



+ **YOU**

Summer 2023
Mentoring: Investing in Others

Sermon Title: Passing The Faith Along
To be used with Session 2: Moses and Joshua
Scripture: 2 Timothy 1:3-7

Connection with Bible Study: To complement the Bible study “Moses and Joshua,” this is a sermon about a mother and grandmother who taught scriptural truth and mentored young Timothy. Though we don’t know much about these women, Paul singled them out for commendation and used their faithful teaching as a reminder to Timothy to continue to love and live Scripture as he’d been taught. The young man also had the benefit of traveling with two missionaries, Paul and Silas, and the historian and physician, Luke; thus he learned valuable lessons from them as well.

Introduction: The events are burned into my memory forever. The first was the birth of our daughter in Birmingham, and the second was the birth of our son five years later in LaGrange, Georgia. I was there and felt joy over their safe arrival, of course, but also bewilderment since they didn’t come with instructions! Now our daughter has three fine sons, and I was there for their births, too. Parents and grandparents have the scriptural command and great opportunity to “bring [children] up in the training and instruction of the Lord” (Eph. 6: 4). We have an excellent example in Timothy’s household. Though his father was a shadowy figure, Timothy had the benefit of two women in his family who loved God and taught him to do the same.

1. A Commendation For Two Women (2 Tim. 1:3-5)

We know very little about Timothy’s family background in several respects. First, his father isn’t mentioned, other than he was Greek, not a native-born Jew. It may be that his father refused to have Timothy circumcised as an infant according to Jewish law. Later Paul saw to this matter when Timothy began to travel on mission in order to prevent criticism from Jewish leaders (Acts 16:3). Thus, we don’t know how open Timothy’s father was to his blossoming faith. Perhaps his father was often away in business or with the Roman army or deceased. Nor are we sure if Timothy’s grandmother, Lois, was his maternal or paternal grandparent, though we assume maternal. What we do know is that Timothy had two faithful women in his life who taught him to love God and Scripture. His grandmother, Lois, passed faith to his mother, Eunice, and both passed the faith along to Timothy. In the Ephesians passage cited above, Paul exhorted the father to take the lead in teaching faith to children. Some have called this being the “spiritual priest” for the family. But it’s good that faithful women can take up this task when men aren’t willing or aren’t available.

2. A Commendation For A Young Man (2 Tim. 1:5)

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Luke introduced us to Timothy in the context of Paul's second missionary journey. He and Silas came to the twin cities of Derbe and Lystra (where Paul was stoned on his first journey). There they found Timothy who was active in the local Christian assembly and respected by local believers (Acts 16:2). Paul impressed the young man to join him and Silas, and we believe Luke joined the mission around the same time after Paul's Macedonian vision. (The narrative pronouns changed to plural ("we") in Acts 16:10 when the writer joined the journey.) Paul called Timothy's faith "sincere," and noted that it had "lived first" in his grandmother and his mother. Paul noted that Timothy's gifts for ministry were apparent when the church sent him into service. The apostle had every confidence in his young protégé, but he also exhorted him to "rekindle," or recommit to God's will each day.

3. A Call To Continue in Faith (2 Tim. 1:6-7)

Many believe Timothy was an introvert and shy. In this passage Paul reminded him that God didn't give him a spirit of fear—anxiety or unease in pastoral service—but "power, love, and sound judgment." The apostle had earlier exhorted the younger man not to let anyone discourage him because of his youth (1 Tim. 4:12) but to counteract criticism with his exemplary life.

If Timothy was a bit awkward socially or lacking in relational skills, he has many contemporaries. One study found that 25 percent of senior pastors label themselves introverts and 61 percent admit they "have few close friends."ⁱ Pastors must not only grow in spiritual wisdom but also grow in people skills.

During my seminary study the local pastor assigned as my "field supervisor," or mentor, gave an unusual assignment when he had me read Dale Carnegie's "How To Win Friends and Influence People." He said in addition to the theological study we did, this book of simple principles was good for pastors to read and follow since so much of our work has to do with relationships and leadership.

Conclusion: Timothy had theological training from his mother, grandmother, church, his mentor, Paul, and his travel companions Silas and Luke. Paul also spent time coaching him on leadership—getting along with others and not being shy in using his gifts to strengthen the church. One can only imagine how Timothy's life would have been different had he not had these wonderful influencers to encourage him. We pass the faith along when we follow these New Testament examples. With eyes toward the future, we prepare a new generation for leadership.

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ⁱ <https://www.christianpost.com/news/study-reveals-how-pastors-perceive-themselves.html>