

Ready! Set! Go!
A Foundation for Faith
2 Timothy 1:5

May 11, 2014

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Text Introduction: We began last Sunday going through this wonderful book called 2 Timothy which is actually a letter from Paul to Timothy. Paul writes from prison. He is preparing Timothy to take the mantle of leadership. His general theme is a call to perseverance. I am calling this series Ready, Set, Go. Look with today at just this one verse—1:5—an appropriate verse for this Mother’s Day.

Text: ⁵ clearly recalling your sincere faith that first lived in your grandmother Lois, then in your mother Eunice, and that I am convinced is in you also.

Introduction: As Paul begins his letter, he does so in his very customary way of naming himself as the author and stating Timothy as the recipient. Then, he launches into a thanksgiving. In this particular case, his thanksgiving brings him to the time when he first met Timothy. According to Acts 16, Paul met Timothy in the town of Lystra on his second missionary journey. Paul, by his own impression, we assume, as well as the testimony of the other believers there took Timothy with him on the remaining part of the journey.

In Acts 16, we learn a little about Timothy’s family background. We learn that he has a believing mother, but his father was Greek. From that mention of his father and no subsequent mention of his father, we can only assume that he was raised in a home with a believing mother and unbelieving father. In our text today, we pick up the nugget that his grandmother was also a believer. From these two places, we are learning about the foundation of his faith.

Here in this 1 verse, multiple matters of faith and family collide.

1. Passing of faith from one generation to another is among the highest callings in life.

The command of God from the beginning is to reach the next generation. Consider with me a few key texts.

- Deuteronomy 6:7 And these words which I command you today shall be in your heart. 7 You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, when you walk by the way, when you lie down, and when you rise up.

- Joshua 4:21-24 21 Then he spoke to the children of Israel, saying: “When your children ask their fathers in time to come, saying, ‘What are these stones?’ 22 then you shall let your children know, saying, ‘Israel crossed over this Jordan on dry land’; 23 for the LORD your God dried up the waters of the Jordan before you until you had crossed over, as the LORD your God did to the Red Sea, which He dried up before us until we had crossed

over, 24 that all the peoples of the earth may know the hand of the LORD, that it is mighty, that you may fear the LORD your God forever.”

- Judges 2:10-11 10 When all that generation had been gathered to their fathers, another generation arose after them who did not know the LORD nor the work which He had done for Israel. 11 Then the children of Israel did evil in the sight of the LORD, and served the Baals;

As we read the Old Testament, the failing of Israel was not that the first generation disobeyed, it was that they failed to pass their faith to the next generation. As has been said many times before me, “We are only one generation away from extinction.”

In track and field, in the relay race, the race is won in the exchange of the baton. We do not have an infinite window to exchange the baton. Because passing our faith is of the highest callings, it must have the highest priority in our lives.

2. Lack of spiritual heritage is no excuse for lack of faith.

But, somebody is here today and will say, “But, Pastor, I didn’t have that opportunity as a child.” We see that issue addressed in Timothy’s life. Timothy’s family was not perfect. A person’s lack of spiritual heritage is no excuse. What happened to Timothy’s father? We don’t know, so we ought not to assume, I guess. However, we know he is not mentioned. Because he is not mentioned it is a good assumption that at least in Timothy’s formative years, he did not have a believing father at home.

3. Every person is responsible for his/her own faith.

But, then, I sense some parents among us today beating themselves up because their children are not believing or at least not in a growing relationship with the LORD. This verse reminds us that every person is responsible for his/her own faith. Timothy’s grandmother’s and mother’s faith are mentioned, but Paul comes to Timothy’s faith. A verse like this one has led many to remark, “God has no grandchildren.” He only has children.

Parent, you have the responsibility for giving your child a godly heritage. This is to be a high priority in your life. That priority should dictate decisions that you make as a family. However, there are no guarantees right? You are responsible for giving them an opportunity to believe in Jesus Christ, but you can in no way make them. Paul is by implication reminding us to quit beating ourselves up when our children make poor and wrong choices in response to God.

4. The church is called to be the partner in discipleship.

In Timothy’s life, we are also forced to deal with the fact that God calls and uses the church. By the testimony of the church in Acts 16, we learn how instrumental the church was in helping Timothy become a discipleship of Jesus. Where did he meet Paul? In the church!

So What?

If you are a child, who has been blessed with a Godly heritage, be thankful and act in accordance with that heritage. If you are a child, who has not been blessed with a Godly heritage, stop making excuses, refuse to be bitter, and chart a new course for your life.

If you are a parent, your calling is high!

As a church, partner with the family in this high calling! The world's next Timothy might be seated among us today!