

As Paul encourages Timothy in his gifting, he also reminds him of three things that reflect the Spirit's authority over both of their lives.

What three characteristics demonstrated that the Spirit was at work in Timothy's life? Which one do you feel is most difficult for the younger generation?

So, the challenge to the younger generation is to honor the older and give them permission to speak into their lives. But authority isn't given away to just anyone. Only when your life gives evidence of spiritual maturity will the older generation pass on their authority.

WRAP-UP

We will all face transitions throughout our lives. Over its seventy years as a church, New Life has also had its share of transitions. But if we are prepared for transitions, they don't have to include fear and conflict, rather they can be opportunities for all to grow. When Paul was preparing to pass his authority to Timothy, he invested in him through prayers of thanksgiving and blessing and grew a genuine affection towards him. He encouraged Timothy by letting him know that he saw the faith God had placed in him and sought to fan into flame the calling in Timothy's life. And Timothy honored both God's authority and Paul's in his life. We also can transition well if we do the same; invest in and encourage the younger generation and honor the older generation and the authority they hold. All of us need each of us.

Memory Verse

This is why I remind you to fan into flames the spiritual gift God gave you when I laid my hands on you. - 2Timothy 1:6 NLT

PRAYER (20 MIN)

Ask your group to pray for you regarding one area where you can apply this study in your life: _____

Pray for your group members' needs: _____

Challenge- Ask God to show you a Paul and/or Timothy that he wants in your life. Then reach out and connect with that person this week.

"Transitions" Chapters #2

INTRODUCTION

If you enjoy reading, you know that every good book has seamless transitions that carry you from one chapter to the next. If we view the generations of the church as "chapters" that tell the story God is writing, we'd expect to find that we transition well from one generation to the next. But that is not always the case. A transition should hold both a conclusion and an anticipation. We find many transitions that took place in the Bible. Some went well and others didn't. Let's learn from those that did it right so that we can transition well.

Ice Breaker (Optional—8 min)

What life transition have you most recently experienced?

STUDY QUESTIONS (45 MIN)

1. Opportunity for Growth

Ecclesiastes 3:1 NLT - 1 For everything there is a season, a time for every activity under heaven.

Transitions in life are inevitable. Most of the time a transition brings us an opportunity to grow. But sometimes we aren't well prepared, and the transition can be frightening, because we are facing something unknown.

What would you say were your most and least successful transitions in life? (marriage, work, education...)

If we hold too tightly to the season we are in, we lose our opportunity to grow into what God has ahead for us. Allow yourself to grieve what you are leaving, but also rejoice in anticipation of what is ahead. Embrace the season between who you were and who you are becoming.

2. Charge of the Older- Empowerment

One of the better-known cross generational relationships in the bible is between Paul and Timothy. In what might have been the last letter he wrote before being martyred, Paul is addressing Timothy.

2 Timothy 1:1-5 NLT - 1 This letter is from Paul, chosen by the will of God to be an apostle of Christ Jesus. I have been sent out to tell others about the life he has promised through faith in Christ Jesus. 2 I am writing to Timothy, my dear son. May God the Father and Christ Jesus our Lord give you grace, mercy, and peace. 3 Timothy, I thank God for you--the God I serve with a clear conscience, just as my ancestors did. Night and day I constantly remember you in my prayers. 4 I long to see you again, for I remember your tears as we parted. And I will be filled with joy when we are together again. 5 I remember your genuine faith, for you share the faith that first filled your grandmother Lois and your mother, Eunice. And I know that same faith continues strong in you.

What is the tone of Paul's letter?

Timothy was Paul's selected protégé. Paul had worked with Timothy to train and instruct him and had sent him on missionary journeys, including to the church at Ephesus which Paul had founded. Paul took great care as he transitioned his ministry into the hands of the younger Timothy.

- *Authority- In 2 Timothy 1:1, what did Paul state that established his authority to speak into the life of Timothy? Who do you look to for your spiritual guidance? Do you feel you God has called you to offer spiritual guidance to someone else?*
- *Blessing and Thanksgiving- In verses 2 and 3 Paul prays for God's blessing and gives thanks for Timothy. Think about your prayers for others. Is giving thanks for people a regular part of your prayers? Have you gone beyond asking God to "fix" problems and prayed for their relationship with God and His direction in their lives?*
- *Affection- Verse 4 shows Paul's genuine affection towards Timothy. Is there a "Paul and Timothy" relationship in your life? If so, is there anything you've noticed that deepens your*

affection for them? If not, what is a first step in making that connection with someone?

- *ICNU (I see in you)-In this letter Paul lets Timothy know that he recognizes his genuine faith. Paul encourages Timothy to use that faith and accept that he is called by God. By the end of the letter Paul validates Timothy's calling to preach. We don't have to wait until the end of our lives to encourage others. Take a few minutes to encourage members of your group by telling them what you see that God has placed in them.*

2 Timothy 4:1-2, 6 NLT - 1 I solemnly urge you in the presence of God and Christ Jesus, who will someday judge the living and the dead when he appears to set up his Kingdom: 2 Preach the word of God. Be prepared, whether the time is favorable or not. Patiently correct, rebuke, and encourage your people with good teaching. ... 6 As for me, my life has already been poured out as an offering to God. The time of my death is near.

3. Charge of the Younger – a Culture of Honor

1 Peter 5:5 NLT - 5 In the same way, you younger men must accept the authority of the elders. And all of you, serve each other in humility, for "God opposes the proud but favors the humble."

As young adults we are excited to take on life and apply all that we have learned to make a difference in the world. But sometimes we overestimate just what we can do on our own. Peter reminds the younger men that they are under the authority of the elders, and that both generations are to serve each other humbly.

What would you say is the most valuable things the older generation adds to our church? What is the most valuable offered by the younger generation?

2 Timothy 1:6-7 NLT - 6 This is why I remind you to fan into flames the spiritual gift God gave you when I laid my hands on you. 7 For God has not given us a spirit of fear and timidity, but of power, love, and self-discipline.