

# ARE WE THERE YET? PASSING THE MANTLE PAUL AND TIMOTHY

## BEFORE THE LESSON

The Apostle Paul is a well-known New Testament writer and evangelist. While he was doing great things for the Kingdom of God, Timothy was one of his closest co-workers. In 2 Corinthians we read that Timothy worked with Paul as an evangelist. He's mentioned in several of Paul's letters as a co-worker in the faith (2 Cor. 1:1; Phil. 1:1; Col. 1:1; 1 Thess. 1:1; 2 Thess. 1:1). Timothy even handled several delicate negotiations for Paul (1 Thess. 3:1-2; Phil. 2:19; 1 Cor. 4:17). Paul had great affection for Timothy! He even mentions him as a model to be imitated in Philippians 2:20, where he says, "I have no one else like him, who will show genuine concern for your welfare." And as we read the introduction to 1 Timothy today, we hear that Paul considers Timothy his own son in the faith. Paul had deep affection for Timothy and mentored him to become a church leader.

## STARTING THE LESSON

Timothy was one of Paul's closest co-laborers. Paul saw Timothy as a son in the faith. We're going to look at 1 Timothy 1:1-5; 2 Timothy 2:1-3. We're going to look at advice Paul gave Timothy as he mentored Timothy to be a faithful leader in the church. Paul was passing the mantle of leadership to Timothy – very much like the transition of leadership that's happening at Vineyard Columbus right now.

### TIPS TO SHARE WITH LEADERS

Make sure you give everyone a chance to talk. If you have someone in your group who talks too much, make sure you help them set limits so others can have a chance to share as well.

## STARTER QUESTION

- Have you had a role model or mentor in your life? Tell us about them.
- Is there a relationship (in real life or on TV) that you admire? Tell us about that.

## OPENING PRAYER

Holy Spirit, guide our conversation that we might draw close to you. Help us become more like you. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

## 1 TIMOTHY 1:1–5 (NIV)

Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the command of God our Savior and of Christ Jesus our hope,

<sup>2</sup>To Timothy my true son in the faith:

Grace, mercy and peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Lord.

<sup>3</sup>As I urged you when I went into Macedonia, stay there in Ephesus so that you may command certain people not to teach false doctrines any longer <sup>4</sup>or to devote themselves to myths and endless genealogies. Such things promote controversial speculations rather than advancing God’s work—which is by faith. <sup>5</sup>The goal of this command is love, which comes from a pure heart and a good conscience and a sincere faith.

## 2 TIMOTHY 2:1–3 (NIV)

You then, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus. <sup>2</sup>And the things you have heard me say in the presence of many witnesses entrust to reliable people who will also be qualified to teach others. <sup>3</sup>Join with me in suffering, like a good soldier of Christ Jesus.

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### QUESTION 1

- In 1 Timothy 1:2, what does Paul call Timothy? What does that say about their relationship

*He calls him “my true son in the faith”. They have a strong bond. Paul loves Timothy.*

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### QUESTION 2

- Timothy is Paul’s son. Another way to describe their relationship is mentor and mentee. What are the benefits of having a mentor in your life?

*Answers will vary. It’s always nice to have a wise friend who can give you counsel and encouragement.*

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### QUESTION 3

- In 1 Timothy 1:3, Paul urges Timothy to address problems in the church in Ephesus. Engaging in conflict is hard and change is hard. How might Timothy (or our church) engage in healthy conflict?

*Answers will vary. Speaking the truth in love is important.*

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### QUESTION 4

- In 1 Timothy 1:5, Paul lists four things that are important in a leader of character. What are they? Who have you seen demonstrate these characteristics?

*Love, pure heart, good conscience and a sincere faith. Answers will vary.*

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### QUESTION 5

- Who have you seen demonstrate the characteristics listed in 1 Timothy 1:5?

*Answers will vary.*

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### QUESTION 6

- Turning to 2 Timothy 2:1-2, Paul is writing about passing the mantle of leadership to others. What kind of leaders is Timothy to look for?

*Paul tells him to look for reliable people who are qualified to teach others.*

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#### QUESTION 7

- What do reliable people look like? How do we know they are reliable?

*Answers will vary. They don't have to meet a certain standard in age, socioeconomic class or ethnicity, but they do have to be of good character. As we read in 1 Timothy, they would demonstrate love, a pure heart, good conscience and a sincere faith.*

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#### QUESTION 8

- Paul taught and mentored Timothy. And then he encouraged Timothy to mentor others so that they too would be qualified to lead others in the church. What are some practical ways that we in the 21<sup>st</sup> century can mentor others to become vital leaders in the church?

*Through small group leadership, having one-on-one relationships with others. Answers will vary.*

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#### QUESTION 9

- In 2 Timothy 2:3, Paul tells Timothy "Join with me in suffering". What does that mean to you? Americans don't like suffering!

*There will be hardships. Following Jesus isn't supposed to be easy. We have to be willing to sacrifice to follow Jesus. Paul reminds Timothy (and us) that being a Christian doesn't guarantee happiness and an easy road.*

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#### QUESTION 10

- In comparing Paul passing the mantle of leadership with Rich passing the mantle of leadership to Eric and Julia, how have you seen similarities?

*Answers will vary. Rich has imparted wisdom and provided mentoring to Eric and Julia. He has talked about their good character. They have demonstrated their ability to teach and lead.*

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#### PRAYER MINISTRY

- Spend time making a list (mental or written) of the pastors on staff at VC. Pray for them individually and collectively that they might follow the Holy Spirit's leading during this transition.
- Spend time talking about whether those in your group have had a mentor or are a mentor to someone else. Pray for the mentoring relationships in our church and our community that leaders with good character will rise up.