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Leader Guide

Unbroken Chain

September 24, 2023

Main Passage: 2 Timothy 4:1-8

Theological Theme

Paul wrote to Timothy at the end of his life to give a solemn charge of how to be a godly, effective pastor. His words are helpful for any believer who wants to live a life of impact.

Introduction

- ❓ When have you been involved in passing the torch in some way?
- ❓ What kinds of things make this process easier or more difficult?

1. The Charge (2 Timothy 4:1-2)

The apostle Paul sent this letter to his ministry protegee, Timothy. Paul did much of his teaching and discipling through letters. In this letter, Paul gave Timothy a strong charge regarding his continuing work as a young pastor. Paul's use of the word "charge" emphasized to the seriousness of the words that would follow. If Timothy wanted to be a godly pastor, he needed to heed Paul's instruction.

- ❓ How might the average believer apply the idea of preaching the Word each day? You may not have opportunity to speak in front of a room, but what influence has God given to share His truth with others?
- ❓ How can you be ready "in season and out of season" (v. 2)? What preparation is required for this?
- ❓ Application: How do you need God to work through His Word in your life?

2. The Need for Preaching (2 Timothy 4:3-4)

Paul also laid out the reason behind his strong charge. There is power and motivation in knowing why something is a big deal. When people understand the "why," they are more likely to take up the charge with passion and dedication.

- ❓ Why would it be important for Timothy to understand the reason Paul encouraged Him toward preaching the Word faithfully? How would this be helpful when it became difficult to continue in ministry?
- ❓ What are some "itching ears" of the world? What specific ways do "itching ears" threaten the integrity of the church today?
- ❓ Application: How might you be guilty of looking for teaching to feed your selfish desires, even subconsciously?

3. Fulfill Your Ministry (2 Timothy 4:5-8)

The broken state of the world should not make Christians feel defeated but should make us even more zealous about fulfilling the work of the ministry. Thinking about the way the enemy deceives lost people should cause those who know Jesus to be more dedicated than ever to focus on what God has called us to do.

- ❓ How can you seek to be more intentional about being an evangelist for Jesus?
- ❓ A drink offering was poured out completely. Can you say that you have lived your life this way for the Lord? Why or why not? Where might you have held back in living for God's purposes?
- ❓ Application: Where is God calling you to stay the course right now? Why can you trust Him to sustain you, even when it's difficult?

Questions to Guide Your Group's Discussion

1. What does this passage say?
2. What did this passage mean to its original audience?
3. What does this passage tell us about God?
4. What does this passage tell us about man?
5. What does this passage demand of me?
6. How does this passage change the way I relate to people? (*How can you use this information this week at work or with friends and neighbors?*)
7. How does this passage prompt me to pray to God?

*Adapted from Seven Arrows by Matt Rogers pastor of The Church at Cherrydale, Greenville, SC

Here's How to Become a Christ-Follower:

Read the following verses and ask after each one: "What does this say to me?"

- **All have sinned:** Romans 3:23 & 1 John 1:8
- **The wages of sin:** Romans 6:23 & John 3:18
- **But while we were sinners, salvation was provided:** Romans 5:8
- **Become a Christ-follower:** Romans 10:9-10 Confess and Believe

Accepting Christ is Just the Beginning:

Next Steps:

- Publicly profess your faith by being baptized (Matthew 10:32-33; Luke 3:21; Romans 6:4).
- Join a church which follows the Bible, where you can grow in your faith through prayer, Bible study and fellowship with other Christians.
- Get involved in groups for encouragement and accountability.
- Begin a daily personal worship experience with God where you study the Bible and pray.
- Share with others what Jesus has done for you. Tell your story (Romans 10:14; Matthew 28:19-20).
- Begin to live for God (Romans 12:1-2, 9-18; James 1:19-27).

Prayer Prompts:

1. What do you need to submit to the Holy Spirit to fulfill the ministry you have been called to?
2. What opportunities has God given you to live out your faith and preach the gospel in your day to day life?