

# Passing on the Faith

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**Bible Text:** 2 Timothy 3:10-11  
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Well, let's grab our Bibles and let's go back to 2 Timothy as we're going through 2 Timothy this morning and, um, we're coming toward the middle last part of 2 Timothy. Paul is incarcerated in a Roman prison. He knows that his execution is imminent and he's writing these words to Timothy to, in effect, beautify the bride of Christ. He's giving instructions on the form and the fashion of the local church who is Christ's bride.

And so we learn lots of practical things about local church life from these books, today we come to 2 Timothy 3:10 and 11. He's already been writing in, in chapter 3 about the vileness and the wickedness of false teachers, other parts of the Scriptures call them wolves, even savage wolves, and now he's going to turn and say, "But Timothy, that's not who you are, you're different." So he says in verses 10 and 11 of 2 Timothy 3,

10 Now you followed my teaching, conduct, purpose, faith, patience, love, perseverance, 11 persecutions, and sufferings, such as happened to me at Antioch, at Iconium and at Lystra; what persecutions I endured, and out of them all the Lord rescued me!

I've entitled this "Passing on the Faith." Again, Paul is writing from a Roman prison cell. He knows he doesn't have much longer to live and it's as if you can see Paul reaching his arm outside of that prison down to Ephesus, that's where Timothy's pastoring, and handing the baton off to Timothy because he knows Timothy's fixing to take up the mantle and continue on in this great work. Who passed the baton to you? Who influenced you to carry on in the faith? And who are you passing the baton onto today? Certainly we should think about our children in this, making sure that our children carry on in the faith and even our grandchildren and great grandchildren, and then, of course, our brothers and sisters and our fellow sojourners in our local church, we have a responsibility there. There could be others but you can about wrap it up there as far as what the Bible says is your responsibility, that is, to those to whom you want to pass on the faith and carry it on.

Now here we have the unique, uniqueness of Paul the apostle who wrote must of, much of the New Testament and Timothy his understudy, his disciple that he's leaving in charge at least of the church in Ephesus, so that's unique but nevertheless the principle Paul brings out here of passing on the faith is foundational and we all have a responsibility there. Now listen well: you will stand before the judgment seat of Christ

and perhaps the Lord will say, "Your pastor taught you the best he knew how to. He structured your church so that you would have the kind of organization where you could mentor, encourage, model, disciple one another. Did you pass on the faith? Did you do it?" And what I find is a lot of you are indeed doing it and you don't even recognize it, and that's what's beautiful about it sometimes is it's what you are, it's not just something you do. It is both but it is something we are and it's something we do.

Let's look at this together and let's look at, first of all, personal discipleship. That's something he points out here to Timothy is that, "My personal discipleship of you, Timothy, is foundational to what you are and who you are and how you're gonna carry this baton forward as I'm passing it on to you." He says in verse 10, he said, "Now you followed my teaching." Uh, now the contrast against here is to the false teachers who were following every other teaching but Paul's teaching, i.e. but true doctrine and true teaching. So he's wanting to form a real contrast. He's described in the earlier verses of this chapter the, the vices, the wickedness, the character traits or lack of character, you could say, of the false teachers and the rebels and those who would try to undermine the faith and now he says, "But now Timothy, you are in sharp contrast to that. You've been well-disciplined by myself and you're on the right track in the truth."

He uses those words, "Now you followed my teaching." The idea of follow there is to follow alongside. He's saying, "Timothy, for many years we have walked lockstep together. Our lives from the core of our being to the expression of our outer conduct has been radically different from the men who are only of this world and the men who follow only after this world." So Paul led, he disciplined, he taught Timothy and Timothy proved to be a trusted devoted follower of Paul.

I remember I had, a, a friend many years ago in ministry and he had a little conference he used to do, a little weekend seminar, you could say, and he, the seminar was entitled "You follow Jesus by following men," and it's true. Uh, God has ordained that young ladies should find godly older ladies and, and be mentored by them and follow them, and by following those older ladies they're actually following Christ. And young men should find godly older men and by following those men they learn to follow Christ. Now Paul's not setting himself up as perfect here but he's saying, "You know that was the mark of my life to be a devoted follower of Christ and now you are following on after that."

But Paul, again, knows his time is not long. He will not that much longer be able to mentor and lead Timothy, and Timothy being his longest and I, I believe most trusted associated, he wants to make sure Timothy stays the course. So he gives Timothy nine particulars, you might call them, nine parts of this Christian walk, and in this case a, a pastor or a church leader's walk that he wants Timothy to remember he has been living those out and now, Timothy, keep on living these out in your life.

Timothy not only followed alongside Paul in these nine particulars of serving Christ, he followed in these nine particulars. It wasn't that Paul was living them and Timothy was just tagging, Timothy joined with Paul and they embodied them together and walked these truths out together. He, he, he followed in them. He embraced them. He became

convinced of them and then he lived these out. First, he heard them from Paul, he, he saw them modeled or emulated in Paul's life and ministry, and then he embraced them and incorporated them in his own life and ministry.

So passing on the faith, if we're gonna pass on the faith and, by the way, can I say this loud and clear this morning that if churches had effectively passed along the faith to the next generation and the next generation in this country of ours, we would not have the wild, weird, bizarre stuff going on in this country that we're seeing going on today. There would be no debate about killing babies in the womb. All this is because the churches have not passed on the faith. We've lost some generations and our goal at Grace Life Church is, of the Shoals is to reestablish the standard, to shine the light bright again and call us back to the truths of God. But in this context, what Paul is saying is, "Timothy, I taught you and I modeled these things, then you began to embrace them and teach them and model them. Now Timothy, keep on going."

Now just for practical application here, I want to talk about three key areas a person would, of personal discipleship that must occur in the church. The first one would be, A) leadership development. If we're gonna have folks who can lead in the children's department, if we're gonna have folks who can lead in the nursery area, and if we're gonna have folks who can lead in helping us, uh, co-labor with our parents to reach and disciple our, our young people, our teenagers, our college folks, if we're gonna have new leaders who can help lead the next generation of small groups so that church members can love and bond and encourage each other, there's got to be leadership development and leadership development greatly depends on personal discipleship. Watching that leader as they model how they pray for their class or as they model how they share their faith, or as they model how they treat their husbands or their wives, teaching is essential and nothing is more important than the foundation of the preaching of the word but as we learn from the foundation of preaching, then we live it out and personally help one another living, live it out. That's what the church body is for. You see, you coming to hear me yell at you every week is more than just, "Okay, I can check that off," like it's some sort of Catholic sacrament. No, this is to the end of your personal ministries and that's why we have small groups, and I'm getting way ahead of myself because that one's coming.

But in leadership development, we see the example, the illustration of personal discipleship in Jesus and his 12 disciples. When Luke was writing the book of Acts, he refers back to the gospel he wrote and he says in, in Acts 1:1, "The first account I've composed, Theophilus, about all that Jesus began to do and teach." Luke says, "I've been with this Lord and Savior. I followed along with him and I learned a lot from what he did and from what he taught." Modeling personal discipleship, so foundational there. And in Mark 3:14 the Bible says Jesus appointed these 12 that they might be with him. They needed to see him teach. They needed to watch him pray. They needed to watch him show humility and meekness when offended but also stand bold and strong and rebuke the Pharisees. They learned from being with him. Personal discipleship.

Then, of course, we have Paul again with Timothy here, with Titus, with Silas, with Barnabas, with Aquila and Priscilla and with many others. Uh, they literally traveled with Paul and learned by being with him. And now Paul's gonna say to Timothy or has said already, we've already studied through it in 2 Timothy 2:2, "the things which you've heard from me, I disciplined you, that is, Timothy, now in the presence of many witnesses entrust these to faithful men. Now take what I gave you, Now you find the men who are the next leaders." I think this is probably the first pastor's training institute in a local church. These are key men that will probably go on to be preachers. "Now Timothy, get them in a small group and, and train them and, and mentor and model this to them."

Well, a second key area not only for leadership training but for every member discipleship and, of course, that's where we talk about our small groups. And the wheel illustration is something we look to to kind of help us understand and keep in our minds the areas we want to be active in and, of course, you can see the, the upper right hand spoke, every member ministry through small groups. That is the arena where we can be involved in some form of personal discipleship one to another. And again, it doesn't have to be this real structured thing, just be real, live for Christ, reach the lost, help the saved to be equipped and grow, and the others in the class will follow along with those who are further down the road. And we see this principle right at the very beginning of the book of Acts in Acts 2:46 as 3,00 people have been saved and they did meet in Solomon's portico as a congregation but also notice what it says there, they were "breaking bread from house to house." That's small groups, getting together in smaller units and caring for each other and praying for one another and ministering one to another. From the very beginning we see a small group structure in God's local church. It's in small groups that bonding begins. You, there's a transparency that can develop and brother with brother and sister with sister in Christ can start feeling the openness to share burdens and needs and weaknesses as well as strengths and things that God's blessed them with. So bonding and transparency and that builds a, an environment for modeling true discipleship one to another.

And then, thirdly, another arena not only for leadership development and not only for every member discipleship but also home-life discipleship, in our homes. What a place to make sure that you are personally discipling those in your family. Now again, I've said it several times, and forgive my voice, I've been out in the weeds and the bushes and the dust and the dirt and it makes my throat close up. But anyway, in our homes we want to make sure our children are picking up on the things of Christ. Surely, surely you haven't been a part of Grace Life very long and you think that my home can be just like the average secular home as long as I get my kids to a good church like Grace Life Church. Surely you don't think that. My point is with all of our flaws and failures and weaknesses and inconsistencies, we need to make sure our children and our spouses know it's real at home. We go by the book at home. God's word is our standard at home and therefore we're modeling before our children what we call home-life discipleship.

Deuteronomy 6:6 and 7 says, "These words, which I am commanding you today, shall be on your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your sons and shall talk of them when you sit in your house and when you walk by the way and when you lie down and when

you rise up." Notice not, not a, a formal, cold classroom in the household. I'm not saying you shouldn't ever have a class and a study. I'm not condemning that but more than anything your children need to see in the everyday parts of life it's real. It's real.

I could, um, my daughters are not here, they've already taken off and I'm gonna take off to where they are later today, and if they were here they could very quickly list for you my weaknesses and my failures in my home, but if there's something that God let me hit on that I believe he used in their lives it was that I tried to humble myself before them and ask their forgiveness when I blew it. And I would always say, "You see, daddy needs a Savior too." That's home-life discipleship. That's modeling that we all serve a real Savior because we all need a real Savior. In contrary, dads, to what the world and Satan and your flesh may tell you, that kind of humility strengthens your family's love and respect for you. It doesn't diminish it. So in whatever ways and I mean this honestly, I think many of our younger families are doing a lot better job than Pam and I did, and praise the Lord for that. I think my children are doing a better job than I did, and I hope my children's children do a better job than they did. But that's a place for discipleship, personal discipleship.

All right, let's go to number 2. I'm gonna get through this one way or the other, just, just part of my discipleship. The particulars of discipleship. So Paul's now gonna list nine items, nine particulars that, in effect, he's saying, "I taught you these, you embraced them and we've lived them together, Timothy, and here's the point, so don't stop now. Keep on going with what you learned from your father in the ministry."

The first one he mentions is, "Now you followed my teachings." Teachings, and literally there's a, a, a definite pronoun here, my teachings. And of course, he's saying, "That's in contrast to all this nutty, crazy stuff, Timothy, that the world teaches, the, uh, Greek and Roman philosophers teach, the, the Gnostics teach or the Judaizers teach. No, no, Timothy, you've been discipled in the truth. I've given you the true doctrines." Um, I think this must include preaching and teaching settings where Timothy literally sat under the voice of Paul as he preached and taught, and this is a foundational thing.

I'll give you a quick illustration from my past. When I was newly converted and a young minister, discipleship groups were very popular. They, they don't seem to be popular anymore but there was some Christian ministries and their whole purpose was to form men discipling men and women discipling women and there was good and there was bad. Um, the good was churches were very weak and anemic and there were not too many real mature disciples in churches so these groups started up to say we'll get this done, but that was also their downfall, they separated their ministry from the local church. And as I studied the Bible, I thought, "This is wrong. The church should be doing this. This should be a part of the ministry of a local church." And thus came our accountability notebook that we used for many years, some of you still use it, just a tool to help us 1:1 disciple one another. You see, true disciples cannot be properly made or matured without being in a local church and primarily under the Spirit-empowered preaching of the word of God. You can't just meet on Thursday and quote the Bible to one another and do a Bible study, as good as that is, separate from the totality of local church life and primarily the

preaching of the word in the local church. But these groups had, I think with good intentions, kind of left that out. It was kind of like you can be a real disciple and not really be centered in a local church. You and I exist to say, no, the biblical model is right, it's wise and it's best, this should be done in local churches for the glory of God.

One key factor there. If you're in a discipleship group outside of the authority of your local church, and shall I say it, some of the worst examples out there are some of these ladies' discipleship groups in the community. Let me ask you something, you're sitting under some lady in some discipleship group meeting at some restaurant or some home, who's overseeing that lady? Who's making sure she's living right, has godly conduct, and believes true and sound doctrine? You see, you're sheltered under your elders, God's ordained that but when you just get Joe Blow or Jane Blow out there and y'all get together, I'm not saying it's all evil, I'm saying though it is dangerous. I don't know if any of our ladies do that or not and I'm not saying you should quit tomorrow, wait a month and then quit. But if I was in any kind of group, I'd say what godly proven local church elder body is overseeing this study so I know I can trust being in here? Did you hear that? What godly proven elder body is overseeing this, this ministry? There's no ministry in the New Testament that's not under the authority of a local church. You show it to me and I'll get up here and change my tone. I'm chasing a rabbit and I've got to get off that. I don't have the voice to chase rabbits this morning.

"Timothy, the first particular, you followed my teaching, my doctrine and it's changed your life." One thing I would point out and there was some good men in these discipleship ministries and, by the way, I thank God for the good that was done, but you know, I think all of those that were, Dr. Seal you remember, that were real popular when we were in our early 20s, they don't exist anymore. But you know what? There's local churches everywhere. Amen? All other ministries come and go, real discipleship needs to be anchored in the local church because God's gonna have his local churches until he returns. That's his ordained means.

Now, secondly, he mentions conduct. We've gotta hurry. He, he's saying, "Timothy, you know I lived out what I taught." Paul's not saying in perfection but he's saying, "from a heart conviction that the doctrine, the teaching I taught was true, and from a heart embracing, adoring and treasuring of the doctrine I taught. You know my conduct exemplified my teaching." In 1 Corinthians 2:4 he writes to the Corinthian church and, by the way, the Corinthians were constantly plagued by false teachers creeping in and teaching, well, usually they'd put a spin on Paul's doctrine. They'd put a twist on the things Paul taught and try to get the Corinthians off track, and so Paul would write to the Corinthians and try to get them back on track, and here's one of the ways he did that, "my message and my," teaching, i.e. in contrast to the nonsense you've been taught by some people who crept in while I was out of town, "my message and my preaching were not in persuasive words of wisdom." You see, in the ancient Greek culture, rhetoric and oratory skills were held in high premium and if you could dazzle with your words and with your charisma people would just swoon to you as a great leader but Paul said, "I made sure when I came to you, I wasn't slick, sharp, polished or anything else." But he said, "I'll tell you what I did have," look at the rest of that verse, "but in demonstration of the Spirit and

power." Here's what Paul's saying, "Your life's been changed. Your heart's been changed. The way you treat your spouse has been changed. The morals of your life has been cleaned up." Here's what Paul's saying, "When I came to you with the true doctrine, your conduct changed. You didn't just get somebody to wow you intellectually and enthrall your emotions. You changed because my message has the power of God in it." What's my point? "Timothy, you knew my conduct. Timothy, you know your conduct. You know God's truth has changed us and though we're not perfect, we've tried to live this thing out."

The Holy Spirit that works in our hearts and convinces us of the truth of God's word is also the Holy Spirit that convicts us and guides us to a new kind of living that exemplifies the doctrine we embrace. The new birth creates a new heart, a new heart with new affections, and a new heart with new affections and a brand new purpose of life, and that creates a new conduct. Nothing more than I remember so distinctly in my life, I was converted driving my car back to college one Sunday night and you know what changed in my life? I started going to church. Now why did that change? Because I changed. Things just started changing. My friends began to change. I wasn't, I didn't make a list, "Okay, I'm gonna change all these things to show everybody my conduct is different." No, I, I, my affections changed, the things I, I longed for and looked to and were mostly drawn to changed.

"Well, not only my teaching, Timothy, you've received it, you know it and you're walking in it, not only our conduct and our lives are different than the world and different than they used to be, thirdly, Timothy, our purpose has changed." Is that the third one? Yeah, the third one. Romans 8:28 is a key to this. Romans 8:28 reminds us, "God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose." That's what happens. When God changes us, we go from living for our purpose with God tacked onto that, you know, that, that's the Baptist way over the last 100 years or so. You keep your life but say a sinner's prayer so you can tack on a free journey to heaven when you die. Uh-uh. No, your purpose changes. This is, this is God's purpose. What happened was God's purpose became Paul's purpose and Paul discipling Timothy, it became Timothy's purpose, and Paul's saying, "Timothy, you've been walking this out with me for years and I'm about to be gone but, Timothy, you can't quit. The purpose we're about is right. Don't shrink back." And in, in, in my, my latter years of ministry here with you and I'm not planning on hanging it up anytime soon but I don't know that I've got 40 something years left either, but here's what I'm gonna say to you, Grace Life Church, the purpose I've laid out for you from the book is right. It's true. We can't shrink back now. That's what Paul's telling Timothy. Now we may polish it and adjust it as we have learned more deeply the word, we're not gonna do it based on what the culture says we ought to be but we're gonna base it on the book, but the purpose primarily remains the same.

The word purpose here that Paul uses is the word that means to set forth or place one thing in front of you. And Philippians 3:13 says, "I do not regard myself as having laid hold of it yet; but one thing I do." Paul didn't say these 12 things I do, he said, "There's one thing I do." Yes, I'm gonna raise my children, I'm gonna make sure they get a good

education, by the way, we need to talk about that, not this morning, but the next 20 years the true church is gonna have to think about where we send our kids to be instructed and trained. All I can say is thank God for teachers in our schools that love Jesus and love the truth. They're the only salvation we've got right now because the federal government's not gonna relent on their, their, uh, uh, passion to teach our children filth and ungodliness. We're gonna raise our children, we're gonna have to work at our jobs and do a lot of things but back of all of that needs to be one thing, we exist that God might be glorified and primarily through His churches." And I'll monitor and sharpen and decrease or increase all this other stuff that makes up my life to make sure that one purpose is maintained. And that's just not for us preachers, that's for us. You have a different role but that's us.

Paul's strategy for living out this purpose was very clear. Well, let me back up, Ephesians 3:21 again. If there's a summary of what I would call biblical theology and it's, it's not a complete one, I understand that but it's about as complete as any one verse can get, I think, and a summary of what our purpose should be, Ephesians 3:21, and a summary of what Paul's purpose was, Ephesians 3:21, "to Him be the glory in the church and in Christ Jesus to all generations forever and ever." In other words, this lasts for all of time and this last for all eternity. Is your driving purpose something that lasts for time and eternity? Why would you do that if it's not? Why would you do that? Why would you sit under my preaching and give your life to something that doesn't matter when you leave this earth? Why would you do that? I'm not saying you're doing that, I'm just saying if you are, why would you do that?

But now Paul's strategy was very simple, Galatians 1:16, "that I might preach Him among the Gentiles." Paul tried to preaching one of the Jews, God closed that door and then God sent him to the Gentiles, preach, preaching the word, i.e. preaching the gospel. Colossians 1:28 and 29, "We proclaim Him, admonishing every man and teaching every man with all wisdom, so that we may present every man complete in Christ. And For this purpose also I labor," this purpose, "striving according to His power, which mightily works within me." "Well, pastor, I'm not called to preach." Yes, but you're called to the church and there's a junior boy you could help disciple, there's a young girl you can help influence, there's a man in your class that's a newer Christian that you can love and encourage and model a little bit for and then we're all together in this purpose. Can I get an amen there? Find your role and keep on keeping on. Don't quit on me. I'm not saying any of you have, I'm just saying don't. That's what Paul's telling Timothy. He's not rebuking Timothy for not doing it, he's just saying, "Timothy, you just keep on doing it."

Well, this was Paul's purpose, this was Timothy's purpose and it's the purpose of every biblical pastor and every true Christian since this time. Well, the next one, faith. That's the, is that the fourth particular? The fourth particular aspect, the faith. Now this could be faithfulness but that's not what I think it means in this context. I think it means one's personal faith, one's personal trust in Christ. He's saying, "Timothy, you saw my personal faith and trust in Christ, my love for Him, my treasuring of Him, and, and, Timothy, I've seen your personal faith in Christ, your love for Him and your treasuring of Him. And Timothy, likewise let's continue on being those kind of men." And boy, this reminds me



afresh that if a man's gonna be a pastor, he first must be converted. He must have experienced the new birth. He must be born again. We've got too many guys in our pulpits who are maybe loving in their personality or kind in their demeanor or caring of people naturally but that doesn't matter if they're not born again, if they're not saved.

Then patience, patience to wait when nothing's happening. Oh, my goodness, how many times did Paul preach and nothing happened? How many times did Paul preach and the church would drift away from sound doctrine and he'd try to get them back? On patience, he said, "Timothy, you've seen my patience." You know, in our early, earlier years of reforming this church, not much was happening. I remember being in a board meeting with Anchored in Truth board and the board members saying, "Pastor, nothing's happening." And I'd be discouraged and I'd say, "No, it didn't look like much is happening," but we didn't quit. We didn't quit and today we've got more people wanting to connect with us, contact us, minister with us than we get to. But it took some years of patience. Mom and dad, all of your family may not yet know the Lord, some of them may be way away in Moab sojourning in a foreign land, but don't quit. Keep on. Believe. Don't throw in the towel. Patience.

Then he says love. It's the word agape. It's that love, I believe in this context and almost every, not every but almost every context when agape is used it means that unique love capacity that comes in us in the new birth. It's not natural. It's not the kind of love the world understands. It's a unique love. And first of all, it gives us a great love for all men. We have a great love for mankind, a, a capacity to pity them and feel sorry for them when they do their wicked deeds. But it's also that deep, rich, abiding love for the brethren. 1 Thessalonians 4:9, "Now as to the love of the brethren, you have no need for anyone to write to you, for you yourselves are taught by God to love one another." What's Paul saying? He's saying, "It was in you by God. God the Holy Spirit came and brought this into you so you really don't have to be taught anything about this. It's there because you're born again." Now you do have to develop it, you need somebody to model it so you know how to express it better but it's there if you're God's. That's what keeps us together here at Grace Life Church because God put something in me that loves you, and God put something in you that loves each other here in a unique way, and it's reciprocal. And can I say this to you? If that's not the glue that's holding us together, we will not be held together.

"Timothy, a, you, you've seen this love in my life and I've seen it now in your life and, Timothy, keep on walking in it." Then perseverance. Perseverance. Keep pressing forward regardless of the headwinds. Bear up under the load, Timothy. And we've been through this in 1 and 2 Timothy over and over and over. He talks about the hardships, the underminers, the false teachers, the usurpers, etc. etc. What he means, "Timothy, you don't quit. You keep on. You saw me keep on going." And matter of fact, Paul's locked in prison awaiting his execution and he's still discipling Timothy. He didn't stop. Perseverance.

Persecutions means various and sundry oppositions to our faith and practice. "Timothy, you saw the persecutions," and connected to that, the last one, the ninth one, sufferings.

Then he talks about in verse 11, look at it there in verse 11, "persecutions, and sufferings, such as happened to me at Antioch, at Iconium and at Lystra," Lystra was Timothy's hometown. I think he specifically mentions Antioch, Iconium and Lystra because that was his first missionary journey. It could have been when Timothy met Paul. It could have been when Timothy was converted under Paul's ministry. And so Timothy would have remembered these, these episodes like when, when, when the stoning he endured at Lystra. Timothy perhaps even saw some of that. Iconium, the, the Jews poisoned the minds of the Gentiles against Paul there and a mob of them attacked him and they tried to stone him, actually they did stone him at Iconium. And then the one I just mentioned at Lystra the Jews from Antioch followed him down to Lystra and influenced a mob to attack Paul. Isn't it interesting that mob rule has been around forever and that's the way a lot of Baptist churches function. You get a mob together and they vote something in or out, right or wrong, up and down. Whoever can get the mob together wins. Well, Paul had his mobs. He had a mob at, at Lystra and they stoned him and they thought he was dead and they dragged him out of the city and left him like a dead dog on the side of the road but he wasn't dead. God just provided for him to be, I guess, knocked out so that he didn't and maybe endure the torment of seeing all those stones coming at him.

So he's saying, "Timothy, you, you lived in that area. You saw these things and now you've walked with me in many of these things so don't let this type of thing startle you, Timothy, and don't let this type of thing stall you. Keep on keeping on. Hold to the teaching. Practice the conduct. Stay focused on the purpose. Walk in that faith of treasuring and adoring Christ. Have patience and, and press forward through the persecutions and the sufferings and always have that love and that perseverance."

Now I'll be brief, III here: God's great rescue. "Pastor, if we stay truth to the faith in this culture, if we stand on the truth and we're unashamed of it, we might face some tough times." Yes, but our God is the God of great rescues. He's the God who always comes through. He says in verse 11, middle part, "what persecutions I endured." This means, "I got through them. I endured them, and out of them all the Lord rescued me. By God's enabling grace," Paul is saying, "I kept serving Christ, kept preaching the gospel. I did it before the persecution in suffering. I did it during the persecution and suffering and, Timothy, you can too. And actually, Timothy, you have already and you need to keep on doing it."

And that phrase, I just want to camp on that phrase as I close, that phrase in verse 11, "out of them all the Lord rescued or delivered me." The Lord's rescue of Paul and I think that's what he's getting to. He, he had to splash that suffering that Timothy most likely witnessed in Iconium and Lystra and Antioch, he, he splashed that out there so he'd kind of, kind of have a graphic vivid memory in Timothy's mind and then immediately on the backside of that graphic impacting memory he says, "But the Lord rescued me out of them all. As hard as that was, as ugly and awful as that was, God's rescue was greater." I think that's the point here. Paul, Paul's rescue was more awe-inspiring and impacting than the persecution or suffering that was launched against him was.

Now think about our Lord. Think about our Lord. What's more powerful, the evil suffering thrust upon our Lord before and during his crucifixion, or the great rescue of God the Father raising him from the dead? Which is more impactful? He came forth alive, glorified before his Father. You see, the rescues of this life during our service to Christ are powerfully impacting, so much so that they can cause the suffering and pain of serving him in this wicked world to quickly diminish. You need to remember that when you're going through something because you're trying to stand for your faith and honor the Lord and it's not fun anymore. We talked to a person just recently that in their organization they work for, they, they're becoming quite woke and this person wasn't woke enough for them and they, they saw the handwriting on the wall. That's not easy when you've spent your whole life with a, a business or an organization. But God has a rescue plan and they found something much much better. Well, God opened a much much better door.

God's rescues are so impacting it makes the heartbreak and the suffering of what you've been through for Christ diminish. In Romans 8:18 Paul says, "For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that is to be revealed to us." Now that's talking about the ultimate rescue when we're glorified with him. You ain't seen nothing yet. You think all this stuff down here is a big deal. It's nothing compared to what's coming. Nothing. It's not worth. Paul says in Romans 8:18, "It's not worthy to be compared." Take all the difficulties, suffering, persecutions, toils and trials and just general sufferings, if you will not even necessarily for your faith sometimes just the heartache of this present life, he's said it can't even be compared with the glory that's going to be revealed to us and in us. You can take all the sufferings and persecutions of the most persecuted martyr for Christ, multiply it 1,000 times and one second in Christ's presence, one second clothed in his righteousness, one second immersed in his glory will have a far greater impact than those thousand lifetimes of suffering. That's what Paul's saying, it's not worthy to be compared.

The songwriter said it will be worth it all when we see Jesus. Earth's trials will seem so small when we see Christ. One glimpse of his dear face, all sorrows will erase. So gladly run the race until we see Christ. But songwriter, but Paul didn't say it will be worth it all, he said you can't even compare them. It's not that one's this one and this one's pretty good bit higher, you can't even compare the sufferings to the glory. So it's not that it will be worth it, I'm not saying it's a bad song, Brother Tom, okay? I'm just amplifying it. I'm not saying it's not that it will be worth it all, Paul is saying it's not even a fair comparison, it's not even worthy to compare the impact of life's trials with the impact of our glorification. There's nothing to compare. They're two radically different things.

I don't know why this came to my mind but it did, I was thinking on this text and I thought about when Pam and I were in Africa the last time, and we had been preaching at a Bible conference for Conrad and they had told us, you have to go to Victoria Falls. If you're ever in South Africa, can I tell you something? You have to go to Victoria Falls. It's amazing. They, they took us on a little boat out there and we went to the, the little, there's a little island place on the edge of Victoria Falls where David Livingstone, the great missionary explorer, had stood there and looked over a vast valley out below that

falls and he saw the smoke of a thousand villages and he claimed them for the glory of Christ. Just powerful to be there and think about the first Christian missionary to ever go to that region of the world.

But that's not what I'm talking about. They took us out in that boat and I guess we saw a hundred crocodiles. It's just the amount of living stuff out there is horrifying almost. I thought, if I drop in this water, it's over. I mean, there's just, they're just, there's stuff everywhere. Warthogs. There was a giant bull elephant just standing out there just blowing water up in the air. It looked like something you'd see at, at Disneyland. Don't go to Disney World. But anyway, like something you'd see at Disney World. But one thing that impacted me was over on the bank probably 150 yards away from us, two female lions had come down and it was, you know, it was pretty just dusty and bare and a few little bushes and they kind of were laying down beside two bushes and I thought, boy, I'm glad I'm not over there. That would not be good. I mean, they were intimidating. And then all of a sudden three or four massive African bull elephants came charging down that bank and those cats ran like their house was on fire.

You see, all of your sufferings are little kitty cats compared to the elephant of God's glory that's coming. I mean, those cats looked intimidating until the elephants showed up and our trials and our suffering and our difficulties seem great and, by the way, the tear ducts are in there for something, amen? There's tears. There's heartache. But you remember the great elephant bull of God's glory is just coming around the corner and he'll blow all that stuff away and it won't even be worthy to be compared. You'll say, "You know, now that I see Jesus for this one second, that stuff just, that's just nothing, that just don't even matter."

"Timothy, I've passed along the faith to you, now you keep on just passing it on to others even though it'll be tough at times but God will rescue us out of all the troubles."