

Learning to Trust *Discipleship from Wilderness to Kingdom*

5. God's Plans: Trusting a New Generation

Fan into flame: Contributing to the Kingdom

2 Timothy 1.1-14

Aim: To look at the relationship between Paul and his spiritual son Timothy and see what we can take from it and apply to our own lives.

To start with:

Name one of your non-biblical heroes of the faith, and share what it is about them that inspires you.

Background Info:

Paul is in prison and recognises that the end of his life is near. Many have deserted him and others are serving the Lord elsewhere (4:10); only Luke is with him now. Paul has a close relationship with Timothy (in Phil. 2:20 he says 'I have no one like Timothy'), and at the end of his life he wants to see him. So Paul writes to Timothy, his son in the Lord, encouraging him to come to him and also encouraging him in the faith; the old Apostle gives words of encouragement and exhortation to the young apprentice.

Read 2 Timothy 1:1-14

1.
 - a. From this passage who can you identify that has had significant spiritual influence on Timothy?
 - b. What has been your own experience of being 'brought on' in the faith? Who have played those sorts of roles in your life and how did they influence you?
2.
 - a. In what ways does Paul encourage Timothy in his faith? (What strategies does he use?)
 - b. What does Paul exhort Timothy to actually do? (See also 2 Tim. 2.1, 3.14, 4.2)

3. Given its content and tone how would you respond if you received a personal letter like this from someone who has 'brought you on' and influenced your faith?
4. What makes this sort of 'mentoring' effective in people's lives in your view? (If you get stuck you might like to think about what prevents people from growing despite having older believers around them).
5. Who is there in your life at the moment that is helping/might help you to grow in your faith? How does that relationship work and how might you honour that person?
6.
 - a. Who is there that you might be in a position to 'bring on' in their faith?
 - b. Which of the methods Paul uses might you use and which would not be appropriate? Is there one in particular that you don't do that you now think you should start putting into practice?
7. To help people grow up in Christ can feel like an overwhelming task. What encouragement do we gain from v.14 and how might that influence the way we view our mentors, ourselves, those we support?

Reflect and Pray:

- Spend a little time thinking about anything that has particularly struck you, and prayerfully consider if there are any practical steps you need to take. Ask the Holy Spirit to help you in this.
- If you do not have spiritual support at the moment who might you ask to help you? If you are not supporting anyone else, who might you be able to offer support to if they want it? Pray and ask God for discernment in this matter.

