

## Equipping the Next Generation

### Titus 2

#### Introduction

- Passing on the telephone- one piece of technology that we have seen change from one generation to the next
  - Babysitter had what we called an “antique telephone”
    - Make a call you would have to call the operator
    - tell them who you were trying to reach
    - and then the call would be transferred.
  - Rotary Phone- Spin the dial for each number
  - Cordless Phone- walk around the house and punch the numbers instead of spinning the dial
  - Cell Phone
    - Take it anywhere
    - Talk to anyone or text anyone, anywhere, anytime
  - Recent conference where speaker described that his kids have never known a time when they couldn’t talk to someone through FaceTime
  - My first impressions of a smart phone-this is stupid!!! Why do I need one of these???
  - A completely new world-however the need is the same—COMMUNICATION!
- Sermon Series: “All In: The Family of God”
  - The need is the same from generation to generation- We need God’s grace in order to have a relationship with God and spend eternity with God.
  - How that message is communicated sometimes has to change from generation to generation
  - However, one thing that remains significant to the effectiveness of that communication is that the story of God’s grace must be passed down from generation to generation.
  - The sustainability of any church is the successful communication of God’s grace from one generation to the next.
- Titus 2: Equipping the Next Generation
  - Titus a pastor in Crete
  - One of Paul’s protégées
  - Dealing with a difficult congregation
    - False prophets
    - In need of the older generation to step up to equip the younger generation
- Main Points
  - Be an example
  - Make an investment
  - Take the next step in discipleship

#### Be An Example

- **Titus 2:1-5**
  - Reads much like the Fruits of the Spirit (Galatians 5)
  - Centers on good character
  - All things we aspire to, but often fail to do especially in the critical moments when it counts the most
- Temptation
  - To teach what we know, without first applying it to our lives- the worst kind of example
  - We Forget the work of the Spirit and the center of change is the heart
  - In this case, Paul encourages Titus to remember that right living is found not in trying harder, but in applying sound doctrine to align your life with
- False Prophets
  - **Titus 1:16**
  - Creating divisions and chaos within the church
  - Difficult to pass on the faith and sustain a church
- Experience this past week at Annual Gathering
  - Concern felt across our ABC Ohio Region
    - Sustaining churches in decline
    - Reaching younger generations
  - Can't help but think about the examples we find of faithful generations and then a generation in which faith is skipped
    - Somewhere along the lines the story didn't get passed on
    - Immediate reaction is to blame the younger generation-may have some truth to it
    - Yet, the responsibility to pass on the faith is on the previous generation-part of the response of the younger generation is a reflection of the generation before it
    - Somewhere the lines of communication have broken down
    - Evident in our church
  - Steps being taken by the ABC Ohio Region
    - Focus on next generation leadership development
    - Bible Studies, Missionaries, Leadership Academy
    - Challenge now to do more than just put younger people into leadership positions-how will the passing of the torch take place?
  - Encouraging that the Region is taking some of the same steps we are as a church
- Our hope
  - **Titus 2:11-14**
  - A picture of purpose for how to live in the present with the future in mind
  - How we live now matters
    - Family-passing on the story
    - Sustaining the church
    - Eternity with God
- Before we do anything, we need to be an example

- Last week we were encouraged to examine our lives before taking communion
- Communion is a representation of our faith in God
- Our faith informs our practice
- “If you’re part of a small and struggling Christian community, (it is important) to live with integrity in the framework you’ve got and make your witness to the gospel tell by refusing to give outsiders any chance to mock or criticize your home and family life.”<sup>1</sup>
- **Titus 2:7-8**
- Let’s be informed about our faith, grow in it, and be an example by the way we live

### Make an Investment

- **Titus 2:4-6**
  - Train or equip
  - It’s difficult to train or equip if we don’t set the right example (to previous point)
  - Pass the torch by making an investment
- What do I have to invest?
  - Influence- it defines leadership
    - Everyone has influence
    - It’s why living by example is the first step to influence
    - Influence can be good or it can be bad
    - Whatever it is, it has a good chance of influencing the decisions of the next generation.
  - Fall Baseball
    - Win or lose doesn’t matter
    - Really prep for Spring
    - In many ways, Fall ball is about an investment
    - First time in kid pitch
    - Overcome fear of getting hit
      - Jackson got hit
      - Next practice took a soccer shin pad for protection
      - Have to get over it and stand in the box
    - I don’t care if you strike out-just strike out swinging rather than looking
    - If they can overcome this fear, there is a good chance they will be successful in the Spring
  - Younger families have fastballs coming at them all the time
    - Will they stand in the box for their faith, or will they fall away?
    - Parents, your children are having the same experience as they navigate faith with life.
    - What can we do?
      - I can’t stand in the box with Jackson
      - I can encourage him

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<sup>1</sup> N.T. Wright, *Paul for Everyone: The Pastoral Letters 1 and 2 Timothy and Titus*. Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2004. Pg. 154.

- I can pitch to him
    - I can talk through what he is experiencing
    - I can even coach him to some extent
    - Continue to give him opportunities to overcome fear
  - It's not about hitting a grand slam, its about swinging at good pitches!
- Invest in three ways
  - Relationship
    - Who is one person in this church that is younger than you that you don't have a relationship with?
    - Introduce yourself
    - Invest in them each Sunday and maybe even throughout the week
  - Prayer
    - Find that person, introduce yourself, commit to pray for that person
    - Every prayer is an investment!
  - Financially
    - Sustaining the church through financial support
    - You may not see the return
    - Keep in mind- **Titus 2:13-14**
    - It's not always about the present, but the future of what will be
- Paul's message to Titus is that the sustainability of the church is based on the willing investment of the older generation in the younger generation.

### Next Level Discipleship

- **Titus 1:9**
  - Remember there were false prophets
  - Confusion as to what was true and what was false
  - Sound doctrine was key to living the faith
  - Not only would sound doctrine allow them to live out their faith, but to discern truth
  - This was important for any person in the church, but especially for the leadership
- Next level discipleship
  - What is the next step that you need to take
  - We've done great outreach, but in order to sustain we need great leadership
  - That leadership needs to come from the next generation
    - Important to be here on Sunday mornings, but you have to cultivate your faith beyond Sunday morning
    - Sunday nights have provided this opportunity
    - Leading in your home
    - Serving
- Critical time in our church
  - Need to move to the next level
  - What is the next step that you need to take?

- For those of you who are already serving and leading
  - How will you allow the next generation to lead?
  - Will you have a hands-off approach?
  - Will you invest through
    - Relationship
    - Prayer
    - Financial support

### Conclusion

- In order for the church to sustain the next generation must be equipped
  - Be an example
  - Make an investment
  - Take the next step in your discipleship
- Titus 2:13 (ESV), “waiting for our blessed hope, the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ”