Aug 23, 2026

Oaks Early Risers Bible Class

Timothy, a Leader with a Legacy
2 Tim 1:1-6; 3:14-16

The Oaks Baptist Church
Grand Prairie, Texas

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FOOD FOR THOUGHT

THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK:
A strong spiritual heritage is a precious gift. But even if our upbringing lacked the kind of positive influences that helped form Timothy's faith, there are likely others in our life who've had a profound impact in helping to shape our spiritual development

PRAYER FOR THE WEEK:
Father, thank You for the men and women in my life that have modeled sincere faith

SCRIPTURE FOR THE WEEK:
When I call to remembrance the genuine faith that is in you, which dwelt first in your grandmother Lois and your mother Eunice, and I am persuaded is in you also
(2 Tim 1:5 NKJV)

(from "Our Daily Bread", Dec 16, 2022)

Series: The Testimony of Faithful Witnesses

UNIT 3: Faithful Witnesses Spread the Good News

NEXT WEEK
Lydia, the Generous Hostess (Acts 16:11-15, 40)

Lesson Background and Introduction

As far as we know, Paul had no children and never married. He had a sister and nephew (Acts 23:16), so he was an uncle. We know he studied under the famous rabbi, Gamaliel, in Jerusalem (Acts 22:3). Paul's relationship with Gamaliel as a spiritual father may have influenced his decision to consider Timothy as a son in the faith (1 Timothy 1:2). Since Paul's production of letters involved Timothy to a large degree and he thought of Timothy like a son, it is fitting that Paul would write to him when they were apart. Even as Paul endured imprisonment in Rome and his day of martyrdom drew near (around AD 67), he continued planning correspondences. Paul wrote two letters to Timothy while the younger man served as a pastor in Ephesus. Through them, he offered guidance, reassurance, and encouragement. Eventually, Paul requested that Timothy visit him in Rome and "bring … the scrolls [and] especially the parchments" (2 Timothy 4:9, 13). In some ways, 2 Timothy reads like a last will and testament, sent from a spiritual father to a spiritual son (4:6; compare Philippians 2:22). As any father would, Paul wished to see Timothy again before he died. Though Timothy is often perceived as a youth, he was approximately 40 years old when he received Paul's second letter. Paul first met Timothy while traveling through Lystra (Acts 16:1-3). According to Acts 16:1, Timothy's mother was Jewish, but his father was Greek. Strict Jews considered such a relationship dangerous and sometimes even sinful (compare Nehemiah 13:23-27; Ezra 9:1–10:44). Greek culture placed fathers as the head of the household (paterfamilias), and therefore, the one responsible for decisions regarding matters of religion. Timothy's Greek paternity is evident in his lack of circumcision, which, as a Jew, should have occurred on the eighth day of his life (Acts 16:3; Leviticus 12:3). However, Timothy possessed some education in Jewish faith by way of his mother and grandmother (2 Timothy 1:5). Much of Timothy's further ministry education and training came from the time he spent with Paul while they served as missionaries planting churches across Macedonia.

Timothy had a surrogate parent and mentor in Paul. Paul lived a life worthy of imitation and spent significant time reaching out to his son in the faith to encourage and support him. Through Paul's writings, we learn essential truths about Timothy that help us identify him as a faithful witness of Christ. Timothy's rich heritage of faith was passed to him by his mother, grandmother, and spiritual father. Strong parental influence in faith is an incredible blessing. May we all find the mentors we need for steady growth in discipleship, and may we, in turn, develop into devoted mentors ourselves! Timothy's example shows us that spiritual heritage comes from various places. If you lack spiritual support from your family of origin or extended family, don't dismiss the power of relationships built out of a church family. God gave Timothy a gift, a church leadership position, and beloved relationships. He had a spark implanted in him that remained burning. Timothy had endurance, a long memory, diligent trust in God, and supportive, helpful companions on the journey. He didn't succumb to discouragement in the face of hardship and opposition. However, Timothy's success didn't come through individualistic means. He submitted to relationships that supported him through tough times.

(*Adapted from the NIV Standard Lesson Commentary*)

NOTES AND CROSS-REFERENCES

A Sincere Legacy (2 Tim 1:1-6)

Legacy through prayers (1-4)

Prayers that seek the increase in faith (1 Thess 3:10)
Prayers for all the saints (Eph 6:18)
Prayers for the rescue from harm (Rom 15:31)
Prayers for enlightenment (Eph 1:18)
Prayers for empowerment (Eph 3:16-19)
Prayers to live a godly life (Col 1:10)
Prayers for an open door (Col 4:3)

Legacy through faith passed on (5)

Faith passed that reveals the righteousness of God (Rom 1:17)
Faith passed that leads to salvation (Acts 11:13-14)
Faith passed through believing the gospel (Gal 3:2)
Faith passed through the preaching of the gospel (1 Peter 1:12)

Legacy through a Gift of power (6)

Power of the Holy Spirit (Zech 4:6)
Power to overcome (Luke 10:19)
Power to be witnesses (Acts 1:8)
Power to speak wisely (1 Cor 2:4-5)

A Continued Legacy (2 Tim 3:14-16)

Legacy from Mentors (vs. 14-15)

Mentors that provided sound teaching (2 Tim 1:13-14)
Mentors that presented the word of God as it actually is (1 Thess 2:13)
Mentors that presented the truths of the faith (1 Tim 4:6)
Mentors that follow Christ (1 Cor 11:1-2)

Legacy from Scripture (16)

Scripture that is perfect (Ps 19:7)
Scripture that provides understanding (Ps 119:104)
Scripture that proclaims the whole will of God (Acts 20:27)
Scripture that prepares and builds up the Church (Eph 4:11-13)