

The Passing of the Torch

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I. Introduction.

A. Text: II Timothy 4:5-8.

B. Paul reminds Timothy that he is doing the most significant work.

C. There is coming a time when truth will disappear from the earth.

II. We need the same encouragement of faith that Timothy received.

A. The believer is to be steady in his Christian commitment.

1. Timothy's base was the strength that was in Christ Jesus.

2. We need consistent fellowship with the Lord through prayer and Bible reading.

B. The believer is to endure hardships as a soldier of Jesus Christ.

1. Those who seek to live godly in Christ Jesus will suffer from persecution.

2. The reason is that Christianity is a counter-culture movement.

C. The believer is to do the work of the evangelist.

1. Timothy did not likely have the gift of evangelism.

2. Gifts are to be directed towards the world also, and this is to what Paul is referring.

D. The believer is to fulfill his ministry.

1. He is to keep on serving.

2. Paul was passing the torch to Timothy to carry on the apostolic ministry as all are called to do.

III. Paul's view of his departure.

A. Paul said he was about to be sacrificed referring to the drink offering. Paul may have known that he was about to be beheaded.

B. Paul said that the time of his departure had come—a time for a new adventure.

C. Paul's life accomplishments were summed up with...

1. "I have fought the good fight." Paul's fight was with spiritual powers.

2. "I have finished the race." (Philippians 3)

a. The race is the Christian life.

b. The question is whether one runs his life in his own resources or in God's resources.

c. The prize is the new body.

3. "I have kept the faith."

a. Paul has guarded its truth.

b. He has dispensed it to others.

D. Paul was waiting for a crown of righteousness.

1. He was looking for glory that would accompany the righteousness given to Him by Christ. (II Corinthians 5)

2. The glory that will await is the resurrected body.

3. The glory was to be given in "that day." We will be conformed to the image of God's Son.

Application questions:

1. Why should the believer expect to endure hardships?

2. How would you respond to someone who argues that he or she does not have to evangelize because he or she does not have the gift of evangelism? Explain.

3. What does it mean to receive the crown of righteousness?
