

Passing the Torch to the Next Generation – March 16 & 17, 2019
Follow-up Bible Studies

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Day One: Psalm 119:89-96

- In the beginning of this stanza, how does the psalmist describe God's word (89)? What thoughts and feelings do descriptors like "eternal" and "stands firm" bring to mind? What inspiration do they offer regarding your commitment to God's word?
- What is the Lord's faithfulness like (90-91)? What is the psalmist's delight (92)? What impact has this made (92-93)? What about when the situation is urgent (94-95)? What is your response to this life-or-death imagery? What makes the Bible so powerful? Bring to mind some ways scripture personally brings life or delivers you from affliction. Give thanks to God.
- What are the writer's thoughts on perfection (96)? How does God's word compare (96)? A leader's good ideas, magnetic charisma, etc. can only go so far, but God's word is endlessly perfect. Pray that our church's next generation of leaders deeply commit to studying and being transformed by scripture.

Day Two: Mark 1:35-39

- Set the scene of this text (35). What did Jesus do (35)? How does this verse compare to Exodus 33:11? Jesus regularly made space to commune with his Father. What habits help you to deeply know God? What new practices do you want to try?
- Who looked for Jesus (36)? When they found him, what did they say (37)? Why do you think they seemed so exasperated? What might they have failed to notice and discern? Let's not follow Simon's example here. Instead, may we pray for and make space for our leaders and pastors to pursue intimacy with the Lord.
- How did Jesus respond to his disciples (38)? What happened next (39)? If Jesus had not often gone away to "a solitary place" to pray, do you think he would've fully understood his mission? What clarity does regular interaction with God bring to your life? Pray our leaders get this clarity, too. How will it benefit our church?

Day Three: Acts 9:19-31

- After his conversion, what was Paul up to (19-20, 22)? How did people respond to his preaching (21)? What conspiracy arose, and how did Paul avert it (23-25)? What do you think it was like for Paul to so quickly go from oppressor to persecuted Apostle?
- What happened upon Paul's arrival in Jerusalem (26)? Who vouched for him, and how (27)? In this one moment Barnabas began the process of passing the torch to Paul. At great personal risk, he selected and invested in Paul. How do you think Paul felt about this? How do Barnabas' actions impact you today? Pray that our current pastors would be courageous and intentional as they pass the torch to the next generation of leaders.
- Once accepted by the disciples, what happened next for both Paul and the broader community of believers (28-30)? Through all these ups and downs, how do you think Paul was able to remain confident the Lord was with him?

Day Four: Philippians 1:3-11

- What does Paul do each time he remembers his friends in Philippi (3)? Why does he joyfully pray for them (5-6)? This is in part a call to be courageous in the face of opposition and setback. God *will* finish the good work he started in your life and in the life of our church. Respond to the Lord.

- In addition to thankfulness and joy, how does Paul feel about the Philippians (7-8)? Clearly, he is invested in this community of believers. What are some ways you can demonstrate investment in our church and its next generation of leaders?
- Summarize Paul's prayer for those in Philippi (9-11). Take a few days to commit this prayer to memory. Then begin praying it for yourself and for our church's current and future leaders. What would it look like in your own life and in the life of our church for this prayer to be answered?

Day Five: 1 Timothy 1:18-20

- In this section of his letter, how does Paul address Timothy (18)? Reflect on Paul's evolution in the latter three passages we've studied this week: first a mistrusted outsider, then a passionate church planter encouraging one such church. Finally, he writes to just one person, like a parent investing in a child. What does this tell us about healthy ways to pass the torch of leadership?
- What is Paul's command to Timothy "in keeping with" (18)? Why is he issuing this command (18-19)? These words are echoed later on in 6:12. Why must leaders "fight" and "take hold"? How do these sorts of decisive actions help them to finish well?
- How does Paul describe rejection of faith (19)? What other imagery is fitting? Whom does Paul call out for "shipwrecking" their faith (20)? Paul could've just as easily written, "Don't do anything stupid, lest the Lord disqualify you from leadership." Pray that our leaders, both current and future, heed this warning.