

Paul's Later Letters

Fully Establishing the Churches According to Christ's Design

Paul's Later Letters

This letter contains a simple verse misused by every Western discipleship organization in the world: 2 Timothy 2:2

foundational to our entire leadership development system

why BILD exists

key to first encyclical: Jesus to the Gospels

why 2 Timothy is key to the core of our BILD curriculum (napkin)

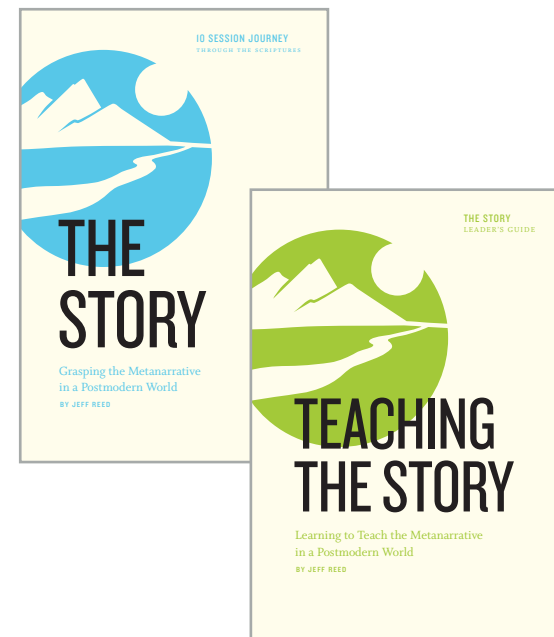
Paul's Later Letters

Issue: Process of developing intergenerational apostolic leaders

Questions:

1. What process did Paul expect Timothy to follow in developing future apostolic leaders? What was the context of that training? And what does Paul mean by using the term *entrusting*?
2. How did Paul describe the lifestyle of an emerging apostolic leader? What is the significance of his soldier, athlete, and farmer metaphors to the expected lifestyle of a faithful apostolic leader? what about hardship expectations?
3. What is in Paul's thinking by challenging Timothy to become a master craftsman of the Word? What is entailed in becoming a master craftsman?
4. What should be the focus of a master craftsman of the Word? What does he need to be careful to avoid? What can he expect to be a central lifelong task?

New Perspective on Paul



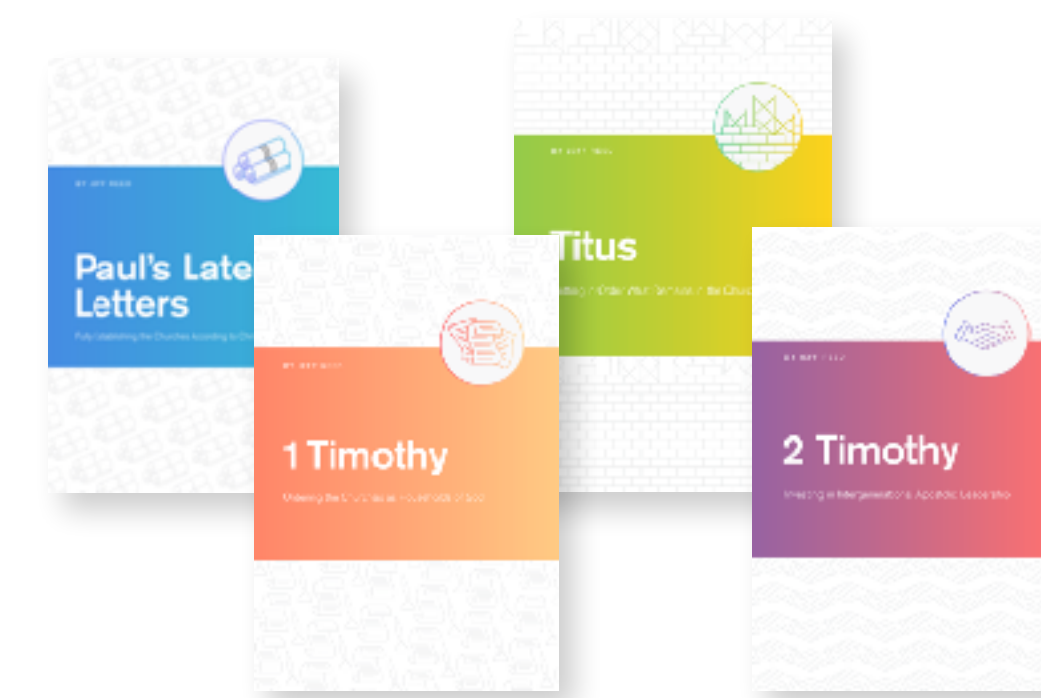
Kerygma
Early Acts
Apostles' Teaching
6 months
Paul: 3 years "night and day"



Didache
Body of Acts
Theology of Paul
1½ years



Full Kerygma
After Acts
Apostles' Gospels
1 year



Paul's Later Letters



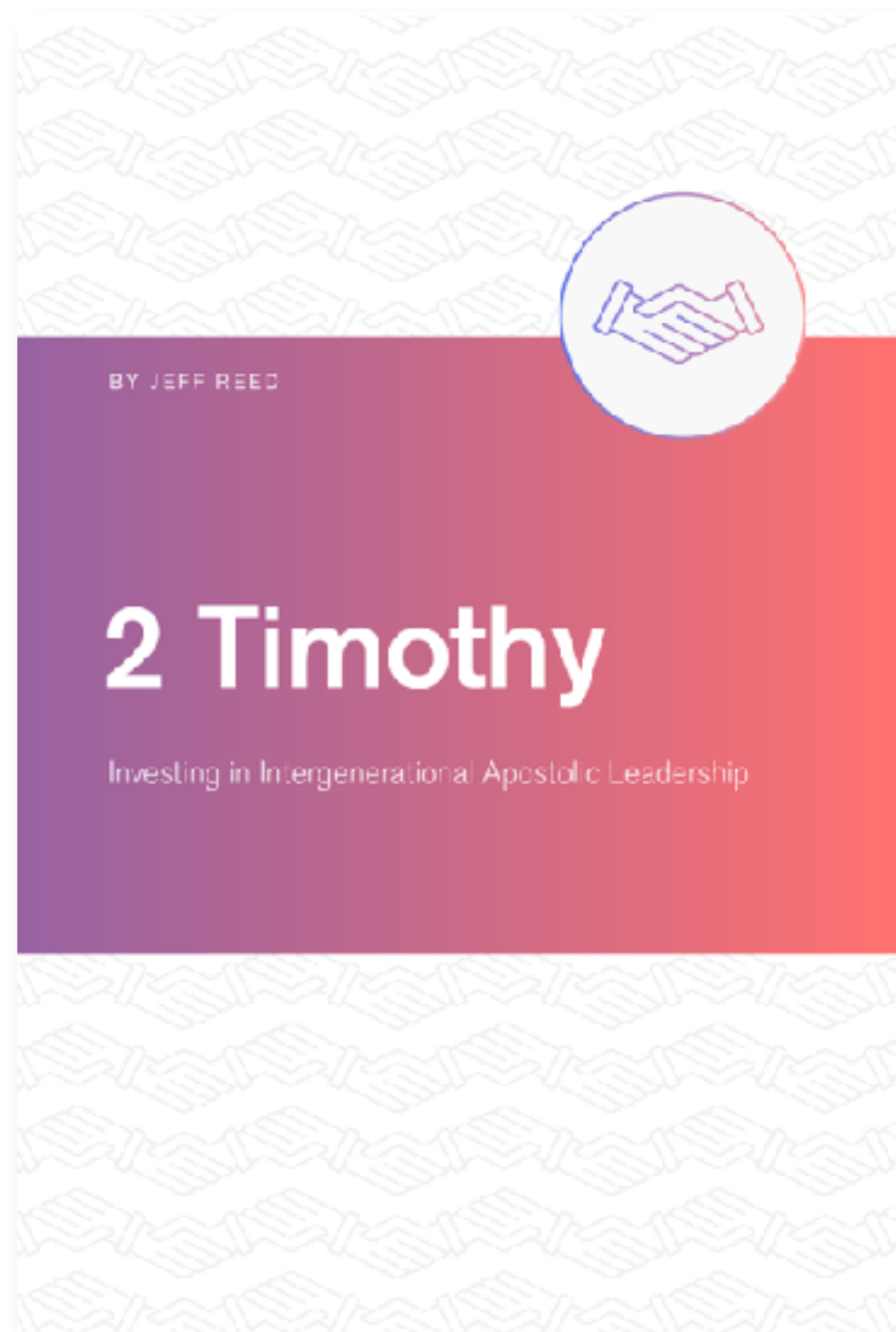
Book 1: Paul's Later Letters: Fully Establishing the Churches
According to Christ's Design

Book 2: 1 Timothy: Ordering the Churches as Households of God

Book 3: Titus: Setting in Order What Remains in the Churches

Book 4: 2 Timothy: Investing in Intergenerational Apostolic
Leadership

2 Timothy



2 Timothy: Investing in Intergenerational Apostolic Leadership

Session 1: Importance of Key Apostolic Leaders to Complex Apostolic Networks

Session 2: Intergenerational Process of Developing Apostolic Leaders

Session 3: Passion of Ongoing Shaping of Apostolic Networks

Session 4: Paul as a Finisher, Fighting the Good Fight

Session 5: The Incredible Network Acumen of Paul

Situating Paul's Second Letter to Timothy

Paul's later letters bring us to the third and final phase of Paul's process of establishing strong, mature, multiplying churches, with solid leadership and high community impact with the gospel.

1 Timothy—written to Timothy at Ephesus, autumn of AD 62

Titus—written to Titus who was in Crete, summer of 66

2 Timothy—written to Timothy, fall of 67 (shortly before Paul's death)

Situating Paul's Second Letter to Timothy

Now, in 2 Timothy, we continue Paul's line of reasoning in what it takes his young, emerging apostolic leaders to start assuming his functions more directly.

Titus is more situational than 1 Timothy: I left you in Crete to "set in order what remains" in the churches.

Timothy was written in autumn AD 62, whereas Titus was written in the summer of AD 66, four years later.

While Paul was in Crete in the fall of AD 59, on his way to Rome (where he would be put under house arrest), there is no indication he had an emerging network of churches there. The network in Crete is seen after his release from prison.

Paul was in prison from February, AD 60 to March AD 62.

Situating Paul's Second Letter to Timothy

Situation of 2 Timothy

The implications are significant.

Paul wrote his first letter to Timothy from Macedonia, having sent Timothy to Ephesus. Ephesus was a mature church with elders trained by Paul earlier. So Paul gives Timothy a more complete picture of establishing the churches of Ephesus in the household of God (household codes).

With Titus, he evidently left a completely new network of churches, probably one house church in several towns or cities, probably planted in a couple of months (not yet time to multiply). Thus we have a snapshot of how to plant and establish a small network in a few months. This is possible to see now because the whole picture is complete.

Now he writes 2 Timothy.

Situating Paul's Second Letter to Timothy

Situation of 2 Timothy

The implications are significant.

Paul is concerned that Timothy will remain strong and establish an intergenerational process for establishing young, future apostolic leaders.

Paul is seeing cracks in his entire Asian apostolic team of coworkers.

Paul is concerned about the investment of his life in those networks, but he is confident God will preserve what he has entrusted back to Him.

He knows Timothy is key to guarding the deposit of sound teaching, which he entrusted to him.

Importance of Future Apostolic Leaders

What we have learned so far.

In this introduction to 2 Timothy, Paul builds on his first letter, addressing the same three issues: his role, Timothy's future role, and leaders on his apostolic team who did not make it.

Paul's Process for Developing Intergenerational Apostolic Leaders (*apostolic tradition of Paul*)

1. Paul invested heavily in future apostolic leaders, Timothy being his main example, so they could assume his task of guarding the sound teaching that he delivered to the churches and continue to establish future churches in that teaching.
2. Paul adds to his earlier focus with a challenge to Timothy to rekindle the gift that was given to him. And he exhorts Timothy to follow Paul's intensity, which includes suffering in the service of the churches.

Importance of Future Apostolic Leaders

Paul's Process for Developing Intergenerational Apostolic Leaders (apostolic tradition of Paul)

3. Paul saw his stewardship as delivering *sound teaching* to the churches and properly ordering them in that teaching, the focus of his first letter to Timothy. In this letter, Paul builds on his stewardship by additionally focusing on his ongoing role of guarding and developing the networks, which he entrusted back to God to preserve until Christ returns.
4. Paul saw the need for his stewardship of ongoing guarding and developing church networks to be passed on to leaders like Timothy. So, in his second letter to Timothy, he created a process for developing these leaders and entrusting them with the functions needed to carry out this very difficult task.

Importance of Future Apostolic Leaders

Paul's Process for Developing Intergenerational Apostolic (apostolic tradition of Paul)

5. Paul saw the emerging cracks in his Asia network and the ongoing need to deal with those cracks, knowing soon he would not be around. So though he saw his work in establishing these networks as a deposit back to God from the gifts entrusted to him, he knew leaders like Timothy and Titus would need to carry on his apostolic functions within the networks.
6. We can rightly assume that the main purpose for writing this last letter to Timothy was to create both an intergenerational process of developing these leaders and to lay out the schema for the process of continuing to guard and develop future networks, according to his apostolic tradition, which was being handed down in his letters.
7. And we can assume that the keys for dealing with the cracks emerging in his Asia networks are embedded in what he was about to tell Timothy about continuing his apostolic functions when he dies.

Developing Intergenerational Apostolic Leaders

Now let's continue in Paul's second letter to Timothy, focussing on the intergenerational process of developing apostolic leaders

¹ You then, my child, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus; ² and what you have heard from me through many witnesses entrust to faithful people who will be able to teach others as well. ³ Share in suffering like a good soldier of Christ Jesus. ⁴ No one serving in the army gets entangled in everyday affairs; the soldier's aim is to please the enlisting officer. ⁵ And in the case of an athlete, no one is crowned without competing according to the rules. ⁶ It is the farmer who does the work who ought to have the first share of the crops. ⁷ Think over what I say, for the Lord will give you understanding in all things.

2 Timothy 2:1–7

Developing Intergenerational Apostolic Leaders

Note several things here.

1. Paul's development of Timothy took place in the context of ministry (in-service, not for-service).
2. Paul's development of Timothy was an *entrusting process*, far deeper than what we often refer to as a *training process*.
3. Paul has in mind, here, the training of future apostolic leaders. This is seen in many places: in his metaphors of soldiers, athletes, and farmers; in his call to be a master craftsman; in his warning about two more of his team who failed the tests; and, in his final paragraph, of becoming a tool for special use.
4. Key apostolic leaders must lead a different life: free from entanglements of soldiers, having intense discipline of athletes, and with the intense seasonal work of farmers.
5. Future apostolic leaders should regularly reflect on the kind of lifestyle required if they are going to be effective like Paul in shaping church networks.

Developing Intergenerational Apostolic Leaders

A few key words help the idea in 2 Timothy 2:2 come alive.

through many witnesses—This is hard to translate. NIV and NASB translate it “in the presence of”

entrust: “to entrust one to” (LN); “to place beside” (BGD); “to bring forward, to present, to introduce” (TDNT); “b. The apostle Paul uses *τίθημι* and compounds very rarely. When he does it is particularly to describe God’s work” (TDNT); “to bring to a place,” “to place, put, lay,” so that placing is an effective disposing which determines the quality of what is placed and can thus mean “to establish,” “to bring to a specific state,” “to bring about,” “to institute,” “to make.” (TDNT)

This is very different from what I thought, but it makes an even stronger point. The idea is not entrust the teaching to faithful leaders who can teach others; though that is part of it. But he is saying, “in the presence of many witnesses, do not place a person along side you, sharing in your apostolic leadership, unless he is proven faithful. Be careful!

Developing Intergenerational Apostolic Leaders

Paul was careful to place Timothy alongside him as a very key apostolic leader, even including his name alongside his own in letters like Philippians.

He publicly affirmed his recognition of Timothy again and again. Many witnesses heard it.

This makes an even stronger argument that Timothy was trained by Paul and entrusted, not only with the deposit of sound teaching but also with the task of establishing, correcting, and directing networks of churches, alongside him in many of his apostolic functions amongst the network.

Paul reviews many of those functions in 2 Timothy 3.

This is what I did with Michael in bringing him alongside me. This is what I meant when I said to him 4–5 years ago, you need to stop calling you my Timothy. I was placing him alongside me. This is what Paul increasingly did with Timothy. Timothy witnessed it and many confirmed it along the way.

Developing Intergenerational Apostolic Leaders

Then Paul reminds Timothy of the intense lifestyle that goes with that responsibility:

Timothy, you are not going to live a normal life!

Look at the soldier. He is not free to live his life however he pleases. Timothy must view himself like one in the military, who is not free to live a normal life as a free citizen.

Look at the athlete, who is competing in the olympic games (1 Corinthians 9:24–27). You have to suspend many of the things of normal life to compete at the level you need to in order to win.

Look at the farmer, who seasonally has to work all night, sometimes for weeks, to bring in the crop on time.

Timothy, reflect carefully on these examples, and you will understand the core of what it means to be faithful to the intense lifestyle that goes with being placed alongside me in the church networks.

Developing Intergenerational Apostolic Leaders

This is what I see in leaders like Abraham of Shanghai, Hugo of Hong Kong, Chadwick of Chennai, Ebey of Coimbatore, Joseph of Kampala, Yusufu of Abuja, Ali of Paris, and many others of our 120 key international leaders around the world.

It is what I saw in Michael, and it is what I see in many aspects of several of our top leaders on our own apostolic team.

But it is rare, and it should be.

This is not to take away from the tremendous commitment of sodal leaders of all kinds in our churches; of elders, deacons, and leading women; and of every truly committed family and believer. But it is simply to say that there are those whom God chooses that we need to recognize and place alongside us as they prove faithful to this key apostolic lifestyle.

Developing Intergenerational Apostolic Leaders

Paul continues with a focus on the faithfulness of himself and future apostolic leaders.

⁸ Remember Jesus Christ, raised from the dead, a descendant of David—that is my gospel, ⁹ for which I suffer hardship, even to the point of being chained like a criminal. But the word of God is not chained. ¹⁰ Therefore I endure everything for the sake of the elect, so that they may also obtain the salvation that is in Christ Jesus, with eternal glory. ¹¹ The saying is sure:
If we have died with him, we will also live with him;
¹² if we endure, we will also reign with him;
if we deny him, he will also deny us;
¹³ if we are faithless, he remains faithful—
for he cannot deny himself.

2 Timothy 2:8–13

Developing Intergenerational Apostolic Leaders

Paul continues on the lifestyle of apostolic leaders in this section. Note the following:

1. Paul adds here that this life will be characterized by hardship, which again is part of the territory of apostolic leaders. It's a hardship that is wrapped around the churches, that they might obtain all that God intends for them, fully realizing the eternal life they have entered.
2. Paul reviews this hardship at many points in his letters. In fact, in almost every letter, we see an element of conflicts without and fears within; one of the most descriptive is 2 Corinthians 11:16–29, which he will pick up in the next major section of this letter.
3. Paul also reminds Timothy that there are rewards in the kingdom attached to the faithfulness required of these types of leaders; and they can lose the rewards if they do not remain faithful to their calling.

Developing Intergenerational Apostolic Leaders

Paul continues his focus on developing intergenerational apostolic leaders by focusing on accurately handling the Word.

¹⁴ Remind them of this, and warn them before God that they are to avoid wrangling over words, which does no good but only ruins those who are listening. ¹⁵ Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved by him, a worker who has no need to be ashamed, rightly explaining the word of truth. ¹⁶ Avoid profane chatter, for it will lead people into more and more impiety, ¹⁷ and their talk will spread like gangrene. Among them are Hymenaeus and Philetus, ¹⁸ who have swerved from the truth by claiming that the resurrection has already taken place. They are upsetting the faith of some. ¹⁹ But God's firm foundation stands, bearing this inscription: "The Lord knows those who are his," and, "Let everyone who calls on the name of the Lord turn away from wickedness."

2 Timothy 2:14–19

Developing Intergenerational Apostolic Leaders

In this section Paul turns to the skill these leaders need to develop. He makes the following points.

1. Paul's focus turns to Timothy's need to work hard at becoming a master craftsman, one who accurately handles the Word. And as we saw in 1 Timothy, that requires a gymnastic-style personal discipline in the Word and ongoing progress in mastering the Scriptures, which can be clearly observed.
2. Paul again appeals to the importance of the pursuit of becoming a master craftsman of the Word to avoid being pulled into false doctrinal systems and erroneous fears and debates by those who are not operating on the sound teaching entrusted to him.

Developing Intergenerational Apostolic Leaders

Again, note several key words

do your best: “to do something with intense effort and motivation— ‘to work hard, to do one’s best, to endeavor” (LN); “take pains, make every effort” (BGD); “*spoudázō* means to make haste” or transitively “to hurry something on,” then “to treat seriously or respectfully” (TDNT)

present yourself approved: (*present*) “to make something be” (LN), (*approved*) “respected, esteemed” (BGD)

a worker: “one who practices an art” (LSJ); “workman, artisan” (WSNTDICT)

rightly explaining: “to cut in a straight line” (LJS); “to teach correctly” (LN); “guide the word of truth along a straight path (like a road that goes straight to its goal), without being turned aside by wordy debates or impious talk” (BGD)

Developing Intergenerational Apostolic Leaders

The idea is this:

Do your best to present yourself to God as a master craftsman, taking great care to guide the churches on the straight path of the sound teaching, avoiding all diversions.

This is the entire idea of the Mastering the Scriptures Series.

Developing Intergenerational Apostolic Leaders

Again, Paul brings up two more members of his apostolic team that did not make it. This is probably why Paul feels so strongly about who he puts on his apostolic team, especially who he is willing to place beside him in looking to the next generation.

“Hymenaeus and Alexander”

1 Timothy 1:18–20; left the faith (“shipwreck in the faith”)

“Phygelus and Hermogenes”

2 Timothy 1:15–18; left the network (“turned away from me”)

“Hymenaeus and Philetus”

2 Timothy 2:16–18; got caught in theological dispute (“swerved from the truth”)

Developing Intergenerational Apostolic Leaders

Finally, Paul focuses on developing apostolic leaders who are prepared for special use.

²⁰ In a large house there are utensils not only of gold and silver but also of wood and clay, some for special use, some for ordinary. ²¹ All who cleanse themselves of the things I have mentioned will become special utensils, dedicated and useful to the owner of the house, ready for every good work. ²² Shun youthful passions and pursue righteousness, faith, love, and peace, along with those who call on the Lord from a pure heart. ²³ Have nothing to do with stupid and senseless controversies; you know that they breed quarrels. ²⁴ And the Lord's servant must not be quarrelsome but kindly to everyone, an apt teacher, patient, ²⁵ correcting opponents with gentleness. God may perhaps grant that they will repent and come to know the truth, ²⁶ and that they may escape from the snare of the devil, having been held captive by him to do his will.

2 Timothy 2:20–26

Developing Intergenerational Apostolic Leaders

Finally, Paul focuses on the importance of Timothy viewing himself as a special utensil.

1. As Timothy stays focused on becoming a master craftsman, ever progressing in the sound teaching entrusted to him, he will become a special utensil in the hand of God (rather than an ordinary utensil not worth that much), not wasting time on senseless and stupid controversies, and not becoming consumed by endless quarrels. The idea seems to be that a master craftsman will be able to create special vessels, as a special tool in God's hand, like a master potter.
2. Timothy needs to stay focused on solid teaching and exercise great patience in light of the constant need to be teaching correctly and the endless need to be ever correcting other teaching, with the view that he might save many from going wrong directions or from the consequences of incorrect teaching and losing their faith.

Developing Intergenerational Apostolic Leaders

Paul's Process for Developing Intergenerational Apostolic Leaders

1. Paul begins this section of his letter with a challenge to Timothy to entrust to others in the way God entrusted to him—in the context of ministry; and entrust in such a way that they will continue that same process, creating an intergenerational process of developing future apostolic leaders.
2. Paul calls apostolic leaders to a very specific and demanding lifestyle; a lifestyle he compares to a soldier free from normal entanglements of life, following the rigorous habits of an athlete, and the intense seasonal work of a farmer.
3. Paul builds on this lifestyle challenge by pointing out that the life of an apostolic leader, who is truly focused on the network of churches, will be filled with hardship. It's a life he has pictured at many points in his letters and will again here, in the next chapter, as a life filled with conflicts without and fears within.

Developing Intergenerational Apostolic Leaders

Paul's Process for Developing Intergenerational Apostolic Leaders

4. Timothy and all future generations of apostolic leaders need to strive to become master craftsmen of the Word, handling it accurately, which requires a rigorous lifelong discipline in the Word so constant progress in handling the Word is evidenced amongst the churches.
5. By staying focused on becoming a master craftsman of the Word and avoiding endless doctrinal controversies and debates, Timothy will develop into a special utensil in the hand of God, prepared to handle the lifelong task of constantly and patiently correcting the teaching of others, keeping them from developing pathways that will lead to abandonment of their apostolic stewardships.
6. Paul developed Timothy over a twenty-year period. Even though he entrusted Timothy with ministry on his team when Timothy was in his late teens, it took twenty years to completely develop Timothy as a faithful apostolic leader, which is the process illustrated in this brief final letter.

Developing Intergenerational Apostolic Leaders

Developing Intergenerational Apostolic Leaders Today

1. We must begin by developing future apostolic leaders in the context of ministry, in Paul–Timothy types of relationships, viewing their development as an entrusting process to faithful future apostolic leaders, not merely an academic training process. We must recognize that our system today of academic training in the context of theological institutions by professors is not at all the way Christ intended for future apostolic leaders to be developed.
2. We must entrust to future leaders who are willing to embrace a very demanding lifestyle as seen in soldiers free from entanglements of life, willing to follow the rigorous habits of a top athlete, and willing to pay the price of exhausting seasonal work as needed.

Developing Intergenerational Apostolic Leaders

Developing Intergenerational Apostolic Leaders Today

3. We must entrust to potential future apostolic leaders who demonstrate their willingness to suffer hardship for participating in the ministry of leading networks of churches, demonstrating an increased ability to handle conflicts without and fears within, recognizing that those who cannot will be attracted to endless quarrels and most likely will be constantly complaining.
4. We must entrust to future leaders who have a passion to become master craftsmen of the Word, demonstrated by their ability to handle the Word accurately, who have an emerging, rigorous lifelong discipline in the Word, and whose ongoing progress in mastering the Scriptures can be clearly observed.

Developing Intergenerational Apostolic Leaders

Developing Intergenerational Apostolic Leaders Today

5. Part of continuing to entrust to leaders who are emerging as potential future apostolic leaders includes the following: that they must demonstrate the ability to stay focused on becoming a master craftsman of the Word; they must avoid the temptation to enter into endless theological quarrels and debates; and they must demonstrate the ability to patiently instruct and correct teaching, understanding this to be a lifelong task in keeping churches strong and multiplying.
6. Developing these types of leaders, generation by generation, needs to be done in a Paul–Timothy type of relationship in the context of establishing churches and church networks. Though Paul entrusted Timothy with ministry on his team in his late teen years, Paul developed Timothy over a twenty-year period, and we should expect no less, thus proving to be faithful.

Developing Intergenerational Apostolic Leaders

Faithfulness Questions

1. Is he someone who is so committed he will suspend many of his own interests to serve you like a soldier serves a commanding officer? Or is he always focused on what isn't being recognized in him or entrusted to him, and what he thinks should be?
2. Is he willing to exercise a level of discipline in his ministry choices that almost appear to be unbalanced like an athlete competing in the olympics? Or are his ministry choices filled with excuses?
3. Is he willing to work all night for weeks to get a crop in on time?
4. Does he stand strong in hardships, disappointments, and strong opposition? Or is he always complaining, wanting something different from you, or being critical of his circumstances?
5. Is he abnormally committed to mastering the Scriptures and progressing in them? Or is he always questioning things and getting into arguments about issues that are distracting from what is simple and clear?

Paul's Later Letters

Issue: Process of developing intergenerational apostolic leaders today

Questions:

1. How is Paul's process of training Timothy different from how we train pastors, missionaries, and other top leaders today? How is the context of that training different? And what is the difference between *entrusting* versus just *training* today?
2. How are the lifestyle expectations of pastors and other ministry leaders different from the lifestyle Paul expected of apostolic leaders?
3. What does it mean to become a *master craftsman* of the Word?
4. What should the focus be of a master craftsman of the Word? How does a focus on secondary doctrinal debates and denominational traditions distract from the simple apostolic teaching?