

Small Group Guide: Guarding the Deposit of Faith  
Based on 2 Timothy 3

## **OPENING PRAYER**

Begin by thanking God for His Word and asking the Holy Spirit to guide your discussion and apply truth to your hearts.

## **ICEBREAKER**

Share about a time when you wanted to quit something difficult but decided to press on. What kept you going?

## **SERMON RECAP**

Paul, near the end of his life and imprisoned in Rome, writes to his spiritual son Timothy with an urgent message: "Don't quit!" Despite increasing persecution and difficult times, Timothy must guard the deposit of faith that has been entrusted to him and pass it on to faithful people who can teach others.

## **KEY TAKEAWAYS**

Difficult times are coming - Opposition to the gospel has existed since the beginning and will intensify as we approach Christ's return.

The gospel is worth suffering for - The power of God's Word to transform lives and grant eternal life makes any present suffering worthwhile.

We must guard and pass on the faith - Each generation is responsible to know, live out, and hand down sound doctrine to the next.

Scripture is God-breathed and profitable - The Bible is our guide for knowing what's right, knowing when it's not right, knowing how to get right, and knowing how to stay right.

How we treat each other matters - If we're called to have patience under persecution from enemies, how much more should we show grace to fellow believers?

## **DISCUSSION QUESTIONS**

### Understanding the Text

Read 2 Timothy 3:1-5. Which characteristics of people in "the last days" do you see most prevalent in our culture today? In what ways might these tendencies creep into the church?

What does Paul mean by "holding to a form of godliness, although they have denied its power" (v. 5)? Can you think of examples of this in modern Christianity?

Paul defines patience as "the ability to bear pain or trials without complaint, without losing your temper, without taking revenge." How does this definition challenge or expand your understanding of biblical patience?

## **Application**

Paul reminds Timothy of his teaching, conduct, purpose, faith, patience, love, and perseverance. Who has modeled faithful Christian living for you? How can you be that example for someone else?

The sermon challenged us about how we treat fellow believers: "Why would we not be willing to bear up under burdens with our brothers and sisters?" Is there someone in the body of Christ you need to reconcile with or show more patience toward?

"Guard the deposit and entrust it to faithful people who will be able to teach others" (2 Timothy 2:2). Who are you intentionally discipling or investing in spiritually? If no one, who might God be leading you to mentor?

The message emphasized that our focus should be on the resurrection, not just present comfort. How does keeping an eternal perspective change the way you approach current difficulties?

## **PRACTICAL APPLICATIONS**

### *RELATIONSHIP REPAIR*

If the Holy Spirit brought someone to mind during question #8, reach out to that person this week. Initiate reconciliation or show intentional grace.

### *MENTORING MOMENT*

Identify one person (younger in the faith or age) you could invest in. Invite them for coffee or a meal to begin building a discipling relationship.

### *FAMILY FOCUS*

Parents: Have a conversation with your children about what it means to "guard the deposit." Share your faith story and what you believe is most important to pass on to them.

### *PATIENCE PRACTICE*

When you face irritation or provocation this week, pause and pray: "Lord, give me the patience that bears up under difficulty without complaint, anger, or revenge."

## **PRAYER PROMPTS**

Pray for endurance and faithfulness in difficult times  
Pray for those who are facing persecution for their faith around the world  
Pray for wisdom to guard sound doctrine and pass it on faithfully  
Pray for patience and grace in relationships within the body of Christ  
Pray for those who have "quit" or wandered from the faith—that God would draw them back  
Thank God that He is our good, good Father who loves us through Christ