



**11am Bible Study**  
**March 11, 2026**  
**Passing the Torch Without Losing the Fire:**  
**A Call to Discipleship**  
**Earnest Salsberry, M.Div. | Pastor of Worship**

**2 Timothy 2:1–2**

“You, therefore, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus. And the things that you have heard from me among many witnesses, commit these to faithful people who will be able to teach others also.”

**Lesson Objective**

To help the church understand that God builds His church through generations, where those who have carried the work faithfully prepare and empower the next generation to continue the mission. This is not about pushing anyone out, but about passing the torch so the fire keeps burning.

**Introduction**

How do we honor those who carried the work while preparing those who must carry it next? The Bible gives us the answer: **We pass the torch.**

God’s design for the church is generational: seasoned believers are called to **mentor and prepare the next generation of leaders**, not as replacements but as partners in continuing the mission of Christ.

**A. The Kingdom of God Is Generational Vs. 1-2**

“You, therefore, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus.

In this passage, Paul the Apostle is preparing Timothy for leadership.

Paul teaches Timothy a simple principle:

He encourages Paul in the faith before he steps up in leadership.

What you learned from me

Teach it to faithful people

Who will teach others also- You will also teach like God has blessed those before you to teach.

God’s plan was never for one generation to hold the ministry forever.

God’s plan is for the ministry to move through generations.

**B. Even Jesus Passed the Torch**

The greatest example of generational leadership is **Jesus Himself**.

Jesus Christ could have done all the ministry alone.

But instead, He chose twelve ordinary men and trained them.



### **Matthew 28:19–20**

“Go therefore and make disciples of all nations...”

Before Jesus ascended to heaven, He gave the mission to the disciples.

He was saying:

**“I started the work, but now you must continue it.”**

Jesus did not see the disciples as replacements.

He saw them as **the future of the mission.**

We should also see the next generation as the future of the church.

### **C. Passing the Torch Is Biblical**

Throughout Scripture, we see the same pattern:

- Moses prepared Joshua Deuteronomy **31:7–8**
- Elijah prepared Elisha **2 Kings 2:9**
- Paul the Apostle prepared Timothy **2 Timothy 2:1–2**
- Jesus Christ prepared the disciples **Matthew 10:1; John 14:12**

The strongest leaders in the Bible were not **gatekeepers**.

They were **torch bearers** who trained the next generation.

### **The Next Generation Lesson**

#### **Honoring Those Who Built the Ministry**

In the African American church, we must never forget:

Some people prayed when nobody else would pray.

Some people sang when the choir had five members.

Some people gave when the church barely had lights on.

Because of that faithfulness, the next generation has something to build on.

So, this conversation is not about replacing elders.

It is about respecting their work enough to continue it.

### **D. From Gatekeepers to Mentors**

Sometimes people hold tightly to positions because they love the ministry.

But the greatest legacy is not holding a role.

The greatest legacy is raising someone who can carry the vision forward.

A powerful question for every believer is:

**Who am I pouring into?** When we mentor others, our impact multiplies.

### **E. The Church Needs Every Generation**

Healthy churches need:

**Seasoned Saints** bring: Wisdom, Stability and Maturity

**Emerging Leaders** bring: Energy, Creativity and New Perspective

God never intended for one generation to replace the other. He intended to walk together.



## **Practical Applications**

### **For Experienced Members**

- Who can I mentor?
- What wisdom should I pass down?
- How can I help someone grow in ministry?

Your influence becomes greater through mentorship.

### **For Younger Members**

Ask yourself:

- Am I honoring those who came before me?
- Am I willing to learn before leading?
- Am I faithful in small responsibilities?

Respect builds trust across generations.

1. Why do leadership transitions sometimes feel uncomfortable in churches?
2. What does healthy mentoring look like in ministry?
3. How can experienced members remain influential while new leaders grow?
4. What can younger members do to honor those who came before them?

## **Important Thought**

The church is strongest when the elders share their wisdom and the younger generation receives it with humility.

When that happens, the ministry does not lose its power. It multiplies it.

### **Final Thought:**

Our ancestors in the faith did not carry the torch so it could stop with them.

They carried it so the light of Christ would continue shining.

Now the question becomes:

***Will we hold the torch... or will we pass it, so the light keeps burning?***