

A man in a green plaid shirt is seen from the back, speaking into a microphone. He is standing in front of a blurred background of people sitting at tables outdoors, possibly at a cafe or restaurant. The scene is lit with warm, ambient lighting, suggesting an evening or indoor setting with large windows.

## STUDY 4

# SPEAKING OUT

2 TIMOTHY 3:10-4:8

Sometimes reading Paul's instructions to Timothy feels like dipping in to someone else's mail. After all, Timothy is a 'professional Christian leader,' and most of us are not. And yet we're reminded again in this passage that Timothy didn't hear the gospel from 'professionals' but from family. So in some ways, this is a letter for Christian leaders and teachers - and in other ways, for all of us.

*Thinking back to your own journey towards faith, were you most influenced by a "Christian professional" or an ordinary Christian friend?*



4. As we prepare the next generation for gospel mission, what would Paul have us prioritise to best equip them for the days ahead and to guard them from false messages?

What needs to change for us to make this priority a reality in the lives of the generation after us?

Yet again, Paul makes clear to Timothy that being the next generation on gospel mission won't be easy. Sharing the gospel will bring opposition, necessarily. In fact, if you aren't facing any opposition, that's a sure sign you aren't sharing the real gospel! It is tempting to alter the gospel to avoid opposition, but the Scriptures give us confidence not to. All the Scriptures were inspired by God himself to help us 'get' the gospel, and it's only that real, biblical gospel that produces real change in people's lives. That's why Timothy has to stay focussed on *sharing that gospel*...

**Read 2 Timothy 4:1-8**

5. As a full-time Christian worker, what does Paul tell Timothy to focus on above all else? (v2,5) Why would that be?

6. Raising up and sending the next generation of Christian workers requires resources, including eager children’s and youth ministry teams, finances to support these ministries, funds for ministry trainees and theological training, and making sure current ministry staff have time to focus on identifying and training the next generation. How might you encourage the church by giving your time, money and effort to help in this urgent cause?

***Instructions to all Christians***

<sup>11</sup> Christ himself gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the pastors and teachers, <sup>12</sup> to equip his people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up <sup>13</sup> until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ. <sup>14</sup> Then we will no longer be infants, tossed back and forth by the waves, and blown here and there by every wind of teaching and by the cunning and craftiness of people in their deceitful scheming. <sup>15</sup> Instead, speaking the truth in love, we will grow to become in every respect the mature body of him who is the head, that is, Christ.

*Ephesians 4:11-15*

7. Most of us aren’t full-time Christian workers like Paul and Timothy. But check out the sidebar. What should be similar about all Christians?
  
8. In 4:1-8, what future realities does Paul include in his charge, to inspire Timothy to keep sharing the gospel? How should those realities impact us?

<sup>3</sup> Pray for us, too, that God may open a door for our message, so that we may proclaim the mystery of Christ, for which I am in chains. <sup>4</sup> Pray that I may proclaim it clearly, as I should. <sup>5</sup> Be wise in the way you act toward outsiders; make the most of every opportunity. <sup>6</sup> Let your conversation be always full of grace, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how to answer everyone.

*Colossians 4:3-6*

Pray that we will have confidence to stand strong in the gospel and make it known. Pray that we will be intentional about thinking through how we can be using our resources not only to raise up the next generation of Christian workers, but to work out what sharing the gospel looks like in our own everyday lives.