

A vertical photograph showing a person's feet in various styles of sneakers (Converse, Jordan, etc.) standing on a stone ledge. The background is a blurred view of a town with a blue roof and green trees. The text is overlaid on a white rectangular box in the upper half of the image.

STUDY 5

PARTNERING IN MISSION

2 TIMOTHY 4:9-22

Throughout this letter we've seen that we need to *be* the next generation on gospel mission, and we also need to send and support the next generation who'll be on gospel mission *after us*. People who promote the gospel without shame. Without stopping. Eyes open to the way others will tend to distort the gospel. Speaking the gospel openly, in all kinds of situations, every chance we get. It might all sound like a big ask... which is why we aren't expected to do it all *alone*...

WE'RE ALL IN THIS TOGETHER

Read the letter's conclusion: 2 Timothy 4:9-22

1. The apostle Paul is often thought a 'hero' of the early church, and rightly so. But how much did even Paul need others around him? What does he say about that in v9, 11, 13 & 21? Also see 1:15-18.
2. What's the main focus of these partnerships? 1:16, 18, 4:11, 13
3. What effects can it have when people aren't on gospel mission together? 4:10, 14-15, 16
4. In an ideal world, how could other Christians help you to share the gospel? Which of these things could you do for others?

5. How could you help the next generation build relationships so they can be on gospel mission together? Consider the following possibilities:
- Help with Holiday Kids Club where relationships are often built
 - Cook for Youth Church so teens can bond over dinner
 - Have people for a meal at your house so they can enjoy time together
 - Babysit for a young family so the couple can spend time with others
 - Attend Latechurch to support and disciple young adults
 - Other things you can think of?
6. Usually our ministry trainees and students are sent far away from our church and it's easy to lose touch. Why is it important that we don't? What would it look like to keep up a supportive partnership with them over time and distance, the way Paul and Timothy did?

If even a hero like Paul desperately needed his mission partners, we're not going to be able to do it all on our own! We need the encouragement of others being on gospel mission with us. The generations that follow us in our church need that from us. The next generation of ministry workers needs that from us. But of course, in a world broken by sin, that's not always going to work out as it should. That's when we need something even deeper...

Read again 2 Timothy 4:16-18

7. Who stood by Paul when no one else did, and for what purpose?

8. Put yourself in Paul's shoes. Do you think you personally could stand alone with Jesus himself as your only support? If you couldn't at the moment, what would need to change for you so you could?

9. How can we help the next generations at our church have that kind of rock-solid relationship with Jesus?

Paul's final letter to Timothy makes it clear that being the next generation on gospel mission won't be easy. That's why we need to do it together. Helping each other be unashamed of the gospel. Helping each other stay focused on the gospel to the end. Helping each other stay true to the gospel ourselves. Helping each other share the gospel with others. Because of our imperfections, we won't always help each other as we should. But even then Jesus himself stands with us. Pray that we really would support each other in gospel mission. Pray that we'd raise up a new generation who'll do that too. Pray finally that Jesus himself would make his gospel mission continue and thrive, far beyond our human limitations.