

Theme: The church, strengthened by the grace of God, must make sure to pass the faith on from generation to generation.

## I. Laws of the Navy

- A. Poem of 27 quatrains we had to memorize plebe summer
- B. I knew it - and blew it - and then got it, and carry on!
- C. The fifth quatrain is about one link in the chain
- D. On the strength of one link in the cable,  
Dependeth the might of the chain.  
Who knows when thou may'st be tested?  
So live that thou bearest the strain!
- E. Today we want to talk about our place as a link in the chain that is the universal, historical church

## II. A Chain of Generations

- A. Notice the chain of generations in this passage  
You then, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus. <sup>2</sup> And the things you have heard me say in the presence of many witnesses entrust to reliable men who will also be qualified to teach others. <sup>2</sup>  
Timothy 2:1–2
  - 1. Paul refers to Timothy as his son - generations
  - 2. Paul to Timothy to 3rd generation to 4th generation
  - 3. The chain is built as one person passes the faith down to another
- B. Why this multi-generational vision is essential
  - 1. It lies at the heart of the ministry of the church (v2)
  - 2. It lies at the hear of the purpose of the family

what we have heard and known, what our fathers have told us. <sup>4</sup> We will not hide them from their children; we will tell the next generation the praiseworthy deeds of the Lord, his power, and the wonders he has done. <sup>5</sup> He decreed statutes for Jacob and established the law in Israel, which he commanded our forefathers to teach their children, <sup>6</sup>so the next generation would know them, even the children yet to be born, and they in turn would tell their children. <sup>7</sup> Then they would put their trust in God and would not forget his deeds but would keep his commands. Psalms 78:1–7

- a. Pre-marriage counseling - one of main purposes of marriage is multiplying a godly legacy
  - b. We see here multiple generations receiving and passing on the faith
  - c. Purpose - that they would put trust in God and obey
- 3. A failure to do this can bring destruction
    - a. The message of Judges - and Samuel-Chronicles!
    - b. One link failing breaks the whole chain
  - 4. We received the Gospel because others did this faithfully
    - a. Against all odds, the faith has survived!
    - b. People have died to maintain the chain - we don't want to be the weak link
    - c. It is our turn to make sure it is passed on

## III. A Chain of Grace

- A. Notice the foundation - grace!  
You then, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus. <sup>2</sup> Timothy 2:1

1. This is not about our clever schemes
2. It is not about our political power or wealth
3. In fact the church has often done better without those things!
4. Grace saved us, sustains us, strengthens us
5. Grace is our message, our method, our measure

technologies have come and gone - but the Gospel has outlasted them all

- d. This is not because of our strength, our wisdom, our marketing savvy
- e. It is not because our message has been popular or easily adaptable
- f. It is because of the grace of God, the Word of God, the Spirit of God

#### B. We grace is essential

1. Because the Gospel we guard and pass down is the gospel of grace

However, I consider my life worth nothing to me, if only I may finish the race and complete the task the Lord Jesus has given me — the task of testifying to the gospel of God's grace. Acts 20:24

- a. We are not commissioned to safeguard our favorite culture
  - b. We are not commissioned to guard the American dream
  - c. We are not even commissioned to be the guardians of morality (don't confuse the root and the fruit!)
  - d. We are commissioned to safeguard and pass down the Gospel of the grace of God
  - e. Apart from this there is no salvation!
2. Because grace is what has kept the faith alive!
    - a. The church and the Gospel have survived - against all odds!
    - b. Nero, Diocletian tried to stamp it out - they are gone but the faith lives on
    - c. Cultures have changed, kingdoms arisen and died,

#### IV. Applying the Word

##### A. Don't live in the past - look to the future

1. Some Christians long to return to some supposed golden age in the past - don't do this!
2. We were called to this time, this place - live here and now!
3. This is not always comfortable - but it is always essential!

##### B. Don't be a pessimist - the grace of God will overcome

1. Many can bemoan problems in our world
2. They think our culture and neighbors are sick
3. It is much worse - apart from the Gospel it is all dead
4. But our God raises the dead!
5. The Gospel is still the power of God to salvation!
6. It is not up to us - God will keep His Word!

##### C. Boldly commit ourselves to add another link to the chain

1. We have a call - lets boldly commit ourselves to it!
2. Our labor is never in vain
3. The Kingdom is advancing all around - lets be part of that
4. Soak in the Gospel, saturate your children with it
5. Speak it to one another
6. Share it with our neighbors, friends, family - and watch God work!

D. Water baptisms - another link in the chain!

### Another Link In the Chain

2 Timothy 2:1-2  
March 9, 2014  
Water baptisms  
Psalm 128:5-6

May the Lord bless you from Zion all the days of your life; may you see the prosperity of God's people, 6 and may you live to see your children's children. Peace be upon the church, the Israel of God. Psalms 128:5-6

You then, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus. <sup>2</sup> And the things you have heard me say in the presence of many witnesses entrust to reliable men who will also be qualified to teach others. 2 Timothy 2:1-2