

February 12, 2023

FINISHING WELL

"GUARD THE GOSPEL"
John Greene | Senior Pastor

2 TIMOTHY 1:13-14 (ESV), "Hold on to the pattern of wholesome teaching you learned from me...Through the power of the Holy Spirit who lives within us, carefully **GUARD THE PRECIOUS TRUTH** (the gospel) **THAT HAS BEEN ENTRUSTED TO YOU.**"

INSIGHT: Pastoral succession is a relay race that must be finished well.

INSIGHT: My effectiveness as a leader would be determined not by what our church had accomplished, but how well I stepped down and passed the leadership baton.

I. PASTORAL SUCCESSION IS LIKE A RELAY RACE.

II. PAUL'S SENSE OF TIMING

- a. Paul is imprisoned, and though imprisoned several times, Rome is different.
- b. Paul realized his circle of influence was shrinking.

TRUTH: Paul sensed the thrust of his ministry was diminishing and that the time had arrived to pass his mantle to another, more influential servant.

- c. Paul was growing older.
- d. Paul's missionary trips and hardships had worn him down.

INSIGHT: I'm growing older and don't have quite the energy for new projects I once had.

III. TIMOTHY WAS READY TO RECEIVE THE BATON OF LEADERSHIP.

LOVING ADMONITION: Be on guard against holding to the past.

INSIGHT: We are in a God-appointed time of intentional transition of leadership.

TRUTH: I am preaching this message and have planned next Sunday's with one end: that my time has a definite ending and Todd's has a definite beginning.

IV. PASSING LEADERSHIP ASSUMES RECOGNIZED GIFTING.

TRUTH: Todd Core has been gifted of God to teach the Word and organize and lead God's people.

TRUTH: There are good teachers and pastors in Lufkin, but there's no better communicator of God's Word than Todd Core.

ADMONITION: Keep the main thing the main thing.

V. GUARD THE GOSPEL (2 Timothy 1:13-14).

PASTORAL TRUTH: Your goal is to carry the baton of the gospel across the finish line.

INSIGHT: There are three internal attacks in every church:

- 2 Tim. 2:17-18, false teaching – confront it.
- 1 Cor. 5, flagrant immorality – put a light on it.
- Titus 3:10, continual divisiveness – confront it, resolve it, or kick it out.