

A Biblical Guide to 10 Spiritual Legacy Conversations

From 2 Timothy 1:5, 3:10, 14

1:5 I am reminded of your sincere faith, which first lived in your grandmother Lois and in your mother Eunice and, I am persuaded, now lives in you also. 6 For this reason I remind you to fan into flame the gift of God, which is in you through the laying on of my hands.... 3:10, 14 You, Timothy, know all about my teaching, and how I live, and what my purpose in life is. You know about my faith, my patience, my love, and my endurance. You know how much persecution and suffering I have endured...[and how] the Lord rescued me from all of it...Continue in what you have learned and have become convinced of, because you know those from whom you learned it.”

In Paul's letter to Timothy, his young apprentice and “son in the faith,” Paul mentions 10 important things that Timothy knows full well about Paul's own life and faith journey. How many of these things have we talked about with our children / parents? Below is a guide to 10 spiritual legacy conversations. Enjoy!

1. MY TEACHING (Core Beliefs/Convictions). Beyond a basic Sunday School knowledge of God, we tend to adopt certain life-wisdom and teachings that deeply shape us. These core convictions/beliefs are the things we also tend to share with others. Let's chat about core your beliefs.

Conversation Questions: What Christian teachings do you value most? Which words of Jesus come to mind? What teachings shape your daily life most? Any favorite Bible verses? Which verse would you want on

your tombstone? Are there any specific faith or Bible issues, controversies, or curiosities that have occupied your mind a lot? (e.g., evolution, other religions, politics, heaven & hell, etc.) What would your dying, last words of faith advice be to your kids / grandkids if you had only minutes to live?

2. MY WAY OF LIFE (Conduct). Most of what we pass down to others is “caught” rather than “taught.” We may preach one thing but its how we live that reveals our true character and rubs off on our kids most.

Conversation Questions: How have you tried to live out your faith in your everyday life? Where have you done a decent job? Where have you struggled and would like to improve? How has your faith shaped your approach to money? marriage? parenting? work? friendships? sexuality? hobbies? political views? What do you think other people say about your lifestyle and conduct behind your back? What personal advice would you give a younger person trying to live a Christ-centered way of life? Challenge: Is there an area of your life where you've lacked integrity? If so, confess your shortcomings to your children, and let them know you are sorry and want to do better.

3. MY PURPOSE (Unique Calling). We all long to answer the question “What on earth am I here for?” Some of us clearly know our God-given purpose, and others maybe only have a faint sense. I've heard it said, “Your divine purpose is to be found where your greatest passion and gifts intersect with the world's greatest needs.” Let's chat about life purpose.

Conversation Questions: What things in life bring you the most joy? What could you do for hours without getting tired of it? What are you most passionate about? What gifts and abilities has God given you? How have you tried to use them in your life? Do you know your God-given purpose? If so, what? What does it look like for you to employ this passion and purpose in God's service? At your funeral, what would you hope people would say about what you spent your life doing?

4. MY FAITH (Personal Relationship with God). Living faith requires moving beyond God as a concept or idea, to having a personal relationship with Him. Let's chat about personal faith.

Conversation Questions: When is your earliest memory of faith in God? When and how did you first begin to believe/trust in God? Was there a particular moment or was it a longer process? How do you personally relate to and connect with God? (Prayer? Scripture reading? serving others?) Describe the character and heart of God in your own words? If Jesus suddenly showed up in the flesh with us right now, what words might he speak to you based on your current life circumstances?

5. MY PATIENCE. Yep, it is certainly a virtue! No wonder the famous “Love Poem” in 1 Corinthians 13 begins with it: “Love is patient, love is kind...” Let’s talk about patience.

Conversation Questions: What has tested your patience most in life? Parenting? Career? Relationships? How have you handled things when they don’t go according to plan? Do you expect others to learn in 10 weeks or months something it took you over 10 years to learn?

6. MY LOVE. Jesus summed up the entire Christian life as learning to “Love God with all your heart, soul, mind and strength” and to “Love your neighbor as yourself.” Christlike love is the greatest legacy we can pass down or live up to. Let’s talk about love.

Conversation Questions: How do you try to express your love for Christ? For friends and family? For your neighbors? How well do you love the more difficult people in your life? How good are you at receiving love from others? from God? How do you keep loving someone when you don’t “feel like it”? When they’ve hurt you? If the best way to discover what we truly love is to look at where we spend the bulk of our time and money, what are your *true* loves?

7. MY ENDURANCE. I love Eugene Peterson’s book on discipleship just for its title alone: *A Long Obedience in the Same Direction: Discipleship in an Instant Society*. Many of the fruits of faith grow only through enduring hard times when it would seem much easier to give up. “Do not become weary of doing good; for at the proper time you will reap a harvest *if* you do not give up” (Gal. 6:9).

Conversation Questions: How long do you hang in there when you feel like giving up? Do you tend to quit things when they get difficult? Or do you press on through it? When were you tempted to quit but didn’t? Is there a time when you did quit something and later regretted it? Share

some experiences of quitting or nearly quitting — both positive and negative.

8. MY PERSECUTIONS (Hardships due to your faith). Jesus promises his followers not success and endless blessings, but rather a life of suffering for his namesake. His invitation is “If you would like to be my followers, you must first deny yourselves, take up your cross and follow me.” What has it cost you (if anything) to be a Christian?

Conversation Questions: Where/when have you been persecuted for the sake of being a Christian? How might your life be different in terms of suffering if you were not a Christian? Are there times when you probably should have taken a stand for Christ but you were too afraid and didn’t?

9. MY SUFFERINGS (Common struggles). C.S. Lewis wrote, “God whispers to us in our pleasures, speaks in our conscience, but shouts in our pain: it is His megaphone to rouse a deaf world.” The sufferings of life can strengthen us and also crush us. Let’s talk about our faith has been tested by times of suffering.

Conversation Questions: What times of suffering have you experienced in your life? (e.g., illnesses, loss of job, death of loved one, financial struggles). Which has been the hardest? How did you handle it? What helped bring you through it? How has your faith been tested by difficult times? If you could go back, would you avoid it? Or have your sufferings made you stronger — the person you are today? Explain. How have/might you help others who are suffering through the lessons you learned in your own?

10. MY DELIVERANCE. The story of the Bible is the story of endless instances of God stepping into history — into the messes of our lives — and delivering us from it. Let’s talk about deliverance.

Conversation Questions: How has God intervened in your life? What specific circumstances has God delivered you from? What forms did that deliverance take? Have there been times when God did not answer your prayers for help? How have you handled that? How has God brought good out of bad situations? How has God redeemed your poor decisions?