



## September Sermon Series: White Noise: Hearing God Through the Clutter Today's Sermon #2: The White Noise That Builds Legacy

### Getting the Nod

Video: **I Believe**

**What do you believe? In order to ask that question... I have to ask us, "What voices are we listening to? What white noise have we decided to listen to that cancels out the other noise we are choosing not to listen to? More importantly, what are the white noises and the voices that our children are listening to... and what legacy are we leaving with them?"**

**Illustration of Sir Nicholas Winton:** Sir Nicholas Winton was a stockbroker in 1938 when Hitler's troops began to march into Czechoslovakia. **In his gut he knew that something evil was underfoot.** He quit his job as a stockbroker and began to charter trains, raise money, and transport Jewish children out of Nazi occupied Czechoslovakia and Poland. Because of him, 699 Jewish children escaped what would have been imminent death in Nazi prison camps. Vera Gissing, one of the 699 children who escaped remarked, "He did not only save 699, he saved a generation. We have had children and grandchildren. Because of him, there are about 7,000 of us alive." (SOURCE: from a sermon by Jay Winters, sermoncentral.com, "What Kind of Legacy Will You Leave", 6/29/08)

**Transition:** Sir Nicholas Winton listened to the voice in his heart about the dangers that were coming. We can't avoid white noise... but we can choose what noise to listen to! **And that goes for our families also!!!**

**There's a story in the New Testament that reveals a family who faced unbelievable white noise from the world and how they overcame it to mold a young man into a powerful history-maker. He ended up being the Apostle Paul's right-hand man. His name was Timothy.**

### God's Take

NKJV | 2 Timothy 1:1-7 Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, according to the promise of life which is in Christ Jesus, 2 To Timothy, a beloved son: Grace, mercy, and peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Lord. 3 I thank God, whom I serve with a pure conscience, as my forefathers did, as without ceasing I remember you in my prayers night and day, 4 greatly desiring to see you, being mindful of your tears, that I may be filled with joy, 5 when I call to remembrance the genuine faith that is in you, which dwelt first in your grandmother Lois and your mother Eunice, and I am persuaded is in you also. 6 Therefore I remind you to stir up the gift of God which is in you through the laying on of my hands. 7 For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind.

Let's look at all the negative white noise that surrounded Timothy and his family...

### Timothy's Destructive White Noise:

1. **An anti-Christian community.**

- Timothy's hometown of Lystra. Paul had been to Lystra three years earlier on his first missionary journey. While there, things got really ugly really fast when a group of jealous Jews showed up.
- NLT | Ac 14:19-20 **Then some Jews arrived from Antioch and Iconium and won the crowds to their side. They stoned Paul and dragged him out of town, thinking he was dead.**
- **Application:** And just like Lystra, we have some in our community that would love for churches to fight and close. We're blessed to be in a community where there are a lot of believers, but the presence of heroin tells us we are not alone!!! There are drug dealers who would love nothing more than to see Christian kids turn away from their Bibles and youth to experiment with their product. There are voices that minimize Christianity. And there are hounding temptations from the enemy to draw our children away from purity and into promiscuity.

## 2. A disconnected father.

- It does not seem that Timothy's father was a Christian. He is never referred to by name and is called "The Greek" and is not named by Paul as someone who was influential in Timothy's Christian training.
- NLT | Ac 16:1 **Paul went first to Derbe and then to Lystra, where there was a young disciple named Timothy. His mother was a Jewish believer, but his father was a Greek.**
- **Application: This is powerful reality of my own childhood!!** There are numerous **single parents** trying so hard to raise their children right and lack the support of a former spouse. And there are **parents driving their children to church and leaving the disconnected partner back at home.** Or maybe you're the **grandparent** who is now raising the children because there is no one taking responsibility for the souls of these precious kids that you love. It's tough doing it alone or without spiritual help.

## 3. A murderous emperor.

- The first missionary trip of Paul to Lystra was at a time of Roman rule with Claudius. **In 49AD he banished the Jews from Rome and several persecutions of the Christians took place, including the persecution that murdered the Apostle James.**
- The second time Paul visits Lystra, the time of this second letter to Timothy, **Nero was emperor of Rome... and he was a cruel tyrant.** To show you how cruel he was, 10 years later in 64AD, much of Rome burned and he was proven in history to be guilty of it... but he falsely charged the result of the fire on the Christians.
- **Application:** Timothy was being raised in a confusing and terrifying time. There are nations where Christians are being hunted down, imprisoned, and persecuted and murdered!! We've all seen what corruption can do to the political environment of a country. God is at work all around us... but there is a murderous war going on around the world.

## 4. A persecuted church.

- According to Easton's Bible Dictionary, **Nero sent out a decree** that Christians not only started the fire... but were haters of the human race and a vast multitude was convicted.

- He would go on to murder, torture, and treat Christians morbidly. (Tie them to a stake in his garden, set them on fire for night lights and urinate on them.)
- **Application:** While we may not live in a country where an emperor is torturing Christians, **Christian faith is still under attack especially among our teens and young adults.**
- Go to a **secular college campus for orientation day** and see the different clubs and organizations that are vying for their membership. There's the **atheist society** that boasts freedom without god, and the **humanist's society** that claims that mankind is god.
- **Jail Ministry Testimony:** This last Wednesday the ladies in our Jail Ministry were sharing the Good News when a woman asked, "How can I be saved?" She then told them **she had been an atheist, but knew she needed God's salvation in her life!!! PTL!**
- There are clubs that encourage our kids to explore their sexuality, to question your upbringing, to rebel against authority. **College professors target Christians**, attempting to embarrass and belittle them until they break, calling Christianity out-of-date, repressive and dangerous.
- The deception and danger is clearly present all around us. Like Paul concerned for Timothy, we might wonder about our kids how are they ever going to make it, hold onto their Christian faith?

**Transition:** All of these realities are examples of white noise that cloud the minds of every day people... and create a battle in the minds of our kids. **But how did Timothy turn out so well... despite the threats and noise of a broken and corrupt world? Let's look at the positive and more profound white noise in Timothy's life...**

## Our Response

### WHAT WILL YOUR LEGACY BE?

I visited the home of Elvis in Graceland, Tennessee. After so many years after his death, I was amazed at the crowds of people that take the tour and listen to his life's story. The sad thing is, the story will never change, because he has lived his life and what he has achieved, whether good or bad, will be told over and over again for all eternity. **But the book of our lives hasn't been finished and we can write our own ending. We can finish well and impact our children and grandchildren's lives!**

### The White Noise That Builds Legacy:

#### 1. A spiritual hero.

- Timothy had already met Paul three years before this letter was written. He watched him as Paul stood toe-to-toe with his persecutors. He watched as Paul's passion kept him on the road... reaching out to a lost world... starting churches... training and equipping others to do what he was doing! And Paul was pouring into Timothy's life...
- **3 I thank God, whom I serve with a pure conscience, as my forefathers did, as without ceasing I remember you in my prayers night and day, 4 greatly desiring to see you, being mindful of your tears, that I may be filled with joy...**
- We all need spiritual heroes!! Especially the children. They need to see us emulating and respecting someone that is doing faith right. No one is perfect, but heroes are around. And most of all... we need to be those heroes in training!

## 2. The genuine faith of family.

- Lois and Eunice were authentic believers. Trustworthy; loving; bold; spiritual, and genuine.
- The Greek word for “genuine” is **“an-noo-pok-ree-tos”** and it means sincere and undisguised, and without hypocrisy. What a description! It is a 24/7 faith.
- **5 when I call to remembrance the genuine faith that is in you, which dwelt first in your grandmother Lois and your mother Eunice, and I am persuaded is in you also.**
- God honors genuine and authentic faith! It does not return void!!!

## 3. An encouraging and protective church.

- Timothy got to see his Mom’s church in action. It happened in 50 AD when Paul was stoned and left for dead. He was to everyone considered dead. So, when the believers of Lystra who loved Paul surrounded him and was praying... notice the powerful lesson that they all learned... **Look at the answered prayers!!!!**
- NLT | Ac 14:20 **But as the believers gathered around him, he got up and went back into the town. The next day he left with Barnabas for Derbe.**
- Timothy and the Lystra Church got to see answered prayer and **the power of God’s resurrection!** In the context of the church... Timothy was amazed at God’s work in his church.

## 4. The Word of God.

- **Paul tells Timothy in 2 Timothy 3:14-15** **But you must continue in the things which you have learned and been assured of, knowing from whom you have learned them, 15 and that from childhood you have known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.**
- **There’s one word that brings our legacy all together – Scripture.** The Scriptures reveal the truth of who we are and **who our God is**. The Scriptures do not paint an unrealistic picture of humanity but recognizes the depth of our **sin and its effects on us and our world**.
- Scripture **provides answers to the pain, suffering, disappointment and death** that we see in the world around us.
- Scripture **acknowledges the guilt** and conviction that we feel when we do something that it not God’s will for us.
- The Scriptures show us a God who is personally **interested in your peace**.
- The Scriptures **show us Christ Jesus who pursued us...** came to earth for no other reason than for you – to live perfectly in your place – **to take sin’s punishment** in your place.
- **Jesus has risen from the dead** for you to demonstrate that the God we trust in for our salvation can absolutely deliver on what he has promised to us.
- **These are the timeless truths of God’s Word that do not shift according to the latest fads or trends.** God has chosen to have these truths written down so that we could clearly know what is right and wrong, good and dangerous.
- Can there be any greater legacy to leave than one that demonstrates the importance of the Scriptures in our lives and those of our children?

- As fervently as we rearrange our schedules to watch a football game, we strive even more to make time to be at worship, Bible study, Sunday school and student ministry? **That the usefulness of Scripture.**

**Transition: Let me close with one of my favorite stories of legacy...**

### **Taking It Home**

**Legacy of Lois Pasteur:** Louis Pasteur, the pioneer of immunology, lived at a time when thousands of people died each year of rabies. Pasteur had worked for years on a vaccine. Just as he was about to begin experimenting on himself, a 9-year-old, Joseph Meister, was bitten by a rabid dog. The boy's mother begged Pasteur to experiment on her son. Pasteur injected Joseph for ten days--and the boy lived.

Decades later, of all the things Pasteur could have had etched on his headstone, he asked for three words: JOSEPH MEISTER LIVED.

Our greatest legacy will be those who live eternally because of our efforts. (Source: Leadership Journal)