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12:9-21; Galatians 5:19-25; 2 Peter 1:5-10). We have truth behind our religion—our offering worship and service to God (Colossians 3:17). We have truth behind our hope of eternal life—the greatest hope for those in this mortal world (1 John 5:13).

We must be very cautious of taking liberties with the rules. It is a well known fact that any group or organization that is based on rules must maintain the rules or their will be no group. From one generation's leaning comes another generation's leaving. Consider Deuteronomy 4:1-3, 9-10, 23-27. We must remember our covenant with God (the New). We must not add to, or take away from His word. We must not become apathetic to Him or His authority. Truth must be held up as absolute and unchangeable (James 1:17-18) in this generation if we hope for the next to do the same.

### **The Importance of Edification**

It is a constant struggle to hold on to the ones who have already obeyed. The allure of sin takes some (1 John 2:15-17). Failure to prioritize their life takes many away (Matthew 6:25-33). So many are putting the temporal in front of the spiritual and eternal (Luke 8:7, 14). Others in the pursuit of more, more, more get swallowed up (1 Timothy 6:6-12). The philosophies of men take souls away (Colossians 2:8). This happens because some place more credibility in men than in God (Galatians 1:6).

Sadly, failures on the part of brethren drive some out as well. There is a reason for passages such as: Romans 12:10, "*Be kindly affectionate to one another with brotherly love, in honor giving preference to one another*". Ephesians 4:32, "*And be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God in Christ forgave you.*" 1 John 4:11, "*Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another.*" We need to be looking out for the "needs" of our brethren in order to stir up "*love and good works*" not strife (Hebrews 10:24-25). We are to be strengthening and reinforcing our brethren; working together to achieve for all (Ephesians 4:11-16). There are occasions of needed help for other's success (Galatians 6:1-3). On this difficult path we need help, and need to help others (Hebrews 3:12-14)

### **The Importance of Passing the Torch**

The future of this congregation's concern for truth is in our hands. We are responsible to instill the basis of faith in the hearts of the next generation (Deuteronomy 6:1-9). Let's consider what

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not to do from Judges 2:7-13. Joseph and his generation let the word stifle, but his generation let the word spread. We must "*know the Lord*". The hope of our knowledge and zeal taught today must be passed on. We also know that our examples speak to the world continues into future generations. We must pass the torch today.

One great example of passing the torch is Lois, Grandmother and Mother. We are grateful that her faithfulness had come through the past generations. Lois taught Eunice, who taught Timothy (2 Timothy 1:5). Even through adversity they remained faithful. Timothy's father was not a disciple of Christ, but he was a pupil of him from Acts 16:1. Think of the work accomplished in his lifetime of serving Christ. This is due to the fact that one person can influence many. We must see the future generations go with us. We must pass the torch either.

### **Conclusion:**

If the Lord wills, we will continue to grow and worship God as part of our lives. We must strive to maintain the line of truth. We must strengthen our brethren and pass the torch of faith on to generations to come.

The hope of this congregation is in the hands of those who depend a lot on you and me. We are grateful that we were told of future captivity of his generation. It would not happen in his day (2 Timothy 2:9). We can be satisfied to say, "As long as the truth is not our problem". There are many who will echo our faithfulness forward for generations to come. We are willing to do the work. We must pass the torch to our heirs so they can do the same. ~ts

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