

## Be Faithful!

**Text:** 2 Timothy 3:10-17

### Introduction:

1. This chapter: Paul warns Timothy of the coming apostasy of the last days (Vs.1-9), cites his own example as a contrast to the apostates (Vs. 10-13) and then exhorts him to live a life distinct from the apostates in conformity to the Scriptures (Vs. 14-17).
2. This lesson: Timothy is challenged to 'continue', to be faithful. Paul will encourage Timothy with his own example (Vs. 10-12), exhort him to also be faithful (Vs. 14-15) and then equip him for a life of faithfulness (Vs. 16-17).

### I. The Example of Faithfulness (Vs. 10-13)

#### A. Paul's Catalogue (Vs. 10-11)

1. "But thou" = Timothy's life stands in sharp contrast to the apostates described in the previous verses
2. "fully known" = to follow, have understanding. To follow along, to follow closely. Describes the relation of a disciple to his master – study at close quarter, follow in spirit, note with a view to reproducing (Key).
3. Paul gives a graphic sketch of his ministry calling with 9 terms. Timothy's intimate knowledge of Paul, his father and mentor in the Gospel ministry, would serve to spur him on to stay faithful.
  - a. Doctrine = teaching, system of truth (i.e. the Gospel, truths contained in Epistles)
  - b. Manner of life = conduct, the way one leads one's life, the guiding principles of one's life
  - c. Purpose = the goal and aim of Paul's life (i.e. to fulfil God's calling upon his life)
  - d. Faith = his personal faith in God. Paul was a man of great faith and thereby enjoyed a great measure of God's power upon his life and ministry
  - e. Longsuffering = patient forbearance
  - f. Charity = Christian love (e.g. for God and others)
  - g. Patience = bearing up under the load, perseverance amid trying circumstances
  - h. Persecutions = to be pursued like a hunter would its prey. Note they are plural in number.
  - i. Afflictions = sufferings

#### B. Paul's Conclusion (Vs. 12-13)

1. Persecution is a guaranteed experience for the separated, consecrated believer (Vs. 12)

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- a. “will live godly” = ‘will’ means willing, desiring or determining. Those pursuing a godly life will encounter opposition!
  - b. “shall suffer persecution” = an guaranteed experience. Persecution comes in many forms and in varying degrees but a godly Christian will face some form of persecution for his walk with Christ.
  - c. Luke 6:22 *“Blessed are ye, when men shall hate you, and when they shall separate you from their company, and shall reproach you, and cast out your name as evil, for the Son of man's sake.”*
  - d. John 15:18-19 *“If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you. If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you.”*
  - e. 1 John 3:13 *“Marvel not, my brethren, if the world hate you.”*
  - f. Note: The reason many believers do not experience persecution is that they are too much like the world with little to no quest after a godly life. “The world cannot hate us, we are too much like its own” (Jim Elliot) Luke 6:26 *“Woe unto you, when all men shall speak well of you! for so did their fathers to the false prophets.”*
2. The ungodly will continue to degenerate into further depths of depravity (Vs. 13)
    - a. ‘seducers’ = deceivers, jugglers, magicians
    - b. “wax worse and worse” = to increase, make progress. Evil does not improve with time, it gets worse!
    - c. “deceiving and being deceived” = the deceiver becomes the deceived! Their sin becomes their punishment. They encounter the law of sowing and reaping. In the process of embarking on a course of deceiving others, they themselves loose themselves from the moorings of truth and become captives to the treacherous currents of falsehood that abound in a lost world.

## II. The Exhortation to Faithfulness (Vs. 14-15)

Timothy is to be faithful to two key things:

### A. To His Schooling (Vs. 14)

1. “but...thou” = Timothy is exhorted to live a life distinct from the evil men described in previous verse (Vs. 13) as well as Vs. 1-9.
2. ‘continue’ = to abide (translated ‘abide’ 61 times in N.T.), to remain
3. “in the things” = the truths of God’s Word
  - a. The things he had been taught – “thou hast learned” The things taught him by the Apostle Paul (Vs. 10) and his mother and grandmother (Vs. 15; 1:5)
  - b. The things of which he had assurance – “assured of”

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- c. The things he knew came from a credible source – “knowing of whom thou hast learned them” There are any number of people who will want to try and teach you their pet heresies so make sure you consider whether they are a reliable and godly source of instruction. 1 Cor. 4:15-16 *“For though ye have ten thousand instructors in Christ, yet have ye not many fathers: for in Christ Jesus I have begotten you through the gospel. Wherefore I beseech you, be ye followers of me.”*

### B. To the Scriptures (Vs. 15)

1. The time of his instruction – “from a child” A *brephos*, a newborn child, an infant, a babe.
2. The content of his instruction – “the holy Scriptures”
  - a. ‘holy’ = set apart for God. Distinct from the writings of man.
  - b. “Scriptures” = letter, writing
3. The aim of his instruction – “to make thee wise unto salvation”
  - a. This reveals the grand purpose and design of Holy Scripture, to lead lost sinners to salvation.
  - b. “through faith which is in Christ Jesus” = faith is the channel through which this salvation is received (Eph. 2:8-9). Jesus Christ, His Person and Work, are the focal point of Scripture. John 5:39 *“Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me.”*

## III. The Equipping for Faithfulness (Vs. 16-17)

The same Scriptures to which Timothy is to be faithful (Vs. 15) will also provide him with the spiritual resources to be faithful. “After exhorting Timothy to hold fast to the sacred Scriptures, he now proceeds to describe them.” (Wuest)

### A. The Source of the Scriptures (Vs. 16a)

1. “All Scripture” = the scope of inspiration. Inspiration extends to every part of the Bible. This refutes the idea that the Bible merely “contains” the Word of God, implying some of it is not.
2. “is given by inspiration of God” = comes from one compound Greek word, *θεοπνευστος*, made up of ‘God’ (*theos*) and ‘blow’ or ‘wind’ (*pneo*). So, it means “God-breathed”. See also 2 Peter 1:21. ‘moved’ means to be born or carried along (‘driven’ in Acts 27:17)
  - a. The Scriptures are precious as they reveal the mind of the Eternal God to us.
  - b. Albert Barnes: “Let us, then, study and prize the Bible. It is a holy and a safe guide. It has conducted millions along the dark and dangerous way of life, and has never led one astray. The human mind, in its investigations of truth, has never gone beyond its teachings; nor has man ever advanced into a region so bright

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that its light has become dim, or where it has not thrown its beams of glory on still far distant objects.”

### B. The Service of the Scriptures (Vs. 16b)

The Divinely inspired Scriptures are profitable for four functions:

1. Doctrine = teaching
  - a. Doctrine is important! This is the first use of the Scriptures listed. This is totally reverse priority to the modern user-friendly church that would have us set aside doctrine in the name of “unity”.
  - b. Our doctrine is to come entirely from the Scriptures. It is the sole authority for faith and practice. It is not Scripture plus tradition but Sola Scriptura (Scripture alone!).
2. Reproof = to convict, convince, tell a fault, rebuke. Means to refute error, to show that a certain teaching or action is wrong. Sin and error must be dealt with in a direct and plain manner (Cloud). Note ‘reprove’ and ‘rebuke’ are at the top of the list in 4:2.
3. Correction = to straighten up again, to rectify, to set wrong things right (Cloud). “Restoration to an upright or right state, setting right.” (Wuest)
  - a. The Word of God corrects our course
  - b. Illustration: An airplane or ship must be kept on course by continually comparing the present course with the fixed compass and stars and by making continual readjustments. Even a slight deviation off course can have disastrous results in the long term.
  - c. Note: There is such violent opposition to any form of correction today largely due to the “positive only” mantra that has permeated our politically correct society and seeped subtly yet definitely into the hearts and minds of God’s people within the church.
4. Instruction = lit. “child training” and includes discipline, training and education. Word translated ‘nurture’ (Eph. 6:4) and ‘chastening’ (Heb. 12:5,7,8, 11). God’s Word shapes and molds the whole man.

### C. The Sufficiency of the Scriptures (Vs. 17)

1. ‘that’ = the end/goal of these various functions of Scripture
2. ‘perfect’ = complete, brought to maturity
3. “thoroughly furnished” = to completely outfit, fully furnish, fully equip or supply. We have all we need in the Living Word (Col. 2:9-10) and the written Word. No need for tradition or extra biblical revelations.
4. “all good works” = the Word of God sufficient to for every form of Christian service and ministry

**Conclusion:** It’s not how we start but how we finish. Will we be found faithful to God and His Word at the end of our race? Are we staying faithful to the truth or are we allowing ourselves to drift with the currents of this world?