

## 2 Timothy

### I. Introduction

- A. **2 Timothy 3:10-17** . . . Now you followed my teaching, conduct, purpose, faith, patience, love, perseverance, [11] persecutions, and sufferings, such as happened to me at Antioch, at Iconium and at Lystra; what persecutions I endured, and out of them all the Lord rescued me! [12] Indeed, all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will be persecuted. [13] But evil men and impostors will proceed from bad to worse, deceiving and being deceived. [14] You, however, continue in the things you have learned and become convinced of, knowing from whom you have learned them, [15] and that from childhood you have known the sacred writings which are able to give you the wisdom that leads to salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. [16] All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness; [17] so that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work.
- B. We've spent the last four teaching times talking about the difficulties that will come in the last days. Last week we concluded that part of **2 Timothy 3** by talking about the ungodly, self-serving leaders and teachers who infiltrate the church and take advantage of the immature, naive, and emotionally needy Christians for their own personal gain. Today we are going to look at (1) the cost of being a godly leader in the church, (2) being rescued by God in the midst of persecution and suffering, (3) the cost of being a **godly** Christian in the world, (4) how to stay on the narrow path in spite of ungodliness in the church, and (5) the importance of God's word in all of this.
- C. Prayer

### II. God and His word will guide and transform us through difficult times

- A. [10] Now you followed my teaching, conduct, purpose, faith, patience, love, perseverance, [11] persecutions, and sufferings, such as happened to me at Antioch, at Iconium and at Lystra . . .
1. Leaders and teachers who wish to be godly can learn much about godly leadership and teaching from those who have gone before and those who are with us. Paul was Timothy's godly example, and he continues to be an example of godly leadership and teaching to all who read about him and read what he wrote.

- a. Yet he is not the only one. God has given us a number of godly examples, if we will look for them, observe their lives, give serious thought to their teaching, and learn from their wisdom.
  - b. The Bible presents us with examples, such as Noah, Abraham, Joseph, Moses, Joshua, Job, God's prophets, the godly kings of Israel, Jesus, and the disciples – whose lives we can read about and whose teaching we can study.
  - c. In addition, we have church history, biographies, and current, living examples. We also have books and Bible study tools – such as commentaries and transcribed sermons that have been left for us by godly leaders and teachers.
  - d. These resources are available to guide us into being godly leaders, teachers, and everyday Christians.
2. Apparently Timothy took advantage of Paul's example, for the scripture says he learned how to be a godly leader and teacher by observing Paul's teaching, conduct, purpose, faith, patience, love, perseverance, persecutions, and sufferings.
- a. As for teaching, Timothy not only learned what to teach, but the reasons for teaching it – which are just as important as knowing what to teach.
  - b. He learned a way of life, and the purposes and goals for living that way. This too, is important, because a leader's and teacher's way of life not only adds credibility and authentication to his message, it provides an observable demonstration of how to live the message in practical ways.
  - c. By observing Paul's ministry experiences, Timothy saw the necessity for faith in God – a faith that leads you to place your life, your well-being, your ministry, and those you serve in God's hands – trusting Him to work in and through you for His good and His kingdom and His glory.
  - d. Timothy learned the value and ways of patience, love, and perseverance – qualities that are especially needed when dealing with Christians who have issues, hurts, and fears that have to be overcome in order for them to live according to God's will and word.
  - e. And Timothy learned that persecution and suffering are a real and often unavoidable part of serving God and living a godly life.
3. Are you hungry to learn from the godly believers who have gone before or are still with us? After the writer of Hebrews wrote a chapter about the godly and faithful men and women who served

- and suffered for God's sake (**Heb. 11**), he began **chapter 12** with these words, "Therefore, since we have so great a cloud of witnesses surrounding us (*those who lived and served and suffered for God's sake*), let us (*learn from them and be motivated by their example to*) lay aside every encumbrance and the sin which so easily entangles us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us."
4. May we, whether a church leader, teacher, or attendee – may we thoughtfully observe the lives of godly Christians who have gone before, and those who are living today, in order to learn about godly living from their example, their teaching, and their writing.

B. **[11b]** what persecutions I endured, and **out of them all the Lord rescued me!**

1. If you are like me, the first question you ask after reading this statement is, "What did God rescue Paul from?"
  - a. Obviously, God did not rescue him from the suffering part of the persecutions; nor from the Jews who followed him around in order to thwart his ministry; nor from the false teachers coming into the churches and luring Christians away from the truth of the gospel; nor from being imprisoned by Caesar.
  - b. This is supported by Paul's own words: **2 Corinthians 11:24-28**, "Five times I received from the Jews thirty-nine lashes. [25] Three times I was beaten with rods, once I was stoned, three times I was shipwrecked, a night and a day I have spent in the deep. [26] I have been on frequent journeys, in dangers from rivers, dangers from robbers, dangers from my countrymen, dangers from the Gentiles, dangers in the city, dangers in the wilderness, dangers on the sea, dangers among false brethren; [27] I have been in labor and hardship, through many sleepless nights, in hunger and thirst, often without food, in cold and exposure. [28] Apart from such external things, there is the daily pressure on me of concern for all the churches.
2. So **why** and **how** could Paul say God rescued him out of them all?
  - a. Paul said this because God rescued him from the things that mattered most to him, and such things should matter most to us, too.
  - b. For example, in the face of all that Paul suffered for the ministry's sake, God rescued him from being tempted beyond what he could bear – so that he was never forced to jeopardize his faith in God, relationship with God, and calling from God.

- c. God rescued him from being mentally and emotionally crushed, from feeling sorry for himself, and from the despair that often motivates a person to abandon the work God called them to do.
  - d. God rescued him from discouragement after being abandoned and forsaken.
  - e. And God rescued him from pride – with the thorn in his flesh – just to name a few of the important things God rescued Paul from.
3. What is it you want God to rescue you from when you encounter trials and tribulation, or when you are suffering?
- a. We are prone to want relief from the pain and suffering.
  - b. Yet the godly, God-trusting person wants God’s glory, the advancement of God’s kingdom, stronger faith and greater perseverance, continued spiritual growth, and to remain within the boundaries of godliness so as not to back off, give way to unbelief, and resort to selfish and sinful solutions. In other words, the godly, God-trusting person wants the outcome of **James 1:2-4**.
- C. And it is exceedingly wise to want the outcome of **James 1:2-4**, because [vs 12] all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will be persecuted.
- 1. However, we live in a country that protects religious freedom. And though it looks probable that a day is coming when godly Christians in the USA will be persecuted, it isn’t happening yet.
  - 2. But we do face the kind of daily challenges, trials, and difficulties that can push a weaker Christian toward distrust of God, ungodly choices, and sinful behavior.
  - 3. Therefore, the question I have for all of us is: “Will we live godly in Christ Jesus when experiencing more common instances of injustice, mistreatment, discrimination, dishonest business practices, being taken advantage of, forced to endure unresolved conflict, being misrepresented or maligned, or simply having to put up with the selfish and irrational ways of those around us? Will we?”
  - 4. If we won’t, then it is highly unlikely we will remain faithful when persecuted.
- D. As stated in vs 1, life in the world and in the church is going to get worse, not better. Here in vs 13 we get this same message, “But evil men and impostors will proceed from bad to worse, deceiving and being deceived.” In other words, unbelievers’ and mediocre Christians will

progressively increase their rejection of biblically based godliness and the amount of evil they practice. But there is a way us to avoid being part of this downward slide.

- E. [14] You, however, continue in the things you have learned and become convinced of, knowing from whom you have learned them . . .
1. Another way to say this is, “Live up to what you know and have found to be true, knowing that the one who taught you has lives what he teaches.”
  2. You can be taught that God is real, His word is true, and His ways work. But to be convinced of these things, most of us need to substantiate what we know by living according to what we know.
  3. The reality is, in the Christian life, we begin with learning information. We go from learning information to becoming convinced of it is true by putting it into practice and working it out in real life.
  4. For example, you can know **Philippians 4:6-7**. But you cannot begin to experience the peace of God that surpasses human understanding until you stop the anxiety, turn away from the fear, cry out to God, and patiently wait for Him to bring good out of the difficult situation you are facing.
  5. However, we are more likely to go from learning to application if the ones who teach us are living according to what they are teaching.
- F. [15] and that from childhood you have known the sacred writings which are able to give you the wisdom that leads to salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.
1. The primary point here is that it is the word of God – through the help of the Holy Spirit and godly teachers – that teaches us how to love, how to pray, how to think, how to speak, what we ought and ought not desire, how to deal with fear, how to deal with people, how to raise children, how to resolve conflict, how to be humble and meek – especially in the face of people who want to take advantage of us, how to see and handle money, how to be a godly business person, how to treat employees, how to deal with employers – including bad employers, how to do our job, how to operate the church...and I could go on. But you get the point.
- G. [16] All Scripture is inspired by God (*God-breathed*) and [all Scripture is] profitable (*it produces a beneficial result*) for teaching, for reproof, for

correction, for training in righteousness; [17] so that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work.

1. All Scripture is inspired by God – not some parts – not just the parts you understand or can explain, not just the parts that science supports, and not just the parts that fit your theology. All scripture.
2. And all scripture is profitable, that is, it produces beneficial results.
  - a. Profitable for **teaching**: God’s word provides the basis and truths necessary for teachers to teach believers how to know God, how to understand God and His word, and how to apply God’s word in practical ways to the various areas of life.
  - b. Profitable for **reproof**: Scripture sets the standard for love and godliness, and shows the ways and means of becoming godly. This provides an unbiased, unchanging basis for reproving those who are acting in foolish, immature, selfish, and sinful ways.
  - c. Profitable for **correction**: Reproof reveals the wrong. Correction points the wayward person in the right direction, and gives them the means to begin and continue doing what is right and good.
  - d. Profitable for **training in righteousness**: A godly life requires prolonged training just as much as becoming an Olympic champion requires prolonged training. Scripture shows us the how and why for training that will produce the winning results.
3. [17] so that the man [and woman] of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work.
  - a. To be adequate is to be equal to the task. To be equipped is to be sufficiently supplied with whatever is needed to do the task.
  - b. Therefore, when the Christian man or woman is willing to be taught by the word of God, reproved by the word of God, corrected by the word of God, and trained in righteousness according to the word of God, then that Christian will be, or be becoming, adequate and equipped to live a godly life and serve the church in a godly, God-honoring manner.
  - c. Therefore, the foundation, the immovable anchor, the reliable, and the ultimate source of knowledge for living the Christian life and serving God, is the inspired scriptures.

### III. Conclusion

- A. May we, like newborn babies, long for the pure, uncompromised truth of God’s word, so that by it we may grow into godly people who are able to proclaim the excellencies, the wisdom, and the truths of Him who called us out of darkness into His marvelous light.

