

2 Timothy – Chapter 3

Paul's Last Message

Context

- It was the year 64 AD and Rome had just burned down - to which Nero blamed Christians for
- Due to this, Nero went on a rampage with the Roman army capturing and murdering a number of Christians
- Paul, was one of the people caught by the Romans and quickly imprisoned - taken to Mamertine Prison most historians believe
- So Paul, in prison, which will end up being where he is led to martyrdom, writes this last letter - he is later beheaded.
- Thus, this is the last letter written by Paul...he could write something to almost anyone...and he chooses to write it to Timothy - who was currently in Ephesus

Who was Timothy?

- Timothy was from Lystra and would seem to have grown up “knowing the scriptures”
 - 2 Tim. 3:16 - “...that from childhood you have known the Holy Scriptures”
- Scripture tells us he was imprisoned with Paul a number of times (Philemon 1, Phil. 1:1, Col. 1:1)
- He ministered at a number of churches:
 - Berea - Acts 17:14
 - Thessalonica - 1 Thes. 3:1
 - Philippi - Phil 2:19
 - Corinth - 1 Cor. 4:17
- He is the person Paul left to shepherd and minister at Ephesus
- Someone that Paul dearly loved

Recap on Chapters 1 & 2

Chapter 1:

Paul opens with a list of First (of his last) Encouragements:

- 1) Keep your fire kindled for the Lord
- 2) Do not forget what God has given you - a spirit of power, love and self control
- 3) Do not be ashamed the Gospel
- 4) Guard and protect the Gospel - be intentional and diligent
- 5) Follow Jesus, and His Word

Chapter 2:

- Exhortations:
 - Pursue God thru His Word
 - Grab hold of God's promises, claim them, and believe them
 - Serve God with all your heart
 - Die to yourself and live for Christ
- Encouragements:
 - God's Word is full of life changing truth
 - The Lord will give you an understanding if you seek it
 - The Lord is faithful
 - His grace is sufficient

— 2 Timothy Chapter 3:1-5

¹ But understand this, that in the last days there will come times of difficulty. ² For people will be lovers of self, lovers of money, proud, arrogant, abusive, disobedient to their parents, ungrateful, unholy, ³ heartless, unappeasable, slanderous, without self-control, brutal, not loving good, ⁴ treacherous, reckless, swollen with conceit, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God, ⁵ having the appearance of godliness, but denying its power...

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- These were challenging times of persecution
- Timothy was also having a hard time in Ephesus - remember Paul encouraged him to "fan the flame" and to "not be ashamed"
- If we look at all of these strong admonishments was Timothy beginning to compromise the gospel?

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- Paul provides a list of dangerous qualities
- 18 different descriptors
- But perhaps the most dangerous description is how they are described in verse 5

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- Despite all of these sinful attributes that have the appearance of godliness
- NET translates this verse as:
 - *"They will maintain the outward appearance of religion but will have repudiated its power"*
- A wolf in sheep's clothing

— 2 Timothy Chapter 3:6-9

...Avoid such people. ⁶For among them are those who creep into households and capture weak women, burdened with sins and led astray by various passions, ⁷always learning and never able to arrive at a knowledge of the truth. ⁸Just as Jannes and Jambres opposed Moses, so these men also oppose the truth, men corrupted in mind and disqualified regarding the faith. ⁹But they will not get very far, for their folly will be plain to all, as was that of those two men.

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- False teachers “creep” in
- NIV says “worm their way in”
- Will entice weak minded people and lead them away with various passions

2 Timothy Chapter 3:6-9

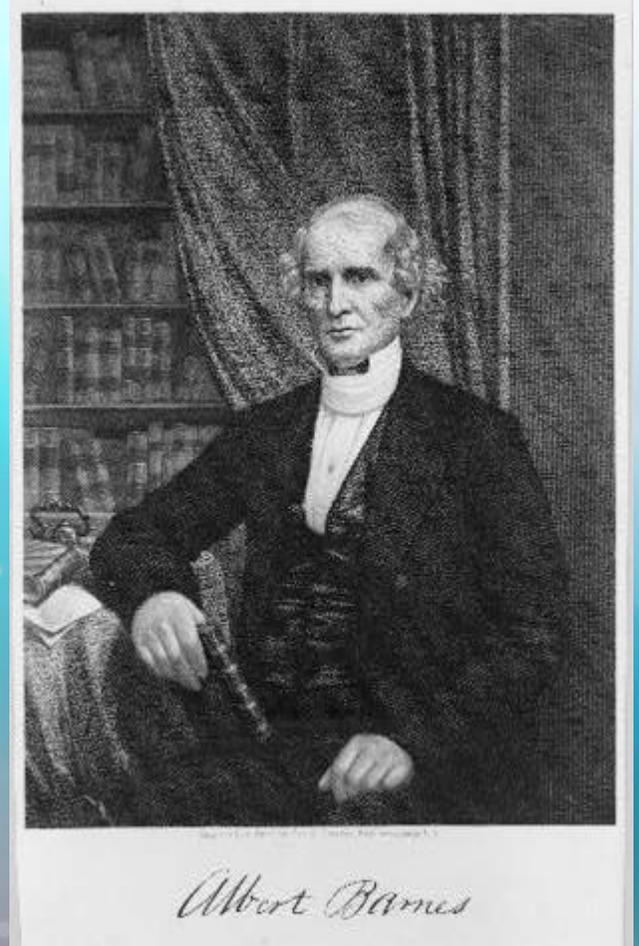
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- Always learning but never moving forward
- Head knowledge not spiritual knowledge
- Are we pursuing intellectual knowledge or actual spiritual pursuit?
- Albert Barnes might have said it best...

2 Timothy Chapter 3:6-9

"Many obtain much speculative acquaintance with the "doctrines" of Christianity, but never become savingly acquainted with the system; many study the constitution and government of the church, but remain strangers to practical piety; many become familiar with the various philosophical theories of religion, but never become truly acquainted with what religion is; and many embrace visionary theories, who never show that they are influenced by the spirit of the gospel. Nothing is more common than for persons to be very busy and active in religion, and even to "learn" many things about it, who still remain strangers to the saving power of the gospel."

- Albert Barnes



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- Most commentators believe these are the magicians or sorcerers described in Exodus chapter 7
- Perhaps passed down through oral tradition
- Regardless, Timothy must have known about whom Paul was speaking – given just as an example

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- An example of teachers who oppose truth
- And are of corrupted mind
- Disqualified (reprobate in KJV) - *adokimos*
 - Castaway, unapproved, rejected, worthless
 - Reprobate: unprincipled

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- They won't get very far and their folly will be plain to see
- Plain (ESV) / manifest (NKJV) / Clear (NIV) / obvious (NASB)
 - *Ekdelos* - wholly evident, manifest
 - Only time this word is used in scripture
- How do we recognize false teachers?
- By holding them against what God's Word says - "Against the mirror of Scripture" - Paul Tripp
- The counterfeit bill example

2 Timothy Chapter 3:6-9

- Counterfeit bill example
- How do we recognize a counterfeit bill?
- Who can recognize this one?



— 2 Timothy Chapter 3:10-11

10 You, however, have followed my teaching, my conduct, my aim in life, my faith, my patience, my love, my steadfastness, **11** my persecutions and sufferings that happened to me at Antioch, at Iconium, and at Lystra—which persecutions I endured; yet from them all the Lord rescued me.

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- Paul provides a dramatic contrast to false teachers
- “But you...” (NKJV)

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<u>Follow Paul's Example of...</u>	<u>What was Timothy Following</u>
• My teaching	• The Gospel
• My conduct	• To be more like Christ - Jesus' example
• My aim in life	• To live is Christ and die is gain
• My faith	• That Jesus died for our sins
• My patience	• God answers prayer in 3 ways: yes, no and wait - patience is a fruit of the spirit
• My love	• Love for the lost, as Paul desires those to be follow and be with Jesus
• My steadfastness	• To not give up while promoting the Gospel
• My persecutions and sufferings	• The Gospel is offensive to those who are perishing

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"Be imitators of me just as I also imitate Christ"

1 Corinthians 11:1

— 2 Timothy Chapter 3:12-15

12 Indeed, all who desire to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted, **13** while evil people and impostors will go on from bad to worse, deceiving and being deceived. **14** But as for you, continue in what you have learned and have firmly believed, knowing from whom you learned it **15** and how from childhood you have been acquainted with the sacred writings, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus.

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- A reminder to us (and to Timothy) that persecution is to be expected
- Persecution was all around Timothy right now
- Paul himself was being persecuted as he wrote this

2 Timothy Chapter 3:12-15

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- The world will only go from bad to worse
- And it is ever changing

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- We must continue to hold fast to the Gospel, and God's Word
- Continue: *meno*
 - Abide, continue, dwell

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- How Timothy needs to be continually reminded...someone who sat under Paul, lead a number of churches, and has been "acquainted" with scripture since he was young
- "Sacred writings make you wise"
- Being in God's Word
- A good reminder for us

— 2 Timothy Chapter 3:16-17

16 All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, **17** that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work.

2 Timothy Chapter 3:16-17

16 All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, **17** that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work.

- And if we are in God's Word let's not forget what we have
- The world is ever changing but God's Word is....from God!
- Breathed (ESV, NIV) / Given by the inspiration of (NKJV): *theopneustos*
 - *Theos*: God, godly
 - *Pneo*: to breathe
- All scripture - not some

2 Timothy Chapter 3:16-17

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- Profitable for:
 - Teaching: training, understanding
 - Reproof: rebuke, reprimand
 - Correction: "getting right"
 - Training: staying right

2 Timothy Chapter 3:16-17

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- Complete (perfect KJV): *arteos*
 - Complete or perfect
- Equipped: *exartizo*
 - To equip fully, accomplish, to finish out
- A reminder that we have all we need to “finish things out” - God’s word
- Also a reminder that our pursuit of holiness is if found in our pursuit of God’s Word

Application

Key Items:

- These are days of difficulty
- Verses 1-9 - Avoid false teachers and hold fast to God's Word
 - those who desire head knowledge but not spiritual
 - Remember, they will try to creep in like a worm
 - The world is ever changing...along with what is in it.
 - God does not change, He is the same yesterday, today, and tomorrow
- Verses 10-15 - be Christ imitators and pursue God and His Word
 - Paul gives us an example of how to live HOWEVER that example is based on Jesus - our true example
 - Abide in Christ and His Word.
- Verses 16-17 - the power of God's Word
 - God's Word will continue to equip us
 - Helps us: "Get right, stay right and be right"