

IMITATE

ME

A RESEARCH GUIDE

COMPILED BY

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Imitate Me

A Study Guide

*First published by Peter Foxwell, The Cornerstone Church,
www.FamousGod.com 2023*

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First edition

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Foreword

Introduction to the Research Guide

Welcome, and thank you for using the *Imitate Me* Research Guide. Before getting started, please take a moment to read this brief introduction.

An essential part of my sermon preparation is research. I consult various resources for information and insights into the biblical passage or topic. I used a notebook for years to write what I found, but recently, I've used the Notes app on my computer and other devices, which makes my research notes easy to share with you.

Introduction to the Imitate Me Series

Find and Follow Jesus

I have one primary objective whenever I preach and teach: I want to help people find and follow Jesus.

- *Finding* Jesus is about receiving spiritual birth and receiving eternal, abundant, spiritual life from Jesus through faith.
- *Following* Jesus is about a Spirit-filled lifestyle based on learning and applying his teachings by faith.

Following Jesus is the overflow of finding Jesus. It's the result of the spiritual life we received when the Holy Spirit joined us to the living, reigning Jesus. He is in us, working new life in and through us. First, we receive the gospel; then, we grow in the fruit of the gospel. First, we're saved, then we're sanctified.

The *Imitate Me* sermon and small group teaching series is about following Jesus. The series is designed to help you grow your Jesus-centered lifestyle by faith; it's a path to sanctification, spiritual growth, and Christlike maturity.

Spiritual growth is a complex process. On the one hand, it depends on the Holy Spirit's work and copious amounts of empowering grace. In this respect, it's about growing deeper into our union with Jesus. On the other hand, spiritual growth is about learning, applying, and working on the necessary decisions, changes, and efforts we must contribute. In other words, spiritual growth requires divine-human cooperation. We're dependent *and* active in the process.

Why Spiritual Growth?

You may be wondering why we should be concerned about spiritual growth. Does it really matter all that much? Here are some of the reasons I believe we need a sermon and small group teaching series on spiritual growth:

- The New Testament is filled with life-changing applications of the gospel, presumably, so we will adopt those teachings and grow spiritually.
- Christians by definition follow Jesus, which implies committing to him and adopting his teachings (Matthew 16:24, Mark 8:34, Luke 9:23, John 10:27).

- The Holy Spirit is at work in us to 1) desire to be like Christ, 2) work on becoming like Christ, and 3) live consecrated (devoted) to Jesus (Romans 8:1-11; 2 Corinthians 3:17-18; Galatians 5:22).
- We are joined to Jesus so we can die to sin and live to God and righteousness (Romans 6:1-13).
- Following the teachings of Jesus is like building a house on a rock. It provides stability through the storms of life (Matthew 7:24-27).
- The way of Jesus is the most beautiful way to live.
- Healthy things tend to grow. Unhealthy things tend to wither and die.
- Loving Jesus involves obeying Jesus (John 14:15-24).
- One component of the Great Commission is teaching people to obey Jesus (Matthew 28:18-20).
- We are saved when we repent and believe the gospel. Repentance is a change of mind leading to a change of belief, direction, and devotion. We turn from self and sin to Jesus Christ as our God, Lord, and Savior. A changed life is logical and inevitable (Mark 1:14-15; Acts 2:38; 20:21; Revelation 2:5).
- False disciples claim to follow Jesus but they don't obey his teachings (Matthew 7:15-23).
- Maturity in Christ was the apostle Paul's stated goal for the churches (Ephesians 4:11-16; Colossians 1:28-29).
- Living like an unconverted non-believer indicates that you *are* an unconverted non-believer (Ephesians 4:17ff.).

The Goal of Spiritual Growth

The goal of spiritual growth and maturity is conformity to the character and conduct of Jesus. We're aiming to become like Christ. Christ-likeness is both inward and outward; it includes our inner beliefs, attitudes, desires, *and* our outward actions and behavior.

Colossians 1:28–29 (ESV) Him we proclaim, warning everyone and teaching everyone with all wisdom, that we may present everyone mature in Christ. 29 For this I toil, struggling with all his energy that he powerfully works within me.

Ephesians 4:20–24 (ESV) But that is not the way you learned Christ!— 21 assuming that you have heard about him and were taught in him, as the truth is in Jesus, 22 to put off your old self, which belongs to your former manner of life and is corrupt through deceitful desires, 23 and to be renewed in the spirit of your minds, 24 and to put on the new self, created after the likeness of God in true righteousness and holiness.

Ephesians 4:13–15 (ESV) ... until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ, 14 so that we may no longer be children, tossed to and fro by the waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by human cunning, by craftiness in deceitful schemes. 15 Rather, speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in every way into him who is the head,

into Christ,

Christ-likeness is a high bar; honestly, this side of the Lord's return it's not fully attainable. However, it's God's will that every Jesus-follower and every church aims to grow closer to it.

Conformity to Christ is the goal, but how do we get there? What is the process we should adopt? What is the path we should follow?

A Path to Christ-likeness

One path to Christ-likeness is described in 2 Timothy 3:10-11, the passage on which the *Imitate Me* series is based. The passage spells out eight characteristics of a mature Jesus-follower, all of which were adopted by Timothy as he followed Paul's example.

The apostle Paul wrote to Timothy, who was ministering in the church at Ephesus:

2 Timothy 3:10-11 (ESV) 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.

Paul noted that his protege, Timothy, had walked the growth path by imitating Paul's life and ministry. Timothy had watched and adopted his mentor's example of apostolic doctrine, integrity, purpose, faith, social intelligence, love, and courage.

Paul intentionally set himself as the role model of Christian life and ministry. He indicates this in several other New

Testament letters, for example:

Philippians 3:17 (ESV) Brothers, join in imitating me, and keep your eyes on those who walk according to the example you have in us.

This begs the question: Who was Paul's mentor? Whose model was Paul following? It was the Lord Jesus himself:

1 Corinthians 11:1-2 (ESV) Be imitators of me, as I am of Christ. 2 Now I commend you because you remember me in everything and maintain the traditions even as I delivered them to you.

Summing Up the Imitate Me Series

Let's sum up the *Imitate Me* sermon and small group series:

- Conforming our lives to the character and conduct of Christ is the goal.
- Spiritual growth and maturity are the means.
- Adopting specific beliefs and behaviors by imitating a mentor is the path.

Introduction to 2 Timothy

2 Timothy is a letter from the apostle Paul to Timothy. It was written from Rome around AD 64-67. The NIV Zondervan Study Bible's introduction to the letter states:

As Paul writes 2 Timothy, he knows his time of “departure is near” (4:6). He is “chained like a criminal” (2:9) and undergoing trial, the outcome of which could be “the lion’s mouth” (4:17). He was evidently arrested a second time by Roman authorities (under Nero, who reigned AD 54-68) and writes or dictates 2 Timothy from jail. He has been accused of a crime punishable by death. Yet he is confident that “the Lord will rescue [him]” and “bring [him] safely to [God’s] heavenly kingdom” (4:18). His physical circumstances seem hopeless, but he has not lost spiritual hope.

The primary purpose of 2 Timothy is to urge Timothy to continue to minister boldly in Ephesus despite opposition from false teachers in the church. The NIV Zondervan Study Bible’s introductory notes are helpful here:

Paul is concerned for the integrity of the gospel message in an adverse age (1:14; 3:14; 4:2) and writes to reinforce Timothy’s commitment to it.

Paul steels Timothy for his duties by appealing to God’s grace, Christ’s enabling, his (Paul’s) own example, and the enemy’s folly. What Paul tells Timothy, Timothy must pass on to the people of the Ephesian church (2:2,14).

The final chapter dignifies Timothy in his trials by

issuing an ennobling charge to persevere for the sake of his eventual crown of righteousness as a gospel servant (4:1-8).

Robert Yarbrough comments on Timothy's preparation for his difficult assignment:

Timothy has spent years of preparation, not in a monastery, but in public life as a servant of the gospel while under Paul's direct or indirect influence. He does not need to learn a new language, at least in the short term. Moreover, he is grounded in the same Scriptures from which Jesus taught and to which Paul constantly appeals. Both of these factors and more should buoy Timothy with hope, even though "evildoers and imposters will go from bad to worse" (v. 13). Whatever his feelings of inadequacy, Timothy has the equipping he needs.

Yarbrough, Robert W.. *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*

The following outline of the letter illustrates Paul's concern for Timothy's courage and commitment to Christ and the gospel despite difficulties and opposition. This outline is adapted from the NLT Illustrated Study Bible's notes:

- 1:1-4: Introductory remarks
- 1:5-18: Charge to be faithful
- 2:1-13: Charge to be strong and endure suffering

- 2:14-26: Dealing with opposition
- 3:1-4:8: Charge in light of the last days - what to do as a faithful minister
- 4:9-22: Paul's final words

John MacArthur's Introduction to 2 Timothy

MacArthur's introduction is worth reading in its entirety (www.gty.org/library/sermons-library/55-1/motivating-a-spiritual-son). Here is an edited excerpt:

And he writes to Timothy because Timothy is the key to carrying on the work. So, what he is doing in second Timothy is passing the torch, passing the baton, passing the mantle – as it were – of the prophet. Paul at this particular time is in his upper 60s, maybe 66 or 67 years of age, and having spent his life is now ready to go to be with the Lord, having accomplished all that God wanted him to accomplish.

Timothy is in his upper 30s, maybe 36 or 37, and carries the brunt of responsibility for ministry and extending the kingdom in the next generation. Timothy is his child in the faith – his protégé, his student, his disciple, and Timothy faces tough times: persecution, hostility, animosity, resentment to the message, resistance to the truth, and it will not be easy.

We believe that at the time of the writing of this, Timothy is still in Ephesus. He's been there three to five years ... trying to set that church right. It's been a very, very difficult time. But Paul wants to be sure Timothy carries on the work.

Can I give you a little insight into great men of God? They have a sense of mission that expands beyond their own life. They are not driven by ambition; they are driven by mission. They are not driven by their own sense of success or their own need to attain; they are consumed by the bigger picture. And it was far more important to Paul that the work go on than that his life go on.

The whole epistle is basically instruction to Timothy for how Timothy is to carry on the mission, the work, the mandate, the Kingdom ministry. It's clear. It's direct. It is demanding exhortation. It calls for the best that Timothy or any other man or woman of God has to offer... He is concerned about Timothy. He knows him well; he knows his strengths; he knows his weaknesses, and there are hints in this epistle that Timothy was at a weak point in his life.

It could all be summed up in chapter 2 verse 1. "You therefore, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus." What a statement. Timothy, be strong. Could it be that he was in danger of being weak? I think Paul assumes that possibility... (Timothy) is

apparently vacillating to some degree and weakening under the pressure of all that's going on around him, and Paul writes to him to infuse strength into him to carry on the Kingdom work.

Using this Research Guide

I suggest that you use this guide to preview and review each sermon; use it to prepare for church and use it to go deeper after church. Also, take the research guide to your small group and use it as a resource in your discussions.

The research guide is packed full of information, so don't be overwhelmed by the mountain of ideas. Instead, only read enough to get the insights you need to understand the meaning and implications of the passage.

Thanks for reading this introduction. God bless you on your journey to spiritual growth and maturity.

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Chapter 1

Week 1: Find a Mentor

2 Timothy 3:10 (ESV) You, however, have followed my ...

Overview of Chapter 1

The chapter is organized into three sections:

1. Introductory Insights
2. Commentaries
3. Applications

Introductory Insights

The Power of Spiritual Role Models

As many of you know, I first turned to Jesus Christ as God and Savior when I was a student at university. After the initial glow of encountering Jesus wore off, I began to flounder. I didn't know much about the Christian faith, and I didn't know how to live a Christian life. I felt the tug of my old life, drawing me away from Jesus.

Then, along came two guys named Andy and Phil. They were part of a campus ministry called Cru, and I met with them once or twice a week for a whole school year. They helped me find my feet as a Christian. They taught me the basics of the faith. I eagerly consumed their lessons on God, salvation, spiritual growth, and so on. They even taught me how to share my faith with other students.

I am what I am today, mainly because of Andy and Phil. Because of their example, I went from being an aimless, half-hearted baby believer to a fully committed disciple of Jesus. I became spiritually hungry and eager to share my faith with anyone willing to listen. I led Bible studies and helped organize an on-campus outreach project. I loved to worship God and even experienced God calling me into vocational ministry.

The Necessity of Spiritual Examples

My spiritual growth was assisted and accelerated by following my spiritual mentors and imitating their examples of godly life and ministry. My experience is borne out by 2 Timothy 3:10:

2 Timothy 3:10-11 (ESV) 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.

Paul commends Timothy when he writes, “You have followed.” The verb “to follow” is *parakoloutheō*, which means to follow closely, attend to, and conform to. George Knight III writes,

“Paul uses ... “followed” in a double sense here... it has the sense of “accompanying” or “being present at” events, e.g., persecutions and sufferings. But primarily, and more profoundly, Paul uses it in the sense of the “following” that takes place “with the mind” and that “understand” and “makes one’s own” that which one follows, as in 1 Timothy 4:16. In this sense, he refers to Timothy having followed his teaching, etc.”

The idea is that we imitate what we know because we’ve paid close attention. We’ve spent enough time with a spiritual mentor to follow their example. Therefore, every Jesus-follower should consider finding one or more mentors for their life and ministry. N.R. Johnson comments on the need for spiritual mentors:

When I use the term “Christian mentor” I mean someone who is spiritually further along than I am, who is willing to walk through the process of discipleship with me—who will keep me focused on

Jesus Christ as they encourage, press, and challenge me in my spiritual walk so that I may grow in my understanding of the Word of God, deepen in my relationship with Jesus Christ, practically build my life around Him, and experience a Christianity that actually works.

You see this in the life of Jesus as he poured His life into the 12 apostles or in Paul as he discipled Timothy and Silas. The focus for both Jesus and Paul was not merely to spend time with an individual—but to have discipleship—creating the lifelong hunger to grow and become more like Christ and to also disciple others who in turn would disciple others.

www.deeperchristian.com/29-2/

John MacArthur comments on the need for a spiritual mentor

If a person is to be a strong soldier of the faith, there are three things that are usually true about them. Number one, they have a strong example as a mentor. Strong men tend to be the producers of other strong men...

And let me say just in a general sense before we look specifically at the passage, I am absolutely convinced that this is a tremendously important point. We are all copiers, we are all mimics, we are all imitators. And who you pattern your life after is going to be who you

turn out to be in great measure. You are marked by your models...

That's why I tell young people all the time, it's so important whose ministry you sit under, what school you go to, particularly what seminary you go to because the people who influence your life will do that. They will mark you. They will mark you with their set of convictions, with their perceptions and perspectives.

www.gty.org/library/sermons-library/55-15/standing-against-apostasy-part-1

Translating the Text of 2 Timothy 3:10

- ESV: You, however, have followed my teaching, my conduct, my aim in life, my faith, my patience, my love, my steadfastness...
- Amplified: Now you have closely observed and diligently followed my teaching, conduct, purpose in life, faith, patience, love, steadfastness...
- Barclay: But you have been my disciple in my teaching, my training, my aim in life, my faith, my patience, my love, my endurance...
- KJV: But thou hast fully known my doctrine, manner of life, purpose, faith, longsuffering, charity, patience,
- Phillips: But you, Timothy, have known intimately both what I have taught and how I lived. My purpose and my

faith are no secrets to you. You saw my endurance and love and patience...

- Wuest: But as for you, you were attracted as a disciple to me because of my teaching, conduct, purpose, faith, longsuffering, divine and self-sacrificial love, patience
- Young's Literal: And thou — thou hast followed after my teaching, manner of life, purpose, faith, long-suffering, love, endurance,

The following translations try to express the meaning of “followed.”

- But you know from watching me (TLB)
- But as for you, you were attracted as a disciple to me because of my teaching (Wuest)
- you have observed and diligently followed (Amp)
- you carefully followed (NKJV)
- you have intimately known (WNT)
- But thou hast been thoroughly acquainted with (Darby)

CWSB Dictionary

παρακολουθέω parakolouthéō; from pará (G3844), near, and akolouthéō (G0190), to follow. To accompany side by side, follow closely, attend to carefully. In the NT:

(I) To accompany, to be done by someone (Mark 16:1... referring to those who did believe in the past).

(II) Metaphorically, to follow closely in mind, to investigate, search out or trace so as to attain knowledge of (Luke 1:3).

(III) To conform to... (1 Tim. 4:6; 2 Tim. 3:10).

The Context of 2 Timothy 3:10-11

2 Timothy 3:1-9 describes the environment in which Timothy ministered. Godless people opposed Christianity and faithful doctrine, which made leading the church in Ephesus difficult, even dangerous.

In *2 Timothy 3:10-17*, Paul urged Timothy to remain faithful to the true gospel and resist the enemies of the faith by relying on and teaching the Word of God. Timothy was already doing this by following Paul's teachings and lifestyle: *2 Timothy 3:14* (ESV) "But as for you, continue in what you have learned and have firmly believed, knowing from whom you learned it."

Commentaries

Notes from the TGC Commentary on 2 Timothy

3:10-17 Paul reminds Timothy of what he has done thus far (3:10). Then he urges him to "continue in what you have learned and have firmly believed (3:14). Put plainly, the apostle is unabashedly stating, "Don't

be associates with them. Instead, continue in your association with me and all who subscribe to ‘the sacred writings, which are able to make you wise for salvation’” (3:15)...

Paul is perfectly aware how people in general will behave between Christ’s first and second coming. But, in a sense, that is irrelevant, because thus far Paul has been marching to a different drummer. In rehearsing their history, Paul is urging Timothy to remember and remain in the pattern he has followed.

www.thegospelcoalition.org/commentary/2-timothy/#section-9

Notes from the New American Commentary on 2 Timothy

3:1-9: ... Paul’s description made it clear that Timothy was facing religious pretenders representative of the quacks and mythomaniacs that populated the ancient world.

3:10-17: Where could anyone find the strength and wisdom for resisting and overcoming such opposition? Two sources of help were 1) the sterling example Paul had demonstrated (vv. 10-13) and 2) the instruction of Scripture (vv. 14-17). Paul directed Timothy to consider and use the strength

each resource could provide.

3:10: Paul expressed active examples of his commitment in order to urge Timothy to resolute action. In v. 11 he used examples of his passive commitment in the face of persecution and affliction.

The verb “know” described Timothy as someone who had carefully traced out the events of Paul’s life. It “does not imply that Timothy has always been at the side of Paul but that he has observed that life with close interest.”

The verb is used in Luke 1:3 (“carefully investigated”) to describe Luke’s careful checking of the truthfulness of Christian traditions about Jesus. The knowledge Timothy had gained was not theoretical but practical (cf. 1 Tim 4:6, where “followed” is the same verb translated as “know”).

Notes from the Christ-Centered Exposition Commentary on 2 Timothy

Paul urges Timothy to continue following Jesus by doing two things: remembering the past (vv. 10-13) and focusing on the Scriptures (vv. 14-17).

In verses 10-13, Timothy reminded of Paul’s example.

The apostle's example was to be emulated in so far as he followed Christ (1 Cor 11:1).

Every leader should be able to say, "Follow me, as I follow Christ." This is Leadership 101. Leadership is not lordship. Peter said pastors should not be domineering but should set an example to the flock (1 Pet 5:3; cf. 2 Cor 1:24). Leadership is about following Jesus and inviting others to come along.

William Barclay on "Followed" - 2 Timothy 3:10

Barclay translates "followed" as "been a disciple."

Paul contrasts the conduct of Timothy, his loyal disciple, with the conduct of the heretics who were doing their utmost to wreck the Church.

The word we have translated "to be a disciple" includes so much that is beyond translation in any single English word. It is the Greek *parakolouthein* and literally means to follow alongside; but it is used with a magnificent width of meaning.

It means to follow a person *physically*, to stick by him through thick and thin. It means to follow a person *mentally*, to attend diligently to his teaching and fully to understand the meaning of what he says. It means to follow a person *spiritually*, not only to understand

what he says, but also to carry out his ideas and be the kind of person he wishes us to be.

Parakolouthein is indeed the word for the disciple, for it includes the unwavering loyalty of the true comrade, the full understanding of the true scholar and the complete obedience of the dedicated servant.

<https://bibleportal.com/commentary/section/william-barclay/the-duties-and-the-qualities-of-an-apostle-2-timothy-310-13-8521>

Robert Yarbrough on Timothy's Preparation

Timothy has spent years of preparation, not in a monastery, but in public life as a servant of the gospel while under Paul's direct or indirect influence. He does not need to learn a new language, at least in the short term. Moreover, he is grounded in the same Scriptures from which Jesus taught and to which Paul constantly appeals. Both of these factors and more should buoy Timothy with hope, even though "evildoers and imposters will go from bad to worse" (v. 13). Whatever his feelings of inadequacy, Timothy has the equipping he needs.

Yarbrough, Robert W.. The Letters to Timothy and Titus

John MacArthur on “Followed”

Let me talk a little about the word “followed.” It’s very important. It’s not just a simple word that means to follow in – in some generic sense. It’s a rich word that has some profound insight, *parakoloutheō* literally is to follow alongside. That’s simply its literal meaning. But as you see how it’s used in ancient times, it begins to open up in incredible ways. For example, the Stoic philosophers used the word as a technical term for the relationship between a disciple and his master, a student and his teacher.

A very close relationship was expressed in this term. You followed not from afar, not at a distance, but you followed in an intimate relationship as a – as a master and a disciple are connected. Some have translated it, for example, like this: “to study at close quarters,” or “to carefully note with a view to reproducing,” or “to take as an example.” So let’s – let’s take that middle meaning and read it this way, “But you carefully noted my life with a view to reproducing it.” That’s the essence of the word. You patterned after me. You began to think like I think, talk like I talk, walk like I walk, react like I react. You patterned your life after me.

Notes from John Stott in the Bible Speaks Today Commentary on 2 Timothy

Paul first reminds Timothy what he has been doing thus far: ‘you have observed’ or followed ‘my teaching’ (10). Then he exhorts him to continue in the same path: ‘continue in what you have learned’ (14).

So verses 10 to 13 describe Timothy’s *past* loyalty to the apostle, and verses 14 to 17 urge him to remain loyal in the *future*. The two main verbs sum up the gist of the paragraph: ‘you have *followed* me faithfully up till now (10); so then *continue* to do so (14)’.

Timothy’s position is explained in terms of a certain ‘following’ of Paul. The verb *parakoloutheō* can be used literally, of following a person as he goes somewhere and of walking in his footsteps. But it is not so used in the New Testament. Its figurative use can refer either to an intellectual following, much as we say to a person who is explaining something to us ‘I follow you’, or to a real commitment of mind and life as when we say of somebody ‘he’s a follower of So-and-so’.

... Paul seems to use the verb in the ... more committed sense in his letters to Timothy. In the first letter he has urged Timothy to nourish himself on ‘the good doctrine which you have followed’, that is, embraced.

So surely the verb has the same meaning here in the second letter.

Paul is reminding Timothy not simply that he has ‘fully known’ (AV) or ‘observed’ (RSV) his doctrine and conduct, as if he were merely an impartial student or a detached observer, but that he has become a dedicated disciple of the apostle’s.

No doubt he had begun by taking pains to grasp the meaning of Paul’s instruction. But then he went further. He made it his own, believed it, absorbed it, lived by it. Similarly, he doubtless began by watching the apostle’s manner of life, but then he went on to imitate it.

Because Paul knew himself as an apostle to be following Christ, he did not hesitate to invite others to follow himself: ‘Be imitators of me,’ he wrote, ‘as I am of Christ’ (1 Cor. 11:1; cf. 1 Thes. 1:6).

He even made himself the standard by which truth could be distinguished from falsehood: ‘Brethren, join in imitating me, and mark those who so live as you have an example in us’ (Phil. 3:17).

Thus, in both belief and practice, in ‘teaching’ and ‘conduct’ (10), Timothy became and remained Paul’s faithful follower. He had ‘followed step by step’ (NEB).

Notes from Calvin's Commentary on 2 Timothy

In order to urge Timothy, he employs this argument also, that he is not an ignorant and untaught soldier, because Paul carried him through a long course of training. Nor does he speak of doctrine only; for those things which he likewise enumerates add much weight, and he gives to us, in this sentence, a very lively picture of a good teacher, as one who does not, by words only, train and instruct his disciples, but, so to speak, opens his very breast to them, that they may know, that whatever he teaches, he teaches sincerely.

Notes from Precept Austin

The verb *parakoloutheo* pictures Timothy always at Paul's side, attending Paul wherever he went. Thayer adds that the verb means to "conform one's self to" so that, ultimately, a disciple becomes like his mentor.

Parakoloutheo was a technical term used by philosophers to describe the relationship of a disciple to his teacher (studying with him in close quarters, carefully noting his life with a view to reproducing, etc.).

Hall adds that: Since we are more easily led by precedents than by precepts, the apostle propounds

his own example for our imitation, wherein we have the lively pattern and portraiture of a faithful pastor, whose office it is not only to preach sound doctrine, but also to practice what he preacheth in his own life, that so he may be able to speak from the heart to the hearts of his people ...

Ray Pritchard discussing following godly leaders, points out that: This principle is based on the truth that we become like the people we associate with. If we follow the ungodly, we will become like the ungodly. If we follow the arrogant, we are likely to become arrogant. If we follow those who follow Jesus, we are more likely to become like Jesus ourselves. In this case, Paul uses himself as an example and says, in effect, "Follow me as I follow Christ."

These are the marks of the godly people we should follow:

They have nothing to hide. "You know my way of life."

They teach the truth. "You know my doctrine."

They practice what they preach. "You know my faith, my love, and my patience."

They aren't afraid of persecution. "You know my sufferings and my persecution." (2 Timothy 3: Perilous Times)

https://www.preceptaustin.org/2_timothy_310-11

Applications

Paul - A Life and Ministry Mentor

A significant component of Paul's ministry strategy was modeling the Christian faith and life. He provided an example of faithfully following Jesus. This approach is evident in several New Testament letters. For example:

- 1 Corinthians 10:31 - 11:2 (ESV) So, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God. 32 Give no offense to Jews or to Greeks or to the church of God, 33 just as I try to please everyone in everything I do, not seeking my own advantage, but that of many, that they may be saved. Be imitators of me, as I am of Christ. 2 Now I commend you because you remember me in everything and maintain the traditions even as I delivered them to you.
- 1 Corinthians 4:14-17 (ESV) I do not write these things to make you ashamed, but to admonish you as my beloved children. 15 For though you have countless guides in Christ, you do not have many fathers. For I became your father in Christ Jesus through the gospel. 16 I urge you, then, be imitators of me. 17 That is why I sent you Timothy, my beloved and faithful child in the Lord, to remind you of my ways in Christ, as I teach them everywhere in every church.
- Philippians 3:17 (ESV) Brothers, join in imitating me, and keep your eyes on those who walk according to the example

you have in us.

- Philippians 4:9 (ESV) What you have learned and received and heard and seen in me—practice these things, and the God of peace will be with you.
- 1 Thessalonians 1:5-7 (ESV) You know what kind of men we proved to be among you for your sake. 6 And you became imitators of us and of the Lord, for you received the word in much affliction, with the joy of the Holy Spirit, 7 so that you became an example to all the believers in Macedonia and in Achaia.
- 2 Thessalonians 3:7-9 (ESV) For you yourselves know how you ought to imitate us, because we were not idle when we were with you, 8 nor did we eat anyone's bread without paying for it, but with toil and labor we worked night and day, that we might not be a burden to any of you. 9 It was not because we do not have that right, but to give you in ourselves an example to imitate.
- 1 Timothy 4:11-12 (ESV) Command and teach these things. 12 Let no one despise you for your youth, but set the believers an example in speech, in conduct, in love, in faith, in purity.
- 2 Timothy 1:13 (ESV) Follow the pattern of the sound words that you have heard from me, in the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus.
- Titus 2:7-8 (ESV) 7 Show yourself in all respects to be a model of good works, and in your teaching show integrity, dignity, 8 and sound speech that cannot be condemned, so that an opponent may be put to shame, having nothing evil to say about us.

The ESV Study Bible notes on 1 Corinthians 4:16:

God has designed the Christian life so that much of one's progress comes through imitating other Christians, imperfect though they be.

Spiritual Growth by Imitation

The apostle Paul was not the only biblical author who urged his readers to follow examples of spiritual maturity:

- Hebrews 13:7-8 (ESV) 7 Remember your leaders, those who spoke to you the word of God. Consider the outcome of their way of life, and imitate their faith. 8 Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever.
- 1 Peter 5:1-3 (ESV) So I exhort the elders among you, as a fellow elder and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, as well as a partaker in the glory that is going to be revealed: 2 shepherd the flock of God that is among you, exercising oversight, not under compulsion, but willingly, as God would have you; not for shameful gain, but eagerly; 3 not domineering over those in your charge, but being examples to the flock.

Of course, the Lord Jesus is the prime example of godly life and ministry:

- Matthew 16:24 (ESV) Then Jesus told his disciples, "If

anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me.

- Matthew 20:25-28 (ESV) But Jesus called them to him and said, “You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great ones exercise authority over them. 26 It shall not be so among you. But whoever would be great among you must be your servant, 27 and whoever would be first among you must be your slave, 28 even as the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.”
- John 13:13-17 (ESV) You call me Teacher and Lord, and you are right, for so I am. 14 If I then, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another’s feet. 15 For I have given you an example, that you also should do just as I have done to you. 16 Truly, truly, I say to you, a servant is not greater than his master, nor is a messenger greater than the one who sent him. 17 If you know these things, blessed are you if you do them.
- Ephesians 5:1-2 (ESV) Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children. 2 And walk in love, as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us, a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God.
- Colossians 3:13 (ESV) ... forgiving each other; as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive.
- 1 Peter 2:21 (ESV) For to this you have been called, because Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example, so that you might follow in his steps.
- 1 John 2:5-6 (ESV) By this we may know that we are in him: 6 whoever says he abides in him ought to walk in the same way in which he walked.
- 1 John 3:16 (ESV) By this we know love, that he laid down

his life for us, and we ought to lay down our lives for the brothers.

The Concept of Examples

Mounce's Complete Expository Dictionary of Old and New Testament Words

The NT also uses this word - *typos* - to describe a theological pattern or example. In this sense Adam is a “pattern” of Christ, the one to come (Rom. 5:14), and the people and events of the OT are cited as “examples” to the Corinthians to spur them on to reject evil (1 Cor. 10:6). Paul applies this in a personal context for believers, writing that they are to follow his example (Phil. 3:17) and that he has acted in such a manner to be a “model” to believers in the church (2 Thess. 3:9). One of the roles of an elder is to be an “example” to his flock (1 Pet. 5:3), setting a pattern by doing what is good (Tit. 2:7) and not allowing anything else to interfere with his example (1 Tim. 4:12). In this way, people in the church must emulate the example of the elders by becoming examples themselves to others (1 Thess. 1:7).

Randy Alcorn on Spiritual Mentors

It's not surprising that Scripture calls upon us to imitate and follow the examples of Christ (1 Peter 2:21) and God the Father (Ephesians 5:1). It's more surprising that we are told to follow the examples of

the godly people around us, and to strive, by Christ's help, to be such examples ourselves

Alcorn continues: This is why it's vital that we become part of a Bible-believing local church. God has His faithful people everywhere, and by becoming actively involved in the local body of Christ we can get to know such people and learn from their examples in different areas—and hopefully, be examples ourselves. (Another way we can be inspired is by reading and discussing biographies of faithful believers, as well as the Christ-centered books others have written.)

The body of Christ needs to let its light shine before men, and we need models of every spiritual discipline ... Puritan William Bates wrote, "Precepts instruct us what things are our duty, but examples assure us that they are possible..."

<https://www.epm.org/blog/2019/May/17/follow-christ-examples#:~:text=“Be%20imitators%20of%20me,%20brothers,%20Do%20not%20neglect%20your%20gift>

Finding Life and Ministry Mentors

I was blessed to find my original life and ministry mentors, Andy and Phil. Since then, my life and ministry have been influenced by many others. I've never met most of them, but I've read their books, biographies, and blogs and watched their

videos. I've applied their teachings and examples to my life. I've learned (but don't practice perfectly) Christ-centered virtues such as courage, boldness, kindness, global awareness, mission mindset, love for God and the Bible, and so much more.

- My first pastor (who modeled deep reverence) was William Still.
- My first Christian author (who modeled precision) was John Stott.
- My foundational knowledge of the Bible, theology, and ministry practice was passed down to me by my seminary professors.
- My passion for global gospel outreach was gleaned from John Piper.
- Endurance through hardships was imprinted on me by Charles Simeon.
- Clarity and power in preaching came from Charles Spurgeon.
- A life of love, kindness, and conviction was modeled by Kim Foxwell

I could go on and on. I'm so grateful to God for leading me to exceptional mentors.

Our mentors can be anyone who is a step or two ahead of us in the journey, such as a parent, small group leader, Bible teacher, pastor, author, or friend.

N. R. Johnson comments on finding spiritual mentors:

Perhaps the greatest way I have been personally mentored is not so much through one-on-one relationships or conversations but through countless books, sermons, podcasts, articles, magazines, and online courses.

Over the years I have been personally mentored by Andrew Murray, Oswald Chambers, CT Studd, Hudson Taylor, Amy Carmichael, Samuel Brengle, AW Tozer, Charles Spurgeon, Ian Thomas, Corrie Ten Boom, and countless others—not by talking with them (and for note, they are all dead), but rather through their sermons, books, articles, and other resources.

Yes, meeting with someone is tremendously helpful, but God has used the individuals above—through their resources and life examples, to grow my faith and press me into Him—perhaps more than the one-on-one conversations and relationships.

Remember, while it is great to find a mentor, it is also an incredible opportunity to grow yourself if you mentor someone else. Find someone of the same gender—whether they are a new Christian or someone whose age is in the generation below you—and allow Jesus to use your life to point them to Himself and push them into His Word.

2

Chapter 2

Week 2: Pass the Faith Along

2 Timothy 3:10-11 (ESV) You, however, have followed my teaching ...

Overview of Chapter 2

The chapter is organized into three sections:

1. Introductory Insights
2. Commentaries
3. Applications

Introductory Insights

The Power of the Word to Pass the Faith Along

When I was a baby Christian, a friend gave me a copy of the New Testament. It had an indestructible naugahyde-like cover, and I could comfortably slide it into the back pocket of my jeans. I carried that little book everywhere as I read and re-read its God-breathed contents.

The Word of God slowly changed my heart, thinking, and lifestyle. As I read, I experienced a powerful spiritual transformation. After more than 40 years, I still have that Bible, and it's fun to leaf through it and find notes I took on sermons I heard in those early days of my Christian life.

The Bible is a powerful book. The Holy Spirit uses it to create and mature Christians.

2 Timothy 3:14-17 (ESV) 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. 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.

The Word first converts us to faith in Christ; then, it conforms us to the character and conduct of Christ. The Bible is our most potent and valuable tool for passing the faith along from one generation to the next and from those more established in the faith to those who are rookies in the faith. I'm grateful that my friend helped pass the faith along to me by giving me that

pocket-sized New Testament.

Translating “My Teaching”

Noun: διδασκαλία (didaskalia), 21x. didaskalia, like didachē, denotes “teaching” or “doctrine,” both the content and the act. Content is expressed in Mt. 15:9, when Jesus refers to the “teachings” of the Pharisees as “rules taught by people,” and in Col. 2:22, which mentions “commandments and teachings of people.” The act is expressed in the reference to the gift of “teaching” (Rom. 12:7) and of the elder who works hard at “preaching and teaching” (1 Tim. 5:17).

There is an important distinction in the NT between sound doctrine and false doctrine. The majority of occurrences of didaskalia are in the context of the doctrine of the church or “sound doctrine,” e.g., “sound doctrine, which conforms to the glorious gospel of the blessed God” (1 Tim. 1:10; also 1 Tim. 4:6, 13, 16; 5:17; 6,1; 2 Tim. 4:3; Tit. 2:7).

An additional example that parallels didaskalia and didachē is “the trustworthy teaching [didachē] as it has been taught . . . sound doctrine [didaskalia]” (Tit. 1:9).

Similarly, didaskalia refers to the OT in Rom. 15:4.

A different label for sound doctrine is “the doctrine of God” (Tit. 2:10). Paul also refers to these teachings as “his teaching” (2 Tim. 3:10).

In contrast, *didaskalia* can refer to false doctrines as in the aforementioned teachings of Pharisees (Mt. 15:9) and of “people” (Col. 2:22), as well as the negative “every wind of teaching” (Eph. 4:14).

Mounce’s Complete Expository Dictionary of Old and New Testament Words

The Greek Word for “teaching” is *didaskalia*. It refers to the content of Paul’s teaching, preaching, and instruction as an apostle of Jesus Christ.

- Amplified: Now you have closely observed and diligently followed my teaching...
- KJV: But thou hast fully known my doctrine...
- Barclay:
- Phillips: But you, Timothy, have known intimately both what I have taught...
- Wuest: But as for you, you were attracted as a disciple to me because of my teaching...
- Young’s Literal: And thou — thou hast followed after my teaching...

Paul Was a Teacher

The Lord Jesus Christ commissioned his apostles to preach the good news of the Kingdom.

Luke 9:1-2 (ESV) And he called the twelve together and gave them power and authority over all demons and to cure diseases, 2 and he sent them out to proclaim the kingdom of God and to heal.

The Lord Jesus also commissioned his apostles to teach disciples in every nation.

Matthew 28:18-20 (ESV) And Jesus came and said to them, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. 19 Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, 20 teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age."

Paul's apostolic mission was to preach the gospel where it was unknown and teach it to Christians to establish them in their faith. If there was a distinction in Paul's mind between preaching and teaching, it is very small. The ultimate goal of teaching is spiritual maturity or conformity to the character and conduct of Christ.

Colossians 1:28-29 (ESV) Him we proclaim, warning everyone and teaching everyone with all wisdom, that we may present everyone mature in Christ. 29 For this

I toil, struggling with all his energy that he powerfully works within me.

The gospel (the content of his preaching and teaching) was revealed to Paul by the Lord Jesus Christ.

Galatians 1:11-12 (ESV) For I would have you know, brothers, that the gospel that was preached by me is not man's gospel. 12 For I did not receive it from any man, nor was I taught it, but I received it through a revelation of Jesus Christ.

Paul had no other curriculum from which to teach.

Romans 15:18-21 (ESV) For I will not venture to speak of anything except what Christ has accomplished through me to bring the Gentiles to obedience—by word and deed, 19 by the power of signs and wonders, by the power of the Spirit of God—so that from Jerusalem and all the way around to Illyricum I have fulfilled the ministry of the gospel of Christ; 20 and thus I make it my ambition to preach the gospel, not where Christ has already been named, lest I build on someone else's foundation, 21 but as it is written, "Those who have never been told of him will see, and those who have never heard will understand."

When Paul said goodbye to the elders of the church in Ephesus, he reminded them that he had been a faithful teacher of the Christian faith in spite of intense opposition:

Acts 20:20-32 (ESV) ... how I did not shrink from declaring to you anything that was profitable, and teaching you in public and from house to house, 21 testifying both to Jews and to Greeks of repentance toward God and of faith in our Lord Jesus Christ.

... 24 But I do not account my life of any value nor as precious to myself, if only I may finish my course and the ministry that I received from the Lord Jesus, to testify to the gospel of the grace of God.

26 Therefore I testify to you this day that I am innocent of the blood of all, 27 for I did not shrink from declaring to you the whole counsel of God.

... 31 Therefore be alert, remembering that for three years I did not cease night or day to admonish every one with tears. 32 And now I commend you to God and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up and to give you the inheritance among all those who are sanctified.

Paul passed his teaching along to Timothy:

1 Timothy 4:6 (ESV) If you put these things before the brothers, you will be a good servant of Christ Jesus, being trained in the words of the faith and of the good doctrine that you have followed.

Alan J. Thompson in *The Gospel Coalition Commentary on Acts 20* writes:

First, Paul's own example has been one of comprehensive proclamation of God's Word in the midst of suffering (20:18–27). Framed by references to Paul not holding back (“I did not shrink,” 20:20, 27), Paul refers to his proclamation ministry as “declaring,” “teaching,” “testifying,” “proclaiming,” and “declaring” throughout these verses.

In doing so, Paul essentially says he has proclaimed everything (“anything” that was profitable, repentance and faith, “the gospel of the grace of God,” “the kingdom,” “the whole council of God”), to everyone (Jews and Greeks, and “to you”), everywhere he could (“in public and from house to house”).

All of this has been done in the midst of “tears” and “trials” with the prospect of more afflictions to come. Therefore, Paul, like Ezekiel, is a faithful watchman, discharging his duty faithfully and innocent of the blood of those who reject his message (see 18:6).

www.thegospelcoalition.org/commentary/acts/#section-42

What Was Paul's Teaching?

What was the content of Paul's teaching that Timothy followed? We don't have to look very hard to find examples of Paul's

preaching and teaching. The letter to the Romans is his masterwork, but each one of his letters is filled with teaching.

Paul placed ultimate value on the Scriptures, which in context were the books of the Old Testament. However, Paul's own writings were also considered to be Scripture; that is, the God-breathed Word of God, true and authoritative. Today, we consider all the books of the Bible (Old and New Testament) to be God's Word. The Bible is the content of our teaching.

2 Timothy 3:14-17 (ESV) 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. 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 Peter 3:15-16 (ESV) And count the patience of our Lord as salvation, just as our beloved brother Paul also wrote to you according to the wisdom given him, 16 as he does in all his letters when he speaks in them of these matters. There are some things in them that are hard to understand, which the ignorant and unstable twist to their own destruction, as they do the other Scriptures.

Robert Yarbrough comments on the content of Paul's teaching:

For today's reader, the Pastoral Epistles, along with Paul's other ten NT epistles, convey the breadth and depth of this body of conviction, richly informed by divine revelation (see, e.g., Rom 16:25– 26; Gal 1:11– 12; Eph 3:3– 6).

For Timothy, our two known Pauline letters to him certainly epitomize that teaching.

Yarbrough, Robert W.. The Letters to Timothy and Titus,

Pass the Faith Along by Teaching the Bible

1 and 2 Timothy reveal the necessity of Bible teaching in the church's mission. We teach to pass the faith along. There is no better source than Scripture for transmitting the Christian faith in every generation.

The following passages indicate that teaching is either true or false, that false teaching is destructive, and that true teaching builds up Christians and churches. The truth of teaching is measured by its conformity to the sound doctrine passed down from Jesus and the apostles.

- 1 Timothy 1:3 (ESV) As I urged you when I was going to Macedonia, remain at Ephesus so that you may charge certain persons not to teach any different doctrine,

- 1 Timothy 1:10-11 (ESV) whatever else is contrary to sound doctrine, 11 in accordance with the gospel of the glory of the blessed God with which I have been entrusted.
- 1 Timothy 3:1-2 (ESV) The saying is trustworthy: If anyone aspires to the office of overseer, he desires a noble task. 2 Therefore an overseer must be... able to teach...
- 1 Timothy 4:1-2 (ESV) Now the Spirit expressly says that in later times some will depart from the faith by devoting themselves to deceitful spirits and teachings of demons, 2 through the insincerity of liars whose consciences are seared,
- 1 Timothy 4:6 (ESV) If you put these things before the brothers, you will be a good servant of Christ Jesus, being trained in the words of the faith and of the good doctrine that you have followed.
- 1 Timothy 4:13-15 (ESV) Until I come, devote yourself to the public reading of Scripture, to exhortation, to teaching. 14 Do not neglect the gift (teaching and leading) you have, which was given you by prophecy when the council of elders laid their hands on you. 15 Practice these things, immerse yourself in them, so that all may see your progress.
- 1 Timothy 4:16 (ESV) Keep a close watch on yourself and on the teaching. Persist in this, for by so doing you will save both yourself and your hearers.
- 1 Timothy 5:17 (ESV) Let the elders who rule well be considered worthy of double honor, especially those who labor in preaching and teaching.
- 1 Timothy 6:2-4 (ESV) Teach and urge these things. 3 If anyone teaches a different doctrine and does not agree with the sound words of our Lord Jesus Christ and the teaching that accords with godliness, 4 he is puffed up with conceit

and understands nothing.

- 1 Timothy 6:20-21 (ESV) O Timothy, guard the deposit (Paul's teaching) entrusted to you. Avoid the irreverent babble and contradictions of what is falsely called "knowledge," 21 for some have swerved from the faith by professing it by professing it.
- 2 Timothy 1:6-7 (ESV) For this reason I remind you to fan into flame the gift (teaching and leading) of God, which is in you through the laying on of my hands, 7 for God gave us a spirit not of fear but of power and love and self-control.
- 2 Timothy 1:10-12 (ESV) ... our Savior Christ Jesus, who abolished death and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel, 11 for which I was appointed a preacher and apostle and teacher, 12 which is why I suffer as I do.
- 2 Timothy 1:13-14 (ESV) Follow the pattern of the sound words that you have heard from me, in the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus. 14 By the Holy Spirit who dwells within us, guard the good deposit (the apostolic teaching passed down from Paul) entrusted to you.
- 2 Timothy 2:1-2 (ESV) You then, my child, be strengthened by the grace that is in Christ Jesus, two and what you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses entrust to faithful men, who will be able to teach others also.
- 2 Timothy 2:8-9 (ESV) Remember Jesus Christ, risen from the dead, the offspring of David, as preached in my gospel, 9 for which I am suffering, bound with chains as a criminal. But the Word of God is not bound!
- 2 Timothy 2:14-15 (ESV) Remind them of these things, and charge them before God not to quarrel about words, which does no good, but only ruins the hearers. 15 Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a worker who has

- no need to be ashamed, rightly handling the Word of truth.
- 2 Timothy 2:24-25 (ESV) And the Lord's servant must not be quarrelsome but kind to everyone, able to teach, patiently enduring evil, 25 correcting his opponents with gentleness.
 - 2 Timothy 3:8 (ESV) Just as Jannes and Jambres opposed Moses, so these men also oppose the truth, men corrupted in mind and disqualified regarding the faith.
 - 2 Timothy 3:14-16 (ESV) 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.
 - 2 Timothy 3:16-17 (ESV) All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, reproof, correction, and training in righteousness, 17 that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work.
 - 2 Timothy 4:1-2 (ESV) I charge you in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who is to judge the living and the dead, and by his appearing and his kingdom: 2 preach the Word; be ready in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, and exhort, with complete patience and teaching.
 - 2 Timothy 4:3-4 (ESV) For the time is coming when people will not endure sound teaching, but having itching ears they will accumulate for themselves teachers to suit their own passions, 4 and will turn away from listening to the truth and wander off into myths.
 - 2 Timothy 4:14-15 (ESV) Alexander the coppersmith did me great harm; the Lord will repay him according to his deeds. 15 Beware of him yourself, for he strongly opposed our message.

- 2 Timothy 4:17 (ESV) But the Lord stood by me and strengthened me, so that through me the message might be fully proclaimed and all the Gentiles might hear it.

Paul makes similar statements in his letter to Titus:

Titus 1:9 (ESV) He must hold firm to the trustworthy word as taught, so that he may be able to give instruction in sound doctrine and also to rebuke those who contradict it.

Titus 2:1 (ESV) 1 But as for you, teach what accords with sound doctrine.

Titus 2:7-8 (ESV) 7 Show yourself in all respects to be a model of good works, and in your teaching show integrity, dignity, 8 and sound speech that cannot be condemned, so that an opponent may be put to shame, having nothing evil to say about us.

Paul uses “tradition” in a similar sense:

1 Corinthians 11:2 (ESV) Now I commend you because you remember me in everything and maintain the traditions even as I delivered them to you.

2 Thessalonians 2:15 (ESV) So then, brothers, stand firm and hold to the traditions that you were taught by us, either by our spoken word or by our letter.

2 Thessalonians 3:6 (ESV) Now we command you, broth-

ers, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you keep away from any brother who is walking in idleness and not in accord with the tradition that you received from us.

Paradosis (παράδοσις, 3862), “a handing down or on” ... denotes “a tradition,” and hence, by metonymy ... (b) of “apostolic teaching,” 1 Cor. 11:2, RV, “traditions” (KJV, “ordinances”), of instructions concerning the gatherings of believers (instructions of wider scope than ordinances in the limited sense); in 2 Thess. 2:15, of Christian doctrine in general, where the apostle’s use of the word constitutes a denial that what he preached originated with himself, and a claim for its divine authority ...; in 2 Thess. 3:6, it is used of instructions concerning everyday conduct.

Vine’s Complete Expository Dictionary

The New American Commentary on 1 Corinthians 11:2 explains the source and role of “tradition” in passing on the Christian faith:

Paul does not specify what traditions he has in mind in his commendation in 11:2.

In 11:23–26 he refers to the tradition of the Lord’s Supper and in 15:1–11 to the received tradition of the gospel.

The immediate context of 11:3 has to do with the roles of men (husbands) and women (wives) in the gathered assembly.

Regarding all three traditions Paul offers further instruction and/or correction regarding their present behavior.

The traditions were not Paul's own but rather those handed down to him (11:23; 15:1–3). What Paul says in 11:2–16 is not merely his opinion but represents traditional teaching practiced by all the churches (11:16).

Commentaries

Lenski's Commentary on the New Testament - 2 Timothy 3:10

“My teaching” is the basis and ground of all else for Paul and for Timothy...

New American Commentary - 2 Timothy 3:10

The “teaching” was the gospel message he had proclaimed.

The MacArthur New Testament Commentary Series - 2 Timothy 3:10

The reference here is to the specific, divinely inspired, apostolic teaching that Timothy had heard expounded so often and so carefully by Paul... Paul’s teaching was apostolic teaching and, therefore, divine teaching.

John Gill - 2 Timothy 3:10

... the apostle calls the doctrine he delivered, “my doctrine”: not because he was the author of it, or that it was a scheme of principles formed and contrived by him; but because it was the doctrine which he had received from God, which was given him to preach, and which he did preach purely and faithfully;

...it was the doctrine of Christ, and the same with that which was preached by the rest of the apostles; and which was the doctrine of the Scriptures, and was according to godliness;

and as preached by him, was all of a piece, and without any adulteration, or mixture, and was open and manifest, and well known to Timothy, and others; for he used no hidden things of dishonesty, nor did he conceal his principles, or keep back anything that was profitable.

<https://bibleportal.com/commentary/section/john-gill/31102>

William Barclay - 2 Timothy 3:10

There is teaching. No man can teach what he does not know, and therefore before a man can teach Christ to others he must know him himself. When Carlyle's father was discussing the kind of minister his parish needed, he said: "What this parish needs is a man who knows Christ other than at secondhand." Real teaching is always born of real experience.

<https://bibleportal.com/commentary/section/william-barcly/the-duties-and-the-qualities-of-an-apostle-2-timothy-310-13-8521>

John MacArthur's Sermon on 2 Timothy 3:10

Teaching, *didaskalia* simply means what it says, doctrine, teaching, divine truth, the basis of everything. He says, Timothy, you followed my teaching of truth, you followed my instruction, God's revelation. You followed apostolic doctrine, you followed my doctrine. In chapter 2 verse 2, "The things you heard from me in the presence of many witnesses you are to pass on to someone else." You learned from me, someone else needs to learn from you. The passing on of the apostolic doctrine was vital.

So Paul had learned and imitated – rather Timothy had learned and imitated Paul, first of all, in the area of ministry duty with regard to teaching. He had learned and followed Paul's doctrine. When he taught, he taught what Paul had taught him. That's what he was to do. The things you heard from me, teach faithful men, so they'll teach others and keep passing down the unmitigated, unaltered truth. That was absolutely vital.

In chapter 4 he says to him in verse 2, "Preach the Word." Preach the Word. "The time is coming," – verse 3 – "when they won't endure sound doctrine," but you preach it. Pass it on just as you have received it. That was vital. Having the right mentor is important

because the content is the bottom line of that teaching process. I say this so often to people. Be careful who you listen to, what you read, and who you learn from because that all goes into the foundation of what you assume to be truth. You must be very cautious with what you expose your mind to.

And what a privilege to have had the apostle Paul whose teaching was not only true but it was inspired teaching. Timothy had a tremendous privilege. So important to have the right teacher. It does no one good service to sit under people teaching error, to listen to people teaching lies, to be exposed to things that aren't true, rather to follow that which is true, the Word of God. So Timothy then followed Paul in the area of his ministerial duties by teaching the very things that Paul had taught him, he followed that pattern.

www.gty.org/library/sermons-library/55-15/standing-against-apostasy-part-1

Biblical Doctrine: A Systematic Summary of Bible Truth by Mayhue and MacArthur on Teaching

Biblically speaking, Christian teaching is scriptural truth. Two Greek New Testament words are most often translated as “doctrine,” “teaching,” or

“instruction”—didachē and didaskalia. Comparing their combined fifty-one appearances affirms that Christian doctrine refers to Scripture, whether read, explained, or even theologically systematized...

Scripture always refers to “sound doctrine” in relationship to Christian doctrine that finds its ultimate source in God, while all other doctrine is either of man (Col. 2:22) or demons (1 Tim. 4:1). Christian doctrine is sound—all other “doctrine” is unsound (1 Tim. 1:10; 6:3). Christian doctrine is good, and thus profitable, while all other is bad and valueless (1 Tim. 4:6; 2 Tim. 3:16).

Since Christian teaching is all about biblical truth and biblical truth is all about God’s Word, Christians must therefore affirm a high view of Scripture and doctrine. But with equal importance, they must also make Scripture the basis for translating sound Christian doctrine into godly living, “so that in everything they may adorn the doctrine of God our Savior” (Titus 2:10). Christian doctrine serves as the constitution of godly living. Just as the skeleton is to the body or oxygen is to breathing, doctrine proves indispensable to Christianity. Without Christian doctrine, believers would be stripped of truth in living out the faith...

The New Testament Epistles overflow with exhortations to make “sound doctrine” the very heart of the Christian faith and ministry. Christians are reminded

by Paul (1) to be a good minister of Christ Jesus, brought up in the truths of the faith and of good teaching (1 Tim. 4:6); (2) to keep as the pattern of sound teaching what was heard from him (2 Tim. 1:13); (3) to preach the Word (2 Tim. 4:2); (4) to hold firmly to the trustworthy message while encouraging others by sound doctrine (Titus 1:9); and (5) to teach what is in accord with sound doctrine (Titus 2:1). It is disconcerting to imagine where the gospel would be if Paul had not publicly confronted Peter over faulty doctrine (Gal. 2:11–21).

Christ's ministry (Matt. 7:28–29), the apostles' ministry (Acts 5:29), and the early church's ministry (Acts 2:42) all revolved around sound doctrine...

Systematic Theology by Grudem on Scripture

The authority of Scripture means that all the words in Scripture are God's words in such a way that to disbelieve or disobey any word of Scripture is to disbelieve or disobey God...

Paul here (2 Timothy 3:16) affirms that all of the Old Testament writings are *theopneustos*, "breathed out by God." Since it is writings that are said to be "breathed out," this breathing must be understood as a metaphor for speaking the words of Scripture... the

Old Testament writings are regarded as God's Word in written form. For every Word of the Old Testament, God is the one who spoke (and still speaks) it, although God used human agents to write these words down.

But at two places in the New Testament, we see New Testament writings also being called "scripture," along with the Old Testament writings. ... in 2 Peter 3:16, Peter shows not only an awareness of the existence of written epistles from Paul, but also a clear willingness to classify "all of his [Paul's] epistles" with "the other scriptures." This is an indication that very early in the history of the church all of Paul's epistles were considered to be God's written words in the same sense as the Old Testament texts were. Similarly, in 1 Timothy 5:18, Paul quotes Jesus' words as found in Luke 10:7 and calls them "scripture."

Applications

Any study of passing the faith along must answer two questions: 1) What is the content of the faith we pass along, and 2) What are the methods of passing the faith along? Here are my answers:

The Content We Pass Along

The source of Christian teaching is the Bible which is the Word of God breathed out by the Holy Spirit and revealed to the prophets and apostles. John Piper writes,

We are a people of the Book. We know God through the Book. We meet Christ in the Book. We see the cross in the Book. Our faith and love are kindled by the glorious truths of the Book. We have tasted the divine majesty of the Word and are persuaded that the Book is God's inspired and infallible written revelation. Therefore, what the Book teaches matters. Doctrine is important for worship and life and mission. Education for Exultation is education saturated by the Bible.

www.desiringgod.org/messages/building-our-lives-on-the-bible

Since the Bible is God's Word, there is no need for extra words, new words, or supplemental words in the church's teachings. While tradition, reason, and experience may have a role to play in interpreting and applying the Bible, they remain subordinate to the Bible. They are not God-breathed and they can be mistaken.

Since the Bible is God's Word, it has the authority to shape and direct Christian beliefs and behavior. The Bible must be the foundation of all teaching and preaching in the churches. Teachers who waver in their commitment to Bible teaching not only lose spiritual authority, they also do great harm to Christians and churches. Piper again:

In 2 Timothy 3:13 the evil men, it says, “proceed from bad to worse.” The word for “proceed” means “advance” or “go forward,” and in this case it is from bad to worse. Then in verse 14 Paul says to Timothy, “You, however, continue in the things you have learned.” The word “continue” is the opposite of “advance” or “go forward.” It’s the word for “remain,” “abide,” “stay.” “You, Timothy, don’t advance, don’t go forward - remain, abide, stay, continue in the things you have learned.” There is a conservative impulse in Christianity - an impulse to conserve: to remain and to stay and to abide.

Verses 14b-15 tell us what Paul has in mind: “. . . knowing from whom you have learned them, and that from childhood you have known the sacred writings . . .” There it is: it’s the “sacred writings” - the “Scriptures” - that he should continue in. Don’t leave these. Don’t “go forward” from these. Don’t “advance” from these. Don’t think that the “Word of God” is grammar school material while something else (say philosophy or science or technology) is college or graduate school. Don’t leave the “sacred writings.” Continue in them. Conserve them. Keep them.

There is no salvation from sin and guilt and condemnation and hell apart from faith in Jesus Christ (Acts 4:12; Romans 10:13-17; 1 John 5:12). And there is no other authority besides the Scriptures to show you

who Christ is and to give you his Word. So don't leave the Bible, children. Don't leave the Bible, young people. Don't neglect the Bible, dads and moms. Don't ignore the Bible, single people. Under God, the "sacred writings," the Scriptures, are the greatest treasure in the world. They alone make us wise unto salvation through Christ. O don't neglect this Book!

Why do the Scriptures have this power? Verses 16 and 17 give the answer: "All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness; so that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work." The basic answer is that the Bible is the inspired Word of God. Inspired means "God-breathed."

www.desiringgod.org/messages/building-our-lives-on-the-bible

Since we believe that the Bible is the God-breathed Word of God, we also think that it is without error in what it affirms. Wayne Grudem notes that:

God's words are, in fact, the ultimate standard of truth (John 17:17). Especially relevant at this point are those Scripture texts that indicate the total truthfulness and reliability of God's words. "The words of the LORD are words that are pure, silver refined in a furnace on the ground, purified seven times" (Ps. 12:6, author's translation), indicates the absolute reliability and

purity of Scripture. Similarly, “Every word of God proves true; he is a shield to those who take refuge in him” (Prov. 30:5), indicates the truthfulness of every word that God has spoken.

Though error and at least partial falsehood may characterize the speech of every human being, it is the characteristic of God’s speech even when spoken through sinful human beings that it is never false and that it never affirms error: “God is not man, that he should lie, or a son of man, that he should repent” (Num. 23:19) was spoken by sinful Balaam specifically about the prophetic words that God had spoken through his own lips.

With evidence such as this we are now in a position to define biblical inerrancy: The inerrancy of Scripture means that Scripture in the original manuscripts does not affirm anything that is contrary to fact.

This definition focuses on the question of truthfulness and falsehood in the language of Scripture. The definition in simple terms just means that the Bible always tells the truth, and that it always tells the truth concerning everything it talks about.

Grudem, Wayne. *Systematic Theology*.

John MacArthur comments on the need for strong biblical/theological commitments and convictions:

... those who are the strong soldiers who defend the faith have a strong confidence in Scripture. They understand that Scripture is inspired by God and profitable and can make the man of God adequate, fully outfitted for every good work.

(www.gty.org/library/sermons-library/55-15/standing-against-apostasy-part-1)

Martin Luther, the 16th-century Reformer, would have agreed with MacArthur:

In the mid-twentieth century, a full-length film was made about the life of Martin Luther. It included a scene that I found particularly provocative. The scene took place after Luther's historic meeting with the authorities of the Holy Roman Empire and of the Roman Catholic Church at the Diet of Worms. When Luther was called upon at Worms to recant of his teachings, he made his epic stand, stating: "Unless I am convicted by Scripture and plain reason ... my conscience is captive to the Word of God. I cannot and I will not recant anything, for to go against conscience is neither right nor safe. Here I stand, I cannot do otherwise. God help me."

R. C. Sproul in *Feed My Sheep: A Passionate Plea for Preaching*

R. C. Sproul discusses the distinctions between preaching and teaching and comments on how he combines them in his classroom:

I make a distinction between preaching—which involves exhortation, exposition, admonition, encouragement, and comfort—and teaching, which involves the transfer of information. I practice both in my own ministry, and sometimes I obscure the distinction.

The students in my seminary classes will testify that sometimes, in the middle of my lectures, when I'm trying to communicate certain doctrines and information about theology, I'll start preaching, because I'm not interested in the mere transfer of information. I want that information not only to get in their heads but in their bloodstreams.

In fact, I warn them at the beginning of each course: “Don't think that I'm in this classroom as a professor in a state of neutrality. I'm after your mind and your heart. I hope not only to instruct you, but to persuade you. I want to move you to grasp not only the truth of this content, but also the importance and the sweetness of it, so that you will take it with you for the rest of your lives. It is not my goal simply to transfer information from my brain to your notebook, because learning doesn't take place until it gets in your head and into your life.”

R.C. Sproul in *Feed My Sheep: A Passionate Plea for Preaching*

Sproul also argues for the centrality of the Bible in teaching and preaching:

Here we may well ask Luther: if the top priority of the minister is teaching, what is he to teach? Luther would reply: The Bible, the content of Scripture. Calvin wrote commentaries on almost every book of the Bible, and those commentaries grew out of teaching seminars he gave to his congregation in Geneva. Luther also wrote many commentaries based on his lectures to his congregation and students in Wittenberg. These Reformers gave much of their time and effort to teaching the Bible, and all pastors should do the same.

R.C. Sproul in *Feed My Sheep: A Passionate Plea for Preaching*

The Methods We Use to Pass the Faith Along

1 and 2 Timothy mention several methods for passing the faith along:

- Reading the Bible to the congregation
- Preaching to the congregation
- Teaching individuals and groups in the church

- Correcting errors and resisting false teachers
- Grandparents and parents teaching their children and grandchildren

Teaching faith basics to new believers has always been a critical task for church elders. This is sometimes called catechesis – from the Greek word “to teach.” The *Didache* (the teaching) is a first-century manual on Christian doctrines, lifestyle, and church order. It contains a catechism.

Today, many churches conduct catechism classes for middle or high school students. Other churches offer classes and courses of Christian education to children and adults. Small groups can be good venues for passing the faith along. The Internet has made it possible to distribute Christian teaching to large numbers comparatively easily and cheaply.

The following websites can be helpful for research:

- John Piper’s sermons and articles: www.desiringGod.org
- John MacArthur’s sermons and articles: www.gty.org
- RC Sproul’s teaching and articles: www.ligonier.org
- Bible Hub: biblehub.com
- Gospel Coalition Commentaries: www.thegospelcoalition.org/commentary/

Catechesis

Read the full article by Joe Carter here: www.crossway.org/articles/10-things-you-should-know-about-catechesis/

1. Catechesis is a form of instruction. The instruction is usu-

- ally based on a book or document known as a catechism.
2. Catechesis includes five related and easily confused terms. While the catechism is the content of the instruction, the person being taught is called the catechumen (from the Greek for “one being instructed”), and the catechist is the person doing the instructing. The instruction is called catechesis, and the process is called catechizing.
 3. Catechesis is biblical. The terms related to catechesis are derived from the original Greek Word transliterated as *katecheo* (i.e., to teach orally, to instruct). Paul uses the term and concept in Galatians 6:6 when he says, “Let him who is taught the word share all good things with him who teaches.”
 4. Catechesis is historical. Almost every denomination and tradition in church history has used some form of catechesis for the religious education of Christian children and adults: Lutherans (e.g., Luther’s Small Catechism), Presbyterians (e.g., Westminster Shorter Catechism), Baptist (e.g., Keach’s Catechism), Catholics (e.g., Catechism of the Catholic Church), Anglicans (e.g., The Catechism from the Book of Common Prayer), etc.
 5. Catechesis often includes four main elements. Most catechesis has included four staples: the Apostles’ Creed, the Lord’s Prayer, the Ten Commandments, and teachings on the sacraments or ordinances (e.g., Lord’s Supper and baptism).
 6. Catechisms supplement preaching by equipping people with the knowledge to understand sermons.

3

Chapter 3

Week 2: Living with Integrity

*2 Timothy 3:10-11 (ESV) You, however, have followed
... my conduct...*

Overview of Chapter 3

The chapter is organized into three sections:

1. Introductory Insights
2. Commentaries
3. Applications

Introductory Insights

Translating “Conduct”

Agoge (ἀγωγή), from ago, “to lead,” properly denotes “a teaching”; then, figuratively, “a training, discipline,” and so, the life led, a way or course of life, conduct, 2 Tim.3:10, RV, “conduct”; KJV, “manner of life.”

Vine’s Expository Dictionary

- Amplified: Now you have closely observed and diligently followed my... conduct,
- KJV: But thou hast fully known my... manner of life,
- Phillips: But you, Timothy, have known intimately both what I have taught and how I lived.
- Wuest: But as for you, you were attracted as a disciple to me because of my... conduct,
- Young’s Literal: And thou — thou hast followed after my... manner of life,
- New Living Translation: But you, Timothy, certainly know... how I live,

The Necessity of Integrity

The Christian faith is more than a message (the gospel, the Bible, Jesus’ teachings, doctrine); it’s also a way of life. The two go hand in hand so that one’s way of life either aligns with

or undermines the message. A life of integrity aligns with and flows out of the message we claim to believe. John MacArthur comments on the need for integrity:

An essential goal for any spiritual leader is to gain people's trust through genuine integrity. Like Paul, a leader's conduct must be trustworthy and consistent with his words.

But once a leader proves to be hypocritical in any area of ministry, no matter how seemingly insignificant, he loses everything he has labored for in ministry and sees his credibility destroyed.

www.gty.org/library/articles/A367/in-defense-of-integrity

An ungodly life is antithetical to the gospel message of godliness. Godless living undermines our witness and makes a mockery of Christianity.

Titus 2:9-10 (ESV) Bondservants are to be submissive to their own masters in everything; they are to be well-pleasing, not argumentative, 10 not pilfering, but showing all good faith, so that in everything they may adorn the doctrine of God our Savior.

Titus 2:7-8 (ESV) 7 Show yourself in all respects to be a model of good works, and in your teaching show integrity, dignity, 8 and sound speech that cannot be

condemned, so that an opponent may be put to shame, having nothing evil to say about us.

Ray Stedman commented on the need for integrity in our life and witness:

The modern term, *integrity*, accurately expresses this. Integrity is in short supply in Christian circles today, especially in the electronic church, where some leaders' lives are a mess, yet they are allegedly seeking to try and help others. It never can be done.

<https://www.raystedman.org/new-testament/thessalonians/whatever-became-of-integrity>

The apostle Paul, in order to open doors to his apostolic ministry, frequently defended his integrity from unjust attacks and misunderstandings. One of Paul's most important claims to integrity is found in 2 Corinthians 1:

2 Corinthians 1:12-14 (NLT) We can say with confidence and a clear conscience that we have lived with a God-given holiness and sincerity in all our dealings. We have depended on God's grace, not on our own human wisdom. That is how we have conducted ourselves before the world, and especially toward you. 13 Our letters have been straightforward, and there is nothing written between the lines and nothing you can't understand. I hope someday you will fully understand us, 14 even if you don't understand us now. Then on the day when the

Lord Jesus returns, you will be proud of us in the same way we are proud of you.

It's worth taking a few minutes to study the passage in order to note all the ways in which Paul manifests his integrity: holiness and sincerity; depending on grace; straightforward.

There are several more passages in which Paul defends his integrity. For example:

- Acts 23:1 (ESV) And looking intently at the council, Paul said, "Brothers, I have lived my life before God in all good conscience up to this day."
- Acts 24:16-17 (ESV) So I always take pains to have a clear conscience toward both God and man.
- 2 Corinthians 2:17 (ESV) For we are not, like so many, peddlers of God's word, but as men of sincerity, as commissioned by God, in the sight of God we speak in Christ.
- 2 Corinthians 4:2 (ESV) But we have renounced disgraceful, underhanded ways. We refuse to practice cunning or to tamper with God's word, but by the open statement of the truth we would commend ourselves to everyone's conscience in the sight of God.
- 1 Thessalonians 1:5b (ESV) You know what kind of men we proved to be among you for your sake.
- 1 Thessalonians 2:2-8 (ESV) we had boldness in our God to declare to you the gospel of God in the midst of much conflict. 3 For our appeal does not spring from error or impurity or any attempt to deceive, 4 but just as we have been approved by God to be entrusted with the gospel, so we speak, not to please man, but to please God who tests

our hearts. 5 For we never came with words of flattery, as you know, nor with a pretext for greed—God is witness. 6 Nor did we seek glory from people, whether from you or from others, though we could have made demands as apostles of Christ. 7 But we were gentle among you, like a nursing mother taking care of her own children. 8 So, being affectionately desirous of you, we were ready to share with you not only the gospel of God but also our own selves, because you had become very dear to us.

- 1 Thessalonians 2:10 (ESV) You are witnesses, and God also, how holy and righteous and blameless was our conduct toward you believers.
- 2 Timothy 1:3 (ESV) I thank God whom I serve, as did my ancestors, with a clear conscience, as I remember you constantly in my prayers night and day.

John MacArthur writes:

There wasn't a hint of corruption in Paul's ministry—no troubling dots to connect, and no lingering questions that demanded answers. The utter absence of the seeds of scandal in Paul's character further testifies to his integrity.

www.gty.org/library/blog/B130313/marks-of-an-excellent-shepherd-integrity

The New American Commentary on 2 Corinthians 4:1-2:

Those who act honorably, as Paul does, do not need to cloak their deeds in secrecy but are open to the view of the entire world, Christian and non-Christian.

Paul repudiates all deception. The noun “deception” translates a Greek word that literally means the readiness to do anything (*panourgia*). When used in a bad sense, it applies to someone who is sly, crafty, deceitful, and tricky.

He repudiates any guileful misuse of the word of God... he contrasts himself with the peddlers of the word of God. Paul plays off the ancient world’s widespread suspicion and criticism of “fraudulent teachers of philosophy, out simply for their own gain.” He insists that unlike such con men he did not adjust, water down, or tamper with the gospel to stroke his listeners’ egos or to avoid ruffling their feathers.

Finally, he lays out what he does do; he sets forth the truth plainly. This last phrase again relates to his bold speech (see 6:6; 7:14)

One of the clearest examples of Paul defending or describing his integrity is found in Acts 20, the passage that describes his last words to the elders of the church in Ephesus:

Acts 20:17-27 (ESV) 17 Now from Miletus he sent to Ephesus and called the elders of the church to come to him. 18 And when they came to him, he said to them:

“You yourselves know how I lived among you the whole time from the first day that I set foot in Asia, 19 serving the Lord with all humility and with tears and with trials that happened to me through the plots of the Jews; 20 how I did not shrink from declaring to you anything that was profitable, and teaching you in public and from house to house, 21 testifying both to Jews and to Greeks of repentance toward God and of faith in our Lord Jesus Christ.

22 And now, behold, I am going to Jerusalem, constrained by the Spirit, not knowing what will happen to me there, 23 except that the Holy Spirit testifies to me in every city that imprisonment and afflictions await me. 24 But I do not account my life of any value nor as precious to myself, if only I may finish my course and the ministry that I received from the Lord Jesus, to testify to the gospel of the grace of God.

25 And now, behold, I know that none of you among whom I have gone about proclaiming the kingdom will see my face again. 26 Therefore I testify to you this day that I am innocent of the blood of all, 27 for I did not shrink from declaring to you the whole counsel of God.

Alan J. Thompson in *The Gospel Coalition Commentary on Acts* 20 writes:

First, Paul’s own example has been one of comprehensive proclamation of God’s Word in the midst

of suffering (20:18–27). Framed by references to Paul not holding back (“I did not shrink,” 20:20, 27), Paul refers to his proclamation ministry as “declaring,” “teaching,” “testifying,” “proclaiming,” and “declaring” throughout these verses.

In doing so, Paul essentially says he has proclaimed everything (“anything” that was profitable, repentance and faith, “the gospel of the grace of God,” “the kingdom,” “the whole council of God”), to everyone (Jews and Greeks, and “to you”), everywhere he could (“in public and from house to house”).

All of this has been done in the midst of “tears” and “trials” with the prospect of more afflictions to come. Therefore, Paul, like Ezekiel, is a faithful watchman, discharging his duty faithfully and innocent of the blood of those who reject his message (see 18:6).

www.thegospelcoalition.org/commentary/acts/#section-42

Commentaries

George Knight, Commentary on Pastoral Epistles - 2 Timothy 3:10

... since teaching never exists apart from the reality of the teacher's life and from and change that it has brought about in the teacher's life, he adds the marks of godliness that flow from the teaching and accompany it in his own life...

Robert Yarbrough Commentary on 2 Timothy 3:10

His "way of life." Paul's teaching, like Jesus's, was not only for thought but for life. A term used by outsiders for the early Christian movement was "the way" (*hē hodos*), referring to an actual path, road, or route but then also serving as a metaphor for conduct or way of life...

Here, however, Paul uses a word found nowhere else in the NT. Clement of Rome uses it twice to describe Christian conduct (1 Clem. 47:6; 48:1). Paul's teaching was borne out of and validated by the Christ-centered and missional life he lived.

Yarbrough, Robert W.. The Letters to Timothy and Titus

S. Lewis Johnson on 2 Timothy 3:10:

Well, the Latin word “integer” was a word that meant “whole” or “entire.” It had the idea of soundness, incorruptibility, incorruptibility in the sense of honesty, firm adherence to a set of values, and completeness.

When we think of Paul’s ministry of integrity or the integrity of Paul’s ministry, it certainly had soundness, incorruptibility, honesty. There was a firm adherence to values, the values derived from the Lord God. In that sense, Paul’s ministry was surely a ministry of integrity.

The characteristic of Paul’s ministry was integrity; that is, he was true to his ideals, he was true to the message that had been given to him, he was true to the ministry, and honest in the proclamation of it and, also, fearless in the proclamation of it.

<https://sljinstitute.net/acts/the-integrity-of-pauls-ministry-part-i-acts/>

Gill’s Commentary - 2 Timothy 3:10

Manner of life ; both his civil life, how he spent his time, not in ease and idleness, but oftentimes in labour with his own hands; nor did he live in a sensual and voluptuous manner, but frequently was in hunger, and thirst, and nakedness;

And likewise his religious life, and conversation, not only in the church, which was spent in the ministry of the word, and ordinances; but in the world, which, by the grace of God, was in simplicity and godly sincerity, in a very just, holy, and unblamable manner:

His life was agreeable to his doctrine, and ornamental to his profession: and even the secrets of his mind, his views, his aims and ends in all he did,

<https://bibleportal.com/commentary/section/john-gill/31102>

Barclay's Commentary - 2 Timothy 3:10

The Christian life does not consist only in knowing something; it consists even more in being something. The task of the apostle is not only to tell men the truth; it is also to help them do it. The true leader gives training in living.

bibleportal.com/commentary/section/william-barclay/the-duties-and-the-qualities-of-an-apostle-2-timothy-310-13-8521

Matthew Henry's Commentary on 2 Timothy 3:10

Paul's manner of life was of a piece with his doctrine, and did not contradict it. He did not pull down by his living what he built up by his preaching. Those ministers are likely to do good, and leave lasting fruits of their labours, whose manner of life agrees with their doctrine; as, on the contrary, those cannot expect to profit the people at all that preach well and live ill.

<https://bibleportal.com/commentary/section/mhc/verses-10-17-5185>

Applications

A godly life is committed to true doctrine AND to godly living. Integrity is the intersection of both; that is, what we believe must be supported by how we behave. Warren Wiersbe comments:

Paul's 'manner of life' backed up his messages. He did not preach sacrifice and live in luxury. He gave to others far more than he received from them. He stood up for the truth even when it meant losing friends and, in the end, losing his life. Paul was a servant, not a celebrity.

Generally speaking, people won't believe what we say until they see how we live. If our beliefs and behavior don't match, they'll write us off as hypocrites. John MacArthur comments:

But integrity isn't just vital for shepherds. In a world that's eagerly looking to call into question and destroy the credibility of God's Word, as believers we need to diligently guard our own reputations. We need to lead faithful, consistent lives, knowing that our conduct is a testimony to the truth of Scripture—often far stronger than any verbal testimony we can offer. How we live and behave shapes the reputation of the Lord and His truth in the eyes of the world. What does your character say about the transforming work of the Lord in your life?

<https://www.gty.org/library/blog/B130313/marks-of-an-excellent-shepherd-integrity>

Ray Stedman comments:

But hear Paul. “We were holy and righteous and blameless,” he says. Holiness means “separate, intended for a single purpose.” In this sense, *singleminded* would be a good translation...

Also he was righteous before others. He behaved himself, resisting things which could be misconstrued or which would tend to mislead...

Finally, he was blameless in his own eyes. Do not misunderstand that. Blamelessness in Scripture never means sinlessness. Paul did not think of himself as sinless. What he means is: He is honest. He has dealt with all his sin. Aware of it, he judges it and does something about it. He does not cover it over because he knows, as he puts it, “God tests the heart.” God knows what is going on inside so Paul is strictly honest with himself, does not deceive himself, but confesses his wrong and so is blameless.

<https://www.raystedman.org/new-testament/thessalonians/whatever-became-of-integrity>

Be careful not to turn this teaching into legalism. We always need the Savior. We always need saving and sanctifying grace. Living well is the fruit not the root of our life in Christ. If we ever manage to overcome our tendency to hypocrisy, it will happen because of grace, grace, and more grace. We cannot improve our standing with God by improving our lifestyle. Remember, we are made right and kept right with God by grace alone, received

through faith alone, in Christ alone.

Paul applies his understanding of the importance of right conduct to Timothy:

1 Timothy 4:12 (ESV) Let no one despise you for your youth, but set the believers an example in speech, in conduct, in love, in faith, in purity.

2 Timothy 2:22-25 (ESV) 22 So flee youthful passions and pursue righteousness, faith, love, and peace, along with those who call on the Lord from a pure heart. 23 Have nothing to do with foolish, ignorant controversies; you know that they breed quarrels. 24 And the Lord's servant must not be quarrelsome but kind to everyone, able to teach, patiently enduring evil, 25 correcting his opponents with gentleness.

A final word on the importance of integrity:

Proverbs 19:1 (ESV) Better is a poor person who walks in his integrity than one who is crooked in speech and is a fool.

4

Chapter 4

Living on Purpose

2 Timothy 3:10-11 (ESV) You, however, have followed my... aim in life,

Overview of Chapter 4

The chapter is organized into three sections:

1. Introductory Insights
2. Commentaries
3. Applications

Introductory Insights

One of the best-selling non-fiction books in publishing history is Rick Warren's *The Purpose Driven Life*. It has sold more than 50 million copies in 137 languages. It's a book about

the Christian life and the theology of sanctification written in everyday language. It's about finding and following Jesus.

What accounts for the popularity of Warren's book? Apart from being well-written and easy to read, it scratches an itch in every human heart. Everyone wants a purpose to live for. We're all looking for meaning and significance. It's tough to begin a day thinking there's nothing to live for:

Ecclesiastes 1:14 (ESV) I have seen everything that is done under the sun, and behold, all is vanity and a striving after wind.

The Got Questions website comments on this depressing-sounding passage:

Saying that everything is meaningless sounds depressing, but we must keep Solomon's point of view in mind... The key phrase is *under the sun*, which is repeated throughout the book. Solomon is sharing an earth-bound perspective. He is only considering life "under the sun"; that is, a human life lived to the exclusion of any consideration of God. From that godless perspective, everything is indeed "meaningless."

In the book of Ecclesiastes, Solomon discusses ten vanities—ten things that are "meaningless" when considered from the limited point of view of "under the sun." Without God, human wisdom is

meaningless (2:14–16); labor (2:18–23); amassing things (2:26); life itself (3:18–22); competition (4:4); selfish overwork (4:7–8); power and authority (4:16); greed (5:10); wealth and accolades (6:1–2); and perfunctory religion (8:10–14).

When Solomon says, “Everything is meaningless,” he did not mean that everything in the world is of zero value. Rather, his point is that all human efforts apart from God’s will are meaningless. Solomon had it all, and he had tried everything, but when he left God out of the equation, nothing satisfied him. There is purpose in life, and it is found in knowing God and keeping His commands.

<https://www.gotquestions.org/everything-is-meaningless.html>

The apostle Paul found his life’s purpose when he encountered the exalted Lord Jesus Christ on the road to Damascus (Acts 9:1–22). Jesus gave him an apostolic commission that consumed the rest of Paul’s life.

Paul’s purpose in life was such a driving force that Timothy was able to observe and imitate it. What was Paul’s aim in life? Why did he get up every morning? Why was he ready to struggle and suffer to accomplish it? Here are some examples:

Acts 20:20–27 (ESV) how I did not shrink from declaring to you anything that was profitable, and teaching you in

public and from house to house, 21 testifying both to Jews and to Greeks of repentance toward God and of faith in our Lord Jesus Christ. ... 24 But I do not account my life of any value nor as precious to myself, if only I may finish my course and the ministry that I received from the Lord Jesus, to testify to the gospel of the grace of God. ... 27 for I did not shrink from declaring to you the whole counsel of God.

1 Corinthians 2:1-5 (ESV) And I, when I came to you, brothers, did not come proclaiming to you the testimony of God with lofty speech or wisdom. 2 For I decided to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ and him crucified. 3 And I was with you in weakness and in fear and much trembling, 4 and my speech and my message were not in plausible words of wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power, 5 so that your faith might not rest in the wisdom of men but in the power of God.

Translating 2 Timothy 3:10

- ESV: You, however, have followed my... my aim in life,
- New Living Translation: But you, Timothy, certainly know... what my purpose in life is.
- Amplified: Now you have closely observed and diligently followed my... purpose in life...
- Barclay: But you have been my disciple in my... aim in life...
- KJV: But thou hast fully known my... purpose, faith,
- Phillips: But you, Timothy, have known intimately... my purpose...

- Wuest: But as for you, you were attracted as a disciple to me because of my... purpose...
- Young's Literal: And thou — thou hast followed after my... purpose...

Noun: *πρόθεσις* (*prothesis*), 12x. This noun is related to the compound verb *protithēmi* (“to purpose, plan”) and means “a purpose, plan, display.” It is used four times to denote “the consecrated bread” that was in the Holy Place of the Tabernacle (Mt. 12:4; Mk. 2:26; Lk. 6:4; Heb. 9:2).

In its other occurrences *prothesis* is used in a personal manner, i.e., of people or God. Paul, for example, writes to Timothy, “you know all about my teaching, my way of life, my purpose, faith, patience, love, endurance” (2 Tim. 3:10; cf. Acts 11:23; 27,13).

In a number of instances *prothesis* is used of God’s “purpose.” A well-known example is Rom. 8:28: “And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to his purpose” (cf. Eph. 1:11; 2 Tim. 1:9). Similarly, it denotes God’s “purpose” in choosing Jacob over Esau (Rom. 9:11) and his “eternal purpose, which he accomplished in Christ Jesus” (Eph. 3:11).

Mounce’s Complete Expository Dictionary of Old and New Testament Words

Purpose = *prothesis* (πρόθεσις), “a setting forth,” “a purpose” is used (a) of the “purposes of God,” Rom. 8:28; 9:11; Eph. 1:11; 3:11; 2 Tim. 1:9; (b) of “human purposes,” as to things material, Acts 27:13; spiritual, Acts 11:23; 2 Tim. 3:10.

Vine’s Complete Expository Dictionary

Intention, resolve: Acts 11:23: “steadfast purpose of the heart”; 27:13: “that they had obtained their purpose”; 2 Tim 3:10: purpose in the sense of “Paul’s” predisposition/aim...

Eerdman’s Exegetical Dictionary of the New Testament

Acts 11:23 (ESV) When he came and saw the grace of God, he was glad, and he exhorted them all to remain faithful to the Lord with steadfast purpose...

Our purpose in life is connected to God’s purpose:

2 Timothy 1:8–9 (ESV) Therefore do not be ashamed of the testimony about our Lord, nor of me his prisoner, but share in suffering for the gospel by the power of God, 9 who saved us and called us to a holy calling, not because of our works but because of his own purpose and grace,

The Christian’s holy calling is described in some detail in Ephesians 1–3, especially Eph 1:3–14 where we see

the truths that saints are chosen (Ep 1:4), predestined (Ep 1:5, 11), adopted as sons (Ep 1:5), accepted in the Beloved (Ep 1:6), redeemed through His blood (Ep 1:7), forgiven (Ep 1:7), sealed with the Holy Spirit (Ep 1:13) and given the earnest of our inheritance (Ep 1:14).

In addition to a holy calling, saints also have a high (“upward”) calling (Php 3:14) and a heavenly calling (He 3:1)

https://www.preceptaustin.org/2_timothy_19#1:9

- by grace (Kaleo - Gal 1:6)
- through the “gospel” that we “may gain the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ” (Kaleo - 2Th 2:14)
- to salvation (Kaleo - Ro 8:30-note)
- saints by calling (Kletos - 1Co 1:2)
- brought “into fellowship with His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord” (Kaleo - 1Co 1:9)
- both Jews and Greeks (Kletos - 1Co 1:24)
- not from among Jews only, but also from among Gentiles (Kaleo - Ro 9:24-note)
- according to His purpose (Kletos - Ro 8:28-note)
- to walk worthy (Kaleo - Ep 4:1-note)
- (to proclaim His excellencies) out of darkness into His marvelous light (Kaleo - 1Pe 2:9-note)
- for this purpose (to suffer... follow in His steps) - (Kaleo - 1Pe 2:21-note)
- heavenly calling (klesis) (Heb 3:1-note)

- (a holy calling) having been called (kaleo) “with a holy” calling (klesis) (2Ti 1:9-note)
- to be holy yourselves in all your behavior - (Kaleo - 1Pe 1:15-note)
- to inherit a blessing (following Christ’s example) - (Kaleo - 1Pe 3:9-note)
- to His eternal glory in Christ (Kaleo - 1Pe 5:10-note)
- and return in triumph “with Him” at the end of this age (Kletos - Re 17:14-note).

Commentaries

New American Commentary - 2 Timothy 3:10

His purpose was his resolve to show single-minded commitment to Christ.

Christ-Centered Exposition Commentary - 2 Timothy 3:10

And Paul’s purpose was to live for something greater than pleasure, money, or personal fame. Paul expressed his single-minded passion to the Ephesians elders: “But I count my life of no value to myself, so that I may finish my course and the ministry I received from the Lord Jesus, to testify to the gospel of God’s grace” (Acts 20:24). Paul’s great aim in life was to finish his ministry of testifying to the gospel for the

glory of Christ. He reminds us of that glorious purpose to which we must give our lives in our own ministry contexts.

Robert Yarbrough's Commentary on Pastoral Epistles - 2 Timothy 3:10

His “purpose” (prothesis) Paul refers to this resolve, the iron will he exhibited from the time of his conversion to live out the implications of Jesus’s messiahship. Jesus taught, “No one who puts a hand to the plow and looks back is fit for service in the kingdom of God” (Luke 9:62), and Paul spoke of plowing as a metaphor for the Christian life (1 Cor 9:10). While he was surely not a sinless follower of Jesus (1 Tim 1:15– 16), Paul seems to have wavered little. The consistent and courageous “purpose” he exhibited is a model for Timothy to emulate.

John Stott's Commentary on 2 Timothy - 2 Timothy 3:10

... his ‘aim in life’ (the spiritual ambitions which motivated him and made life meaningful for him)

John MacArthur's Commentary on 2 Timothy

A leader's purpose relates to his personal motive for service, the driving passion of his heart. Paul was under compulsion, confessing, "Woe is me if I do not preach the gospel" (1 Corinthians 9:16). Yet his was an inner compulsion, a voluntary yielding of all that he had to the Lord... He continually discharged his responsibility to proclaim, without compromise or deflection, the gospel of Jesus Christ and the full counsel of God's Word.

That driving inner force creates a life of integrity and faithfulness, a life in which professed faith is lived truth. Such things as creature comforts, self-love, self-fulfillment, self-promotion, and self-preservation had been of no consequence to Paul, nor should they be to Timothy. The single great motive of their lives was the unreserved passion to fulfill the purpose of the divine calling to the glory of God.

William Mounce, Commentary on the Pastoral Epistles - 2
Timothy 3:10

Purpose carries the idea of resolve or a way of thinking. It is used earlier of God's purpose in salvation; 2 Timothy 3:10 is the only time in Paul that it is not used of God's purpose (cf. 2 Timothy 1:9).

Notes from Precept Austin

In the present context, *prothesis* refers to the plans or designs of Paul's life, the guiding motive of his life and work, the driving passion of his heart. Having clear purpose in line with the Father's will is an indispensable requirement in Christ's school of discipleship for "If you aim at nothing, you will hit it every time."

Paul was consumed with a passion to fulfill God's "purpose" for saving him to proclaim Christ writing: I am under compulsion; for woe is me if I do not preach the gospel" (1 Corinthians 9:16).

Peter adds that believers: "have been called for this purpose, (when you do what is right and suffer for it) since Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an

example for you to follow in His steps” (1 Peter 2:21).

Matthew Henry comments that Paul is saying to Timothy “Thou hast known my purpose, what I drive at, how far it is from any worldly, carnal, secular design, and how sincerely I aim at the glory of God and the good of the souls of men.

https://www.preceptaustin.org/2_timothy_310-11#3:10

John Gill’s Commentary on 2 Timothy 3:10

Purpose: Open and manifest; and which were not to obtain glory and applause from men, nor to gather wealth and riches for himself; but that God might be glorified in the salvation of men; that Christ might be magnified both in his life and death; that his Gospel might be spread, his kingdom be enlarged, and that many souls might be converted and brought to the knowledge of him; and hence he became all things to all, that he might gain some.

Applications

People have all kinds of drives, aims, and purposes in life. These are necessary for a healthy and fulfilled life. Genesis chapter

one explains that the drive to achieve something is a result of being made in the image of God. He gave humans their purpose in the creation mandate:

Genesis 1:26-28 (ESV) Then God said, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness. And let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over the livestock and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth."

*27 So God created man in his own image,
in the image of God he created him;
male and female he created them.*

28 And God blessed them. And God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it, and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over every living thing that moves on the earth."

Rick Warren comments on the creation mandate:

The first job God gave humans was to manage and take care of God's "stuff" on earth. This role has never been rescinded. It is a part of our purpose today. Everything we enjoy is to be treated as a trust that God has placed in our hands. The Bible says, "What do you have that God hasn't given you? And if all you have is from God, why boast as though you have accomplished something on your own?"

Warren, Rick. *The Purpose Driven Life: What on Earth*

Am I Here For? (p. 59). Zondervan. Kindle Edition.

Today, as followers of Jesus, we have a new creation mandate to bring everything under the Lordship of Christ through gospel preaching and gospel communities among all peoples. Rick Warren writes:

It's time to settle this issue. Who are you going to live for — yourself or God? You may hesitate, wondering whether you will have strength to live for God. Don't worry. God will give you what you need if you will just make the choice to live for him.

Warren, Rick. *The Purpose Driven Life: What on Earth Am I Here For?* (p. 76). Zondervan. Kindle Edition.

Our best life is a God-centered life dedicated to fulfilling God's purpose - his new creation mandate. We're not all called to be apostles, but we're all called to follow Jesus and glorify God in everything we do. We're all called to be salt and light, to good works, to love and faith, to gospel witness and Christ-centered community.

Rick Warren writes:

Knowing your purpose gives meaning to your life. We were made to have meaning. This is why people try dubious methods, like astrology or psychics, to discover it.

When life has meaning, you can bear almost anything; without it, nothing is bearable. A young man in his twenties wrote, “I feel like a failure because I’m struggling to become something, and I don’t even know what it is. All I know how to do is to get by. Someday, if I discover my purpose, I’ll feel I’m beginning to live.”

Without God, life has no purpose, and without purpose, life has no meaning. Without meaning, life has no significance or hope. In the Bible, many different people expressed this hopelessness. Isaiah complained, “I have labored to no purpose; I have spent my strength in vain and for nothing.” Job said, “My life drags by — day after hopeless day” and “I give up; I am tired of living. Leave me alone. My life makes no sense.”

The greatest tragedy is not death, but life without purpose.

Warren, Rick. *The Purpose Driven Life: What on Earth Am I Here For?* (pp. 40-41). Zondervan. Kindle Edition.

Warren continues:

One day you will stand before God, and he will do an audit of your life, a final exam before you enter eternity. The Bible says, “Remember, each of us will

stand personally before the judgment seat of God... Yes, each of us will have to give a personal account to God.”

Fortunately, God wants us to pass this test, so he has given us the questions in advance. From the Bible we can surmise that God will ask us two crucial questions:

First, “What did you do with my Son, Jesus Christ?” God won’t ask about your religious background or doctrinal views. The only thing that will matter is, did you accept what Jesus did for you and did you learn to love and trust him? Jesus said, “I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.”

Second, “What did you do with what I gave you?” What did you do with your life — all the gifts, talents, opportunities, energy, relationships, and resources God gave you? Did you spend them on yourself, or did you use them for the purposes God made you for?”

Warren, Rick. *The Purpose Driven Life: What on Earth Am I Here For?* (p. 45). Zondervan. Kindle Edition.

William Barclay writes:

First and foremost Paul has an aim in life. Two men were talking of a great satirist who had been filled with moral earnestness. “He kicked the world about,” said

one, “as if it had been a football.” “True,” said the other, “but he kicked it to a goal.”

As individuals, we should sometimes ask ourselves: What is our aim in life? As teachers, we should sometimes ask ourselves: What am I trying to do with these people whom I teach? Once Agesilaus, the Sparta king, was asked, “What shall we teach our boys?” His answer was: “That which will be most useful to them when they are men.” Is it knowledge, or is it life, that we are trying to transmit?

As members of the Church, we should sometimes ask ourselves, what are we trying to do in it? It is not enough to be satisfied when a church is humming like a dynamo and every night in the week has its own crowded organization. We should be asking: What, if any, is the unifying purpose that binds all this activity together? In all life, there is nothing so creative of really productive effort as a clear consciousness of a purpose.

William Barclay Daily Study Bible - Notes on 2 Timothy 3:10

Warren Wiersbe comments on the role of purpose in the Christian's life:

There was never a question about Paul's purpose in ministry: He wanted to do God's will and finish the work God gave him to do (Acts 20:24; Philippians 1:21).

Warren Wiersbe in *The Wiersbe Bible Commentary* (NT).

5

Chapter 5

Faithfulness Fueled by Faith

2 Timothy 3:10-11 (ESV) You, however, have followed my... faith,

Overview of Chapter 5

The chapter is organized into three sections:

1. Introductory Insights
2. Commentaries
3. Applications

Introductory Insights

Christian Biographies - Faithfulness Personified

I'm drawn to stories of faithful Christians. They inspire me. They give me something to aim at. This is why I read Christian biographies. As a new Christian, someone gave me a copy of *God's Smuggler* by Brother Andrew. It had a profound impact on my life then and for many years after. Brother Andrew was a Dutch Christian who smuggled Bibles in the trunk of his car into the Soviet Union. The book highlights how the Lord intervened to prevent border guards from finding the Bibles, which allowed Brother Andrew to distribute God's Word to the underground church.

Later, I read Jerry Falwell's biography, which describes how Falwell founded Thomas Road Baptist Church and led it to exponential growth. Falwell had a vision for the world's largest evangelical Christian University. He founded Liberty University in the basement of the church in 1971. Today, Liberty has over 100,000 students. Falwell is recorded as saying, "Don't tell God how big your mountains are; tell your mountains how big God is." Falwell was a man who believed that God can do what we think is impossible. Consequently, he attempted great things for God while expecting great things from God.

Many biographies have shaped, encouraged, and inspired me over the years, and I recommend everyone read about faithful Christians. John Piper has produced mini-biographies of Christian leaders, and these are available for free at <https://www.desiringgod.org/books/all>

For some suggested biographies, go to the Applications section

below.

Faithful, Faithfulness

- Matthew 23:23 (ESV) “Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you tithe mint and dill and cumin, and have neglected the weightier matters of the law: justice and mercy and faithfulness.
- Romans 3:3 (ESV) What if some were unfaithful? Does their faithlessness nullify the faithfulness of God?
- Galatians 5:22 (ESV) But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness,
- 2 Thessalonians 1:4 (ESV) Therefore we ourselves boast about you in the churches of God for your steadfastness and faith in all your persecutions and in the afflictions that you are enduring.
- 1 Timothy 1:12 (ESV) I thank him who has given me strength, Christ Jesus our Lord, because he judged me faithful, appointing me to his service,
- 1 Timothy 3:11 (ESV) Their wives likewise must be dignified, not slanderers, but sober-minded, faithful in all things.
- 1 Timothy 4:3 (NLT) 3 They will say it is wrong to be married and wrong to eat certain foods. But God created those foods to be eaten with thanks by faithful people who know the truth.
- 1 Timothy 5:11-12 (ESV) But refuse to enroll younger widows, for when their passions draw them away from Christ, they desire to marry and so incur condemnation for having abandoned their former faith (trust, pledge).
- 1 Timothy 6:11 (ESV) But as for you, O man of God, flee these things. Pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love,

steadfastness, gentleness.

- 2 Timothy 2:1-2 (ESV) You then, my child, be strengthened by the grace that is in Christ Jesus, 2 and what you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses entrust to faithful men, who will be able to teach others also.
- 2 Timothy 2:11-13 (ESV) The saying is trustworthy, for: 11 if we have died with him, we will also live with him; 12 if we endure, we will also reign with him; if we deny him, he also will deny us; 13 if we are faithless, he remains faithful—for he cannot deny himself.
- 2 Timothy 2:22 (ESV) So flee youthful passions and pursue righteousness, faith, love, and peace, along with those who call on the Lord from a pure heart.
- Titus 1:9 (ESV) He must hold firm to the trustworthy (faithful) word as taught, so that he may be able to give instruction in sound doctrine and also to rebuke those who contradict it.
- Titus 2:10 (ESV) not pilfering, but showing all good faith, so that in everything they may adorn the doctrine of God our Savior.

CWSB Dictionary

πίστις *pístis*; gen. *písteōs*, fem. noun from *peíthō* (G3982), to win over, persuade. Faith. Subjectively meaning firm persuasion, conviction, belief in the truth, veracity, reality or faithfulness (though rare). Objectively meaning that which is believed, doctrine, the received articles of faith.

(II) Good faith, faithfulness, sincerity (Matt. 23:23; Rom. 3:3; Gal. 5:22; 1 Tim. 1:19, being faithful, sincere; 2:7; 2 Tim. 2:22; 3:10; Titus 2:10, all good fidelity; Rev. 2:19; 13:10; Sept.: 1 Sam. 26:23; Prov. 12:22; Hab. 2:4).

(V) In Rom. 3:3, Paul asks rhetorically, “Their unfaithfulness will not nullify [katargései, fut. act. indic. of katargéō {G2673}, to nullify, destroy, render ineffective] the faithfulness [pístis] of God, will it?” (a.t.). Here pístis likely means faithfulness,

Put Simply

The “faith” Paul describes in 2 Timothy 3:10 has three aspects:

- The objective content of the Christian faith we profess - the faith.
- The subjective act of trusting in God and Christ and the gospel is how we receive forgiveness of sins and restoration to God - saving faith.
- Ongoing actions fueled by our commitment to love and follow Christ - faithfulness.

All aspects of faith are essential; they are always together when faith is genuine. It is possible that the apostle is referring to both his trust in God to keep his promises AND his faithfulness to God. They are connected; trust in God is the root, and faithfulness is the fruit.

Commentaries

John MacArthur's Commentary on 2 Timothy

Faith is here better rendered faithfulness as it is in referring to God in Romans 3:3 and to the fruit of the Spirit in Galatians 5:22 (cf. 1 Tim. 2:15; 4:12)... the faithfulness and trustworthiness of those who are already saved. The idea is that of faithfully living the truth that is professed.

John MacArthur Sermon on 2 Timothy 3:10 -

The second thing he mentions in verse 10 is faith, my faith. It could be that he means faith in God. That would certainly be a fair translation of *pistis*. It could mean that. It also could mean faithfulness or trustworthiness. The same term would be translated that way. And, usually, in lists that Paul makes, like Galatians 5, the list there, 1 Timothy 2:15, 1 Timothy 4:12. In the list it seems best to translate it faithfulness. So he may be saying you have followed my consummate faith and trust in God or you have followed my faithfulness, loyalty, and trustworthiness with regard to the truth.

In either case, what he is saying is I never compro-

mised, I never wavered in my trust toward God and I never wavered in my loyalty to His Word and His calling. You followed my faith, you followed my faithfulness. That's a tremendous thought. Faith begets faithfulness, if you really trust God you'll be faithful to His Word and His will. He stayed true to the purpose. So he says you followed my purpose and that meant you followed my faith and faithfulness. You stayed true to it because you were driven by that purpose.

<https://www.gty.org/library/sermons-library/55-15/standing-against-apostasy-part-1>

William D. Mounce on 2 Timothy

“Faith” begins the list of virtues that flow from correct doctrine and characterize a proper way of living. Timothy was likewise encouraged to pursue faith (cf. 2 Tim. 2:22). Unlike most of the articular uses of *pistis* in the Pastoral Epistles, this one refers not to credal faith but to “trust.”

Wiersbe Commentary on 2 Timothy

The apostle Paul was a man of “faith” who trusted God to meet his needs.

Robert Yarbrough on 2 Timothy

His “faith.” This factor refers to the personal commitment to Christ that Paul and Timothy shared (see 1 Tim 1:2: “To Timothy, my true son in the faith”). Such faith has an objective component (the faith that is believed) and a subjective one (trust in God, but for Paul that never rules out the truths that constitute the core of biblical revelation and Christian confession).

Bible.org

The word may mean “faithfulness,” which is a fruit of the Spirit (Gal. 5:22). Paul was certainly a faithful man (1 Cor. 4:1). But it also may refer to trusting God to do what is humanly impossible, so that He gets the glory. Referring to how God delivered him from the brink of death, Paul said (2 Cor. 1:9), “indeed, we had the sentence of death within ourselves so that we would not trust in ourselves, but in God who raises the dead.” A man or woman of faith lives in light of eternity, trusting that God will keep His promises

beyond the grave (2 Tim. 4:8). Look for examples that live by faith.

William Barclay Daily Study Bible

Paul goes on to other qualities of an apostle. There is faith, complete belief that God's commands are binding and that his promises are true.

Gill's Commentary - 2 Timothy

Faith, embraced, professed, and preached by him, was well known, so no less conspicuous was the grace of faith in him, with respect to his interest in God's everlasting love, in salvation by Jesus Christ, and in eternal glory and happiness; of which he had a full assurance, and which remained constant and firm in him to the end. Unless rather his faithfulness in the discharge of his ministerial work should be here designed, for which he was very remarkable;

Applications

A Small Selection of Christian Biographies to Read

- Heroes by Iain H. Murray.
- Living with the Giants by Warren Wiersbe
- From Jerusalem to Iruan Jaya by Ruth Tucker

Two Books on Living by Faith

- Building Dynamic Faith by Jerry Falwell
- 30 Life Principles by Charles Stanley

Jon Bloom: Devote Yourself to Faithfulness -

<https://www.desiringgod.org/articles/devote-yourself-to-faithfulness>

Introduction

If you're a Christian, no doubt you highly value God's faithfulness, the precious reality "that what God [has] promised, he [is] able to perform" (Romans 4:21 NASB). You believe that Christ upholds the entire cosmos "by the word of his power" (Hebrews 1:3). Therefore, all of reality, not to mention your eternal future, literally depends on God being true to his word.

True to your word. That is a concise, clear definition of what it means to be a faithful person. There is consistency between what you *say* and what you *do*, between what you *believe* and how you *behave*,

between what you *promise* and what you *perform*.

When we (and the Bible) describe someone as “faithful,” we’re almost never referring to how much faith that person possesses, but to how much faith others can place in that person — how much others can trust him to perform what he promises. A faithful person keeps (cherishes, maintains, guards) the faith of those who put their trust in him.

We all want to think of ourselves as faithful, but we all fail at different times and in different ways. As a character quality, as a fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22), faithfulness is all too often in short supply. It always has been, which is why this proverb is in the Bible: “Many a man proclaims his own steadfast love, but a faithful man who can find?” (Proverbs 20:6).

So, beginning with ourselves, how might we resolve to become more faithful disciples of Jesus? One way we can do so is by meditating on this crucial verse:

Trust in the Lord, and do good; dwell in the land and befriend faithfulness. (Psalm 37:3)

Graze on Faithfulness

Psalm 37 was written by David, whom God “took from the sheepfolds . . . to shepherd Jacob his people” (Psalm 78:70–71). David’s experience as a shepherd might explain his choice of the phrase translated “befriend faithfulness,” although the English Standard Version doesn’t convey to us

modern readers the full meaning of what the Hebrew words *rā'êh* and *'ēmūnāh* meant to David and his original readers. No translation does. Here's why:

The word *rā'êh*, which the ESV translates as “befriend,” can mean “feed, graze; drive out to pasture; shepherd, protect, nourish” (ESV OT RI).

The word *'ēmūnāh*, which the ESV translates as “faithfulness,” can mean “steadfastness; trustworthiness, faithfulness; firmness, security; honesty” (Ibid.).

This phrase is a translation challenge because David used a nuanced pastoral allusion — an allusion that his original readers would have intuitively understood (given how familiar they were with sheep), but one that is lost on the majority of us today. So, translators work hard to interpret and convey his meaning in a way we understand. Which explains the variety of different attempts (besides “befriend faithfulness”):

- “Verily [truly] thou shalt be fed” (King James Version).
- “Feed on His faithfulness” (New King James Version).
- “Enjoy security” (Revised Standard Version).
- “Cultivate faithfulness” (New American Standard Bible).
- “Enjoy safe pasture” (New International Version).

Perhaps we'd get closest to what David meant if we could somehow infuse the NASB's “cultivate” with the NKJV's “feed,” such that we'd come away with

a sense of “diligently cultivate [by grazing on] the virtue of faithfulness” (Keil & Delitzsch, 5:283).

But “cultivate,” “feed on,” and “befriend” all give us some sense of what David wants us to do: *devote ourselves to developing faithfulness until it becomes part of us.*

How to Grow Your Faithfulness

David’s command fits with how the Bible instructs us to pursue all aspects of godliness. We are called to build ourselves up in our most holy faith (Jude 20). And the way we build ourselves up spiritually is similar to the way we build our capacities for anything: we exercise what we want to grow.

Bodily strength is increased through the exercise of bodily strength. If we want to grow strong in our muscles or our minds, we must exercise them. We must push against internal and external resistance. We must endure the discomfort and persevere with the limitations of our current capacities until the discomfort decreases and our capacities increase. And we must not give in to the part of us that offers all kinds of reasons for why we should give up.

We all like the idea of stronger, trimmer bodies, but we all find it hard to work out and eat healthier. We all like the idea of growing more proficient in our skills, but we all find it hard to keep practicing and studying.

We all like the idea of building new, healthy, fruitful habits, but we all find it hard to consistently perform the habit until it becomes part of how we function.

Likewise, we all like the idea of becoming more faithful with our talents and more trustworthy to those we are called to serve and serve with, but we all find it hard to “discipline [ourselves] for the purpose of godliness” in this area (1 Timothy 4:7 NASB). But the only way to become more faithful is to practice faithfulness, to cultivate faithfulness, to feed on faithfulness, to befriend (make a companion of) faithfulness, to devote ourselves to developing faithfulness until it becomes part of us.

Begin with What You've Been Given

The wonderful thing is that we don't need some special faithfulness gym membership to begin growing our capacity for faithfulness. We have everything we need right now, right where we find ourselves. Jesus tells us, “One who is faithful in a very little is also faithful in much” (Luke 16:10). And so, if we draw strength from Jesus to be faithful with a little, he will entrust us with much (Matthew 25:23).

The best place for us to start is by identifying the people and responsibilities that Jesus has entrusted to us. And then remember David's exhortation:
Trust in the Lord, and do good; dwell in the land and

befriend faithfulness. (Psalm 37:3)

The people and responsibilities in front of us are where God wants us to trust him. This is the “land” where he wants us to dwell, at least for now. These are the people to whom he wants us to do good. This is where he calls us to practice, cultivate, graze on, and befriend faithfulness.

If we are ever going to be men and women who are more consistently *true to our word*, for whom there is less discontinuity between what we *say* and what we *do*, between what we *believe* and how we *behave*, between what we *promise* and what we *perform*, we will become so here, in the land where God has placed us.

And if we devote ourselves to faithfulness here, someday we will hear our Master say to us, “Well done, good and faithful servant. You have been faithful over a little; I will set you over much. Enter into the joy of your master” (Matthew 25:23).

Rick Warren: 7 Ways God Will Evaluate Your Faithfulness

<https://pastors.com/7-ways-god-will-evaluate-faithfulness/>

Pastors and leaders, I’m going to give you a sneak peek at your final exam. You’re going to stand before God one day, and he’s going to evaluate your faithfulness.

He's going to look at seven different aspects of your life to judge your faithfulness, and you should be highly interested in developing these areas of your life and leadership.

Do you possess the right values?

A faithful person knows what's important in life and what isn't. A faithful person knows how to invest his or her life. A faithful person makes his or her life count. A faithful person knows the significant apart from the trivial.

Proverbs 28:20 says, "*A faithful person will be richly blessed, but one eager to get rich will not go unpunished*" (NIV). This verse contrasts faithfulness with a desire to get rich quick. He's not talking about making money. He's saying that what we have to realize is there is more to life than just the accumulation of things. The Bible says we're to live like fish swimming upstream in a very materialistic world. Faithfulness is proven by our refusal to buy into the system that says the almighty buck is the number one thing in life. Faithfulness is often proven by choosing a simplified lifestyle to allow more time for ministry.

Do you care about the interests of others?

The second way God is going to judge our faithfulness is our relationship to other people. Did we care about the interests of others and not just our own?

Faithfulness swims against the stream of contemporary culture, which says, “What’s in it for me? What are my needs, my ambitions, my desires, my goals, my hurts, my values, my profit, my benefit?” But God says faithfulness is proven by our others-directedness and by giving our life away, by looking at others rather than concentrating on ourselves.

Do you live with integrity before an unbelieving world?

In other words, a mark of faithfulness is the kind of testimony you have with unbelievers. The Bible teaches that a pastor is to be above reproach in the community and to have a good reputation—not with believers but with unbelievers. When God evaluates your faithfulness, he won’t be looking at your communication skills. He will be examining the way in which you walked before those who are outside of the faith.

Do you keep your promises?

When God evaluates your faithfulness, he's going to look at all the promises you made. Proverbs 20:25 says, "*It is a trap to dedicate something rashly and only later to consider one's vows*" (NIV). It's easier to get into debt than to get out of debt—that's making a promise to pay. It's easier to get into a relationship than to get out of a relationship. It's easier to fill up your schedule than it is to fulfill your schedule. The Bible says faithfulness is a matter of if you say it, you do it. You keep your promises. The number one cause of resentment is unfulfilled promises.

Do you develop your God-given gifts?

There's a tremendous emphasis in the Bible on using the gifts and the talents God has given you. God has made an investment in your life and he expects a return on it. First Peter 4:10 says, "*Each one should use whatever gift he has received to serve others, faithfully administering God's grace in its various forms*" (NIV84). Notice it says if you don't use your gift, people are getting cheated. Faithfulness is based on what we do with what we have.

Do you obey God's commands?

In 1 Samuel 2:35, God says, “I will raise up a faithful priest who will serve me and do what I desire” (NLT). God defines *faithfulness* as obedience to the commands of Christ. We can be skilled leaders and communicators, but disobedience disqualifies us from being seen as faithful as God defines it. This is basic, but it's essential.

Do you pass on what you learn?

The Bible talks a lot about the transferring process of multiplication. You're to give what you learn to faithful men, and those faithful men are to give it to others, and so on. None of us would be here today if there hadn't been faithful men and women in the last 2,000 years of the church. We're leading today because some faithful men and women took the time to write down the Scriptures, others preserved the Scriptures, and others translated the Scriptures. We're here because of the testimony of faithful people.

If God teaches you a spiritual truth, it's your duty to pass it on to others.

How do I become faithful? Galatians 5:22-23 says, “*The fruit of the Spirit is . . . faithfulness*” (NIV). It's one of the nine fruits. When the Holy Spirit lives in my life, I will demonstrate faithfulness. How do you know when you're filled with the Spirit? What is the test? Some kind of emotional experience? Not

necessarily. You can have an emotional experience and not be filled with the Spirit. What is the test? The fruit is the test. How do I demonstrate that I'm filled with the Spirit? I demonstrate it when I'm faithful to the responsibilities that God has given me.

Hebrews 11: The Faithfulness Chapter

Hebrews 11:32-38 (ESV) And what more shall I say? For time would fail me to tell of Gideon, Barak, Samson, Jephthah, of David and Samuel and the prophets— 33 who through faith conquered kingdoms, enforced justice, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, 34 quenched the power of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, were made strong out of weakness, became mighty in war, put foreign armies to flight. 35 Women received back their dead by resurrection. Some were tortured, refusing to accept release, so that they might rise again to a better life. 36 Others suffered mocking and flogging, and even chains and imprisonment. 37 They were stoned, they were sawn in two, they were killed with the sword. They went about in skins of sheep and goats, destitute, afflicted, mistreated— 38 of whom the world was not worthy— wandering about in deserts and mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth.

6

Chapter 6

People Skills

2 Timothy 3:10-11 (ESV) You, however, have followed my... patience,

Overview of Chapter 6

The chapter is organized into three sections:

1. Introductory Insights
2. Commentaries
3. Applications

Introductory Insights

Christians Need Emotional Intelligence

New Christians may be surprised to learn that the Christian faith is lived in community with other Christians. It's not a solo journey. The church is a network of people whom God has called to himself AND each other through Jesus Christ. We are the Body of Christ and the Temple of the Holy Spirit. The church is like a family (God's household), with a high value placed on relationships rather than individualism.

The communal aspects of Christian living require us to develop a high degree of emotional intelligence (EQ) - especially showing patience with difficult people and human failings. Relationships fracture when we're quick-tempered, lacking empathy, or critical of others. A person with high EQ is willing to walk a mile in someone else's shoes, see things from another perspective, and adapt to circumstances. High EQ includes self-control and longsuffering.

People Skills Are Necessary

People skills are needed to thrive in the church. The goal is a unity that reflects the unity of the Godhead (Father, Son, and Holy Spirit) and the new, unified humanity Christ birthed at the cross:

Ephesians 2:15-16 (ESV) that he might create in himself one new man in place of the two, so making peace, 16 and might reconcile us both to God in one body through the cross, thereby killing the hostility.

Ephesians 2:19–22 (ESV) So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, 20 built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the cornerstone, 21 in whom the whole structure, being joined together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord. 22 In him you also are being built together into a dwelling place for God by the Spirit.

Ephesians 4:1–3 (ESV) I therefore, a prisoner for the Lord, urge you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling to which you have been called, 2 with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love, 3 eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

Timothy's Experience in Ephesus

Timothy's experience of leading the church in Ephesus underscores the need for church leaders and members to develop good people skills. Opponents of the gospel and the Christian faith were attacking Timothy, making his life and ministry difficult. Yet, his mentor (Paul) counseled patience with his opponents. Patience is tolerance for annoying people. An angry outburst would have been counterproductive (it might have felt good, though). On the other hand, patience might win some over. It would certainly keep the conversation flowing and the doors to reconciliation open.

Harvard Business Review

An article in the Harvard Business Review discusses the importance of emotional intelligence in business. The article's insights readily apply to the church.

Adapted from <https://online.hbs.edu/blog/post/emotional-intelligence-in-leadership>

Introduction

Emotional intelligence is defined as the ability to understand and manage your emotions, as well as recognize and influence the emotions of those around you. The term was first coined in 1990 by researchers John Mayer and Peter Salovey, but was later popularized by psychologist Daniel Goleman.

More than a decade ago, Goleman highlighted the importance of emotional intelligence in leadership, telling the Harvard Business Review, “The most effective leaders are all alike in one crucial way: They all have a high degree of what has come to be known as emotional intelligence. It’s not that IQ and technical skills are irrelevant. They do matter, but...they are the entry-level requirements for executive positions.”

Over the years, emotional intelligence—also known as EQ—has evolved into a must-have skill. Research

by EQ provider TalentSmart shows that emotional intelligence is the strongest predictor of performance. Employees with high emotional intelligence are more likely to stay calm under pressure, resolve conflict effectively, and respond to co-workers with empathy.

The Four Components of Emotional Intelligence

Emotional intelligence is typically broken down into four core competencies:

1. Self-awareness
2. Self-management
3. Social awareness
4. Relationship management

1. Self-Awareness

Self-awareness is at the core of everything. It describes your ability to not only understand your strengths and weaknesses, but to recognize your emotions and their effect on you and your team's performance.

2. *Self-Management*

Self-management refers to the ability to manage your emotions, particularly in stressful situations, and maintain a positive outlook despite setbacks. Leaders who lack self-management tend to react and have a harder time keeping their impulses in check.

3. *Social Awareness*

While it's important to understand and manage your own emotions, you also need to know how to read a room. Social awareness describes your ability to recognize others' emotions and the dynamics in play within your organization.

Leaders who excel in social awareness practice empathy. They strive to understand their colleagues' feelings and perspectives, which enables them to communicate and collaborate more effectively with their peers.

4. *Relationship Management*

Relationship management refers to your ability to influence, coach, and mentor others, and resolve conflict effectively.

Some prefer to avoid conflict, but it's important to properly address issues as they arise. Research shows that every unaddressed conflict can waste about eight hours of company time in gossip and other unproductive activities, putting a drain on resources and morale.

Find another helpful article on EQ here: <https://www.helpguide.org/articles/mental-health/emotional-intelligence-eq.htm>

Mounce's Expository Dictionary

From macros, “long” (in terms of time), and thymos, “the soul” as the seat of feelings and passions (including anger, temper)... the believer should be patient with everyone (Eph. 4:2; Col. 1:11; 3:12; 1 Thess. 5:14; Heb. 6:12).

CWSB Dictionary

μακροθυμία makrothumía; gen. makrothumías, fem. noun from makrothuméō (G3114), to be long-suffering. Forbearance, longsuffering, self-restraint before proceeding to action.

The quality of a person who is able to avenge himself yet refrains from doing so (Rom. 2:4; 9:22; Gal. 5:22; Eph. 4:2; Col. 1:11; 3:12; 1 Tim. 1:16; 2 Tim. 4:2; Heb. 6:12; James 5:10; 2 Pet. 3:15; Sept.: Prov. 25:15; Is. 57:15; Jer. 15:15).

In Heb. 6:15, makrothuméō (G3114) is used of Abraham's patient faith in God under the pressure of trying circumstances (James 5:7, 8). Makrothumía is patience in respect to persons while hupomoné (G5281), endurance, is putting up with things or circumstances. Both words are often found together (2 Cor. 6:4, 6; 2 Tim. 3:10).

Eerdman's Exegetical Dictionary of the New Testament (EDNT - 3 Vols.)

In the LXX μακροθυμία κτλ. appears relatively often. The Hebrew expression that stands behind it in most instances is 'ere 'appayim, “the delay of [the outbreak of] wrath.” It is esp. a characteristic of God, closely associated with his mercy (ἔλεος, etc.). Μακροθυμία κτλ. designates esp. the forbearance of God with humankind, particularly toward sinners, on whom he does not pour his wrath but instead forgives and saves them, though only if they repent. In the wisdom literature μακροθυμία κτλ. also refers to one's relationship to others: the good and the wise do not quickly let their wrath come forth. Here the secular meaning patience, perseverance also appears.

In the NT μακροθυμία κτλ. is both an attribute of God (and Jesus) and a characteristic of the Christian. Here there is a dependence in part on the OT and early Jewish use of this word.

God's μακροθυμία refers also here to his forbearance. However, it is esp. the characteristic of an interim period in which God holds back his wrath in order to give people the opportunity to repent, to avoid the wrath of God, and to receive salvation... In this sense it is found in Rom 2:4: forbearance is parallel to the

“kindness” (χρηστότης) and the “patience” (ἀνοχή) of God... Rom 9:22 is similar, though here the motif of repentance does not appear. According to 1 Pet 3:20 God waited patiently before the flow...; according to 2 Pet 3:9, 15 God’s judgment is delayed because God is forbearing and wants people to repent and be without sin and thus be saved (cf. Ign. Eph. 11:1; Hippolytus Commentarius in Dan. iv.22.1f.). The original OT meaning of μακροθυμία (thus connected with God’s mercy: forgiveness and salvation after repentance) is present in 1 Tim 1:16 (cf. ἠλεήθην), but here Jesus Christ is the subject of the forbearance.

The person as subj. of μακροθυμία κτλ. is present in the parable of the unmerciful servant: Because the debtors can not repay their debts, they ask their creditors for patience, i.e., they ask them not to punish them immediately, but to extend to them time in order that they may repay it (Matt 18:26, 29; cf. T. Job 11:10).

Μακροθυμία is a typical attribute of the Christian: the control of the wrath that easily boils over. Thus the word is found (often with χρηστότης, πραύτης, and ἀγάπη, and sometimes ὑπομονή) in the catalogs of virtues and in other series of Christian virtues (2 Cor 6:6; Gal 5:22; Eph 4:2; Col 1:11; 3:12; 1 Thess 5:14; 2 Tim 3:10). In addition, the proclamation of the gospel must occur “in forbearance and patience” (2 Tim 4:2). In the epigrammatic poem about the value of love, forbearance is not omitted (1 Cor 13:4; see also 1 Clem. 49:5).

Μακροθυμία κτλ. is found with a secular meaning

in Heb 6:12, 15; Jas 5:7 (bis), 8, 10. According to Hebrews the faithful should be patient in awaiting the future promises of God, just as Abraham was. James 5:7 refers to the imminent parousia and admonishes the brethren to wait, as the farmer does (cf. Origen *De Principiis* iii.1.14), to be always patient, and to have endurance, just as once Job (cf. ὑπομονή, v. 11) and the prophets persevered (for μακροθυμία–κακοπαθία, see also Josephus B.J. vi.37; cf. 2 Tim 4:2, 5).

The secular meaning (μακροθύμως, patiently) is present also in Acts 26:3...

Patience in the New Testament

God's Patience Towards Us

Romans 2:4 (ESV) Or do you presume on the riches of his kindness and forbearance and patience, not knowing that God's kindness is meant to lead you to repentance?

Romans 9:22–23 (ESV) What if God, desiring to show his wrath and to make known his power, has endured with much patience vessels of wrath prepared for destruction,

1 Timothy 1:16 (ESV) But I received mercy for this reason, that in me, as the foremost, Jesus Christ might display his perfect patience as an example to those who were to believe in him for eternal life.

2 Peter 3:15 (ESV) *And count the patience of our Lord as salvation,*

Our Patience Towards Others

1 Corinthians 13:4–5 (ESV) *Love is patient and kind; love does not envy or boast; it is not arrogant 5 or rude.*

2 Corinthians 6:3–6 (ESV) *We put no obstacle in anyone’s way, so that no fault may be found with our ministry, 4 but as servants of God we commend ourselves in every way: by great endurance, in afflictions, hardships, calamities, 5 beatings, imprisonments, riots, labors, sleepless nights, hunger; 6 by purity, knowledge, **pa-tience**...*

Galatians 5:22 (ESV) *But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, **patience** ...*

Ephesians 4:1–3 (ESV) *I therefore, a prisoner for the Lord, urge you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling to which you have been called, 2 with all humility and gentleness, with **patience**, bearing with one another in love, 3 eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.*

Colossians 3:12–13 (ESV) *Put on then, as God’s chosen ones, holy and beloved, compassionate hearts, kindness, humility, meekness, and **patience**, 13 bearing with one another and, if one has a complaint against another, forgiving each other;*

*1 Thessalonians 5:13-14 (ESV) Be at peace among yourselves. 14 And we urge you, brothers, admonish the idle, encourage the fainthearted, help the weak, be **patient** with them all.*

*2 Timothy 4:2 (ESV) preach the word; be ready in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, and exhort, with complete **patience** and teaching.*

Commentaries

John Stott's Commentary on 2 Timothy

... his 'patience' - tolerance or longsuffering towards aggravating people.

Lenski's Commentary on the New Testament (20 Vols.)

"My faith" is paired with "my longsuffering," for this is the quality needed when teaching others to believe: the mind must hold out long until the fruit comes. Some foreign missionaries taught and taught for years until the ice was finally broken. In this, too, Timothy had followed Paul. So "my faith, my longsuffering" build on "my teaching."

New American Commentary

The term “patience” (makrothymia) reflected a forbearance toward people and circumstances (4:2),

George Knight’s Commentary on 2 Timothy

... probably carries the sense of “forbearance, patience” towards others, which it also has in its other Pastoral Epistles occurrences (1 Tim. 1:16; 2 Tim. 4:2).

Christ-Centered Exposition Commentary

Timothy also observed particular virtues in Paul’s life: “Faith, patience, love, and endurance.” These four qualities are at the heart of the Christian life. Timothy observed Paul’s faithfulness in ministry (e.g., Acts 18:5-11). He knew of his patience toward others (e.g., the Corinthian church!).

William D. Mounce’s Commentary on 2 Timothy

Patience (cf. 1 Tim 1:16) is especially needed in the Ephesian context and elsewhere (2 Cor. 6:6). and should be a quality of Timothy's life (2 Tim 4:2; cf. 2 Tim. 2:24: "patient even in the midst of evil").

Robert Yarbrough's Commentary on 2 Timothy

His "patience" (makrothymia). This is an attribute of God (Rom 2:4; 9:22) and of Christ (1 Tim 1:16), but also a trait of Paul (and Timothy) as Paul represents them to the Corinthians (2 Cor 6:6). It is a fruit of the Spirit (Gal 5:11) and a trait of God's people (Eph 4:2; Col 1:11; 3:12). Paul will later stress Timothy's need for it (2 Tim 4:2). There are times when any Christian is tempted to give up or take shortcuts. Paul had shown to Timothy a steadfastness that bespoke belief that time is on God's side; his followers, as they toil mightily for him, can gamely await and expect his deliverance. That is Pauline patience.

Precept Austin - 2 Timothy 3:10

Patience (makrothymia from makro = long + thymos = emotion) literally means having a "long fuse" and thus describes an individual who is opposed to haste,

passionate expressions and thoughts, or irritability. Makrothumia denotes the state of mind that can bear long when oppressed, provoked, falsely and maliciously accused, or when one seeks to injure us. The man of God must have a long fuse lest he explode when he cannot afford to. Chrysostom defined “makrothumia” as that “spirit which could take revenge if it liked but utterly refuses to do so.”

J Vernon McGee writes that makrothumia means “long-burning”—it burns a long time. We shouldn’t have a short fuse with our friends and Christian brethren. We shouldn’t make snap judgments.” (McGee, J V: Thru the Bible Commentary: Thomas Nelson)

Calvin said makrothumia refers to that quality of mind that disposes us “to take everything in good part and not to be easily offended.”

Larry Richards - The NT contains many exhortations to be patient. But just what is patience? The Greek word group (makrothumeo/makrothumia) focuses our attention on restraint: that capacity for self-control despite circumstances that might arouse the passions or cause agitation....This is not so much a trait as a way of life. We keep on loving or forgiving despite provocation, as illustrated in Jesus’ pointed stories in Mt 18.” (Richards, L O: Expository Dictionary of Bible Words: Regency)

Hall adds that patience “is an ornament of great worth, not only in the sight of man but also of God. Without it, we are unfit for duty, as the troubled sea

unfit for voyage. Without it we double and increase our burdens; like a wild bull in a net, or the untamed heifer, we may gall our necks, but never break the yoke....By our patience we please God, displease the devil, rejoice the angels, and many times melt and convert our enemies. By this means we heap coals of conversion or coals of confusion upon their heads (Ro12:20). This will keep us good in a bad condition so that a man enjoys himself when he hath nothing else; and though he has nothing, yet is as one that possesses all things.” (2 Timothy 3 Commentary)

John MacArthur New Testament Commentary - 2 Timothy

Makrothumia carries the additional ideas of steadfastness and longsuffering. Paul is speaking of the resolute and persistent spirit of the servant of Christ who never gives up and never gives in, regardless of the cost. Such patience is more than an attitude; it is a determined way of life and is a certain mark of the Christian who lives in uncompromising devotion to his Lord and to the work of the kingdom.

John MacArthur Sermon on 2 Timothy 3:10

www.gty.org/library/sermons-library/55-15/standing-against-apostasy-part-1

And even when things don't go right, he says, you followed my patience, makrothumia. What is that? That is the spirit that endures persecution from people. The steadfast spirit that never gives up and never gives in. It means patience with people, even persecuting people. So he says, "Timothy, you followed my purpose, that resolute uncompromising devotion to do the duty God had given you, to preach Christ, exalt His name, extend His Kingdom with no thought for comfort, no thought for personal success. You did it; you were committed to doing it. Your faith never wavered, your faithfulness and loyalty was exemplary. And even when persecution came you endured that, you took it. You were patient with people, even to people who persecuted you.

Warren Wiersbe's Bible Commentary - 2 Timothy

Paul was a man of "longsuffering" who bore up under people's attacks.

7

Chapter 7

From Selfish to Sacrificial

2 Timothy 3:10-11 (ESV) You, however, have followed my... love,

Overview of Chapter 7

The chapter is organized into three sections:

1. Introductory Insights
2. Commentaries
3. Applications

Introductory Insights

“I” Is the Problem

Our biggest problem is not any of the things we usually think of. It's not money, or people, or health, or any number of circumstances we face. My biggest problem is me; your biggest problem is you. “I” is the problem. Our ego gets in the way of the most important Christlike virtue - love. Christ's love for us was selfless and sacrificial. He got his ego out of the way so he could give himself away for us.

Romans 5:8 (ESV) but God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

1 John 4:9-12 (ESV) In this the love of God was made manifest among us, that God sent his only Son into the world, so that we might live through him. 10 In this is love, not that we have loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins. 11 Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another. 12 No one has ever seen God; if we love one another, God abides in us and his love is perfected in us.

One sign of spiritual growth is our movement away from self to sacrifice because we love people. Love is more than an emotion; it is sacrificial action for the sake of others. The irony of love is that it doesn't feel like a sacrifice; it is voluntary, willing, and fulfilling.

Paul's journey from the fanatical Pharisee who arrested and killed people in the name of his religion to the suffering saint who risked life and limb to get the gospel to those who had

never heard is a remarkable story of life transformation. His experience of Christ's love changed his heart and the trajectory of his life.

We're all invited to join Paul's transformative experience. We're all invited to live a life of love for God and others.

“Love” In 2 Timothy 3:10

“Love” in 2 Timothy 3:10 is the Greek noun *agape*. Its verb form is *apapao*. See below for a comprehensive description of *agape* love in the New Testament.

NIV Word Study Dictionary

ἀγάπη *agapē*, noun, love: In the NT it is usually the active love of God for his Son and his people, and the active love his people are to have for God, each other, and even enemies;

Mounce's Complete Expository Dictionary of Old and New Testament Words

Verb: ἀγαπάω (**agapaō**), one of four Gk. verbs meaning “to love.” In secular Greek especially before the time of Christ, it was a colorless word without any great depth of meaning, used frequently as a synonym of *erōs* (sexual love) and *phileō* (the general term for love). If it had any nuance, it was the idea of love for the sake of its object. Perhaps because of its neutrality of meaning and perhaps because of this slight nuance of meaning, the biblical writers picked *agapaō* to describe many forms of human love (e.g., husband and wife, Eph. 5:25, 28, 33) and, most importantly, God’s undeserved love for the unlovely. In other words, its meaning comes not from the Greek but from the biblical understanding of God’s love.

A biblical definition of love starts with God, never with us (1 Jn. 4:9-10). God is love itself; it is his character that defines love. Because he is love (4:8, using the related noun *agapē*), he acts with love toward an undeserving world (Jn. 3:16; 1 Jn. 3:1, 16), to save them from their sins and reconcile them to himself (Rom. 5:8). The pure and perfect love of God is typified in the love relationship between God the Father and God the Son, which Jesus shows to his disciples (Jn. 17:26).

In response, people are to love God. “Dear friends, let us love one another, for love comes from God. Everyone who loves has been born of God and knows God. Whoever does not love does not know God, because God is love” (1 Jn. 4:7-8). They are in fact to love God above everything else, which is the greatest commandment (Mk. 12:30, 33), and then to love one another (Mt. 19:19; 22,39; Mk. 12:31; Rom. 13:8; 1 Jn. 3:11, 23), especially their spiritual family (Gal. 6:10; 1 Jn. 2:10).

If a person loves God, he or she will also love other people (Gal. 5:6; 1 Thess. 3:6; 1 Jn. 4:20). Loving the other person is an outflow of God’s love for you (“A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another,” Jn. 13:34; cf. 15:12; 1 Jn. 4:11) and sums up the entire law (Rom. 13:7; Gal. 5:14) and is the “royal law” (Jas. 2:8). “Anyone who does not do what is right is not a child of God; nor is anyone who does not love his brother” (1 Jn. 3:10). Our love toward Christ is demonstrated by our obedience to his teachings (Jn. 14:21, 15, 21, 23; 15,10; 1 Jn. 2:5; 5,3; 2 Jn. 6). In return, this obedience invokes the blessing, of God’s love for us (Jn. 14:21). No wonder that love stands at the head of the list of the fruits of the Spirit (Gal. 5:22) and is the greatest of all that will last for eternity (1 Cor. 13:13, both using the noun *agapē*).

But disciples are not only to love God and fellow

believers; they are to love all people (1 Cor. 16:14; 1 Thess. 3:12; 2 Pet. 1:7) as especially their enemies. “But I tell you: Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you” (Mt. 5:44; cf. Lk. 6:35).

The very foundation of salvation is grounded in the realization that God’s unmerited love toward us is greater than any other power—including death (Rom. 8:37-39; 1 Cor. 15:55-57).

Noun: ἀγάπη (**agapē**), signifies the true and pure love of God to his dear Son (Jn. 17:26), to his people (Gal. 6:10), and to a depraved humanity that is in rebellion against him (Jn. 3:16; Rom. 5:8). In fact, the Bible declares that the very nature of God can be defined as love (1 Jn. 4:8, 16). We can see that God is love, regardless of our situation in life; Heb. 12:6 explains that even though we may be under the correction of God, the correction is always guided by love. It is the love of God that prompts our obedience to him. Jesus told his disciples, “Whoever has my commandments and obeys them, he is the one who loves me. He who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I too will love him and show myself to him” (Jn. 14:21, using the related verb *agapaō*).

agapē encompasses the mind, emotions, and will of the individual because it comes from God. As such, we are to live the life of love as demonstrated by the Lord Jesus Christ himself (Eph. 5:2).

Paul tells us, “The fruit of the Spirit is love” (Gal. 5:22); it is only by the indwelling of the Holy Spirit of God that we can internalize and realize the love that God has for us. This type of godly love compels us to look for unmet needs among our fellow human beings. It is godly compulsion (2 Cor. 5:14), which brings us to a point where the world no longer sees us, but rather Christ in us.

This idea prompted the translators of the KJV to translate *agapē* as “charity” (see, e.g., 1 Cor. 13). Derived from the Latin word *caritas*, charity is characterized in the KJV as an out-showing of God’s love and benevolence toward humanity. Further examination of 1 Cor. 13 reveals an inseparable relationship between faith, hope, and love (1 Cor. 13:13), yet the apostle affirms the supremacy of love.

Lastly, *agapē* is a beautiful word picture of sacrificial love. It is expressed in the fact that “while we were still sinners, Christ died for us” (Rom. 5:8). As such, *agapē* can be defined as unmerited and unwavering love. God is the originator of this love, and it can only be experienced by one who truly knows God and has received his Son as Lord and Savior. The ultimate expression of God’s unmitigated love is the Lord Jesus Christ on Calvary’s cross.

Eerdman's Exegetical Dictionary of the New Testament (EDNT - 3 Vols.)

Pauline tradition is reflected in Eph 2:4f.: God has “out of the great love with which he loved us” made the sinner “alive together with Christ.” The love of Christ surpasses all knowledge (3:19); it shows itself as love for the Church in his self-surrender as an “offering and sacrifice to God” (5:2).

In Ephesians, the application begins with the exhortation to love which enables mutual “forbearing” and “upbuilds” the body of Christ (4:2, 16), and the letter closes with the petition for “love with faith” from God and Christ (6:23) and the designation of the addressees... as people who “love our Lord Jesus Christ with love undying” (v. 24).

In the Pastoral Epistles, love can be directed toward the appearing of Christ, i.e., the parousia, or toward “this present world.” The “goal of instruction” is “love that issues from a pure heart and a good conscience and sincere faith” (1 Tim 1:5; “love” alongside “faith” also in 1:14; 2:15; 4:12; 6:11; 2 Tim 1:13; 2:22; 3:10; Titus 2:3). Some have wandered far away from this love (1 Tim 1:3f., 6f.). Love stands in contrast to the results of heretical agitation and can to this extent serve as a criterion for correct preaching. Timothy is admonished to hold fast to the example of

the sound teaching that he received from Paul “in the faith and love” (2 Tim 1:13).

The demand for love of “one another” is grounded in Jesus’ love for his own and has in that love its example (15:12f., 17). To this extent it is a “new commandment” (13:34f.).

1–3 John distinguish themselves from John above all in the fact that God’s love (1 John 3:1; 4:7–21; 2 John 3) and love for God (1 John 2:5, 15; 3:17; 4:10, 12, 20f.; 5:1–3) and for Jesus (5:1), as well as love for one another (3:11, 23; 4:7, 11f.; 2 John 5) and love for the brother (1 John 2:10; 3:10; 4:20f.; pl. 3:14; cf. 5:1f.) are placed in relationship to each other.

In James, the command to love the neighbor (Lev 19:18) is characterized as the “royal law” (2:8). 1 Pet 1:22 demands “sincere love of the brethren,” and that the readers “love one another earnestly from the heart” (cf. 2:17; 4:8).

CWSB Dictionary

ἀγάπη agápē; noun from agapáō (G0025), to love. Love, affectionate regard, goodwill, benevolence.

With reference to God’s love, it is God’s willful

direction toward man. It involves God doing what He knows is best for man and not necessarily what man desires. For example, John 3:16 states, “For God so loved [ἔγάπησεν] the world, that he gave.” What did He give? Not what man wanted, but what God knew man needed, i.e., His Son to bring forgiveness to man.

Spoken more especially of good will toward others, the love of our neighbor, brotherly affection, which the Lord Jesus commands and inspires (John 15:13; 17:26; Rom. 13:10; 1 Cor. 13:1; Heb. 6:10; 1 John 4:7).

In 2 Cor. 13:11, “the God of love” means the author and source of love, who Himself is love. In Rom. 15:30, “the love of the Spirit” means that love which the Spirit inspires (See. also 2 Cor. 2:4, 8; 2 Thess. 1:3; 1 Pet. 4:8; John 13:35, “love one to another”; 2 Cor. 8:7).

... that love of which God or Christ is the object in the hearts of Christians. Of God (Luke 11:42; John 5:42; 1 John 2:5). Also used in an absolute sense (1 John 4:16, 18; 2 John 1:6). Of Christ (John 15:10; Rom. 8:35).

Love for Others in the New Testament

Matthew 5:43-45 (ESV) You have heard that it was said, 'You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.' 44 But I say to you, Love your enemies and pray for those

who persecute you, ⁴⁵ so that you may be sons of your Father who is in heaven.

John 13:34-35 (ESV) A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another: just as I have loved you, you also are to love one another. ³⁵ By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.”

John 15:12-13 (ESV) “This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. ¹³ Greater love has no one than this, that someone lay down his life for his friends.

John 17:26 (ESV) I made known to them your name, and I will continue to make it known, that the love with which you have loved me may be in them, and I in them.”

Romans 13:8-10 (ESV) ⁸ Owe no one anything, except to love each other, for the one who loves another has fulfilled the law. ⁹ For the commandments, “You shall not commit adultery, You shall not murder, You shall not steal, You shall not covet,” and any other commandment, are summed up in this word: “You shall love your neighbor as yourself.” ¹⁰ Love does no wrong to a neighbor; therefore love is the fulfilling of the law.

1 Corinthians 13:1 (ESV) If I speak in the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I am a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal.

1 Corinthians 13:4-8 (ESV) Love is patient and kind; love does not envy or boast; it is not arrogant or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; 6 it does not rejoice at wrongdoing, but rejoices with the truth. 7 Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. 8 Love never ends.

1 Corinthians 16:13-14 (ESV) Be watchful, stand firm in the faith, act like men, be strong. 14 Let all that you do be done in love.

Galatians 5:6 (ESV) For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision counts for anything, but only faith working through love.

Galatians 5:22 (ESV) But the fruit of the Spirit is love...

Ephesians 4:1-3 (ESV) I therefore, a prisoner for the Lord, urge you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling to which you have been called, 2 with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love, 3 eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

Ephesians 4:15 (ESV) Rather, speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ,

Ephesians 5:1-2 (ESV) Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children. 2 And walk in love, as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us, a fragrant offering and

sacrifice to God.

Ephesians 5:25 (ESV) Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her,

1 Thessalonians 3:6 (ESV) But now that Timothy has come to us from you, and has brought us the good news of your faith and love

1 Thessalonians 3:12 (ESV) and may the Lord make you increase and abound in love for one another and for all

1 Timothy 1:5 (ESV) The aim of our charge is love that issues from a pure heart and a good conscience and a sincere faith.

James 2:8 (ESV) If you really fulfill the royal law according to the Scripture, "You shall love your neighbor as yourself," you are doing well.

2 Peter 1:5-7 (ESV) For this very reason, make every effort to supplement your faith with virtue, and virtue with knowledge, 6 and knowledge with self-control, and self-control with steadfastness, and steadfastness with godliness, 7 and godliness with brotherly affection, and brotherly affection with love.

1 John 2:10 (ESV) Whoever loves his brother abides in the light, and in him there is no cause for stumbling.

1 John 3:11 (ESV) For this is the message that you have

heard from the beginning, that we should love one another.

1 John 3:23 (ESV) And this is his commandment, that we believe in the name of his Son Jesus Christ and love one another, just as he has commanded us.

1 John 4:11-12 (ESV) 11 Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another. 12 No one has ever seen God; if we love one another, God abides in us and his love is perfected in us.

Commentaries

Calvin's Commentary of 2 Timothy.

For it was not only an immeasurable love, that God spared not his own Son, that by his death he might restore us to life; but it was goodness the most marvelous, which ought to fill our minds with the greatest wonder and amazement. Christ, then, is so illustrious and singular a proof of divine love towards us, that whenever we look upon him, he fully confirms to us the truth that God is love.

He amplifies God's love by another reason, that he gave us his own Son at the time when we were enemies, as Paul teaches us, in Romans 5:8; but he employs other words, that God, induced by no love of men,

freely loved them. He meant by these words to teach us that God's love towards us has been gratuitous. And though it was the Apostle's object to set forth God as an example to be imitated by us; yet the doctrine of faith which he intermingles, ought not to be overlooked. God freely loved us, — how so? because he loved us before we were born, and also when, through depravity of nature, we had hearts turned away from him, and influenced by no right and pious feelings.

Lenski's Commentary on 2 Timothy 3:10

My love” builds on “my conduct,” for intelligent, purposeful ἀγάπη animated all Paul's conduct.

Christ-Centered Exposition Commentary on 2 Timothy 3:10

Timothy also observed particular virtues in Paul's life: “Faith, patience, love, and endurance.” These four qualities are at the heart of the Christian life. Timothy observed Paul's faithfulness in ministry (e.g., Acts 18:5–11). He knew of his patience toward others (e.g., the Corinthian church!). He witnessed his love for the churches (see Phil 1:7–8). He watched

Paul's amazing endurance as he kept on going despite endless hardships (see 2 Cor 6:4-10). Of course, none of this was owing to Paul's ability but to God's transforming grace. These four characteristics mark Paul's life, and now in a prison cell he urges Timothy to follow them.

Robert Yarbrough, Commentary on 2 Timothy 3:10

His "love." The God Paul serves is "the God of love" (2 Cor 13:11). Paul lived a life driven by that love: "Christ's love compels us" (2 Cor 5:14). He called for love from believers ("Do everything in love" [1 Cor 16:14]) and offered it to them ("My love to all of you in Christ Jesus" [1 Cor 16:24]). When thinking of Paul and what Timothy had learned from him about life in Christ and in service for Christ, Timothy would surely rank this depth and quality of love as one of his foremost impressions.

MacArthur Commentary on 2 Timothy 3:10

Because God himself is loving, no devoted servant of his can be without love. This is the volitional, purposeful, unselfish love that is superior even to faith and hope (1 Cor. 13:13) and is the first fruit of

the Spirit (Galatians 5:22).

We are to walk in love just as Christ also loved (us), and gave himself up for us... (Eph. 5:2; 1 John 4:7).

Love in fact is so crucial to the Christian life that “the one who does not love does not know God...” (1 John 4:8).

John MacArthur - Sermon on 2 Timothy 3:10

<https://www.gty.org/library/sermons-library/55-15/standing-against-apostasy-part-1>

Then he adds a fourth characteristic, my love you followed. You loved, you loved God in it all, you never lost your love for Him. You loved the church. That’s why you were willing to do it. And you loved the lost and you loved even your enemies who persecuted you. We can take love and stretch it at the most magnanimous point here. The agape volitional love of Paul was evident in every dimension. He loved God unwaveringly. He loved the world so much that his heart broke when he saw a city given to idolatry. He loved the church so much that he gave his life on their behalf.

And he loved even his enemies, even his enemies to the point where his desire for those who persecuted him

was salvation. He had love in its widest broadest sense. Now, do you see the flow of qualities? When a man has a driving purpose to fulfill God's will he will be faithful to that purpose. Faithful to that purpose even though he is persecuted and hated by those around him. And even though being persecuted and hated, never moves away from loving God, loving the church, loving the lost and loving even the persecutors. Virtue upon virtue marks out the greatness of the heart of Paul. And Timothy followed that. He patterned his life after that.

John Stott's Commentary on 2 Timothy 3:10

... his 'love' (towards both God and man, as opposed to the false teachers' love for self, money, and pleasure)...

Precept Austin

Again we see that the supernatural Source of this **love** is "the fruit of the Spirit is love... (Galatians 5:22).

Love is unconditional, sacrificial love and a love that God is (1 John 4:8, 16), that God shows (John 3:16; 1 John 4:9). Agape is God's selfless, sacrificial,

supernatural love providing for the recipient's highest good and doing so whether appreciated or not.

Agape in the Greek classics spoke of a love called out of one's heart by the preciousness of the object loved. This is the idea inherent in the Father's proclamation "This is My beloved Son..." Agape is the love that was shown at Calvary.

It is not human affection but is divine love, commanded by God, produced as fruit in the heart of a surrendered saint by the Holy Spirit, self-sacrificial in nature seeking the benefit of the one who is loved, a love which means death to self and defeat for sin since the essence of sin is self-will and self-gratification, a love activated by personal choice of our will (working out our salvation in fear and trembling) not based on our feelings toward the object of our love and manifested by specific actions not just to fellow believers but to all men everywhere.

Applications

John Piper on Christian Love

The difference between secular love and Christian love is that secular love is not rooted in the cross of God's Son, and is not sustained and shaped by the power of

God's Spirit, and is not acted for the glory of God the Father. So the source of it is different, the sustaining power of it is different, and the goal of it is different. Let's think about each of these one at a time and see if we can fill it out.

<https://www.desiringgod.org/interviews/what-make-s-christian-love-different>

For example, C.S. Lewis — and I would recommend this book very highly — in *The Four Loves* distinguishes *eros*, a kind of romantic love where the lovers are hungry for each other, and *phelos*, friendship love where two people are linked arm in arm, shoulder to shoulder, with a common vision and a common goal and a delight and a partnership pulling together toward the goal, and *storge*, affection that one might have for an old sweater or slippers, an old dog that you just can't let go of, and *agape*, divine love characterized by sacrifice in the pursuit of another person's good.

So what I think would be most helpful in response to the question is to give a biblical definition of the love of benevolence because this is the kind of love, which in the Bible, is celebrated as the heart of God's love. So the magnitude of God's love of benevolence is measured in the Bible by four criteria that it can see:

The degree to which the person loved does not deserve to be loved.

The greatness of the price paid to love a person.

The greatness of the good that is done for the person when he is loved.

The level of desire that God has for the good of the one loved.

<https://www.desiringgod.org/interviews/what-is-love>

Jon Bloom on Christlike Love

Jesus, being God, is love (1 John 4:8). And his love covers a multitude of sins (1 Peter 4:8). His love seeks to serve, rather than be served (Matthew 20:28). His love seeks to save the lost (Luke 19:10) and lavishes the returning prodigal with grace (Luke 15:11–32). His love is patient and kind; it's not envious, boastful, arrogant, or rude. His love is not irritable or resentful, does not insist on its own selfish way, rejoices only in the truth, and bears all things (1 Corinthians 13:4–7).

The love of Christ transcends every other virtue; it is the most excellent way (1 Corinthians 12:31; 13:13).

And Jesus said this kind of love would be the distinguishing mark of his followers, the most remarkable thing about them (John 13:35). Because they would love like he loved, they would be his love-ambassadors on earth (2 Corinthians 5:20). So, Christians are meant to be the most love-focused, love-pursuing, love-dispensing people on the face of the earth.

Is this me? Is this you? Do people describe you and me as remarkably loving?

<https://www.desiringgod.org/articles/lord-increase-my-capacity-to-love>

Jesus is utterly serious about his commandment, perhaps more than we may think (John 13:34). He did not command us to love one another relatively well. He commanded us to love one another divinely well — to love as he loved.

It does not matter that this is impossible for fallen human beings, for we have a God for whom all things are possible (Mark 10:27). And since the Father promises to give his Spirit to those who ask (Luke 11:13), let us ask boldly (Hebrews 4:16) and persistently (Luke 11:5–8):

Whatever it takes, Lord, increase my capacity to love until I love you with all my heart, soul, strength, and

mind, and love my neighbor as I love myself.

<https://www.desiringgod.org/articles/lord-increase-my-capacity-to-love>

Precept Austin on Loving Others

As **Edwards** has said **love** “is the badge of discipleship, the landmark of heaven.” Jesus said that “By this all will know that you are my disciples, if you have **love** (agape) one for another (John 13:35).

Tertullian wrote, “It is our care for the helpless, our practice of lovingkindness, that brands us in the eyes of many of our opponents. ‘Look!’ they say, ‘How they love one another!’ Look how they are prepared to die for one another.”

Some Examples of the Apostle Paul’s love for Christians:

Paul’s love for the Christians in Thessalonica

1 Thessalonians 2:7-12 (ESV) But we were gentle among you, like a nursing mother taking care of her own children. 8 So, being affectionately desirous of you, we were ready to share with you not only the gospel of God but also our own selves, because you had become very dear

to us.

9 For you remember, brothers, our labor and toil: we worked night and day, that we might not be a burden to any of you, while we proclaimed to you the gospel of God. 10 You are witnesses, and God also, how holy and righteous and blameless was our conduct toward you believers. 11 For you know how, like a father with his children, 12 we exhorted each one of you and encouraged you and charged you to walk in a manner worthy of God, who calls you into his own kingdom and glory.

Paul's love for the Christians in Philippi

Philippians 1:7-8 (ESV) It is right for me to feel this way about you all, because I hold you in my heart, for you are all partakers with me of grace, both in my imprisonment and in the defense and confirmation of the gospel. 8 For God is my witness, how I yearn for you all with the affection of Christ Jesus.

Paul's love for the Christians in Rome - he mentions so many people by name

Romans 16:1-16 (ESV) I commend to you our sister Phoebe, a servant of the church at Cenchreae, 2 that you may welcome her in the Lord in a way worthy of the saints, and help her in whatever she may need from you, for she has been a patron of many and of myself as well.

3 Greet Prisca and Aquila, my fellow workers in Christ

Jesus, 4 who risked their necks for my life, to whom not only I give thanks but all the churches of the Gentiles give thanks as well. 5 Greet also the church in their house.

Greet my beloved Epaphroditus, who was the first convert to Christ in Asia. 6 Greet Mary, who has worked hard for you.

7 Greet Andronicus and Junia, my kinsmen and my fellow prisoners. They are well known to the apostles, and they were in Christ before me.

8 Greet Ampliatus, my beloved in the Lord.

9 Greet Urbanus, our fellow worker in Christ, and my beloved Stachys.

10 Greet Apelles, who is approved in Christ. Greet those who belong to the family of Aristobulus.

11 Greet my kinsman Herodion. Greet those in the Lord who belong to the family of Narcissus.

12 Greet those workers in the Lord, Tryphaena and Tryphosa. Greet the beloved Persis, who has worked hard in the Lord.

13 Greet Rufus, chosen in the Lord; also his mother, who has been a mother to me as well.

14 Greet Asyncritus, Phlegon, Hermes, Patrobas, Hermas,

and the brothers who are with them. 15 Greet Philologus, Julia, Nereus and his sister, and Olympas, and all the saints who are with them.

James and John on Love in Action

James 1:27 (ESV) Religion that is pure and undefiled before God the Father is this: to visit orphans and widows in their affliction, and to keep oneself unstained from the world.

James 2:14-17 (ESV) 4 What good is it, my brothers, if someone says he has faith but does not have works? Can that faith save him? 15 If a brother or sister is poorly clothed and lacking in daily food, 16 and one of you says to them, "Go in peace, be warmed and filled," without giving them the things needed for the body, what good is that? 17 So also faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead.

1 John 3:16-18 (ESV) By this we know love, that he laid down his life for us, and we ought to lay down our lives for the brothers. 17 But if anyone has the world's goods and sees his brother in need, yet closes his heart against him, how does God's love abide in him? 18 Little children, let us not love in word or talk but in deed and in truth.

8

Chapter 8

Never Quit

2 Timothy 3:10–11 (ESV) You, however, have followed 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.

Overview of Chapter 8

The chapter is organized into three sections:

1. Introductory Insights
2. Commentaries
3. Applications

Introductory Insights

The Difference

The difference between success and failure on the journey to spiritual maturity is simple: quitting leads to failure, and not quitting leads to success. Quitters never win. That sounds very macho and jingoistic, but I assure you it's true. This is the life lesson every Jesus follower must learn.

There are always reasons to quit following Jesus: the weather, our health, circumstances, opposition, fatigue, setbacks, disappointments, compromise, pride, hurt, pain, threats, suffering, persecution, fear, broken dreams, boredom, misunderstandings, idolatry, deception, apostasy, disobedience, faithlessness, unrealistic expectations, challenges, sin, temptations, the devil, oppression, injury, torture, loss. I could go on.

As many adverse situations as we face, they probably aren't as severe as Timothy's challenging work in ancient Ephesus. The apostle Paul described the environment in one of the craziest lists in the Bible:

2 Timothy 3:1-5 (ESV) 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.

The list goes on, but I think you get the picture. Can you imagine serving under those conditions? Well, you and I do. This is a picture of the world in the last days, and we're in the last days. These kinds of people are in the neighborhood and they're in the church. They will make quitting seems like a great idea.

However, Jesus calls us to steadfast endurance in the face of real life. So many things threaten to divert us from Jesus, faithfulness, and the path to spiritual growth and maturity.

Doggedness and a strong will are virtues we must develop. This idea makes me think of bumper sticker lines: We may bend, but we won't break. We fall down but we get up again. We shall not be moved. You can have all this world, just give me Jesus. The obstacle is the journey.

Paul Had the Never-Quit Gene

The apostle Paul had the never-quit gene. He wrote to Timothy:

2 Timothy 4:6-7 (ESV) For I am already being poured out as a drink offering, and the time of my departure has come. 7 I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith.

Paul looked back on his apostolic ministry with satisfaction. He had done all Jesus had called him to do. He completed his assignment because he never quit in spite of many reasons to do so. In a rare moment of biographical revelation, Paul wrote:

2 Corinthians 11:23-33 (ESV) *Are they (the so-called super-apostles) servants of Christ? I am a better one—I am talking like a madman—with far greater labors, far more imprisonments, with countless beatings, and often near death. 24 Five times I received at the hands of the Jews the forty lashes less one. 25 Three times I was beaten with rods. Once I was stoned. Three times I was shipwrecked; a night and a day I was adrift at sea; 26 on frequent journeys, in danger from rivers, danger from robbers, danger from my own people, danger from Gentiles, danger in the city, danger in the wilderness, danger at sea, danger from false brothers; 27 in toil and hardship, through many a sleepless night, in hunger and thirst, often without food, in cold and exposure. 28 And, apart from other things, there is the daily pressure on me of my anxiety for all the churches. 29 Who is weak, and I am not weak? Who is made to fall, and I am not indignant?*

30 If I must boast, I will boast of the things that show my weakness. 31 The God and Father of the Lord Jesus, he who is blessed forever, knows that I am not lying. 32 At Damascus, the governor under King Aretas was guarding the city of Damascus in order to seize me, 33 but I was let down in a basket through a window in the wall and escaped his hands.

Some of Paul's experiences are recorded in the Acts of the Apostles. For example:

Acts 9:22-25 (ESV) But Saul increased all the more in strength, and confounded the Jews who lived in

Damascus by proving that Jesus was the Christ. 23 When many days had passed, the Jews plotted to kill him, 24 but their plot became known to Saul. They were watching the gates day and night in order to kill him, 25 but his disciples took him by night and let him down through an opening in the wall, lowering him in a basket.

Acts 13:50 (ESV) (Paul in Antioch) But the Jews incited the devout women of high standing and the leading men of the city, stirred up persecution against Paul and Barnabas, and drove them out of their district.

Acts 14:1-7 (ESV) Now at Iconium they entered together into the Jewish synagogue and spoke in such a way that a great number of both Jews and Greeks believed. 2 But the unbelieving Jews stirred up the Gentiles and poisoned their minds against the brothers. 3 So they remained for a long time, speaking boldly for the Lord, who bore witness to the word of his grace, granting signs and wonders to be done by their hands. 4 But the people of the city were divided; some sided with the Jews and some with the apostles. 5 When an attempt was made by both Gentiles and Jews, with their rulers, to mistreat them and to stone them, 6 they learned of it and fled to Lystra and Derbe, cities of Lycaonia, and to the surrounding country, 7 and there they continued to preach the gospel.

Acts 14:19 (ESV) (Paul in Lystra) But Jews came from Antioch and Iconium, and having persuaded the crowds, they stoned Paul and dragged him out of the city, supposing that he was dead.

Acts 20:22-24 (ESV) And now, behold, I am going to Jerusalem, constrained by the Spirit, not knowing what will happen to me there, 23 except that the Holy Spirit testifies to me in every city that imprisonment and afflictions await me. 24 But I do not account my life of any value nor as precious to myself, if only I may finish my course and the ministry that I received from the Lord Jesus, to testify to the gospel of the grace of God.

Paul wasn't immune to discouragement. He felt the pain of rejection and persecution – both physical and emotional. His sufferings were real.

2 Timothy 4:9-17 (ESV) Do your best to come to me soon. 10 For Demas, in love with this present world, has deserted me and gone to Thessalonica. Crescens has gone to Galatia, Titus to Dalmatia. 11 Luke alone is with me. Get Mark and bring him with you, for he is very useful to me for ministry. 12 Tychicus I have sent to Ephesus. 13 When you come, bring the cloak that I left with Carpus at Troas, also the books, and above all the parchments. 14 Alexander the coppersmith did me great harm; the Lord will repay him according to his deeds. 15 Beware of him yourself, for he strongly opposed our message. 16 At my first defense no one came to stand by me, but all deserted me. May it not be charged against them!

Paul experienced loneliness, rejection, abandonment, danger, injustice, imminent execution, deprivation, and imprisonment. And yet, God's supernatural support never failed. It fired up his "never gonna quit" attitude.

2 Timothy 4:17 (ESV) But the Lord stood by me and strengthened me, so that through me the message might be fully proclaimed and all the Gentiles might hear it.

2 Corinthians 12:7–10 (ESV) So to keep me from becoming conceited because of the surpassing greatness of the revelations, a thorn was given me in the flesh, a messenger of Satan to harass me, to keep me from becoming conceited. 8 Three times I pleaded with the Lord about this, that it should leave me. 9 But he said to me, “My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.” Therefore I will boast all the more gladly of my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may rest upon me. 10 For the sake of Christ, then, I am content with weaknesses, insults, hardships, persecutions, and calamities. For when I am weak, then I am strong.

Mounce’s Complete Expository Dictionary of Old and New Testament Words

Steadfastness (2 Timothy 3:10). ὑπομονή, hypomonē, noun 32x.

Hypomonē refers to perseverance in the face of hostile forces. Job, for example, manifested great endurance in the midst of his afflictions from Satan (Jas. 5:11). This characteristic is pleasing to God: “To those who by persistence in doing good seek glory, honor, and immortality, he will give eternal life” (Rom.

2:7). Here hypomonē can be understood either in an active (steady persistence in doing good) or a passive (patient endurance under difficulties) sense.

Hypomonē in a passive sense is used in Rom. 12:12, where it is connected with persecution: “Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer” (see also 1 Thess. 1:3: “endurance inspired by hope”). The connection with hope sets hypomonē in the context of end-time expectation where believers endure to the end because of their hope in the Lord’s coming.

hypomonē is not only a characteristic of hope, but of love (1 Cor. 13:7) and the service of Christian workers (1 Tim. 6:11; 2 Tim. 3:10). Furthermore, hypomonē itself produces character (Rom. 5:3-5; Jas. 1:3-4; 2 Pet. 1:6) and is associated with the virtue of patience (Col. 1:11; Jas. 5:7-11).

NIV Word Study Dictionary

ὑπομονή hypomonē, n. [32], perseverance, endurance, patience:– perseverance (12), endurance (8), patient endurance (4), endure patiently (1), patiently (1 [+1328]), persevere (1), persevered (1 [+2400]), persevered (1 [+1877, 4246]), persevering (1), persistence (1), stand firm (1)

CWSB Dictionary

ὕπομονή *hupomoné*; gen. *hupomonés*, fem. noun from *hupoménō* (G5278), to persevere, remain under. A bearing up under, patience, endurance as to things or circumstances. This is in contrast to *makrothumía* (G3115), long-suffering or endurance toward people.

Hupomoné is associated with hope (1 Thess. 1:3) and refers to that quality of character which does not allow one to surrender to circumstances or succumb under trial.

Generally meaning endurance, patience, perseverance or constancy under suffering in faith and duty. Used in an absolute sense (Luke 8:15; Rom. 8:25; 2 Cor. 6:4; 12:12; Col. 1:11; Heb. 10:36; 12:1; James 1:3, 4; 2 Pet. 1:6; Rev. 2:3); by the gen. of that in or to which one perseveres (Rom. 2:7; 1 Thess. 1:3; 2 Thess. 3:5; Rev. 1:9; 3:10). Followed by the gen. of person (Luke 21:19; 2 Thess. 1:4; James 5:11; Rev. 2:2, 19, the precept of constancy toward God; 13:10; 14:12).

Specifically patience as a quality of mind, the bearing of evils and suffering with tranquil mind (Rom. 5:3, 4; 15:4, 5, God who bestows patience; 1 Tim. 6:11; 2 Tim. 3:10; Titus 2:2; Sept.: Ezra 10:2; Ps. 9:19).

Steadfastness: Patient Endurance in the Face of Suffering and Hardships

Luke 8:15 (ESV) As for that in the good soil, they are those who, hearing the word, hold it fast in an honest and good heart, and bear fruit with patience.

Romans 8:25 (ESV) But if we hope for what we do not see, we wait for it with patience.

2 Corinthians 1:6 (ESV) If we are afflicted, it is for your comfort and salvation; and if we are comforted, it is for your comfort, which you experience when you patiently endure the same sufferings that we suffer.

2 Corinthians 6:3-4 (ESV) We put no obstacle in anyone's way, so that no fault may be found with our ministry, 4 but as servants of God we commend ourselves in every way: by great endurance

2 Corinthians 12:12 (ESV) The signs of a true apostle were performed among you with utmost patience (patient endurance), with signs and wonders and mighty works.

Colossians 1:11-12 (ESV) being strengthened with all power, according to his glorious might, for all endurance and patience with joy;

1 Timothy 6:11-12 (ESV) But as for you, O man of God, flee these things. Pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, steadfastness, gentleness. 12 Fight the good fight of

the faith.

Hebrews 10:36–37 (ESV) For you have need of endurance, so that when you have done the will of God you may receive what is promised.

Commentaries

MacArthur Study Bible Notes on 2 Timothy 3:11

3:11 persecutions. From a Gr. verb that lit. means “to put to flight.” Paul had been forced to flee from Damascus (Acts 9:23–25), Pisidian Antioch (Acts 13:50), Iconium (Acts 14:6), Thessalonica (Acts 17:10), and Berea (Acts 17:14). Antioch...Iconium...Lystra. As a native of Lystra (Acts 16:1), Timothy vividly recalled the persecution Paul faced in those 3 cities. the Lord delivered me. Cf. 4:17, 18; Pss. 34:4, 6, 19; 37:40; 91:2–6, 14; Is. 41:10; 43:2; Dan. 3:17; Acts 26:16, 17; 2 Cor. 1:10. The Lord’s repeated deliverance of Paul should have encouraged Timothy in the face of persecution by those at Ephesus who opposed the gospel.

NIV Zondervan Study Bible - Notes on 2 Timothy 3:11

3:11 Antioch, Iconium and Lystra. See Acts 13:13-14:23, which describes when the gospel came to the region of Timothy's upbringing, resulting in his eventual enlistment as Paul's co-worker (Acts 16:1-5). the Lord rescued me. This does not mean deliverance from all harm, for Paul was stoned and left for dead (Acts 14:19-20) and experienced much opposition during this time. It means rather that the Lord kept him from death and empowered him for continued ministry. As God upholds Paul, he can likewise strengthen Timothy in his demanding situation.

ESV Study Bible Notes on 2 Timothy 3:11

3:11 Antioch, Iconium, and Lystra are cities Paul visited on his first missionary journey (Acts 13-14), prior to Timothy joining him during his second journey (Acts 16:1). Since Lystra was Timothy's hometown (Acts 16:1-2), he was probably aware of what happened to Paul on this first journey. Thus Timothy would have known from his earliest awareness of Paul that suffering had been a central part of Paul's work. From them all the Lord rescued me does not mean that God kept Paul from experiencing any harm in these instances, for in Lystra he was stoned and left for dead (Acts 14:19-20), and it is possible that Timothy even witnessed this.

Instead, Paul is probably referring both to the fact that the Lord preserved him from death so that he could continue preaching, and to the Lord's work in Paul's heart to keep him faithful even in suffering. See 2 Tim. 4:18.

New American Commentary on 2 Timothy

3:10 His “endurance” (hypomone) was an attitude of perseverance that controlled discouragement under trying circumstances.

3:11 The difficulties Paul mentioned in v. 11 had demanded his obedience to Christ whenever he had confronted their challenge. The “persecutions” and “sufferings” involved whatever hardships Paul had endured in faithfully spreading the gospel.

Timothy had not been with Paul to see his suffering in Antioch (Acts 13:48-52) and Iconium (Acts 14:1-7), but he could have personally observed Paul's trials in Lystra, his probable hometown (Acts 14:8-20; 16:1-2). Even when Timothy had been absent from Paul's side, he would have heard people discuss the events and use them as patterns of what other devoted followers of Christ could expect.

Paul concluded his observation of hardship with a

reference to Ps 34:19, exclaiming that God had indeed rescued him from death and disobedience to his calling. Hendricksen notes: “The Lord ever rescues his people, frequently from death, sometimes by means of death. Either way, nothing ever separates them from his love (Rom 8:38-39).” Paul’s words reminded Timothy of the certainty of suffering, but they also contained a promise of divine protection.

Lenski’s Commentary on the New Testament - 2 Timothy 3:10-11

3:10 “My love” builds on “my conduct,” for intelligent, purposeful ἀγάπη animated all Paul’s conduct. With it goes “my perseverance,” ὑπομονή, the brave patience which “remains under” all difficulties undismayed, not giving up, making “love” so strong for gaining its object. These two accompanied Paul’s “conduct,” and Timothy followed both.

Equally “my persecution, my sufferings” rest on “my purpose,” for the prosecution and attainment of Paul’s apostolic “purpose” involved for him so much persecution, so much personal suffering, and, crown of nobility, Timothy followed also these.

3:11 Two qualitative clauses follow: “what kind of things occurred to me ... in Antioch, in Iconium, in

Lystra,” and specifying still more closely: “what kind of persecutions I bore (up) under.” Read Acts 13:50; 14:5, 6; 14:19, 20.

Both clauses amplify “my persecutions, my sufferings” by first referring to definite places and then to the persecutions here endured. Yet the qualitative relatives convey the thought that these were “of a kind” with many others that followed elsewhere and later.

Paul mentions these three places because they were located in Timothy’s home province Galatia, Lystra being Timothy’s hometown.

... this is what the Lord did, this is, indeed, what he did. Timothy saw and knew all of it at the time, and such things in Paul’s past life and work he followed.

Christ-Centered Exposition Commentary - 2 Timothy 3:10-11

3:10 He watched Paul’s amazing endurance as he kept on going despite endless hardships (see 2 Cor 6:4-10). Of course, none of this was owing to Paul’s ability but to God’s transforming grace. These four characteristics mark Paul’s life, and now in a prison cell he urges Timothy to follow them.

3:11 Timothy also had intimate knowledge of Paul's "persecutions and sufferings." Interestingly, Paul mentions three particular locations: "Antioch, Iconium, and Lystra." Timothy knew of other experiences as well, including the persecutions in Philippi, Ephesus, and Rome. But Paul draws particular attention to these three locations probably because they surrounded Timothy's home region.

Timothy knew of Paul's brutal beating by a hostile mob, when the apostle was left for dead (Acts 14:5-6, 19). Paul said, "What persecutions I endured!" These particular sufferings apparently had a great impact on Timothy, and Paul urged Timothy to remember his example as he continued to live out his calling.

Paul then reminds Timothy that "the Lord rescued me from them all." This is almost an exact quotation from Psalm 34:19 where David celebrates his deliverance from his enemies. God is the ultimate rescuer. He has delivered His people throughout the ages.

Though He never promises us that this life will be easy, He does promise to be with His people and to rescue them either in this life or by bringing them to glory! As Paul was writing, he was awaiting the ultimate rescue (see 2 Tim 4:17-18).

Timothy is called to endure by the strength God supplies, trusting in God's great faithfulness to His

people. Paul is not just giving Timothy an example to follow; he is pointing him to the source of power by which to live.

Yarbrough, Robert W.. The Letters to Timothy and Titus,

3:10 His “endurance” (hypomonē). This word is found two other times in the PE (1 Timothy 6:11; Titus 2:2) and thirteen times in Paul’s other writings. Paul will shortly mention sufferings. Elsewhere he writes that such sufferings produce hypomonē, which can be translated “endurance” or “perseverance” (as in Rom 5:3).

He is also about to confirm to Timothy that all believers can expect suffering in connection with the Christian life (see 2 Tim 3:12). Paul’s model of “endurance” is important because it shows Timothy that Paul is not calling him to anything he has not already experienced extensively himself.

3:11 Paul’s “persecutions” (a form of diōgmos). Paul uses this word (italicized below) alongside others (i.e., trouble, hardship, *persecution*, famine, nakedness, danger, and sword) to describe what shall not separate believers from Christ’s love (Rom 8:35).

The same word appears in a list of what might seem

to weaken Paul, but actually made him strong: weaknesses, insults, hardships, *persecutions*, difficulties (2 Cor 12:10). The Thessalonians endured “persecutions and trials” (2 Thess 1:4).

Outside of Paul’s writings, the word occurs five other times in the NT: Jesus promises “persecutions” (Matt 13:21; Mark 4:17; 10:30), and Acts recounts two examples (8:1; 13:50).

Hostile reception and violent reaction were part of the mix as the gospel message first went forth. Paul and those who received his message were often at the epicenter of experiencing those unhappy but blessed consequences of faithfulness to God.

His “sufferings.” Twice in its sixteen NT occurrences, this word (a form of *pathēma*) is translated “passions” (Rom 7:5; Gal 5:24). More commonly it refers to Christ’s suffering (2 Cor 1:5; Phil 3:10; Col 1:24; Heb 2:9, 10; 1 Pet 1:11; 4:13; 5:1) or to believers suffering in connection with their commitment to Christ (so here, in 3:11; also Rom 8:18; 2 Cor 1:6, 7; Heb 10:32; 1 Pet 5:9).

This pattern of usage confirms that Jesus’s habit of faithfulness to the Father, with the implication that his followers ought to live as he did (see 1 John 2:6), often had baleful results. Yet, it created a fellowship (Phil 3:10) that was as unavoidable (see 2 Tim 3:12) as

it was alarming.

In reminding Timothy of his sufferings, Paul is commending to Timothy one of the hardest and yet noblest aspects of Christian belief: Jesus's followers do not add to what Jesus did for them on the cross, but they are called to live out the implications of the cross in their daily lives.

In the remainder of the verse, with mention of "Antioch, Iconium and Lystra," Paul most likely draws on a recollection of events described in Acts 13:13–14:23. These verses summarize Paul's so-called first missionary journey, during which he and Barnabas brought the gospel message to the region of Timothy's upbringing, resulting in his eventual enlistment as Paul's coworker (Acts 16:1–5). Paul was stoned and left for dead (Acts 14:19–20) and experienced much opposition during this time.

Such harsh events and memories might tempt a writer to self-glorifying or self-pitying reminiscence. Instead, Paul extols Christ for what he "endured." "The Lord rescued me from all" the ill-treatment he experienced in those momentous months. These words do not mean deliverance from all harm and pain. It means rather that the Lord kept him from death and empowered him for continued ministry. He lived (barely) to serve (and suffer, yet prevail) another day. As God upheld Paul, he can likewise strengthen

Timothy in his demanding situation.

John MacArthur's Sermon on 2 Timothy 3:10-11

Thirdly, he followed Paul in his difficult experiences. He was even made stronger because he went through some of the same difficult things that Paul went through. You followed not only these things, but look at the end of verse 10, you followed my “perseverance, persecutions and sufferings. The ones that happened to me like those at Antioch, Iconium and Lystra; what persecutions I endured and out of them all the Lord delivered me.”

Now Paul went through some very difficult experiences and Timothy understood that. He saw that. He learned from that. He benefited from that. The word “perseverance,” *hupomonē*, means patience with circumstances, not patience with people like the other word, *makrothumia*, but patience with circumstances.

Paul had some circumstances with which he showed his true spiritual character. Times in jail, a thorn in the flesh given to him by Satan but God wanted him to have it because it made him humble and in his humility God gave him strength. There were circumstances in his life, not just people, but circumstances that he had to – to demonstrate

patience with.

He had to remain under, which is what the word means, without compromising. He never compromised when he was having to be patient with people and he never compromised when he was having to be patient with circumstances. He had that virtue, that indomitable spirit never gives up, never gives in. People can't take it away, circumstances can't take it away, it's resolute, persevering, enduring.

Timothy caught that virtue. He patterned his life after that. He learned that ability to endure negative circumstances, to live under it no matter how difficult. And he learned it from Paul.

And then he says you also followed my persecutions. That word, *diōgmos* from *diōkō*, to pursue, means persecution. This is defined here as pursuit, people who wanted his life, plots. He says in Acts 20 the Jews were always lying in wait to kill him, plotting against him, plot after plot after plot to take the life of the apostle Paul. It was a way of life, absolutely constant persecution.

He writes about it in 1 Timothy, he writes about it in 2 Timothy, the hardships that he had to endure, the suffering, the persecution. Timothy saw that. Timothy patterned his life after that. By the way, Timothy was even there during some of those times,

even going through it with the apostle Paul, such as in Acts 17. He saw what was going on in that situation. Acts 17, two verses 13 and 14, “But when the Jews of Thessalonica found out that the Word of God had been proclaimed by Paul in Berea also, there came there likewise agitating and – they came there likewise agitating and stirring up the crowds and then immediately the brethren sent Paul out to go as far as the sea and Silas and Timothy remained there.”

Timothy was there when the persecution was hot on many occasions such as that one. So he says you were there during my difficult experiences. You’ve learned from me ministry duty. You’ve learned from me personal quality. You’ve learned from me difficult circumstances and how to face them.

And then he adds the word “my sufferings.” Sometimes the persecution actually became suffering. That was routine for Paul. The word used here has in it the root of the idea of pathos, suffering, sorrow. Sometimes Paul really got it. It wasn’t just persecution coming at him, it hit him. It hit him and it hit him hard. He suffered in his own body, “I bear in my body the marks of Christ,” he said. It happened not just once but a myriad of times.

Applications

Forerunner Commentary on Patient Endurance

<https://www.bibletools.org/index.cfm/fuseaction/topical.show/RTD/cgg/ID/10664/Patient-Endurance.htm>

We can sometimes learn from our children what we may be like in our relationships with God. This scenario has unfolded for many of us: As a long trip begins, the family piles into the car. Invariably, it is not long before one of the children asks in a whining voice, “Are we there yet?” “When will we get there?” “How much longer will it be?” They do this because young children have little or no concept of time and distance. Their mental clocks move much faster than those of older folks because they have not had the experience to teach them such things.

In our trials as Christians, our lack of experience may be working against us in relation to God and His purposes. That is why we must come to know God and see matters from His longer, broader perspective. These verses in Ecclesiastes 7, then, really compare patient endurance with pride and its fruits of impatience, hasty frustration, and discouragement.

This section, beginning in verse 7, contains a muted suggestion that the long way is frequently superior

to the quick-and-easy way that the immature almost invariably seek. We often do things hurriedly just to get them done, without being all that concerned about how well those jobs are done.

A Blog Post on Patient Endurance

<https://www.growthrootsco.com/single-post/patient-endurance>

No one enjoys waiting for anything. Waiting patiently is hard, but what if God is trying to reveal or instill something in you through the wait? Hurry won't get you to the full promises of God. When we strive to rush the process we often miss out on the fullness of the promise. We miss out on the purpose and growth that God wants to bring. What if God is asking us to humbly take His hand, in intentional surrender, and walk with Him at His pace? God's pace is different from ours because God lives outside of our limited timeline. He doesn't have a deadline and He never grows weary through the wait, so why should we? His timing is always perfect and always produces abundantly more than we could have ever dreamed or imagined. (Ephesians 3:20) The wait is never wasted when it is approached through God's perspective with the posture of patience.

Patience is not something you can muster up or force on your own. Patience is a fruit of the Holy Spirit, therefore it is revealed when yielding to the Holy Spirit's power and leading. (Galatians 5:22-23) Patience is a process through intentional pursuit of God's will above your own will. God's will ultimately prevails in the end. In order to know God's will you have to be proactively reading His Word. Scripture is the established foundation and essence of the character of God. There are many passages in scripture that communicate the patience of God. In 2 Peter 3, Peter writes a letter to encourage the believers in their faith as they seek the promise of the second coming of the Lord. 2 Peter 3:9 states, "The Lord is not slow to fulfill His promise as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing that any should perish, but that all should reach repentance." Repentance is God's will as seen in this passage. God knows that forgiveness and freedom lie on the other side of repentance and His will is for everyone to receive it, yet He knows that this requires patience because we are not always quick to repent and receive forgiveness. God also knows what lies on the other side of your wait because it is His plan and purpose for you.

Being a long-distance runner has taught me a lot about endurance. When I set out to run a long distance I have to realize the endurance and patience that is required to complete the run. It takes a lot of

time, but also a lot of reserved effort and strength. Endurance is the ability to last, to continue despite feelings of fatigue or pain. The conditions and factors surrounding the run also affect the strength and quality of endurance. The weather and terrain are just a couple factors that can affect this. These factors ultimately have the ability to increase endurance if I have the patience and strength to continue. We gain endurance through revelations of truth and grace through reading and meditating on God's Word. As we are filled with His Word and tap into the Holy Spirit's power at work in us, we take hold of the endurance needed to help us persevere through the wait.

Run to the Finish - A Distance Running Blog

<https://www.runtothefinish.com/endurance-quotes/>

Running is a mental sport, which means we need to find the things we can tap into during nearly every long run and especially on race day.

We don't have to keep going, which means we need to CHOOSE to keep going.

When it's harder than we imagined.

When it's asking us to go beyond our limits.

When the miles feel longer than they should...

“Hard work beats talent when talent doesn’t work hard.” – Tim Notke

“The harder the battle, the sweeter the victory.” – Les Brown

“Strength doesn’t come from what you can do. It comes from overcoming the things you once thought you couldn’t.” — Rikki Rogers

“Endurance is one of the most difficult disciplines, but it is to the one who endures that the final victory comes.” – Gautama Buddha

“Strength does not come from winning. Your struggles develop your strengths. When you go through hardships and decide not to surrender, that is strength.” – Arnold Schwarzenegger

“It’s hard to beat a person who never gives up.” – Babe Ruth

“Perseverance is the hard work you do after you get tired of doing the hard work you already did.” – Newt Gingrich

“Anyone can give up; it is the easiest thing in the world to do. But to hold it together when everyone would expect you to fall apart, now that is true strength.” – Chris Bradford

