



1 AND 2 TIMOTHY: Week 4

Author: Carrie Busch
Project Supervisor: Nick Diliberto & Becky Forkel
Artwork: Kate Forkel
Editor: Angela Ivey

Created by Ministry To Youth
www.ministrytoyouth.com

1 AND 2 TIMOTHY

WEEK 4: Paul's Final Encouragement to Timothy

BIBLE: 2 Timothy 4:2 - *Preach the word of God. Be prepared, whether the time is favorable or not. Patiently correct, rebuke, and encourage your people with good teaching.*

BOTTOM LINE: God uses circumstances in our lives to prepare us for the future and teach us to depend on Him.

SUMMARY OF WEEKS 1-3

Over the past several weeks, we've learned quite a bit about what the early church should have looked like, according to Paul.

In 1 Timothy, Paul gave Timothy advice about the false teachings that would inevitably arise in the church of Ephesus.

He advised Timothy on proper worship, how to choose leaders in the church, the importance of holiness and prayer, and how to take care of widows.

Then, we started reading 2 Timothy, another letter from Paul to Timothy.

In this book, Paul once again challenges Timothy to stay strong amid the suffering that goes along with leading a church.

Despite what the world throws at Timothy—the temptation to live for self and give in to temptation, people who stir up trouble, and those who spout out false teachings—Paul wants Timothy to remember to continue doing what God has called him to do.

As we close out our lesson on these two letters, we'll learn a few more truths about church leadership.

LESSON

As we read these verses from 2 Timothy 3, I'd like you to ask yourself how these times that Paul talks about could relate to the times we're living in today.

Make note of any similarities so that we can talk about them during today's lesson.

Read 2 Timothy 3.

1 You should know this, Timothy, that in the last days there will be very difficult times. **2** For people will love only themselves and their money. They will be boastful and proud, scoffing at God, disobedient to their parents, and ungrateful. They will consider nothing sacred. **3** They will be unloving and unforgiving; they will slander others and have no self-control. They will be cruel and hate what is good. **4** They will betray their friends, be reckless, be puffed up with pride, and love pleasure rather than God. **5** They will act religious, but they will reject the power that could make them godly. Stay away from people like that! **6** They are the kind who work their way into people's homes and win the confidence of vulnerable women who are burdened with the guilt of sin and controlled by various desires. **7** (Such women are forever following new teachings, but they are never able to understand the truth.) **8** These teachers oppose the truth just as Jannes and Jambres opposed Moses. They have depraved minds and a counterfeit faith. **9** But they won't get away with this for long. Someday everyone will recognize what fools they are, just as with Jannes and Jambres.

10 But you, Timothy, certainly know what I teach, and how I live, and what my purpose in life is. You know my faith, my patience, my love, and my endurance. **11** You know how much persecution and suffering I have endured. You know all about how I was persecuted in Antioch, Iconium, and Lystra—but the Lord rescued me from all of it. **12** Yes, and everyone who wants to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution. **13** But evil people and impostors will flourish. They will deceive others and will themselves be deceived.

14 But you must remain faithful to the things you have been taught. You know they are true, for you know you can trust those who taught you. **15** You have been taught the holy Scriptures from childhood, and they have given you the wisdom to receive the salvation that comes by trusting in Christ Jesus. **16** All Scripture is inspired by God and is useful to teach us what is true and to make us realize what is wrong in our lives. It corrects us when we are wrong and teaches us to do what is right. **17** God uses it to prepare and equip his people to do every good work.

This letter was written approximately 2,000 years ago.

And yet, it doesn't seem that things have changed all that much.

In the beginning of 2 Timothy 3, Paul warns Timothy of the sin that will abound all around him: greed, pride, disrespect toward authority, ingratitude, a lack of self-control, unforgiveness, slander, betrayal, recklessness—the list goes on and on!

Sound familiar?

You see human beings are born with a sin nature.

That means that, without God, we CANNOT be good.

Without His Holy Spirit working inside our hearts to change us into the image of His Son, we cannot be obedient, holy, and righteous.

And the sad part is that so many people will not listen to the wisdom that God's Word offers.

Let's face it: there are dangers in pursuing worldly lusts rather than God's ways.

But then, why do we go against this knowledge and continue to go after the pleasures that the world offers?

Maybe it's because those pleasures are more immediate than the promise of eternity.

Maybe we are more caught up with what feels good in the moment than the satisfaction of knowing we're safe with God forever.

Either way, we must try to grasp the gravity of the consequences of our sin.

If we choose to follow sin and not Jesus, we will have a price to pay.

And that price is eternal.

This sounds scary, but the fact of the matter is that God—in His great wisdom, provision, and mercy—made a way so that we don't EVER have to experience His wrath toward our sin.

We can choose to believe that a life of holiness is what is best for us.

We can choose to read God's Word and apply it to our lives.

And we can choose to align ourselves with God and not the world.

But we do have to make that choice.

No one else can make it for us.

Discussion questions:

1. Do you struggle to make choices that will lead obedience, holiness, and righteousness?

Why or why not?

2. What temptations are the hardest for your peer group to avoid?
3. How has our culture normalized or even glorified sin?

Read 2 Timothy 4.

1 I solemnly urge you in the presence of God and Christ Jesus, who will someday judge the living and the dead when he comes to set up his Kingdom: **2** Preach the word of God. Be prepared, whether the time is favorable or not. Patiently correct, rebuke, and encourage your people with good teaching.

3 For a time is coming when people will no longer listen to sound and wholesome teaching. They will follow their own desires and will look for teachers who will tell them whatever their itching ears want to hear. **4** They will reject the truth and chase after myths.

5 But you should keep a clear mind in every situation. Don't be afraid of suffering for the Lord. Work at telling others the Good News, and fully carry out the ministry God has given you.

6 As for me, my life has already been poured out as an offering to God. The time of my death is near. **7** I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, and I have remained faithful. **8** And now the prize awaits me—the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give me on the day of his return. And the prize is not just for me but for all who eagerly look forward to his appearing.

9 Timothy, please come as soon as you can. **10** Demas has deserted me because he loves the things of this life and has gone to Thessalonica. Crescens has gone to Galatia, and Titus has gone to Dalmatia. **11** Only Luke is with me. Bring Mark with you when you come, for he will be helpful to me in my ministry.

12 I sent Tychicus to Ephesus. **13** When you come, be sure to bring the coat I left with Carpus at Troas. Also bring my books, and especially my papers.

14 Alexander the coppersmith did me much harm, but the Lord will judge him for what he has done. **15** Be careful of him, for he fought against everything we said. **16** The first time I was brought before the judge, no one came with me. Everyone abandoned me. May it not be counted against them. **17** But the Lord stood with me and gave me strength so that I might preach the Good News in its entirety for all the Gentiles to hear. And he rescued me from certain death. **18** Yes, and the Lord will deliver me from every evil attack and will bring me safely into his heavenly Kingdom. All glory to God forever and ever! Amen.

19 Give my greetings to Priscilla and Aquila and those living in the household of Onesiphorus. **20** Erastus stayed at Corinth, and I left Trophimus sick at Miletus.

21 Do your best to get here before winter. Eubulus sends you greetings, and so do Pudens, Linus, Claudia, and all the brothers and sisters.

22 May the Lord be with your spirit. And may his grace be with all of you.

When we read Paul's farewell to Timothy, we can see that he has fought what he calls "the good fight."

Paul's story reminds us that we don't do the work of the Gospel by ourselves.

Look back at verse 17.

Paul talks about how he was deserted by those he trusted to stay by his side.

But instead of spending these moments to complain and harp on his misery, he reassures Timothy that God has been by his side to help Paul do what God called him to do: preach the Gospel.

It's important to remember that it won't always be easy to share your faith.

You might not have someone by your side coaching you along.

Your news might not be received like you thought it would be.

But one thing is for sure...

God WILL give you the strength to continue to do work for Him.

He will prepare you, equip you, and send you to do His work if you'll only be willing.

And you may never know the impact of your willingness to serve God (think about Paul who probably had NO IDEA that you and I would be reading his letters today, about 2000 years after he wrote them from his prison cell).

Do it anyway.

The point is, pouring out your life for God is, ironically, the only way to truly live.

And although we will face trials as we seek to do God's work, we can rest assured that God has a sovereign plan that cannot be stopped.

We don't ever have to be afraid.

Discussion questions:

1. What is one of the biggest challenges for you when it comes to sharing your faith?
2. Is your faith your priority?

Why or why not?
3. What are some practical ways that you can lean into God when you need strength?

SUMMARY OF 1 & 2 TIMOTHY

God's Word is just as applicable to us today as it was when each book was first penned.

The human condition hasn't changed, so the teachings within the Bible still show us who we are and why we need a Savior.

In 1 and 2 Timothy, Paul passes down truths to his spiritual son, Timothy, in order to see the Gospel furthered.

Timothy, a young pastor of the church of Ephesus, had much to learn.

And because of the unique relationship between Paul and Timothy, we can learn from these words as well.

Jesus died for His Church.

It **mattered** and still **matters** to Him.

Through 1 and 2 Timothy, God teaches us to care for His Church and protect the truth at all costs.

Jesus gave His life for the church, and these letters instruct us that a good church leader should essentially do the same.