

Sermon Notes

WORSHIP SERVICE - 9.10.2023

PART 27 - A TRUE DISCIPLE

I. INTRODUCTION

2 Timothy 3:10-17

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

II. THE MARKS OF TRUE DISCIPLESHIP

1. A DISCIPLE FOLLOWS CHRIST

- Paul turns to addressing Timothy's discipleship relationship with the apostle.
- *"You, however, have followed my..."*
- Paul brings to Timothy's remembrance what he has been actively doing thus far. He has followed Paul. He was Paul's disciple.
- What he learned about the faith he learned from Paul.
- The Greek verb translated "followed" means to *"follow faithfully, carefully paying attention."*

- What is a disciple? A disciple is a learner, a student. One who follows the teaching and instruction of a teacher.
- Jesus instructed his disciples to make more disciples by teaching them (Matt. 28:18-20) everything that Christ had commanded them to do.
- At the heart of the discipleship relationship is reproducing what one has been taught by word and example.

- Notice Paul says, "My...". He uses personal pronouns and possessive adjectives to describe the characteristics which Timothy has followed.
- Timothy was able to personally observe Paul's way of life. He traveled with Paul, learned from Paul, watched Paul's life, saw how the apostle responded to different circumstances, he ministered alongside Paul, was

with him during some very challenging times, Timothy knew intimate details about Paul's life.

- This was the kind of discipleship relationship that Paul and Timothy were engaged in.
- Similar to when Jesus called his disciples to "come and follow" him, and they left everything and committed to living their lives alongside Jesus, Paul had called to Timothy and he responded.
- Paul had met Timothy at Lystra (Acts 16). That was the beginning of the discipleship relationship.
- Paul became a spiritual father to Timothy and Timothy his spiritual son in the faith.

- Now Paul reminds Timothy what he had come to embrace and live out.
- Paul is outlining, in essence, what it means to be a disciple.
- This is what Timothy was following. In contrast to what the false teachers displayed, Timothy knew what the apostle believed and how he lived.
- Those false teachers loved self, money, pleasure, what was not good, but they didn't love God. Their converts were weighed down by sin and sinful impulses.
- Timothy had a completely different example in Paul to follow.

- *"My teaching..."*
- Timothy had learned Paul's teaching and made it his own. What Paul taught, Timothy had embraced and believed.

- *"My conduct..."*
- Timothy was intimately acquainted with Paul's lifestyle. Unlike the false teachers, Paul walked the talk.
- As a result, his conduct confirmed the validity of his teaching.
- Consequently, Timothy had gone on to observe Paul's conduct and life and went on to imitate it.
- 1 Cor. 11:1 Be imitators of me, as I am of Christ.
- Phil 3:17 Brothers, join in imitating me, and keep your eyes on those who walk according to the example you have in us.

- Teaching and conduct were a match, they lined up.
- 1 Timothy 4:16 Keep a close watch on yourself and on the teaching. Persist in this, for by doing so you will save both yourself and your hearers.
- Life and teaching need to align. Timothy saw that in Paul, and he followed his example.

- *"My aim in life..."*
- What was Paul's purpose in life? To make Christ known to Jews and Gentiles alike through the proclamation of the gospel.
- Paul's mission was to take the gospel where it had not been taken yet, especially to the Gentiles.
- Romans 15:20 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.
- Colossians 1:28-29 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.
- Timothy had followed in his steps and had Paul's purpose as his own.
- We must as well if we are disciples of Christ Jesus.

- Paul then lists four personal virtues Timothy had also followed:

- *“My faith, my patience, my love, my steadfastness...”*
 - All of these are the fruit of the Spirit’s work of grace in Paul’s life.
 - Timothy had followed Paul’s teaching, conduct, purpose in life, and his spiritual virtues.
 - Paul lived a consistent life of righteousness, faith, love, self-control, and despite many difficulties, Paul remained steadfast to his principles and teaching.
 - How very different from the false teachers, Paul practiced what he preached.
 - And no bigger contrast would there be between them and Paul than the fact that Paul was willing to endure persecution and suffer for what he believed and taught. The false teachers would not be willing to do that.
- *My persecutions and sufferings...”*
 - Paul reminds Timothy of a memory that was no doubt burned in Timothy’s mind, the persecution that Paul suffered in three Galatian cities, Antioch, Iconium, and Lystra.
 - He was chased out of Pisidian Antioch (Acts 13:50), he had to flee for his life from Iconium when he was alerted to a plot to have him killed (Acts 14:5), and in Lystra, which was Timothy’s hometown, he was seized by a crowd, stoned and dragged out of the city and left for dead (Acts 14:19).
 - Acts 14:19-22 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. 20 But when the disciples gathered about him, he rose up and entered the city, and on the next day he went on with Barnabas to Derbe. 21 When they had preached the gospel to that city and had made many disciples, they returned to Lystra and to Iconium and to Antioch, 22 strengthening the souls of the disciples, encouraging them to continue in the faith, and saying that through many tribulations we must enter the kingdom of God.
 - That boldness, that tenacity, that Spirit-fueled perseverance in the face of persecution and suffering, left an indelible impression on Timothy.
- But Paul reminds Timothy how the Lord rescued him from all of these persecutions.
 - And God would do that for Timothy as well.
 - 11b yet from them all the Lord rescued me.— This is a near quotation from Psalm 34:19.
 - God’s people will have difficulty in this life, they will endure hardship and suffering, but he promises to be with his people and to rescue them in this life or by bringing them to be with him in glory.
- And then he sets the expectation, Timothy must be ready to experience this same kind of treatment.
 - 12 Indeed, all who desire to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted, All who in Christ Jesus, all who desire to live a godly and righteous life, will be persecuted.
 - 13 while evil people and impostors will go on from bad to worse, deceiving and being deceived.
 - The continued activities of false teachers will make things difficult for the godly.
 - The godly will arouse the hatred of the world.
 - A disciple of Christ Jesus, must be ready for this.
 - Jesus himself said, “a servant is not greater than his master. If they persecuted me, they will also persecute you” (John 15:20).
 - 1 Thessalonians 3:2-4 and we sent Timothy, our brother and God’s coworker in the gospel of Christ, to establish and exhort you in your faith, 3 that no one be moved by these afflictions. For you yourselves know that we are destined for this. 4 For when we were with you, we kept

telling you beforehand that we were to suffer affliction, just as it has come to pass, and just as you know.

- We will not all suffer like Paul did. But we will face more subtle forms of persecution, mockery, condescension, rejection, face being marginalized, ignored.
- We will face pressure to compromise, and when we don't compromise, we must be ready to feel the pressure of opposition.
- A true disciple of Christ manifests these characteristics and virtues.
- What we profess must manifest in conduct, speech, and manner of living.
- Additionally, how we live out our Christian faith does influence others for better or worse.
- Can people see in you the marks of a true disciple?

2. A DISCIPLE CONTINUES IN THE FAITH

- 14 But as for you, continue in what you have learned and have firmly believed, knowing from whom you learned it
- Continue means to “*remain, stay, abide, to continue in a certain state.*”
- Evil people and imposters will go on from bad to worse but Timothy is to remain, abide, in what he has learned and believed.
- 1 John 2:24 Let what you heard from the beginning abide in you. If what you heard from the beginning abides in you, then you too will abide in the Son and in the Father.
- 2 John 9 Everyone who goes on ahead and does not abide in the teaching of Christ, does not have God. Whoever abides in the teaching has both the Father and the Son.
- Timothy is to remain unmoved, from what he has first believed.
- Paul gives him two reasons why he must continue:
- First, what he learned and believed is valid because of who he learned it from.
- The teaching is valid because of the teacher. Timothy has faithfully followed his teacher who has demonstrated in life and practice, consistency with the teaching.
- Second, his grounding from childhood in Scripture.
- 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.
- He was familiar with OT Scripture because as we saw from the opening of this letter, his grandmother and mother were people of faith.
- What he learned from God's Word from childhood, and what he learned from Paul, are in complete harmony.
- OT Scripture, apostolic teaching, gives the necessary revelation and instruction for salvation.
- It is through, “faith in Christ Jesus.” What the OT foreshadowed concerning salvation is fully revealed in Christ.
- Timothy can have complete confidence to “continue in what he has learned and firmly believed.”
- He could see how it all fit together. How everything culminates with Christ, and that only through Christ alone can salvation be found.
- And so must we. The gospel we have believed we must remain in and not be moved from it.

THE ORIGIN AND PURPOSE OF SCRIPTURE

- Lastly, Paul asserts two fundamental truths concerning Scripture that are vitally important for every true disciple of Christ to grasp.
- **The first truth is its origin.**
- 16 All Scripture is breathed out by God...
- **Scripture is divinely inspired.**
- All Scripture, every word in your Bible, is God-breathed.
- He is the one and only Divine Author of Scripture.
- 2 Peter 1:19-21 And we have the prophetic word more fully confirmed, to which you will do well to pay attention as to a lamp shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts, 20 knowing this first of all, that no prophecy of Scripture comes from someone's own interpretation. 21 For no prophecy was ever produced by the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit.
- The Words of Scripture did not originate in the will of man, the mind of man did not conceive these words.
- It was the Spirit of God who carried the writers along, he spoke through their natural voices, he superintended every single one of their words.
- Your Bible is a supernatural book containing divinely-inspired, and authoritative words from God.
- There are no more important words than these so that is why you must abide in them.
- Do you have a high view of Scripture?
- God's Word will make the ground of your continuance in the faith firm and rock solid.
- **The second truth is its purpose.**
- ...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.
- **Scripture is totally sufficient.**
- "Profitable" means "useful, beneficial, advantageous."
- God's Word is useful to instruct believers in everything concerning our faith and what God desires for us to know and believe.
- God's Word is useful in correcting our wrong thinking and actions.
- God's Word is useful in exhorting us to right and holy living.
- God's Word is useful in training us to conform to God's righteous standard.
- God's Word shapes our beliefs as well as our lifestyle.
- The result is that the "man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work."
- God's Word is the chief means by which God brings the man of God to maturity.
- This definitely applies in general to every single disciple of Jesus Christ.
- The Word of God makes you a man or woman of God.
- Are you continuing to learn from God's Word?
- Do you receive it as God's authoritative word instructing you in all matters of faith, life, and practice?
- We have been given the timeless, saved, inspired words of God, as you continue in it, it will lead you into Christian maturity and produce the characteristics and virtues of a true disciple of Jesus Christ.

APPLICATION AND REFLECTION

In light of today's message....

- What did I learn about the gospel?

- How can I apply what I learned about the gospel to my life?
- With whom can I share the gospel this week?