

## 2 TIMOTHY

### Lesson 3

### 2 Timothy Chapter 3

We continue our study of 2nd Timothy by looking at Chapter 3, where Paul provides Timothy a final warning about the challenging times ahead—and the need to remain faithful in preaching God's Holy Word. As we have seen throughout our study of both 1st and 2nd Timothy, Paul's concerns for Timothy were deep and personal. He knew the pressures that Timothy was facing, and would face, and Paul did everything he could in both letters to encourage and build up Timothy so that he, like Paul, would remain a faithful servant to the end.

Paul now turns his attention to the coming return of Christ and the challenges that will accompany that return. While today we are still looking for the return of our savior, Paul at that time believed that Christ's return was imminent, perhaps even during Timothy's time. In the third chapter of his letter, he addresses some aspects of what those days will be like, and how they will challenge the preaching of the true Gospel during a period of false teachers and false doctrine.

In closing this chapter, Paul addresses the need to remain faithful in preaching and teaching the true word of God—a warning we can all use today as well.

I am going to do something a little different in this lesson because of the nature of the content in 2 Timothy 3:1-9 and its relation to Paul's previous letter to Timothy in 1 Timothy 4:1-3. Specifically, I'm going to "string pearls," and put both of these scripture references together as though they were a single passage. I believe that this will help make Paul's meaning even clearer. The scriptures below, 1 Timothy 4:1-3 and 2 Timothy 3:1-9, are quoted from the NIV translation of the Bible.

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***Read the passages in 1 Timothy 4:1-3 and 2 Timothy 3:1-9 below. Then consider the questions that follow:***

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*The Spirit clearly says that in later times some will abandon the faith and follow deceiving spirits and things taught by demons. Such teachings come through hypocritical liars, whose consciences have been seared as with a hot iron. They forbid people to marry and order them to abstain from certain foods, which God created to be received with thanksgiving by those who believe and who know the truth.*

*But mark this: There will be terrible times in the last days. People will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boastful, proud, abusive, disobedient to their parents, ungrateful, unholy, without love, unforgiving, slanderous, without self-control, brutal, not lovers of the good, treacherous, rash, conceited, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God—having a form of godliness but denying its power. Have nothing to do with such people.*

*They are the kind who worm their way into homes and gain control over gullible women, who are loaded down with sins and are swayed by all kinds of evil desires, always learning but never able to come to a knowledge of the truth. Just as Jannes and Jambres opposed Moses, so also these teachers oppose the truth. They are men of depraved minds, who, as far as the faith is concerned, are rejected. But they will not get very far because, as in the case of those men, their folly will be clear to everyone.*

1. In perusing the passages above, do you think that the end-time things that he is prophesying about are happening today?

3. What can we learn about the "church" from Paul's warning to Timothy? If we recognize that what Paul is describing is the body of the church and the effect on it of the inclusion of false teachers and false doctrine, what are some things we can learn about our "church" today? How can we use Paul's warnings in our own lives today as well?

As I did in the above section of this lesson, I am placing the remaining verses of Chapter 3 below, as they represent Paul's final charge to Timothy. They also represent Paul's final charge to all believers, as many scholars believe that Paul was beheaded shortly after writing this letter.

*Read below Paul's final charge to Timothy (again, from the NIV translation of the Bible) in 2 Timothy 3:10-17, and answer the questions that follow:*

*You, however, know all about my teaching, my way of life, my purpose, faith, patience, love, endurance, persecutions, sufferings—what kinds of things happened to me in Antioch, Iconium and Lystra, the persecutions I endured. Yet the Lord rescued me from all of them. In fact, everyone who wants to live a Godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted, while evildoers and impostors will go from bad to worse, deceiving and being deceived. But as for you, continue in what you have learned and have become convinced of, because you know those from whom you learned it, and how from infancy you have known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the servant of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.*

4. Paul makes an interesting comparison between those wanting to live a Godly life in Christ Jesus and the evildoers and impostors. What is it?
5. How does Paul know that Timothy has been taught correctly and will know what to do once Paul is no longer on the earth?
6. Paul's final comments in Chapter 3 reflect a truth that we have been studying for several lessons in our study of Paul's letters to Timothy. What does he show us is the most important thing that we can do in order to grow in Christ and avoid the false teachers and false teaching that is so prevalent today?

The lesson that follows will be a short one and will conclude our study. Throughout his two letters, Paul is an encourager, a challenger, and a mentor to Timothy. He is that to us as well. By following Paul's teaching and his life, we can faithfully finish the work that God has started in us. During these troubling times, we desperately need Paul's words of encouragement as much as Timothy did back then.

Anchor yourself on God's word, stay faithful in prayer, and watch for false teachers, false teachings, and false Christs—they are everywhere today. Put your faith in Jesus and God's Holy Word and nothing else. God will bring us the victory!

In Christ,

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