

TTS Scripture S10 – 2 Tim 3:10-11

¹⁰ Now you have observed my teaching, my conduct, my aim in life, my faith, my patience, my love, my steadfastness, ¹¹ my persecutions, and my suffering the things that happened to me in Antioch, Iconium, and Lystra. What persecutions I endured! Yet the Lord rescued me from all of them. ¹² Indeed, all who want to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted. ¹³ But wicked people and impostors will go from bad to worse, deceiving others and being deceived. ¹⁴ But as for you, continue in what you have learned and firmly believed, knowing from whom you learned it, ¹⁵ and how from childhood you have known the sacred writings that are able to instruct you for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. ¹⁶ All scripture is inspired by God and is useful for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, ¹⁷ so that everyone who belongs to God may be proficient, equipped for every good work. [2 Tim 3:10-17]

[1] Context of 2 Tim 3:10ff – Broad & Immediate

[1A] Broad Context

- The purpose of the letter – Paul is discipling Timothy.
 - Instructing a young and fearful but gifted man about building God’s church in the face of challenges.

[1B] Immediate Context

- Recap on last week – people who have the form of godliness but deny the power of it.
 - What does that mean? Can we see this today?
- 1 Timothy 4 and 1 John 2:18-24 – what can be noticed about these two passages?
 - They warn and expose the negative goings on in the church, but they also contain an exhortation/instruction on Timothy to be an example.
 - 1 Timothy – controversies about food etc (v.1-5); but then the positive “put these things before the brethren”, “train yourself for godliness” “set the believers an example”
 - 1 John – beware of the antichrists, and in contrast “let that abide in you which you heard from the beginning...”.
 - 2 Timothy 3:10-17 is very similar in structure

A great principle to pull out just by observing the structure of the passage is that there is not just deconstruction of bad things but also an exhortation and instruction to do good.

Verses 10-17 are therefore best seen in contrast with the question:

- ***“How are we to be a godly example in the church so that we are not swept away by error and can keep building it as the distinct kingdom of God on the earth?”***

[2] Several Instructive Things About Timothy

There are several important things about Timothy that Paul praises in v.10-12 and these can be useful reminders for us in building the church.

What is Timothy doing well in 10-17? How does that instruct us on building the church?

[2A] You have remembered my teaching and conduct.

- V.7 – the errant were “always learning and never arriving at a knowledge of the truth” and they did not have the “power of godliness”
 - In contrast, Timothy remembered what Paul had taught him and held it
- Why is what we’re doing here at TTS important? Why is important to remember what we were taught? Where do we get our knowledge from?
 - Because we know the Truth we have freedom – “you shall know the Truth and the Truth will set you free”;
 - Galatians 4:8-9 (“when you did not know God you were enslaved...”)
 - Back to 1 John 2:24 – “if that which you heard from the beginning remains in you, you also shall continue in the Son, and in the Father”.
 - Because we know the Truth we have eternal life – John 17:3 “and this is eternal life, that they know you,

the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent”

- If we are to build the church we must spend time in the Word and continuously seek to know the Gospel and realise it in deeper ways.

Another reason for remembering teaching:

- It is only from the correct knowledge of God that we are able to have the subsequent power of godliness.
 - What is godliness?
 - 1 Timothy 3 – being like God. Being Holy.
- A distinguishing feature of Timothy according to Paul is that he is not simply in the form of godliness but has the power of it.
 - He didn't simply stop at the knowledge but in the ways described above had a knowledge of God that flowed into action.
 - The word perfect means complete – theory is realised as practice and thus there is a sense of completeness.
 - Augustine: “and they that seek the Lord shall praise Him: for they that seek shall find Him, and they that find shall praise Him.” -> Praise flows naturally from coming to know the Lord.
 - Martin Lloyd Jones: “Holiness is something that follows and is an inevitable deduction from doctrine, from an understanding of our position as Christian people. And especially, I think, we must admit that the New Testament presents its teaching and doctrine of holiness in terms of this great truth concerning the blessed hope. It is after it has told us what we are and who we are and of the hope that lies before us that the New Testament brings in this doctrine of holiness and sanctification and Christian behaviour.”

If we are wrong in practice it is likely that we are wrong in doctrine.

- James 2: “faith without works is dead” because the works are what illustrate the faith.
- John 15:5 – “I am the vine you are the branches” -> the fruits are distinct as they point to their source.
- What are these fruits in the Christian life?
 - The conduct that illustrates the Truth – loving the brethren (1 John 2:9-11);
 - Philippians 2:1-8 and 14-16 (be of one mind and do all without grumbling so that you may be lights to a perverse generation);

- Community (Acts 2:42-46);
- Galatians 5:22-24 (fruits of the Spirit)

[2B] Purpose and aim

- What was Paul's purpose?
 - Colossians 1:24-29 – to build the church.
 - He suffered for the sake of continuing to establish it.
- It is obviously important for us to remember why we are living as Christians on the earth. Why are we still here?
 - Spurgeon:
 - “It is true that our sanctification is a long and continued process, and we shall not be perfected till we lay aside our bodies and enter within the veil; but nevertheless, had the Lord so willed it, He might have changed us from imperfection to perfection, and have taken us to heaven at once. Why then are we here? Would God keep his children out of paradise a single moment longer than was necessary? Why is the army of the living God still on the battle-field when one charge might give them victory?...the answer is they are here that they may live unto the Lord, and may bring others to know His love. We remain on earth as sowers to scatter good seed; as ploughmen to break up fallow ground; as heralds publishing salvation. We are here as salt of the earth, to be a blessing to the world...let us see that our life answers its end.”

[2C] Character

- Learning from one another in humility is part of love, growth and community.
 - It is good to have role models who are wiser in the faith – another benefit of TTS etc.

[2D] Enduring persecution

- Perhaps the antichrists in v.1-9 were so out of fear.
 - They saw Paul suffer and were unwilling and so began to add to or challenge his Gospel.
 - Human idea of glory. Can we see this in the church today?
- Why is it good that we endure persecutions?
 - James 1:2-8 = it produces patience; Romans 5:3-5
- Also because it distinguishes the wheat from the tares:

- It was only the legitimate Christians who endure to the end. Historic precedent.
 - Joni Eriksen Tada and persecuted church as the most thriving and powerful Christians.
- The effect of this can cause us to shine like lights –
 - We build the church by not compromising in the face of evil.
 - Enduring it in love and in boldness.
 - How? We keep our eyes upon Christ who endured the cross for us (Hebrews 12:3)
- 2 Timothy 3:12 – persecution the mark of Christian.

So Timothy was building the church and setting a godly example because he did not depart from teaching, he shone Christ through his works, he had the aim in mind, he imitated godly examples and he had not shrunk down from persecutions. And the encouragement that Paul gives him is that the endurance of persecution is one of the ways in which a Christian does not deny the power of godliness, in contrast again to people such as Hymenaeus...