

## THE PASTORAL EPISTLES: GOD'S DIRECTIVES FOR HIS UNDERSHEPHERDS

### III. II Timothy: Church Ministry Amid Hardship

#### I. Personally Thriving Amid Worsening Apostates

(2 Timothy 3:10-17)

#### I. Introduction

- A. With the ungodly social upheaval that is prevalent in today's world and the worsening of its apostates, we believers in Christ need encouraging insight on how to think and live that we might spiritually thrive today.
- B. Paul provided such insight in 2 Timothy 3:10-17, and we view it for our edification (as follows):

#### II. Personally Thriving Amid Worsening Apostates, 2 Timothy 3:10-17.

- A. Paul claimed Timothy would face increasing troubles for the Christian faith in his ministry, 2 Tim. 3:10-13:
  - 1. After his 2 Timothy 2:24-3:9 instruction on dealing with Satanically influenced people in the ministry, Paul reminded Timothy of Paul's own past trials in facing such people in his own ministry, 2 Tim. 3:10.
  - 2. Timothy knew of Paul's ministry at Antioch, Iconium and Lystra, of his great persecutions there, and how God had delivered him out of them all (2 Timothy 3:11). We report these events from Acts 13:13-14:22:
    - a. In Acts 13:45 at Antioch, Jewish foes out of envy contradicted and reviled Paul, but he and Barnabas spoke the truth boldly and separated from their foes to minister instead to Gentiles, Acts 13:46.
    - b. In Acts 14:2 at Iconium, unbelieving Jews stirred up the Gentiles against the believers, so Paul's team stayed there a long time speaking boldly for Christ, God granting them authenticating miracles, Acts 14:3.
    - c. In Acts 14:5 at Iconium, when Paul learned of a plot to stone him, he and his team fled to Lystra and Derbe in the district of Lycaonia and there evangelized people in those towns for Christ, Acts 14:6-7.
    - d. In Acts 14:19 at Lystra, when Jewish foes came from Antioch and turned Lystra's people against Paul so that they stoned him, leaving him for dead, God raised Paul up to minister in nearby Derbe, Acts 14:20a.
    - e. Paul then returned to Lystra, Iconium and Antioch where he had been opposed, strengthening believers there and exhorting them to continue in the faith, teaching them that through much tribulation they must enter into Christ's future Messianic Kingdom, Acts 14:20b-22; Bible Know. Com., N. T., p. 392.
  - 3. Nevertheless, Paul taught Timothy that he would face similar and even intensifying trials, for all who lived godly in Christ Jesus would suffer persecution, and their persecutors would go from bad to worse, deceiving and being deceived, producing escalating trials for God's servants, 2 Timothy 3:12-13.
- B. Accordingly, Paul guided Timothy on personally thriving in facing such worsening apostates, 2 Tim. 3:14-17:
  - 1. Timothy was to continue in what he had learned from Paul and the other apostles, 2 Timothy 3:14a:
    - a. Paul claimed that those from "whom" Timothy had learned the Christian truth were multiple people, for the pronoun "whom" (v. 14b) is plural, *tinon*. (U. B. S. Grk. N. T., 1966, p. 736; ESV footnote)
    - b. One of those teachers was Paul himself, for Paul in 1 Timothy 1:2 called Timothy his son in the faith.
    - c. Indeed, Scripture reveals that all of the apostles were God's authoritative messengers as they were the foundation of the Church with Christ the chief Cornerstone, Ephesians 2:20 with John 17:20-21.
    - d. Thus, Timothy was to continue in the teaching of what now comprises the New Testament canon.
  - 2. Timothy was to stay with what **God** let him be *convinced* was true -- the apostles' teachings, 2 Tim. 3:14b.
  - 3. Timothy was to rely on written Scripture as his *sufficient* guide for life and ministry, 2 Timothy 3:15-17:
    - a. Paul directed Timothy to rely on the Old Testament Scriptures he had known from childhood that were able to make him wise unto salvation that is by faith in Christ Jesus, 2 Timothy 3:15.
    - b. Indeed, all Scripture is "given by inspiration of God" (KJV), what phrase translates the Greek term "*theopneustos*," a verbal adjective with a *-tos* ending that carries the meaning of the perfect passive participle, 2 Tim. 3:16; Bruce M. Metzger, Lex. Aids for Students of N. T. Grk., 1969, p. 44. **Thus, ALL Scripture is permanently, divinely inspired so that it permanently carries God's authority and power!**
    - c. All Scripture is then profitable for teaching, reproof, correction and training in righteousness. v.16 ESV.
    - d. The man of God may then be *artios*, "proficient" (Ibid., Arndt & Gingrich, p. 110), that is, be **made permanently** equipped (*exertismenos*, perfect passive participle of *exartizo*, "equip, furnish," Ibid., The Analyt. Grk. Lex., p. 147, 144) unto **every** good work, 2 Timothy 3:17.

**Lesson:** *To thrive spiritually in facing worsening apostate opponents, God's servant must hold firmly to His Old and New Testament Scriptures that permanently provides him all the directives he needs for life and ministry.*

**Application:** *May we use Scripture as God's sufficient directive in facing all worsening apostates in ministry.*