

Dear Friends and Family,

“Indeed, all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will be persecuted.”

Not the way you expect your weekly devotional to begin as we enter the New Year!

Yet, Paul reiterates in the 3rd chapter of 2 Timothy,
the sentiment of Christ in Matthew 10:21-22.

Between the following two groups, conflict is inevitable.

It's really quite logical when you consider the facts.

Worldly Men 2 Timothy 3:1-4	Godly Men in Christ Jesus 2 Timothy 3:10-17
Haters of good	Follow sound teachings
Lovers of pleasure/ Lovers of money/ Lovers of self	Live in Good conduct
Boastful	Purposeful
Arrogant/ Disobedient to parents	Faithful
Revilers	Patient
Unloving	Loving
Ungrateful/ Conceited	Persevering
Unholy	Suffering Persecutions
Treacherous/ Reckless	Experiencing Sufferings
Irreconcilable	Know scripture
Malicious gossips	Full of Wisdom that leads to salvation
Without self-control	Adequate
Brutal	Equipped for every good work

Pastor's Point of View

The big question: **How can you stand firm when conflict arises?**

Day 1 - READ 2 Timothy 3:1-5

1. In what ways do you see this list of traits reflected in our world today? Do you see it in fellow believers as well?
2. What would it look like to “avoid such men as these”?
3. Read John 17:14-19, how does Paul’s instruction to avoid these men mirror Jesus’ prayer that we are “not of the world”?
4. Notice that avoidance is not removal. If God removed all of us the moment we were saved there would be no Christians. Instead, we are instructed to avoid the sin and temptations of the world, while being mission minded on reaching the world with the gospel.
5. Is it possible to be a Christian and immersed in some/ all of these behaviors? Do you have personal experience in this area? What should be our response?

Day 2 - READ 2 Timothy 3:6-9

1. Paul further describes the men he instructed to avoid. Remember also, this is a letter to Timothy, Paul’s protege, and Pastor of the church at Ephesus. In verses 1-5, Paul describes the character traits of worldly men. Notice that in verses 6-9, he describes some of the actions they will take.
2. What message is Paul trying to send in regards to the actions of these men?
3. Paul likens them to Jannes and Jambres. Do you know who Jannes and Jambres are?
4. Paul does not expound on these men at all and the only context given is that they opposed Moses. It is assumed that Timothy would know who these men were and understand the correlation. However, we need some added help, as these men are mentioned nowhere else in the Bible. You may have a cross reference in your study Bible sending you to Exodus 7:11, however, their names are not mentioned there.
5. Extra Biblical sources reveal that Jannes and Jambres were Pharaoh’s magicians, spoken of in Exodus 7-8. They directly opposed Moses and the message from God. Note specifically, the correlation that Paul is making. Paul did not imply that these worldly men would arise from **within** the church, but would oppose it from the outside. Note specifically Exodus 8:19 and 2 Timothy 3:9 side by side.

Day 3 - READ 2 Timothy 3:10-12

1. Once again, for us, context is necessary, but the reference would not be lost on Timothy. Read Acts 13 and 14 to understand Paul’s sufferings in Antioch, Iconium, and Lystra.
2. What comfort can we find in the persecutions of Paul and how the Lord responded?
3. Upon quick reflection, what emotions come with the promise that all who desire to live godly lives will be persecuted?
4. Why then, as Christians, should we desire to live godly lives?

Day 4 - READ 2 Timothy 3:13-17

1. The evil in this world will only increase. However, we are called to continue in the things we have learned.
2. Imagine the level of persecution toward Christians in the first century. The Roman Empire was debased and both Rome and the Jews were threatened by Christianity. Yet through God's sovereignty and protection, the message of Christ, the good news of the gospel, continued to spread, even to the ends of the earth.
3. Today, in the year 2020, on a global level, 11 Christians are murdered for their faith EACH DAY.
4. Currently, over 800,000 Christians living in Syria are being actively hunted and killed by terrorists for their faith in Christ. Pray for these brothers and sisters in Christ, asking God for their rescue and praying they may be bold in the face of persecution.
5. Have you ever been in a situation where no matter how bad things were, you knew you were still called to go forward with the gospel? Even if it meant facing difficulties?
6. Are you fully convinced of the knowledge of the saving power of Jesus Christ?

Perhaps one of the best known passages of scripture, in regards to the inerrancy of Scripture, is 2 Timothy 3:16. But immediately after this verse, we are given a challenge. "May we be adequate and equipped for EVERY good work." (2 Timothy 3:17).

And where do our works come from?

Psalm 90:17

Hebrews 13:21

And God is trustworthy in his words, his will, and his leading.

2 Peter 1:19-21

*"So we have the prophetic word made more sure,
to which you do well to pay attention as to a lamp shining in a dark place,
until the day dawns and the morning star arises in your hearts.*

*But know this first of all,
that no prophecy of Scripture is a matter of one's own interpretation,
for no prophecy was ever made by an act of human will,
but men moved by the Holy Spirit spoke from God."*

In joy and thanksgiving,

Happy New Year!

Pastor Matt

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*Therefore, since we have so great a cloud of witnesses surrounding us, let us also lay aside every encumbrance and the sin which so easily entangles us, and let us **RUN** with endurance the race that is set before us -- Hebrews 12:1*