

Text— 2 Timothy 3:10 to 4:5

Fellow redeemed sinners, redeemed by the blood of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ,

The Apostle Paul first addressed the words of our Scripture selection to a young Christian pastor named Timothy. Paul held nothing back concerning what life in this world will be for a Christian pastor— and for that matter, all other Christians.

The times in which we live are accurately described prior to our text, for in 2 Timothy 3:1-7 we read: “This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, Without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, Traitors, heady, highminded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God; Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away. For of this sort are they which creep into houses, and lead captive silly women laden with sins, led away with divers lusts, Ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth.”

Think about it. High self-esteem coupled with selfishness are at an all-time high. Natural affection is surely missing in mothers who murder their own babies via abortions done by doctors who have, ironically, sworn to help preserve life. People commonly lie, cheat, and steal. Sinful pleasures are sought after and practiced even during a plague, for folks continue to gamble by means of lotteries and casinos, while all sorts of fornication are also indulged. And, of course, there are many professed Christians who walk around with a sanctimonious appearance, but of whom Jesus says in Matthew 15:8, “This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoureth me with their lips; but their heart is far from me.” Furthermore, so-called scholars – who love to be publically recognized as people of great learning – continue to dare to change God’s Word by adding to it and taking away from it as they multiply and print their perversions

of the Holy Bible, and make big-money doing so. Consequently, since all people dwell in sinful flesh, even true Christians are tempted to join in the sinful practices of the majority.

Accordingly, our Scripture selection in effect urges all sincere Christians:

“PERSEVERE IN FAITH IN CHRIST JESUS”

With that as our theme may we, in view of our text and with the help of the Holy Ghost, see—

- 1) Why we need to be encouraged to persevere in faith in Christ Jesus
- 2) How we can indeed persevere in faith in Christ Jesus
- 3) Why it is truly necessary to persevere in faith in Christ Jesus, and how we can continue to do so

-1-

Verses 10 & 11, ----- (2 Timothy 3:10-11)

The Apostle Paul uses himself as an example of persevering in faith in Christ Jesus, for he writes: *thou hast fully known my doctrine, manner of life, purpose, faith, longsuffering, charity, patience, Persecutions, afflictions, which came unto me at Antioch, at Iconium, at Lystra; what persecutions I endured: but out of them all the Lord delivered me.*

Paul was an earnest Christian when he wrote the words of our text to Timothy. Nevertheless, Paul’s *doctrine, manner of life, purpose, and faith, are revealed to us in 1 Corinthians 5:9-10, where Paul confesses: “I am the least of the apostles, that am not meet to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God. But by the grace of God I am what I am: and his grace which was bestowed upon me was not in vain; but I laboured more abundantly than they all: yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me.”* Hence, Paul was a sinner and he knew it; however, Paul was saved by God’s grace in Christ Jesus, and he knew that fact as well, and he boldly proclaimed it.

My friends, we are ALL sinners who need the forgiveness of sins and salvation which is provided to us personally by God's grace through faith in Jesus Christ who has paid for all the sins of all people with His holy and precious blood He shed while nailed to the cross of Calvary. It's exactly as Holy Writ reports in the following words: "all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God; Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus: Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God; To declare, I say, at this time his righteousness: that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus. For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast." (Romans 3:23-26; Ephesians 2:8-9) Thus, we ALL need to be encouraged to persevere in faith in Christ Jesus, for Mark 16:16 declares in no uncertain terms: "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned."

As a Christian missionary pastor, the Apostle Paul showed *longsuffering, charity, and patience*. Paul was truly patient and loving with people as he taught them about Jesus Christ the Savior of the world, even in the face of *persecutions and afflictions*. Indeed, for the beloved apostle Paul mentions *persecutions and afflictions, which came to him at Antioch, at Iconium, at Lystra*— all of those cities being in the region known today as the country of Turkey. But note that despite the persecutions and afflictions Paul suffered for the cause of Christ and His Gospel, Paul confessed: *out of them all the Lord delivered me*. Yes, the Lord Jesus Christ delivered Paul so that he was not killed even though many desired to take his life because He preached Christ the crucified and risen one true Savior of the world.

My friends, the Lord knows how to deliver! The Lord Jesus Christ has proved He knows how to deliver since He has delivered us from sin, death, and hell by His perfect life and His atoning death,

for He has kept God's Law perfectly for us and has fully paid for our lack of keeping God's Law. Yes, concerning Jesus the Son of God, we read in Hebrews 4:15 that He "was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin." And, 1 John 1:7 informs us that "the blood of Jesus Christ [God's] Son cleanseth us from all sin." Accordingly, we need to be encouraged to persevere in faith in Christ Jesus.

Verses 12 & 13, -----. (2 Timothy 3:12-13)

Note it well: *all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution*. ALL people with a living fruitful faith in Christ Jesus as their personal Savior and Lord SHALL suffer persecution. There is no doubt about it. At the very least, people will ridicule you when you are a Christian; people will mock you because you will not partake in their sinful practices. When you are with a group of people and you start talking about Jesus and His Word, the group will either make jokes or quickly disperse; just try it and you'll see for yourself. But remember 1 John 2:15-17 admonishes: "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever." Hence, we need to be encouraged to persevere in faith in Christ Jesus.

Yes, we need to be encouraged to persevere in faith in Christ Jesus because *evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived*. Indeed, as time goes on this world is NOT getting better, it's getting worse as wickedness is on the increase. Even churches which wear the label "Christian" have for the most part departed from the real Lord Jesus Christ and His true pure preserved Holy Word. False prophets with their false doctrines abound, and they seduce people into believing their lies, and they themselves believe the falsehoods they spread. For example, look around and you'll see churches not only

condoning but encouraging homosexuals and lesbians to continue in their gross sinning, despite the fact that the Holy Bible in Romans 1, verses 26 & 27 labels such sinful perverted activities “vile affections” which are “against nature” and are “unseemly”. People need to repent and amend their lives, turning to Jesus Christ in sincere faith lest they be damned to hell when they depart this life.

Fellow Christians, as we behold *evil men and seducers growing worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived*, we are tempted to let down our guard, give in, and go along with the crowd. Hence, we need to be encouraged to persevere in faith in Christ Jesus, for Acts 4:12 clearly states: “Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.”

-2-

As we ponder the next few verses of our text, let us see how we can indeed persevere in faith in Christ Jesus.

Verses 14 & 15, ----- (2 Timothy 3:14-15)

In view of the fact that Christians face persecution in this world which is growing more and more wicked, the Apostle Paul urged the young Christian pastor Timothy: *continue thou in the things which thou hast learned and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned them; And that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.*

My friends, the advice given to Timothy is advice ALL of us Christians need to heed. We need to remember all the sound Biblical teachings we’ve learned from faithful Biblical teachers who truly valued the pure preserved Holy Bible, for the HOLY SCRIPTURES through which the Holy Ghost gifted us with faith in Christ Jesus are also the means by which we can be preserved and strengthened in the faith, for we read in Romans 3:20 that “by the

law is the knowledge of sin.” And, Romans 1:16-17 and 10:17 relates: “the gospel of Christ... is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith. So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.” Thus, we can indeed persevere in faith in Christ Jesus by making regular use of the Holy Scriptures.

Verses 16 & 17, ----- (2 Timothy 3:16-17)

These verses inform us as to why it is vital to make regular use of the Holy Scriptures as the means to persevere in faith in Christ Jesus, for the fact of the matter is: *All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works.*

Think about it. ALL Scripture – NOT just some Scripture – is given by inspiration of God. Thus, every word of the Holy Bible is GOD’S WORD since God moved the writers to pen exactly what they wrote, for 2 Peter 1:19-21 informs us: “We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts: Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation. For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.”

Notice also that our text says: *All scripture IS given by inspiration of God*— not merely all Scripture WAS given by inspiration of God. Accordingly, we have ALL SCRIPTURE available to us to this very day— nothing has been lost, for Jesus our Lord and God promises in Matthew 24:35, Mark 13:31, and Luke 21:33, “Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away.” Thus, we Christians can indeed persevere in faith in Christ Jesus by continuing to make regular use of the Holy Scriptures.

We need to make proper use of the Holy Scriptures as well, for the Holy Bible is not given to merely entertain; rather, *All scripture... is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works.*

Note the importance of DOCTRINE being drawn from the Holy Scriptures rather than from the windmills of sinful humans' minds. The Holy Bible is the only proper and reliable source for ALL teachings regarding faith and life. No one can know what is truly right and what is truly wrong without seeking the answers from the Holy Bible which is to be used *for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works.* Indeed, works that are truly good, truly pleasing to God, are ONLY those works done in full accord with God's Word, the HOLY SCRIPTURES!

The reason our nation is in such turmoil today is because people have by-and-large thrown aside the true Holy Bible and the true God. Why, when America was first established, it's early settlers came with the Holy Bible in hand, NOT the Koran or the Zend Avesta or any other so-called holy book. But sadly, as the years have gone by more and more people have cast aside the true God and His true Word. Furthermore, just look at what's happened during the last 50 years or so as perversions of the Holy Bible have been introduced and multiplied: sound Scriptural doctrine is no longer found in the vast majority of so-called Christian churches. The conditions are as the Lord said long ago in Isaiah 3:12 and 59:14, "As for my people, children are their oppressors, and women rule over them. O my people, they which lead thee cause thee to err, and destroy the way of thy paths. And judgment is turned away backward, and justice standeth afar off: for truth is fallen in the street, and equity cannot enter."

Fellow Christians, the only way we can be *perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works*, is by continuing in the faith of Jesus Christ by making regular and proper use of the Holy Scriptures.

Now, we are NOT perfect in our persons since Ecclesiastes 7:20 clearly states, "there is not a just man upon earth, that doeth good, and sinneth not." However, we are DECLARED PERFECT in God's sight for Jesus' sake because of the faith we have in Christ Jesus as our personal Savior and Lord, for we Christians are, as Philippians 3:9 teaches, "found in him, not having [our] own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith." Therefore, fellow Christians, it's vital that each and every one of us persists in faith in Christ Jesus. So, take it to heart that we can indeed persevere in faith in Christ Jesus by making regular, proper use of the Holy Scriptures.

-3-

As we ponder our text to its conclusion, let us see why it is truly necessary to persevere in faith in Christ Jesus, and how we can continue to do so.

Verses 1 & 2, ----- (2 Timothy 4:1-2)

It behooves ALL of us to bear in mind the following words 2 Corinthians 5:10 relates: "we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad." Indeed, everyone will one day stand before Jesus Christ to give an account to Him.

Thus, it was necessary that Timothy would patiently and persistently preach God's Word and all doctrines drawn therefrom regardless of whether folks had a positive or negative attitude toward him or his message. Likewise, pastors today are to preach God's Word and the pure doctrines drawn therefrom no matter how out-of-season it seems these days as we draw nearer and nearer to the day when Christ will visibly return in glory to judge the world. Additionally, all Christians are to desire sound Scriptural preaching and teaching regardless of the fact that it is getting more difficult to find such preaching and teaching, for only by clinging to the true Holy Bible and the true

Christ Jesus proclaimed therein can we persevere in faith in Christ Jesus, for 1 Thessalonians 2:13 reports that “the word of God” is that “which effectually worketh also in you that believe.” Accordingly, fellow Christians, we can persevere in faith in Christ Jesus by faithfully adhering to the Holy Scriptures and all the doctrines drawn therefrom, insisting that the full truth of God’s Word be preached to us by those called to do so.

Verses 3 & 4, ----- (2 Timothy 4:3-4)

We are surely in the times described here in our text, as is evident when one considers which churches have the biggest numbers of attendees and members.

Our own church and conference to which we belong has seen multiple cases of people who have quit and split because they would not endure sound Scriptural doctrine; they went elsewhere where their ears could be scratched and their flesh pleased with falsehoods. Yeah, rather than accepting correction from God’s true Holy Word, folks get ticked off, fail to repent, and seek out a place where they can comfortably continue in the error of their ways. Fables is what their sinful flesh prefers, for such folks desire to hear how good they are rather than being reminded that they are sinners who need to daily repent. My friends, we all dwell in sinful flesh, so we need to continue to desire to hear the full truth of God’s Word, Law and Gospel, rather than some flesh-pleasing pious sounding platitudes devoid of God’s truth.

Verse 5, ----- (2 Timothy 4:5)

Our text closes with the Apostle Paul instructing the young pastor Timothy: *watch thou in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry.*

Fellow Christians, you and I also need to watch in all things, to be on guard. We need to endure afflictions rather than compromising God’s truth. We need to see that the evangel — the Gospel of Christ — is valued by us and is spread abroad by

sound preaching and personal witnessing. And, those who are called pastors need to do as Timothy was instructed by making full proof of their ministry, to fully carry out the duties of the ministry in service to the Savior, Jesus Christ.

Take it to heart that it is truly necessary to persevere in faith in Christ Jesus because He is the ONLY WAY TO GOD AND HEAVEN, “For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him.” (John 3:16 & 36)

Let us daily and sincerely repent of our sins; and, let us, with God’s gracious help as we continue in His Word, persevere in faith in Christ Jesus. Amen.

m.e.l.