

This Is Us | Biblical Truth, Part 2

Text: 2 Timothy 3:1-17

[1] But understand this, that in the last days there will come times of difficulty. [2] For people will be lovers of self, lovers of money, proud, arrogant, abusive, disobedient to their parents, ungrateful, unholy, [3] heartless, unappeasable, slanderous, without self-control, brutal, not loving good, [4] treacherous, reckless, swollen with conceit, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God, [5] having the appearance of godliness, but denying its power. Avoid such people. [6] For among them are those who creep into households and capture weak women, burdened with sins and led astray by various passions, [7] always learning and never able to arrive at a knowledge of the truth. [8] Just as Jannes and Jambres opposed Moses, so these men also oppose the truth, men corrupted in mind and disqualified regarding the faith. [9] But they will not get very far, for their folly will be plain to all, as was that of those two men.

[10] You, however, have followed my teaching, my conduct, my aim in life, my faith, my patience, my love, my steadfastness, [11] my persecutions and sufferings that happened to me at Antioch, at Iconium, and at Lystra—which persecutions I endured; yet from them all the Lord rescued me. [12] Indeed, all who desire to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted, [13] while evil people and impostors will go on from bad to worse, deceiving and being deceived. [14] But as for you, continue in what you have learned and have firmly believed, knowing from whom you learned it [15] and how from childhood you have been acquainted with the sacred writings, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. [16] All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, [17] that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work.

Introduction — Review: Why we are here

- Genesis written to Moses and the Israelites in the wilderness who've just escaped Egyptian slavery
- People who've been dehumanized by oppression, paganism, and their own sinfulness
- God is the creator and he loves beauty and order and friendship and the common good; and he loves human flourishing and neighbor love and compassion.
- God wants his people to cultivate beauty and order... [FLOWER photo]

God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them. [28] And God blessed them. And God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it, and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over every living thing that moves on the earth." (Genesis 1:27-28)

- But God's image has been defaced by sin. [TREE photo] Civilization doesn't generally lend itself to the common good, but rather to systemic oppression. And we all take part in this oppression at some level:

Last Days Sinfulness...

[1] But understand this, that in the last days there will come times of difficulty.

- Last days — days before the Second Coming...dangerous to our souls [LAVA photo]
- Difficulty — Terrible; only used here and Matt. 8:28 for violent demoniacs; hard to bear (has a shaping effect on us all...)

*[2] For people will be lovers of self, lovers of money, proud, arrogant, abusive, disobedient to their parents, ungrateful, unholy ("the person who has no fellowship with God and so is living a merely 'secular' life"¹) [3] heartless, unappeasable, slanderous, [AGED photo] **without self-control** (without strength in regard to bodily lusts; easily led*

¹ The Expositor's Bible Commentary: Ephesians Through Philemon. Volume 11. Edit. Gæbelein, Frank E. Earle, Ralph. Zondervan. 1981. 406.

into sin), *brutal* (not tame; savage; fierce), *not loving good*, [4] *treacherous, reckless, swollen with conceit, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God* (“good’s no fun”), [5] *having the appearance of godliness, but denying its power. Avoid such people.*

- Avoid such people:
 - 1 Corinthians 5:9-11: *“I wrote to you in my letter not to associate with sexually immoral people—[10] not at all meaning the sexually immoral of this world, or the greedy and swindlers, or idolaters, since then you would need to go out of the world. [11] But now I am writing to you not to associate with anyone who bears the name of brother”*
 - Jesus and his disciples demonstrated forming intimate bonds with non-believing people. But, sadly, many people see this text as a command to withdraw from a world that needs the gospel...a world that needs God’s redeemed image-bearers to bring shalom.
- These aren’t just examples of “bad behavior,” but the opposite of Shalom...our human identity to bring about order and beauty in the world.
- This is sin. *“Sin is the obstruction of friendship with God. It obstructs wholeness in humanity...”*

[Verses 6-9: Particular problem — vulnerable women with troubled pasts being taken advantage of by corrupt preachers — preachers Paul compared to Pharaoh’s magicians who opposed Moses]

[10] You, however, have followed my teaching, my conduct, my aim in life, my faith, my patience, my love, my steadfastness, [11] my persecutions and sufferings that happened to me at Antioch, at Iconium, and at Lystra—which persecutions I endured; yet from them all the Lord rescued me.

- “What does Paul explicitly say that he teaches ‘everywhere in every church?’”²
 - Jesus’ atoning death?

² Hood, Jason. Imitating God In Christ. 9.

- Justification by faith?
- The gift of the Holy Spirit?
- Future judgment at the feet of Jesus?
- Answer: Paul teaches his own “ways in Christ...everywhere in every church” (1 Corinthians 4:17)
- Follow godly people’s: teaching, conduct, aim in life, patience, love, steadfastness, persecutions (Timothy possibly witnessed Paul’s stoning in his hometown of Lystra in Acts 14.)

[12] Indeed, all who desire to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted, [13] while evil people and impostors will go on from bad to worse, deceiving and being deceived. [14] But as for you, continue in what you have learned and have firmly believed, knowing from whom you learned it [15] and how from childhood you have been acquainted with the sacred writings, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus.

- How did Timothy learn the gospel?
 1. Imitating the Apostle Paul
 2. Studying scripture
- There is a context for scripture study: community
- We must be people devoted to scripture in the context of community to emerge as God’s people of shalom.

God’s Breath — Receive it...

[16] All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, [17] that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work.

- God’s breath [**PHOTO: WIND**] *Where else do we see God's breath in Scripture?...*
 - [John 20:22 — Jesus breathed on his disciples...“receive the Holy Spirit”](#)

- Acts 2 — A mighty rushing wind filled the room of the disciples
- Genesis 2:7 — God breathed the breath of life into man's nostrils
- God's breath is who he is. God's word is his life. It's his heart. It's his essence. God is his word – Jesus Christ. We want to think like God, feel like God, act like God, react like a God, and know the life of God. And we want to bring the life of God to our community, our city, our world.
- God's breath restores his image within us...his breath teaches us, reproves us, corrects us, and trains us in righteousness. His word!
- "Training in righteousness"