

August 22, 2021 -

II Timothy 3:10-14 -

“Be a Spiritual Mentor”

Introduction:

In our own day, Christians are being persecuted all over the world – in China, in the Muslim world, in Russia where a strong anti-missionary law exists. We too face persecution in a social way today. Every day, 13 Christians worldwide are killed because of their faith, 12 churches or Christian buildings are attacked and 12 Christians are unjustly arrested or imprisoned, while another 5 are abducted. This is according to the 2021 World Watch List annual report produced by Open Doors, a non-profit organization that chronicles persecution against Christians. These brothers and sisters in Christ need our prayers and support. If we stand up for biblical values, there will be friction from those who hold to the secular worldview. Our hope is that they all had great mentors of the faith to encourage them to continue to follow Christ.

This passage describes the mentoring or the discipline-ship process better than most others in the Bible. Here we find three things we must do to be good spiritual mentors.

If a person is to be a strong soldier of the faith, there are three things that are usually true about them. Number one, they are a strong example as a mentor. Strong men tend to be the producers of other strong men, same with women. To reverse it, strong men & women tend to be the product of other strong men & women. And what Paul wants Timothy to recognize and us as well, is that Timothy has had a pattern of a strong man on which to trace his own life. That is vital to the building of a strong man. Paul describes the areas in which young Timothy in **I Timothy 4:12** was to be examples.

I Be an Examples (3:10-11).

1. Paul begins this section: *But thou hast fully known...* and then Paul lists all those things about himself that Timothy should follow. The words “hast fully known” is only one word in the original and it has profound insight. The word “parakolouthéo” (*par/ ox/ a/ koo / the'o*) literally means to follow alongside, to follow one so as to be always at his side. That's simply its literal meaning. It was used in ancient times. For example, the Stoic philosophers used the word as a technical term for the relationship between a disciple and his master, a student and his teacher, a very close relationship was expressed in this term. The aorist tense is used here which sums up all of Timothy's experience. You followed from the beginning of our time together to the present time you patterned your life after me.

2. He challenged Timothy “to follow”. “Timothy patterned your life after me.” Follow the demonstration of uncompromising loyalty. This was true of my life and you should set your life in that same pattern. You saw that I suffered and that didn't deter me.

***We too must be faithful Christians and be good spiritual mentors by being examples to follow. It's not just a simple word that means to follow in some generic sense. Paul himself was the model for Timothy.

3. Paul continues this section, “*hast fully known my doctrine*” (3:10a). Timothy knew all about the content of Paul’s teaching. He had heard Paul preach and teach scores of times. Timothy knew where Paul stood on the Word of God. He always preached the truth of God’s Word. Timothy had a tremendous spiritual example; we need these examples.

4. To be good spiritual mentors, everything we teach must be true to God’s Word. But not only must we teach, we must also model God’s Word. The most powerful part of mentoring is not teaching but real-life modeling. The Christian life is more “caught” than taught. That’s why Paul reminds Timothy of his “**manner of life**” (3:10) or lifestyle, his behavior. Timothy knew Paul’s behavior matched his beliefs. Paul was an “audio-visual” Christian. Paul’s walk matched his talk. What about you?

5. Timothy also knew Paul’s **purpose** (2 Timothy 3:10) or mission. Seeing Paul travel tirelessly and make great sacrifices, Timothy knew Paul’s purpose was not to line his pockets or gain a personal following. Paul was not an “armchair” mentor, remote from the struggles of the Christian life. He was mentoring Timothy from the frontlines of spiritual warfare. Consequently, Timothy knew even when Paul’s life was in danger, he never waived from his purpose.

6. Paul fulfilled his purpose with four virtues: faith, longsuffering, charity, and patience. These qualities in Paul’s life are what he wanted to mentor in Timothy. The word faith (pis-tis) would be better translated “**faithfulness**,” which is a part of the fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22). Paul is not referring to saving faith but to faithfulness in living out what he professes to believe. Longsuffering refers to Paul’s forbearance or fortitude. Paul’s charity enabled him to win and mentor people for whom others showed no concern and may even have despised. His patience allowed him to continue on course during difficult circumstances.

7. Few things are as important as letting younger believers see how we handle adversity. Therefore, Paul reminds Timothy of the persecutions and afflictions he endured in Antioch (2 Timothy 3:11) where he was driven out of the region (Acts 13:50), and in Iconium where an attempt was made to stone Paul, causing him to flee (Acts 14:6). Paul also reminds Timothy of his experience in Lystra, Timothy’s hometown. (**Acts 14:19**)

8. Paul reminds Timothy he had been a Christian gentleman through all kind of persecutions and afflictions, without compromising the Gospel or hating those hostile to him. In the midst of all this, Paul writes: *But out of them all the Lord delivered me* (2 Timothy 3:11 c). Now, Paul is imprisoned and facing imminent execution, yet his faith remains unshaken. How does Paul reveal his faith is still unshaken in **2 Timothy 4:18**?

The Lord’s deliverance doesn’t always mean escape and Paul was well aware of this because even God’s Son didn’t escape the cross. There are some things we must endure. Sometimes we must stand up for the truth of God’s Word at great cost. This may mean

losing friends, a job, or missing a promotion because we will not compromise our Christian convictions. But whether we escape or endure, to be good mentors we must be examples, and

II Be Prepared to Suffer Persecution (3:12).

1. Paul continues: Yea, **and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution (3:12).**

In verse 12 he adds that Timothy shouldn't be surprised by any of the persecution. Indeed, he says, it's a fact it's really true **that all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will be persecuted.** And the reason is because evil men and impostors will proceed from bad to worse, deceiving and being deceived. Timothy, it's never going to end. Timothy, it's not going to end for me until I'm gone. It's not going to end for you until you're gone. It's not going to end for the church until the church is gone.

2. The Bible teaches that even believers who are gentle and loving like Jesus will suffer persecution. We may never be imprisoned, tortured, or martyred for our faith, but if we stand up for biblical values, there will be friction from those who hold to the worldview. That friction will translate into persecution in some form. If we never face any kind of persecution, it could mean we are not making a difference in the world. We know we will face persecution because 100 percentage of those who live for Jesus shall suffer persecution according to 2 Timothy 3:12.

3. Be Discerning 3:13-14).

1. By the way, the evil men and impostors are the group described in verses 1 to 8. Verses 2 to 4 describes their evil, verses 5 to 8 describes their deceit. They are evil. Paul writes that evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived (3:13). This means deception will become increasingly worse. We see this today in the false religions, cults, and global humanism. The word translated seducers (GOES, go-ace) refers to those who pervert the Word of God and are duped by the gods of this world. Thus, they are deceiving, and being deceived. **2 Corinthians 4:4**

2. Impostors are constantly presenting new theology, new morals, and novel ideas about the Bible. But the Bible tells us: **But continue thou in the things which thou hast learned and hast been assured of knowing of whom thou hast learned them (2 Timothy 3:14).**

3. The truths of the Gospel are fixed, nonnegotiable, eternal truths that are not subject to compromise or change. Because of persecution, Timothy may have been tempted to modify his faith or abandon it altogether. However, Paul tells him to continue thou in the things which thou hast learned. There is an old truth that goes, "If it's new, it ain't true." That is not good English, but it's a great doctrinal principle because the eternal truths of God never change.

Conclusion:

We, like Paul (1 Corinthians 9:20-22), must use different methods to communicate the faith in a contemporary way, but the message never changes because God's Word is eternal.