

## 2 Timothy 3:10-17 – CONTINUE

So. We are in the HOME STRETCH of our reading plan through much of the New Testament. I hope that each of you has been with us through it. Maybe you didn't finish it every week, or maybe you did. Maybe you got behind. Maybe you started but haven't continued. Or maybe you've tracked with us every single week! Wherever, whatever – I encourage you to finish it with us. Finish it. Today we're in 2 Timothy. Next week in 1 John. Then on 10/10 we'll be in the book of Revelation.

So that's where we're going over the next few weeks. But for today, we're in 2 Timothy. To kind of set the stage for the specific text today – just remember a few things.

- T-Bone – Paul's son in the faith
  - Pastor that Paul had trained in ministry and left behind in Ephesus to pastor the church that Paul had planted
  - 2 Letters that Paul wrote to him – 2 very different circumstances for Paul and T-Bone both. Couple of years ago, some of you may remember we worked through 1 Timothy verse by verse. It was really Paul's blueprint for Timothy on leading the church.
  - 2 Timothy though – Paul was locked up in prison, knew he would likely die, abandoned by nearly everyone, and writes one of the final things we have recorded – a letter of encouragement to a struggling young pastor – his son in the faith, Timothy.
    - Paul with pastoral affection toward this brother writes him to keep pressing on in the work to which he's been called
    - In the opening verse he calls him to stir the fire of faith within him
    - To Hold On
    - To Guard the deposit
    - To be strong
    - To suffer well
    - Paul knows T-Bone is struggling.
    - He calls him to pursue faith, love, peace, righteousness
    - All while knowing that hard days are still right in front of him – both as a pastor and as a Christian
    - He calls T-Bone to continue, and to press on in doing what God's called him to.

And that's what I want us to look at together today in the Word. This call to keep going. Even when it's hard. To press on. To CONTINUE. If you have a Bible, I invite you to turn with me to 2 Timothy 3. If you're using a device, I encourage you to use the CSB.

### READ 2 Timothy 3:10-17

<sup>10</sup> But you have followed my teaching, conduct, purpose, faith, patience, love, and endurance, <sup>11</sup> along with the persecutions and sufferings that came to me in Antioch, Iconium, and Lystra. What persecutions I endured—and yet the Lord rescued me from them all. <sup>12</sup> In fact, all who want to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted.

<sup>13</sup> Evil people and impostors will become worse, deceiving and being deceived. <sup>14</sup> But as for you, continue in what you have learned and firmly believed. You know those who taught you, <sup>15</sup> and

you know that from infancy you have known the sacred Scriptures, which are able to give you wisdom for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus.

<sup>16</sup> All Scripture is inspired by God<sup>[a]</sup> and is profitable for teaching, for rebuking, for correcting, for training in righteousness, <sup>17</sup> so that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work.

**PRAY.**

**Now, to be clear, the context here is an elder pastor writing to a younger pastor on pressing forward. That's the direct context – however I think it's no stretch at all for us to look at this – at these verses as a call to every follower of Jesus to continue. To keep going. To continue in the work of the Gospel right where God has placed each of us.**

And as we think through what continuing, even when it's hard, even when you're tired, even when it'd be easier to throw in the towel and sleep in and go to brunch or the beach – in this section Paul calls T-Bone to continue and the first thing he tells him is to remind him of the example he set for T-Bone. How I'm going to frame it for you is **"FOLLOW THE RIGHT PEOPLE."**

### **I. Follow the Right People**

Paul has just called out false teachers and the wrong types of people to follow

- Read 3:1-5
- These are the types of people to avoid – and don't miss V5 – holding to the form of godliness but denying its power – we could spend a week right here on this verse
- V9 – their foolishness will be clear to all

BUT YOU...have followed Paul's

- Teaching
- Conduct
- Purpose
- Faith
- Patience
- Love
- Endurance

Want to continue well in the Christian life? Follow the right people. I think not just the pastors of your church – but others that we learn from and allow to have an influence over our lives. The lens that I filter out the advice is: (1) love for Jesus, (2) love for my family, (3) commitment to the mission of God in the world. Just this week, I reached out to a friend, and I was hanging on his words because I'm convinced in his love for Jesus, my family and the mission of God.

### **Who do you allow to influence you?**

- This one "influencer" with 44M followers and a bunch of stupid videos on YouTube.
- See that their **teaching matches the word**. Not parts of the word. Not stuff taken out of context. But the unchanging truth of the Word. And not just what may be done in public if you're thinking about a pastor. But how does he lead his family. How does he love his wife and children.

- See that their **conduct matches their teaching**. Not just an hour on Sunday, or an hour on Thursday night, or Saturday evening, or whatever – but does their lifestyle match their teaching. The people you’re following, if their Tuesday afternoon is misaligned with their Sunday morning, watch out. Dude’s not worth following.
- Purpose – Glorify God, or glorify selves. Personally, as much as I pursue excellence in my craft – the art of preaching → I never want you to leave this portable church setting thinking “man, Paul’s an awesome preacher”. My goal is to have you leaving thinking and knowing “man, Jesus is glorious, and the Gospel of His grace is so very good”.
- Faith – what we spoke at length about last week – that confidence in the character of God that results in God-honoring action.
- Patience & Love
- Endurance – we aren’t sprinters – we’re marathoners. We have some distance runners in the room. They know – sign up for a race – the goal is to finish, to endure. When you think through the people that you allow to influence you, do you see a pattern of endurance in their lives.

Paul is telling T-Bone – in essence, you remember how I lived, consider my example, and follow it as you struggle to continue in the work that God has called you to. Continue. Keep fighting. You can almost hear the words that Paul wrote to the church at Corinth “follow me as I follow Christ.” The same exact principle at work here. Follow the right people. I’d rather you follow a spirit-filled brother in Christ with a middle school education than a PhD whose teaching and conduct are misaligned.

You and I – for us today – as we continue we need to make sure we are following the right people. Because we know that hard times are coming.

## II. Hard Times Are Coming

Re-read 11-13

In V11 Paul is referencing events that happened in his life, recorded in the middle chapters of the book of Acts. They tried to kill him by stoning him to death. Spoiler alert - he didn’t die. Some of you’ve heard me say this – I think the only thing worse than being killed by stoning is to have survived a failed attempt at stoning. And notice, he doesn’t say “look how strong I was”. Instead he says “the Lord rescued me from them all.”

And, while I don’t expect anyone in this room to ever deal with execution attempts on our lives for sharing Jesus with people – the truth here is that every single one of us, if we are desiring to live godly lives, will deal with some type of persecution. **That persecution will look differently for each of us**

- For the kids – it might look like being ostracized or left out at school when they find out you go to church
- It might be dealing with family that call you a hater because you won’t celebrate the “wedding”
- It may mean missing out on that bonus because you just can’t turn in an inflated sales report

Persecution will look differently for each of us, and living a life for the glory of God will cost you something at some point. But the cost is so worth it. There will be people that think you just need to “get with the times” when you promote and defend God’s good design for human sexuality and the family. When you work to defend the lives of the most vulnerable people in the world – unborn children in the United States of America. **When you take a stand for the Gospel – watch out. Because the enemy’s gonna come at you.**

Paul didn’t want T-Bone to be surprised when the haters kept coming after him. He wanted him to be ready – to be ready to continue in what he taught him – by clinging to the all sufficient word of God.

### III. Cling to the All-Sufficient Word

Re-read 14-17

We will never continue well without the Word of God.

- **There's power in the Word of God to save** – because it points us to Jesus. Every word pointing us to believe in the person, work and ways of Jesus.
  - Some of you have heard me share this before – like when I share Jesus with people, of course I want everyone I share with to immediately turn from their sin and trust in Jesus. But, one of my goals is to simply get them to commit to reading the Bible with me. And considering who Jesus is, as presented in this book.
  - Because the power isn't in my words, the power is in God's word.
- **Not only is there power in the Word to save, but it's power applied to the Christian sustains.**
  - Profitable for teaching, rebuking, correcting, training
  - The Spirit of God uses the Word of God to change how we think, and direct how we live. It is profitable.
  - So that we may be complete
    - The implication is that we are incomplete without the word
    - A Christian that ignores the Word is like a fish that ignores the water.
    - We will never continue and finish well without prioritizing God's word.

#### CLOSING:

**Before we can ever continue, we have to make sure we've actually started!**