



A LIFE WORTHY OF IMITATION

BIG IDEA: In an increasingly secular world, we are to stay true to God's Word and set an example worthy of imitation.

DATE: Wednesday, November 12 and Sunday, November 16, 2025

SCRIPTURE: 2 Timothy 3:1-5; 10-17

OPENING QUESTION

Who do you know who practiced what they preached? *What about someone who didn't? What effect did that have on you and your faith?*

SETTING THE STAGE

The apostle Paul has called on believers to be a "vessel for honor" for Christ, pursuing "righteousness, faith, love, [and] peace" (2:22). He will now describe the situation that occurs when people *do not* seek to be such vessels for honor. In particular, he will speak about the evil that will fill the world during the end times, when people are boastful and malignant, corrupting everything they encounter. Paul states that an attitude will arise in which people view themselves as having a form of godliness... but they will have no power from God. Paul calls for Timothy to be different. He is to stand apart from the world and stand up for what he believes. Just as the false teachers that Paul identifies were to be recognized and understood and the way they lived, so true believers in Christ are to be recognized and understood by the way they live. Doctrine should translate into everyday conduct.

STUDY THE BIBLE

2 Timothy 3:1-5; 10-17 (NLT)

You should know this, Timothy, that in the last days there will be very difficult times. ²For people will love only themselves and their money. They will be boastful and proud, scoffing at God, disobedient to their parents, and ungrateful. They will consider nothing sacred. ³They will be unloving and unforgiving; they will slander others and have no self-control. They will be cruel and hate what is good. ⁴They will betray their friends, be reckless, be puffed up with pride, and love pleasure rather than God. ⁵They will act religious, but they will reject the power that could make them godly. Stay away from people like that!

¹⁰ But you, Timothy, certainly know what I teach, and how I live, and what my purpose in life is. You know my faith, my patience, my love, and my endurance. ¹¹ You know how much persecution and suffering I have endured. You know all about how I was persecuted in Antioch, Iconium, and Lystra—but the Lord rescued me from all of it. ¹² Yes, and everyone who wants to

live a godly life in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution. ¹³ But evil people and impostors will flourish. They will deceive others and will themselves be deceived.

¹⁴ But you must remain faithful to the things you have been taught. You know they are true, for you know you can trust those who taught you. ¹⁵ You have been taught the holy Scriptures from childhood, and they have given you the wisdom to receive the salvation that comes by trusting in Christ Jesus. ¹⁶ All Scripture is inspired by God and is useful to teach us what is true and to make us realize what is wrong in our lives. It corrects us when we are wrong and teaches us to do what is right. ¹⁷ God uses it to prepare and equip his people to do every good work.

DISCUSSION

TURN AWAY FROM THE FALSE: 2 Timothy 3:1-5

Paul opens by putting the moral decay that is at work in the world into perspective. What does Paul say that people will be like in the last days? Why might this actually give Timothy *hope* when he encounters people who do evil?

How do you see these verses playing out in our current culture?

The types of people Paul includes have one thing in common – *godless self-centeredness*. What was Paul's advice to Timothy concerning these dangerous people?

FOLLOW THOSE WHO ARE TRUE: 2 Timothy 3:10-13

Paul had suffered much persecution in his work of spreading the gospel, yet the Lord never abandoned him. What was the most important thing the apostle wanted Timothy to take away from the many persecutions that Paul had endured?

Paul's words in this passage echo those of Jesus to His own followers, "If they persecuted Me, they will also persecute you" (John 15:20). If we follow Paul's example and work to live a godly life in Christ Jesus, what can we also expect?

Have you ever been treated differently because of your Christian beliefs?

CONTINUE IN GOD'S WORD: 2 Timothy 3:14-17

Paul stresses that the false teachers continue in their downward trajectory, so Timothy must continue to grow upward in his faith. Why does Paul say Timothy is able to remain confident in the things he has been taught?

Paul states Scripture is profitable for doctrine, reproof, correction and instruction (NIV). *Doctrine* is teaching, *reproof* is conviction, *correction* is setting someone straight, and *instruction* (as Paul uses the term here) refers to training in spiritual matters. If believers embrace all four aspects of Scripture, what will be the result?

RESPONSE

What would happen if a young Christian followed the example *you* have set in your life? What changes need to be made in order for you to be able to say with confidence, as Paul did, "Follow my example."