

# THE ROCK COMMUNITY CHURCH

## 2 Timothy 3:10-13

### “Follow Carefully”

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Anaheim Hills, CA | RockCC.com

21:22

Well, good morning. Open your Bibles with me to 2 Timothy chapter 3. 2 Timothy chapter 3. We're going to be reading verses 10 and 13 this morning. This is God's holy inspired authoritative word.

21:43

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

22:09

Indeed, all who desire to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted. While evil people and imposters will go from bad to worse deceiving and being deceived." This is God's word. Let's pray.

22:28

Father, we are so thankful for the privilege to open our Bibles this morning to hear what you're desiring us to hear, to hear from you. And God, I pray that you would help me, help me to communicate, help us to listen.

22:48

That your spirit would illuminate our hearts and our minds or change us today. I pray that we would walk out these doors, changed people. As we have a weighty text in front of us, this is not an easy passage.

23:11

I pray that we're challenged by it. I pray that your spirit would convict us in the areas that we need repentance in. And that you would lead us and guide us. It's in Jesus' name we pray. Amen. So if you remember, 2 Timothy is Paul's final letter.

23:30

He's about to die. He's about to be executed. He's in prison and he's writing this letter to his young disciple Timothy. And as such, as the final words of a man's life, they're weighty words. These are the words that are significant, important to Paul to mention, to encourage his young disciple.

23:58

Right now as such, so Paul's in prison, awaiting his execution. Timothy, a follower of Paul, a follower of Christ, he's no doubt maybe a little worried. What's his end going to be? If they're about to chop Paul's head off, what's going to happen to me?

24:24

And Paul's writing to Timothy to encourage him. Timothy, stay the course. Timothy, do what you're supposed to do. Preach the word, Timothy. Don't falter one way or the other. Stick with it. And he's going to give him some encouragement today and some weighty truth.

24:49

And so I've broken this message up into three segments, three parts, and there's nothing special. Just kind of things to hang your hats on. The first one is a commendation. Paul's giving Timothy an "atta boy," if you will.

25:06

The second one, point number one is verses 10 and the first part of verse 11. The second one, second part of verse 11, is a hope. And the third one is a guarantee. And that's verses 12 and 13. And I kind of had to fudge a little bit on that third one because there's really actually two guarantees there, but I just, you know, I wanted AAA.

25:29

And it was like a commendation, a hope, two guarantees. That didn't really flow that well. So I cheated a little bit and just broke it up into those three. But that third one, there's actually two points under that.

25:43

So he's writing to Timothy. Now I remind you what Pastor Dave taught on last week at the beginning of chapter three, and I'm not gonna read it all, but he says, but understand, verse one, this, that in the last days there will come times of difficulty for people will be lovers of self, lovers of money, proud, arrogant, abusive, and so on.

26:04

So in comparison to that, that's where Paul left off. It's going to get worse. It's not going to get better. In the last days, what we're living in right now, it gets worse. He's gonna close our section with evil people and imposters will go from bad to worse, deceiving and being deceived.

26:28

So in light of that, Timothy, he goes, "you," now that you is put there at the beginning, it's meant to be forceful, right? It's meant to, as you're reading through the text, it's kind of like you, Timothy, in response to, or in, not forceful, but in, what's the word I'm looking for?

26:53

In comparison, that's the word I'm looking for, my brain just, right? In comparison to these evil people, you, Timothy, I wanna commend you for your actions, your behavior, your theology. What have you done, Timothy?

27:13

You, however, you have followed. And he's gonna list nine areas, nine traits in which Timothy has followed, and we're gonna rocket through those pretty quickly, but you, Timothy, in comparison to these people, you have followed.

27:31

Now there's term for followed in this context is meant to be forceful, right? There's some weight behind that. Paul means to provide Timothy with a commendation that says, you, Timothy, you've carefully examined, this is the weight of that word.

27:53

You've carefully examined, you looked into, you attended, you paid attention, close attention to the minute details of my teaching, of my conduct, of my aim in life, and all the things that he's listed there.

28:08

You've done this, Timothy, and I wanna point out the weight of this word, it's he's intentionally paid attention, right? This didn't happen by accident. Timothy didn't just find himself in the right path.

28:29

He paid attention, he observed, he looked into, he studied, he thought deeply about what he was supposed to do, his calling. He paid attention, that's what Paul is lifting Timothy up. Right, Timothy, you weren't just mindless, this didn't just happen by chance, but you're doing well because you carefully followed.

28:55

You carefully followed, and Paul's gonna put himself up as an example. And I wanna pause in that word for just a moment and ask this question of us. This is just as I was thinking through it this week, it's that weight, am I doing that?

29:13

Am I, can it be said of me, that my Bible is open, it doesn't live in the back seat of my car, where I could find it next Sunday, right? But my Bible is open on a daily basis. I'm examining in details what my life is supposed to be like.

29:32

You see, that is what Paul is, is commending Timothy for. You've carefully followed me. You've carefully, now Paul, I don't think he's trying to be arrogant here, but he puts himself forward as an example, as Paul often does.

29:53

Right, as Paul often does. He said to the Corinthians, in 1 Corinthians chapter four, verse 16, "I urge you then, be imitators of me." Same letter in chapter 11, 1 Corinthians 11:1. "Be imitators of me, follow me as I follow Christ."

30:14

So who is Paul following? And Paul says, follow me as I follow Christ. Be imitators of me. To the Philippians in chapter four, verse nine, he writes, "what you have learned and received and heard and seen in me, practice these things and the God of peace will be with you."

30:38

To the Thessalonians, 2 Thessalonians 3:7, he writes, "for you yourselves know how you ought to imitate us because we were not idle when we were with you." Same letter a few verses later in verse nine of chapter three.

30:53

"It was not because we did not have the right but to give you in ourselves an example to imitate." Right, Paul is not being arrogant, he's being truthful. Right, he's about to say in just a minute, my aim in life, you followed my aim in life.

31:12

You followed my conduct, you followed my teaching, you followed me in all these details and well done. Good, that's what you were supposed to do. I wonder, like here's as I'm reading through this, can I say that?

31:32

Can you guys say that? Can we look at those who are coming up after us and say, follow me as I follow Christ? Intimately look into my life, in the details of my life and what are you gonna see? Paul says, you see the Lordship of Christ.

31:50

You see my passion, my driving aim, my focus is to be spent for Christ. If you were to walk up into 180 today, could you say this? Are you living your life in such a way that you can look at those who are coming up after you and say, do as I did?

32:15

Well done, you're following that path. And I wanna remind us, there's kind of a bookend here. Because if you remember back to 1 Timothy, chapter four, verse 12, this is Paul's first letter to Timothy, some years before.

32:29

He says to Timothy, "let no one despise you for your youth, but set the believers an example in speech and conduct and love and faith and in purity." Right, Timothy, early in his ministry, don't let people look down on you because you're young, but be an example.

32:49

Now Paul, nearing his deathbed, writes to Timothy and says, well done, you've done it. You've stayed the course, Timothy, good job. Your race isn't done. He's about to say in just a few minutes that Paul is about to say in just a few minutes, he's being poured out as a drink offering.

33:08

Timothy, your race is not done. Stay the course, stay the course. Now I don't think Paul's being arrogant. I think he's being truthful. I'll remind you in 1 Timothy 15, he says this, this is a trustworthy saying and deserving of full acceptance.

33:31

That Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am the foremost. Right, Paul's recognizing who he is. He's not saying I'm all that in a bag of chips. Right, he's not putting himself up as this arrogant person.

33:52

He's saying I know who I am. The chief of sinners, the foremost of sinners. I'm spending my life for the glory of Christ. Follow that example, church, follow that example. Paul followed Christ. He called those around him to follow Christ and then he set the example of what that looked like.

34:20

JC Ryle says this, "as the soldier follows his general, as the servant follows his master, as the scholar follows his teacher, as the sheep follow its shepherd, just so ought the professing Christian to follow Christ."

34:37

To follow Christ. So church, I ask, are we doing that? Can you point to your life as an example of following Christ, of what that looks like? So you could walk into one of our Children's Ministry classes this morning and say follow me as I follow Christ.

34:58

That's our, adults, that's our role. That's our God given responsibility for ourselves, for the generation that is coming after us. Now next, he's gonna list nine things, right? Nine points. I don't think this is an exhaustive list.

35:19

I don't know if that's what Paul was intending to do, but I think these are points that describe what a well-rounded example is supposed to look like. And Paul says, you Timothy, however, you followed, and he starts with this word teaching.

35:35

And I don't think that's insignificant at all, that that's first in the list. Now, what is Paul's teaching? That's a little bit too lofty of a topic to tackle in a message when I got a bunch of other things to tackle.

35:53

But Paul's teaching, as we've just laid out, and we're going to list a lot of other verses, Paul's teaching is Bible-saturated. It's Bible-saturated. Paul would be the equivalent today of somebody who has like three PhDs in Old Testament history.

36:17

He knew his stuff. It was thoroughly biblical. Two, it was Christ-centered. And I'm just going to breeze through this and just, Pauline theology is a whole semester, eight years of college. Like, it's a lot, but it's Bible-saturated.

36:36



It's Christ-centered. Christ is the center of Paul's thought. And I say that because a lot of times we attend Bible studies that puts us at the center. Pauline theology, God was at the center. Christ was at the center.

36:52

He's the focal point. He's it. And then third, it was always missional-focused. The gospel wasn't to be hoarded. It wasn't just, oh, Yippee, look at me. I get to now live my little Christian life in my little Christian bubble.

37:06

No, to Paul, the gospel demanded us to go. It required us to not hold on to this, to go and spread the gospel to everyone. Right, so Paul's teaching was Biblically-saturated, Christ-centered, mission -focused.

37:27

And again, I want to point out teaching stands first in this list. Not only is teaching first in this list, but in a few verses, it's first in that list in regard to scripture. He says all scripture in verse 16 is given by inspiration.

37:43

God is profitable for teaching. Teaching sits at the top of Paul's list. See, only from the standpoint of correct theology, of a correct understanding of the Bible, do these other points make sense? Conduct makes no sense unless it's founded upon right doctrine.

38:14

Aim and life makes no sense unless it is founded upon right doctrine. Faith makes no sense unless it is founded upon right doctrine. Patience makes no sense unless it is founded upon right doctrine. Love, steadfastness, here's the final two.

38:32

Persecutions and sufferings make no sense unless it is founded upon correct Biblical thinking. You see, Paul puts this up here first, not because he's saying the Christian life is merely academic. Christian life is not merely academic.

38:54

It's not less than that. It starts with correct Biblical understanding that produces, what does he say next, the correct conduct, right? That right theology produces the right living, the right aim of life, right?

39:13

From that standpoint, you see, church, we cannot skip that. We cannot skip that. Paul says, Timothy, you've looked in detail into my teaching, well done. Don't stop, church, the application for us today is open our Bibles.

39:36

Think deeply about the word of God. Be students of the Bible, not on Sunday mornings, only. Certainly that should be part of our regular practice, but every single day, reading, studying, understanding what God has written, looking into it intently, that's the path where Paul would then look at us and say, well done.

40:04

You've followed, you looked at those details, you've drawn correct definitions because you started at the correct foundation. That is the word of God. So you Timothy however, you followed my teaching, you followed my conduct.

40:25

Paul's teaching like Jesus's was not merely like I said academic, it wasn't just for the thought life. It's also not merely only for the lifestyle. Those two must go hand in hand. What's your conduct?

40:42

Is your conduct becoming of Christ? Does your conduct set up that mare for other Christians and the world to look at and say that's what Christ looks like? You see that's the call to be a follower of Christ.

40:57

Does your conduct match? Timothy you followed my teaching, you followed my conduct, you followed my aim in life. Paul here refers to his resolve. The focus of Paul's life was the Lordship of Christ.

41:17

How is it when Christ caught him on that road? When Christ caught him on that road, he put Paul in check. Paul, why are you persecuting me? Who do you think you are Paul? Paul, let me show you who you are.

41:35

You thought you were going around with the authority of Israel, the leadership of Israel, to persecute and put Christians to death. Why are you coming against me, Paul? Paul's sitting there going, I'm on the wrong side.

41:54

Jesus hits Paul with his Lordship. From that moment Paul lived out his life. Like he said, not perfectly. He said, I'm the chief of sinners, but he lived out his life as if Jesus Christ was king. You notice I said, if Jesus Christ was king, I don't like that sentence.

42:18

I don't like that sentence because my recognition, your recognition, the person across the streets recognition of Christ as king, matters nothing at all. I've heard so many people when you're eventually, well, I don't recognize Christ as king.

42:40

My response is, well, I don't care. Here's the truth. He is king. He is king of kings and he is Lord of lords. One day every knee will bow and every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord. Whether you like it or not, he is Lord.

42:59

I don't sit up here today to say, hey, make Jesus Lord of your life. I sit up here today to tell you that Jesus Christ is Lord of your life. Whether you recognize it or whether you're in total and other rebellion against him, he is Lord.

43:17

Not of a part of your life, not of Sunday morning between, between what, 10 and 11:30, right? No, he is Lord of our lives. He sits upon the throne in the high courts of heaven as the king of kings and Lord of lords.

43:37

Paul recognized that. That was intimate to his teaching. Timothy, you followed that. That's my aim. My aim is to put on Christ. My aim is to look to Christ. And the author of Hebrews, he actually boasts.

43:53

And he's talking about Abraham and those saints of old. And he says, hey, they didn't seek an earthly kingdom. They didn't seek and if they had sought it, they would have opportunity to go back. But as it is, they sought a heavenly one.

44:10

You see, the author of Hebrews is boasting that these Old Testament saints who received the promises of the, the, the promised land. The author of Hebrews says, that's not where their hope was set. Their hope was set in heaven.

44:26

And it says, and therefore, and therefore God was not ashamed to be called their God for, he has prepared a city for them. That was Paul's aim. It's the aim of the Old Testament saints. That our eyes are fixed upon heaven.

44:44

This life, we're going to read a verse in just a few minutes, that this life, this life is temporary. This life is passing. Fix your eyes upon heaven. That was Paul's aim. Jesus said, no one who puts his hand to the plow and looks back is fit for the service of the kingdom of God.

45:04

That's Luke chapter nine verse 62. Church, what is your aim? What is your aim in life? Bigger, better cars, more boats, bigger houses. Those are great things, right? Those are things God could give us.

45:17

We went through Ecclesiastes a year or so ago, however long it was. Those are things that God gives us to enjoy. If that's the aim of your life, if that's the God of your life, your life is wasted, because you can't take that with you.

45:36

He says, my faith, Timothy, you followed my faith. This refers to Paul and Timothy's personal commitment to Christ and unwavering commitment to all that Christ is. We'll come back to this point in a moment.

45:53

He says, my patience. Timothy, you followed my patience. I don't know about you, but as I was reading this this week, I'm like, I kind of wish Paul, you didn't put that word in there, because I'm such an impatient person.

46:08

Am I alone in this? Right, some lady cut me off on the freeway the other day and I'm ready to throw down, right? Like, and it's like, I'm just sitting there, Lord, why, like the depths of the wickedness of my heart.

46:20

Patience, you followed my patience. Paul puts that up. Now, it is an attribute of God, first and foremost. Romans chapter two, verse three and four. Says, do you suppose, oh man, you who judge those who practice such things and you do them, that you will escape the judgment of God?

46:42

Or do you presume upon the riches of his kindness, his kindness, God's kindness, and forbearance and patience? Not knowing that God's kindness is meant to lead to repentance. Patience is an attribute of God.

46:58

It's an attribute of Christ, first Timothy 1:16. Now, we just read 1:15 a few minutes ago that Paul is the chief of sinners. This is the verse after it. But I received mercy for this reason. I received mercy for this reason, that in me, as the foremost, Jesus Christ might display his perfect patience as an example to those who were to believe in him for eternal life.

47:29

It's an attribute of God, it's an attribute of Christ, it's a fruit of the spirit, Galatians chapter five. Love, joy, peace, patience. Christians that are born again that have the spirit of God in dwelling them, patience is a virtue, it's an attribute that should be growing in our lives, not fleeing from our lives.

47:54

As we grow older, our patience should grow greater, not less. It's a trait of God's people, Paul writes, and again, I remind you, Paul writes, this is Pauline theology through and

through. In Colossians 3:12, he says, put on then, as God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, compassionate hearts, kindness, humility, meekness, patience.

48:23

Church, we don't get to run from this idea. Patience is a quality of Christianity. Paul in the next chapter, in chapter four of 2 Timothy, is gonna call Timothy as a pastor. After chapter four, verse two, he says, preach the word, be ready in season and out of season, reprove, rebuke, and exhort with complete patience and teaching.

48:55

Timothy, do this with so much patience. This is not a quality we get to just ignore. Timothy, you followed my patience, my love. The word agape appears 71 times in Paul's letters, and it's absent from none of them.

49:15

The God Paul serves is the God of love, 2 Corinthians 13:11. Paul lived a life driven by love. He says, Christ's love compels us. 2 Corinthians 5:14. He called for love from believers. He says to us, do everything in love.

49:36

1 Corinthians 16:14. And he offered love to his fellow Christians. My love to all of you in Christ. 1 Corinthians chapter 16, verse 24. You see, godly love is the chief ethic of Christianity. And notice, I said godly love, not as the world defines love, as God defines love.

49:57

God is love, he defines love. Timothy, you followed my aim, my faith, my patience, my love, my steadfastness. followed my steadfastness. This is that idea of a long obedience in the right direction, the steadfastness.

50:18

Paul's model of endurance is important because it shows Timothy that Paul isn't asking him to do something Paul was unwilling to do. Paul was obedient even to the point of imprisonment. We're gonna read some persecutions that Paul faced.

50:35

He was obedient to to the end. Timothy you're doing well. Well done. You followed in my steadfastness. I love the story of Paulicarp. Paulicarp was a disciple of John and on the day of his execution the procouncil said to him, take an oath and I will let you go.

50:58

I'll set you free. Here is the oath. Revile Christ. Just revile Christ. And Paulicarp's famous response was this, for eighty and six years I have been his servant and he has done me no wrong. And how can I now blaspheme my King who saved me?

51:27

Light me on fire. And they did. After he said that he prayed in the name of the triune God, he was bound, the fire was lit, an executioner was called in to stab him and he died. And the saints, the believers gathered him and and took care of his remains and then every year they would celebrate on the day of his martyrdom, his birthday.

51:56

That's what they called it. I love that. The Spurgeon says it this way, the greatest moment of a Christian's life is their last because it's the first moment they wake up in heaven. Right? We look at that as such like they killed them.

52:12

Wait, no they killed them. And he awoke, like Stephen did, to Jesus Christ. I saw the Lord standing at the right hand of the throne of God. Right? Like he awoke to Christ saying, well done. You've, Timothy, you've followed my steadfastness.

52:29



You've stayed the course, church. Are we this well rounded example that we could look to those who are coming after us and saying, follow me in all these areas? Or are you like me sitting here looking at this list thinking I got a lot of work to do?

52:54

Right? We're all broken. We're all leaky vessels. We all fail. My intent is not to heap condemnation, but it's to heap a charge. It's the call for repentance where repentance needs to call for. And I speak to myself first and foremost.

53:10

We must do this. We must do this. Verse 11 says, Timothy, you followed my persecutions and sufferings. My persecution and sufferings. I don't know if that's a word or those those two words would be in most of our American lists.

53:37

My persecutions and my sufferings that happened to me at Antioch and Iconium and Leistra, which persecutions I endured. Acts 14 verse 19 and 20 tells the story where the Jews from Antioch came to Leistra and convinced the people to drag Paul out of the city and stone him.

53:56

And they said they left him supposing he was dead. And God preserved his life. Paul in 2 Corinthians chapter 11 writes an entire list of the realities of his ministry. He says this, with far greater labors, far more imprisonments, with countless beatings and often near death, five times I received the hands of the Jews, the 40 lashes minus one, three times I was beaten with rods.

54:29

Once I was stoned, three times I was shipwrecked. A night and day I was adrift at sea on frequent journeys in danger from rivers and danger from robbers, danger from my own people, danger from the Gentiles, danger in the city, danger in the wilderness, danger at

sea, danger from the false brothers in toil and hardship through many sleepless nights in hunger and thirst, often without food and cold and exposure.

54:57

And apart from all these things, there is daily pressure on me of my anxiety for all the churches. I think a lot of the pragmatists in America today would look at Paul and say, well, Paul, it's because you're doing ministry wrong.

55:13

Change the message. Soften the message. Soften it. Right? The people who are upset at you because you're calling them out. And Paul's about to correct that thinking forcefully in just a minute and we'll get there.

55:30

I remind you, Jesus says, whoever does not bear his own cross and come after me cannot be my disciples. Cannot be my disciples. Thus saith the Lord. Bear your cross. Pick it up. Your life is not your own.

55:49

It was purchased. It was bought by Christ. R.C. Sproul and commenting on Luke 14 says this, Jesus is not talking about a general participation in suffering or in bearing the problems and anxieties of daily experience.

56:07

Instead, he is making a clear reference to martyrdom. Unless people were prepared to become martyrs, they could not be his disciples. I love it. It's that attitude. It's that recognition. A lot of us have been sold a cheap bill of goods.

56:27

Grace is free. Christianity will cost you everything. Salvation is a free gift of God. Turn and believe. Living for Christ will cost you everything. If you've been told otherwise, you've been lied to.

56:44

Paul's about to explain that forcefully in just a moment. Now, does this mean all of us are going to go to the gallows? No. I don't think that's what it means. Jesus is saying, pick up your cross. Dying is the easy part.

57:02

Dying is the moment. It's that life spent for Christ. Unappultment is aim and life. That's the purpose. That's the thing that counts. I love what Calvin writes. This is a long quote, but I have it up here on the TVs for you.

57:21

Calvin explains it well. But it is asked, must all men be martyrs? For it is evident that there have been many godly persons who have never suffered banishment or imprisonment or flight or any kind of persecution.

57:39

I reply, it is not always in one way that Satan persecutes the servants of Christ, but yet it is absolutely unavoidable that all of them shall have the world for their enemy in some form or another. That their faith may be tried and their steadfastness proved.

58:01

For Satan, who is the continual enemy of Christ, will never suffer anyone to be at peace during his whole life. And there will always be wicked men that are thorns in our sides. Moreover, as soon as zeal for God is manifested by a believer, it kindles out the fear of Godly men, and although they have not a drawn sword, yet they vomit out their venom, either by murmuring or slander or by raising a disturbance or by other methods.

58:41

Accordingly, although they are not exposed to the same assault and do not engage in the same battle, yet they have a warfare in common and shall never be holy at peace and exempt from persecution. That's the Christian life.

59:02

That's the Christian life. And Paul is going to get back to that. So hold that thought there for a second. He says suffering, that's not a word we like, a result of the fall, a curse placed upon this world.

59:17

Death is a reality. Suffering is a reality. You have a theology of suffering. Do you have a theology of suffering? Spurgeon said it well. Christians, Jesus does not suffer so as to exclude your suffering.

59:36

He bears a cross, not that you may escape it, but that you may endure it. Jesus, Christ exempts you from sin, but not from sorrow. Remember that and expect suffering. It's a reality of our lives. It's a reality of our lives.

01:00:01

Paul, again, part of Paul's teaching, Second Corinthians, chapter four, verse 16 and 18, he writes, so we do not lose heart, we do not lose heart, though our outward self is wasting away, our inner self is being renewed day by day for this light and momentary affliction, light and momentary, is preparing for us an eternal weight of glory beyond all comparison.

01:00:29

As we look not to the things that are seen, but to the things that are unseen, for the things that are seen are transient, they're temporal, but the things that are unseen, they are eternal. That's why the author of Hebrews in chapter 11 is boasting in the saints of old faith saying they saw a heavenly kingdom.

01:00:49

Their eyes were not fixed upon this world. They were not fixed upon this world. They were not fixed upon this world. The second point, a hope, says, you followed my persecution, verse 11, and suffering that happened to me at Antioch and Iconium and Lystra, which persecutions I endured.

01:01:16

I love this, yet the Lord, that from them all the Lord rescued me, yet from them all the Lord rescued me. I couldn't help but like thinking, Paul's in prison when he wrote that sentence. Yet from them all the Lord rescued me.

01:01:34

Like he's in prison, like he could say, yeah, all those night days of the deep stonings, beatings, the Lord rescued me. But wouldn't we be tempted, but I'm questioning him now as I'm in prison, like is he gonna rescue me now?

01:01:50

Right, he's about to say to Timothy in chapter four of second Timothy, verse six and eight, for I'm already being poured out as a drink offering, and the time of my departure has come. I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith, henceforth is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, will award to me on that day, and not only to me, but also all those who love his appearing.

01:02:18

Right, Paul can confidently say, in his living and in his dying, the Lord rescued me from them all. Romans chapter 14, verse eight and nine, for if we live, we live to the Lord. If we die, we die to the Lord.

01:02:38

So then, whether we live or whether we die, we are the Lords. For this end, Christ died and lived again. That's a cool sentence. For this end, he died, and now he lives through the resurrection. For this end, Christ died and lived again, so that he might be Lord, both of the dead and the living.

01:03:02

Church, we have such a profound hope that in our living, he is Lord, and in our dying, he is Lord. Whether we live or whether we die, that affects his Lordship not at all. The reality of persecution and suffering is eminent, as he's about to say.

01:03:25

It's there, it's a reality of our lives. Live well, die well. He is Lord, and he is faithful to take you through the suffering, all the way to glory. He's faithful. Peter says we have a living hope, a living hope.

01:03:45

I love that. 1 Peter chapter one, verse three and five, just for your reference, a living hope. And then the final point, we have a guarantee, and like I said, two guarantees. Verse 12, indeed, all who desire to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted.

01:04:06

Wow, all those who desire to live a godly life will be persecuted. I remind you, Jesus said, a servant is not greater than his master. If they persecuted me, they will persecute you. What makes us think we're any different, any better?

01:04:25

Christ lived his life, most perfect life, and what was the world's response, hatred? They put him to death. You see, Christians, our goal is not to be liked by everybody. Our goal is to preach the gospel, to preach the truth, to call people to repentance, to tell them about the one who sits upon the throne.

01:04:51

And if they persecuted him for doing it, they're going to persecute us. All, indeed, all who desire to live godly lives. I pray that's all of us, all of us desiring to live godly lives. Here's the promise.

01:05:09

Like I said earlier, some of us have been sold a cheap bill of goods. Come to Christ and all your problems will be solved. Now this life's gonna have great suffering, but in the end, we get heaven, we get eternity.

01:05:27

A servant is not greater than his master. I love what Thomas Watson said. Such as are not settled in the faith, can never suffer for it. Skeptics in religion will hardly ever prove martyrs. Kind of choppy English, but in other words, if you're not settled, and Paul said, if you're not settled in his teaching, if you're not settled in your understanding of the theology of who God is, of who Christ is, persecution and suffering for Christ's name makes no sense to you whatsoever.

01:06:03

J .C. Ryle says, mere churchmanship and outward professions are cheap religion, of course, and cost man nothing, but real, vital Christianity will always bring with it a cross. Real and vital Christianity will always bring with it a cross.

01:06:26

Do you desire to live a godly life in Christ Jesus? Paul set the example for Timothy to follow, and he gives us a guarantee if you do this, Timothy, remember he's writing, if you do this, Timothy, you will be persecuted.

01:06:42

The call to Christianity is a call to come and die, to lay down your life for the sake of Christ. We don't get to cheapen that, but there's so much gain. That's why when Paul can say, for me to live is Christ, and to die is what?

01:07:02

Gain, great, yeah, I lose things here, but you know what I gain? I gain Christ, I gain all that he is. And when we understand that is actual gain, that's when this makes sense. That's when this makes sense.

01:07:20

And then he closes with the guarantee number two, while evil people and imposters will go from bad to worse, being and deceiving and being deceived. We live in a world, and Pastor Dave covered this last week.

01:07:36

This is all the first nine verses of this chapter, that this evil, present evil age is going to grow in corruption. That's what he says, evil people and imposters will go from bad to worse, they're charlatans.

01:07:52

Now outwardly, most of them probably don't look like charlatans, most of them don't look like it because they're imposters, but they're selling the people a bill of goods. They're selling people cheap, meaningless religion that promises them everything offers them nothing.

01:08:12

They're gonna go, evil people and imposters will go from bad to worse, deceiving and being deceived. Their aim is deception. And then he puts it in the passive voice too, and they're being deceived. And the active agent, as you look at commentaries, they say the deceptor there is Satan.

01:08:31



Who's doing the deceiving? Well, Satan's deceiving them, they're deceiving the people. That's the guarantee. Church, we need so much discernment. We need so much discernment, which is why I think also Paul started with that first point.

01:08:50

You followed carefully my teaching. How can you tell the difference between good and false teaching? I'm not saying bad teaching, I'm just saying false teaching. Look at the right teaching. Look at the correct teaching, open your Bibles and read it, obey it, study it, do what it says.

01:09:11

And church, prepare. If you wanna live a godly life in Christ, persecution is promised. You will be ridiculed, you might lose your jobs. You might lose your life. It's worth it, let's pray. God, what a heavy, weighty passage.

01:09:37

And I know I would be the first one to say I have so many, so many things to repent of. I relate with Paul and the idea that, I'm the chief of sinners. And I imagine I'm not alone in this room. Help us, help us to put on Christ, help us to follow Christ.

01:10:03

Help us to live this Christianity in integrity, that we could put our lives up at the end, when we're at the end, we could put our lives up and say that was an example of following Christ. I wasn't perfect, but my aim in life was to honor my King, my Lord, my Savior.

01:10:26

Help us do that. I pray if anybody in here does not know you as their Lord and Savior, I pray that as we read that verse, your kindness would lead them to repentance. Your spirit would do a supernatural work of salvation in their hearts today.

01:10:42

They would look to you. And God, we're so grateful. Thank you for today. That's in Jesus' name, we pray. Amen.