

The Marks of a Helpful Mentor

Key Verse:
“Continue thou in the things which thou hast learned and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned them.”
—II Timothy 3:14

Selected Scripture:
II Timothy 3:10-4:8

CHAPTERS THREE AND

four of Paul’s second epistle to Timothy contain the final written thoughts he left for the church. In these words we see his sincere care and concern for the church as his time of departure drew near, as well as a personal reflection on his own Christian walk. A personal testimony begins this lesson, as Paul tells Timothy he should be

well aware of “my doctrine, manner of life, purpose, faith, longsuffering, charity [love], patience, Persecutions, afflictions.” (II Tim. 3:10,11) Paul’s life was a living example of all these things, and he realized that all who similarly would strive to do God’s will would suffer persecution and affliction as he did, saying, “All that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution.”—vs. 12

Although the Apostle Paul had previously warned Timothy of certain ones who would try to cause trouble in the church, he does so again here, saying that such shall even “wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived.” (vs. 13) In the Key Verse, Paul states the matter very plainly, counseling Timothy and us to continue in the things we have learned and are sure of, remembering

of whom we learned them. He tells us by these words that the truths we have once learned do not change, just as God does not change.—Mal. 3:6

The truths Paul, Timothy, and we have learned come from the Holy Scriptures, the Word of God. This should be the proving ground for any teaching, doctrine, or principle of Truth. Anything that does not meet the standard of God's Word we should not consider to be of fundamental importance in our understanding of Truth. "All Scripture, divinely inspired, is indeed profitable for teaching, for conviction, for correction, for that discipline which is in righteousness; so that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly fitted for every good work."—II Tim. 3:16,17, *Wilson's Emphatic Diaglott*

The Apostle Paul continues by giving Timothy some final exhortations. He says, "Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine. But watch thou in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry." (chap. 4:2,5) These were important admonitions for Timothy, because there was soon to come a time in which many would fall away from faithfulness to the Lord and his word.—vss. 3,4

Finally, after giving much exhortation and admonition, the Apostle Paul turned his thoughts inward, speaking personally of his Christian walk, soon to draw to a close. He says, "I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing." (vss. 6-8) Although we may never feel we can make these statements ourselves, yet we should reach the point in our Christian walk, as Paul did, where we can say we have done with our might what our hands have found to do.—Eccles. 9:10 ■