



Daily Bible Habit

Pastoral Epistles

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Focus Points...2 Timothy 3

Listen To...

Paul's admiration for the God-breathed revelation of God as he urged Timothy to minister the Word of God fully in these "last days."

Prayer:

Father in heaven, I thank You for this opportunity to come to You in Your holy Word. Had You not given it, I would not know Your grace or how to live my life in gratitude for Your grace. Send me the same Spirit by which Your Word was written so that I may hear, read, mark, learn and inwardly digest Your Word. In Your name I pray. Amen.

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Commentary:

Biblical mention of the "Last Times" typically happens in times of duress and persecution. Notable Biblical examples include the final chapters of Isaiah, the Book of Revelation, and Jesus' discourses prior to His arrest and crucifixion.

Given the widespread Christian persecution in Rome and his own impending execution, Paul's mention of the "last days" fits the Biblical pattern. When widespread trouble comes, Christians focus even more eagerly on the hope of Jesus' imminent, final return.

"There will be terrible times in the last days," Paul explained (2:1). Using the direct-and-to-the-point style Paul used throughout this epistle, Paul gave a detailed—though not exhaustive—listing of things which mark the "last days" (2:2-7).

Many of these evils were present in Paul's day even as they are in our own time. Who can read through Paul's catalog of "last day" behaviors and not sense that we, too, are in the last days?

This evil we experience, however, is not new. It was evident long before Paul's day in people like Jannes and Jambres who opposed Moses and God's Truth (2:8). As Paul described his own experiences and the persecutions he endured (2:11), he had a simple lesson for Timothy.

"Continue in what you have learned and have become convinced of."
(3:14).

Paul urged Timothy to follow his example. He must *fully* minister God's Word and boldly apply *all* its authority in these last days. God's Word is authoritative because "all Scripture is God-breathed." (3:16) Because all of it—in its entirety—is God's Word, it is:

"useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work."
(3:16-17)

Paul knew the power of God's Word. In every city he visited and every encounter with believers and unbelievers, he used God's Word to teach, rebuke, correct and train. Sometimes his message was accepted with great joy. Other times it was rejected and he was persecuted.

Whatever the result, the God-breathed Scripture must be proclaimed so that everyone "may be thoroughly equipped for every good work."

The Bible was written for two purposes: to show us how to be saved and to show us how to live. Paul's words to Timothy urged him to do both. Timothy was to tell everyone of Jesus' love and train them to be "thoroughly qualified" for right, godly living.

The Greek word for "thoroughly equipped" in 3:17 is "*artios*." It means to be "fully qualified." Paul is not telling Timothy we are saved by being "qualified" by our good works. Instead, Paul urged Timothy that one of the most important focus' in ministry, is to instill in believers to grow in their desire to serve God with holy living.

I love Jesus. You, also, probably love Jesus. We love Him because He first loved us (I John 4:19). The test of love presented to Timothy is simply this: to what degree does your love for God reflect your passion to live a holy life in Jesus' righteousness?

That's what I Timothy 3:15-17 is all about. We have God's Word. Having received it, we are called to use it in every way possible to make us even more qualified to be His "perfectly equipped" ambassadors.

Are you living in God's grace? Do you seek to grow in Jesus' righteousness? Be in the Word. Gain the maturity the Spirit gives in His Word. Gain the power for right living...and serve God with all your heart, mind, soul and being.

Prayer:

Holy Spirit, thank You for Your Holy Word and those who recorded it for all generations. I rejoice that I have been saved exclusively because of God's grace revealed in Scripture. Help me also to rejoice that You have given me Your Word

so that I may serve You in greater righteousness and holy living. Forgive me where I fail. Restore me to Your greater service. In Your name I pray. Amen.

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