

Greetings:

The study that Pastor Pat brings on Sunday mornings is a reflection of the study for that week. It represents a lot of research. Not all of what he has prepared is communicated. In an attempt to continue the learning process, he is making available his study notes to the congregation.

These notes are edited, but not “book” ready. To the critical eye, mistakes can possibly be found. Therefore, he asks that you take the material with humility, teach-ability, and charity.

Enjoy and if you should have any questions or corrections, please do not hesitate to email him at pastorpat@waukeshabile.org.

Date: May 13, 2018

Sermon Title: The Antidote for our Age

Sermon Series: Second Timothy

Text: 2 Tim. 3:10-17

Author: Patrick J. Griffiths ©2018

Waukesha Bible Church is a family of families seeking to live in **the Storyline of the Bible**. She is determined by design to have a **God-centered, Christ-exalting worship; a Word-centered teaching** focused on personal **discipleship** through intentional and systematic instruction; a **Global-impacting mission** that resolves to be a **church planting church**; and a **Grace-based fellowship** where disciples are invited to live under a **reigning grace** characterized by a **Gospel-driven sanctification** that celebrates a divine **monergism** to the Christian life.

Date: May 13, 2018
Title: The Antidote for our Age
Text: 2 Tim. 3:10-17
Theme: The only antidote [cure, remedy, corrective] to the threat of apostasy is the Word of God.

Introduction:

I have entitled this paragraph, “The Antidote for our Age.” What is an antidote? An antidote is, “A medicine taken or given to counteract a particular poison.”¹ There is a great poison permeating our culture and our being. It is systemic and Paul identifies the only antidote to this poison as the Word of God.

Literary Context:

2 Tim. 2:14-26 Our Separation from dishonorable vessels / unapproved workers
2 Tim. 3:1-9 The Apostasy of our Age
Our Text The Antidote to our Age

“Second Timothy moves into its climactic section beginning in 3:10 and extending through 4:8. What makes this section climactic is the return to impassioned exhortation, exhortation to Timothy to learn from Paul’s example as he conducts his ministry in the aftermath of his mentor’s impending death.”²

- Identify with the Word (1:8).
- Guard the Word (1:13).
- Continue in the Word (3:14).
- Preach the Word (4:2).

“In 3:10-13 Paul affirms that Timothy, unlike the false teachers, has followed his example, both in teaching and his conduct. Then, in 3:14-17, he affirms that Timothy has been true to the gospel and so he goes on to encourage him to remain firm in sound doctrine.”³

Historical Context:

- The Church in Ephesus is under siege by false teachers/teaching.
- Paul left Timothy in Ephesus to perpetuate, protect, and proclaim the gospel.
- Paul is about to die and seeks to encourage Timothy to stay the course and thus suffer for the sake of the gospel.

Biblical Context:

Luke 24:27, 44; John 5:39 – The Old Testament Scripture leads his people to salvation through Jesus Christ.

“In times of danger it is important to have secure foundations. This letter has in view threats from people propounding a form of Christianity which threatens the faith. Last week our passage stopped just short of 2:16-17 which mentions two such people. We hear little of the

substance of what they are teaching beyond the idea that they are saying that the resurrection has already happened. The letter mainly warns without engaging in argument, such as we find in the undisputed letters of Paul. 3:1-9 accuses them of immorality and irresponsibility. Our passage refers to people going off after myths and not enduring sound teaching. We are left guessing what the real problem was. **The solution however is to call Timothy, and through him, all in positions of leadership and responsibility back to basics.** Don't get carried away with the new trends, but stay with what you learned (3:14). 3:15 draws attention to the scriptures."⁴

Outline:

The Apostasy of our Age (vv. 1-9)

The Antidote for our Age (vv. 10-17)

How do we guard the gospel? We guard the gospel by continuing in the gospel. There are two movements in our text. The first speaks of Timothy continuing in the example set by the apostle Paul (3:10-13 [compare also 1:13]). The second speaks of Timothy continuing in the Word (vv. 14-17).

I. Timothy followed Paul's Pattern (vv. 10-14; cf. 1:13).

Paul's Personal Example (vv. 10-13; cf. 1:11-13 [notice how many times Paul uses the words "my," "me," and "I"])

- ¹⁰ "You, however, have followed my teaching, my conduct, my aim in life, my faith, my patience, my love, my steadfastness, ¹¹my persecutions and sufferings that happened to me at Antioch, at Iconium, and at Lystra – which persecutions I endured; yet from them all the Lord rescued me. ¹²Indeed, all who desire to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted, ¹³while evil people and impostors will go on from bad to worse, deceiving and being deceived" (2 Tim. 3:10-13)

"The possessive 'my' occurs only at the beginning of the list but is positioned in Greek to apply to each of the words in the series."⁵

- Paul contrasts his own faithfulness against that of the apostates. See further 1:13. There is a knowable pattern. He knows his end is imminent. He has fought a good fight, kept the faith, and is finishing the course.
- There is a better way than that depicted in vv. 1-9!
- Paul confessed Christ and faced persecution for it. But he also knew that in confessing Christ, Christ would confess him before the Father. This motivated Paul to endure.
- Paul recognizes the present age as opposing the Gospel. He notes this in verse 13.
- Paul's "fight" is over. He awaits his imminent death in jail.
- "As good men, by the grace of God, grow better, so bad men, through the craft of Satan, and the power of their own corruptions, grow worse. The way of sin is down-hill; such go on from bad to worse, deceiving and being deceived. Those who deceive others,

deceive themselves, as they will find at last, to their cost.”⁶ Cf. Titus 1:15 “To the pure, all things are pure; but to those who are defiled and unbelieving, nothing is pure, but both their mind and their conscience are defiled” (Titus 1:15).

Verse 13

“The word *gohtev*, which we render seducers, signifies jugglers, pretenders to magical arts; probably persons dealing in false miracles, with whom the Church in all ages has been not a little disgraced.”⁷

“The word ‘seduce’ in A.V. occurs nine times in Old and New Testament always in the general sense of ‘lead astray’; everywhere except here it is used to represent the Greek word for this cognate to the English word ‘planet’ ‘the wanderer,’ (cf. Jude’s ‘wandering stars’) and almost immediately following here ‘deceiving,’ cf. 1 Timothy 4:1 and note. R.V. in these places varies between ‘seduce’ and ‘lead astray.’ The word so rendered here is properly ‘enchanter,’ from the cries of incantations used. So ‘magicians,’ and more generally ‘impostors.’ Compare for the general sense, the most probable here, the use of the verb by Plato, Phæd. 81, 13, ‘the soul having served and loved the body and been bewitched by it through desires and pleasures.’ Some think there may be a reference to the magic arts, such as those of Jannes and Jambres; and certainly Ephesus had an evil repute in this respect itself, cf. Acts 19:13; Acts 19:10. ‘Ephesian letters’ was a common expression for charms made up of magic words and worn as amulets.”⁸

II. Timothy followed Parental Pedagogy; Paul’s Present Exhortation – Continue (vv. 14-17; cf. 1:3-7)

- ¹⁴ “But as for you, continue in what you have learned and have firmly believed, knowing from whom^a you learned it ¹⁵and how from childhood you have been acquainted with the sacred writings, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. ¹⁶All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, ¹⁷that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work” (2 Tim. 3:14-17).

“There is a strong emphasis on the pronoun *you* in contrast to the people described in vv. 2-9.”⁹

““but you, continue,” a command.”¹⁰

“But Timothy, on the other hand, was to continue in the things he had learned. Evil teaching would become worse; **the opposition to truth would, as the ages rolled on, become more intense**; but Timothy and his successors must remember that there was to be no development in the fundamental doctrines of his most holy faith.”¹¹

“Abide for continue, A.V. Abide thou, etc. Be not like these juggling heretics, blown about by every wind of doctrine, and always seeking some new thing, but abide in the old truths which thou hast learnt from thy childhood.”¹²

The apostates have fallen away; they are descending. You Timothy must stay the course and ascend.

Despite difficulty times, stay the course and hold fast to Christ. This exhortation takes the shape of staying true to or in the Word of God. Here, that Word is what we refer to as the Old Testament.

“The comments’ main focus, however, falls on scripture’s utility, its trustworthiness for the ministry Timothy is called to perform. For in scripture one learns about the salvation God provides.”¹³

The way we know God, Jesus, and the Holy Spirit is through the biblical text. The way we learn about ourselves and our salvation is found in the biblical text. What is the answer to 2 Tim. 3:1-5?

- “Don’t be naive. There are difficult times ahead. As the end approaches, people are going to be self-absorbed, money-hungry, self-promoting, stuck-up, profane, contemptuous of parents, crude, coarse, dog-eat-dog, unbending, slanderers, impulsively wild, savage, cynical, treacherous, ruthless, bloated windbags, addicted to lust, and allergic to God. They’ll make a show of religion, but behind the scenes they’re animals. Stay clear of these people” (2 Tim. 3:1-5, *The Message*).

The Word of God! The Church has become bloated with programing and ministering to the “felt needs” of the unbelieving and the fleshly appetites of its congregant. Does the typical Christian find the answer to their problem in the simplicity of Jesus or do they need something more or someone other than Jesus? When we study the biblical text, we must be left with the idea that the answer is rather simple. We do not like the answer because it does not appear to answer what we perceive to be our greatest need. But the Scripture does.

“We might take such exhortations across two thousand years into our own situations which are very different and yet in which such dangers are not unknown. People love the Da Vinci code, New Age myths and recycled Hinduism in western garb. We have our people with ‘itching ears’ and ‘teachers to suit our own interests’ (4:3). We may, however, find such consumerism much closer to home.”¹⁴

Four statements are made concerning the antidote to this present age.

A. The Word’s Simplicity (v. 15a [from childhood])

- ¹⁴ “But as for you, continue in what you have learned and have firmly believed, knowing from whom you learned it ¹⁵and how from childhood you have been acquainted with the sacred writings, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus” (2 Tim. 3:14, 15a).
 1. Faith is always passed on. It moves from person to person.
 2. Faith is always personal. You do not inherit faith. It has to be yours.

I am thankful that the gospel is so simple that any child can understand the need for saving and the salvation found in Christ Jesus.

“Preachers interested in highlighting this passage’s exhortative character might tend to the motivation embedded in the calls for Timothy to persevere. Notice that the letter, on the whole, expresses less interest in theological arguments or proofs and more interest in situating Timothy’s identity within a lineage of lived, demonstrated faithfulness -- God’s, Paul’s, and others’. Paul urges Timothy to persevere, not by explaining to him *why* the faith is correct or salutary, but by reassuring him that the faith is part of who he, Timothy, is. It’s as close to him as his genes. Imparted, lived, experiential knowledge of God’s salvation has brought Timothy to where he is, and it is enough to complete the job.”¹⁵

B. The Word’s Significance (v. 15b [are able to make you wise])

- ¹⁵ “and how from childhood you have been acquainted with the sacred writings, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus” (2 Tim. 3:15b).

“Lit. ‘the sacred writings’ of the Old Testament. It was a requirement of the Rabbis that a child should begin to learn the Law by heart when five years old.”¹⁶

“The prime purpose of scripture is to reveal the way of salvation. cf. John 20:30-31. The gospel introduces us to Jesus, the only way to God.”¹⁷

“The present participle rendered by ‘which are able’ is noticeable, being here used to express the ever-present power of the Scriptures on the human heart. The Holy Scriptures had not completed their work on Timothy when, in his boyhood, he first mastered their contents. It was still going on. ‘Wise unto salvation’ marks the glorious end and destination of the true wisdom which is gained by a study of these sacred books. Other wisdom has a different goal. In some cases it leads to power, fame, wealth; but this wisdom leads only to one goal – salvation. The last clause – ‘through faith which is in Christ Jesus’ – points out the only way to use these Scriptures of the old covenant so as to attain through them the goal of all true wisdom – ‘eternal salvation.’ They must be read and studied in the light of faith in Jesus Christ.”¹⁸

“‘thou knowest,’ the perfect having this present force, and the Greek idiom in a phrase like this using the present where we use the perfect definite. The meaning is that there has been a continued knowledge present always ‘from a babe’ and present now.”¹⁹

It is interesting to me, where Paul places the emphasis. The weight is on salvation, the gospel. Think about where we place the emphasis. The Bible tells a single *Story* and at the center of this *Story* is Jesus. The *Story* about Jesus isn’t something that simply gets us in and then we move on. The gospel is the center of the solar system around which and from which all things revolve and exist. I fully recognize that such a statement appears overly simplistic, but it is the absolute truth. Notice three things stated about the Bible, the gospel.

I cannot help but push for two-things. First, parents must make the educating of their children/child in the gospel and assisting them in their understanding of the Bible a priority. It must be number one. It will do them no good if they gain the entire world, but lose their own soul. Second, we as a church must make the educating of our children in the gospel and assisting

them in their understanding of the Bible a priority. We must leverage our resources both financially and human in achieving this goal. **Why is this so important? Three reasons are noted.** However, the primary idea is focused on Timothy as a Pastor. This is true for all of us, but especially true for Timothy as a Pastor.

- In one's initial salvation (v. 15)
- In one's continued training / sanctification (v. 16a)
- In one's maturing good work / service (v. 17)

This is the significance of the *Story*. Anything other than this is a detour and potentially damaging to our Christian walk.

- What God saves, He sets apart for service.

C. The Word's Source (v. 16a [inspired])

- ¹⁶ "All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness" (2 Tim. 3:16).

The Bible is *The Sacred Scripture*.

"There is very little difference in sense between *every scripture* (emphasizing the individual portions) and 'all scripture' (emphasizing the composite whole). The former option is preferred, because it fits the normal use of the word 'all/every' in Greek (πᾶς, pas) as well as Paul's normal sense for the word 'scripture' in the singular without the article, as here. So *every scripture* means 'every individual portion of scripture.'"²⁰

"*Inspired by God*. Some have connected this adjective in a different way and translated it as 'every inspired scripture is also useful.' But this violates the parallelism of the two adjectives in the sentence, and the arrangement of words makes clear that both should be taken as predicate adjectives: '*every scripture is inspired...and useful*.'"²¹

"He states that 'all' the separate parts of the scriptures (the Law, Prophets and Writings) are inspired and thus, are useful. He points to four uses: a negative and positive teaching use and a negative and positive life-style use. The Old Testament scriptures are useful to teach sound doctrine and to expose untruth. They are also useful for ethics, correcting evil behavior and training in right behavior."²²

D. The Word's Single-mindedness (v. 17 [so that])

- ¹⁷ "that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work" (2 Tim. 3:17).

“Biblical truth serves to equip Christian ministers. The term ‘man / servant of God’ may apply to all believers, **but is most likely referring only to the prophet, pastor/teacher. The ‘good work’ is the work of proclamation - the ministry of the Word.**”²³

The prime directive of the Pastor/Elder is to protect the gospel internally and to proclaim the gospel externally. Period!

“As regards the question whether the man of God is restricted in its meaning to the minister of Christ, or comprehends all Christians, two things seem to decide in favour of the former: the one that ‘the man of God’ is in the Old Testament invariably applied to prophets in the immediate service of God (see 1 Timothy 6:11, note); the other that in 1 Timothy 6:11 it undoubtedly refers to Timothy in his character of chief pastor of the Church, and that here too the whole force of the description of the uses and excellence of Holy Scripture is brought to bear upon the exhortations in ver. 14, ‘Continue thou in the things which thou hast heard,’ addressed to Timothy as the Bishop of the Ephesian Church (see, too, ch. 4:1-5, where it is abundantly clear that all that precedes was intended to bear directly upon Timothy's faithful and vigorous discharge of his office as an evangelist).”²⁴

“This word is positioned for special emphasis; it carries the sense of ‘complete, competent, able to meet all demands.’”²⁵

- What God begins, He finishes (1 Thess. 5:23, 124).

There is no dichotomy in Paul’s view of the Christian life or the centrality of the Word in that Christian life. This picture is not present in the apostates. The apostates have broken this cycle. They do not finish what has begun.

Shepherding the Sheep (What’s the NEXT STEP?)

Those who reject the gospel/word/Jesus are to be avoided by the church and the only antidote [cure, remedy, corrective] to the threat of this apostasy is the Word of God.

To the Elders: Make sure you stay Jesus/gospel centered.

To the believing: Make sure your relationship with God is Christ-centered and Word-based.

To the unbelieving: To reject Jesus is to reject the only source of eternal life and godly living.

¹ <https://www.google.com/search?q=define+antidote&ie=utf-8&oe=utf-8&client=firefox-b-1>

² http://www.workingpreacher.org/preaching.aspx?commentary_id=1836

³ <http://www.lectionarystudies.com/sunday29ce.html>

⁴ <http://wwwstaff.murdoch.edu.au/~loader/CEpPentecost22.htm>

⁵ <https://net.bible.org/#!/bible/2+Timothy+3:9>

⁶ Matthew Henry's Concise Commentary on 2 Tim. 3:10-13.

⁷ Adam Clarke's Commentary on 2 Tim. 3:13.

⁸ Cambridge Bible for Schools and Colleges on 2 Tim. 3:13.

⁹ <https://net.bible.org/#!/bible/2+Timothy+3:9>

-
- ¹⁰ <https://net.bible.org/#!/bible/2+Timothy+3:9>
- ¹¹ Ellicott's Commentary for English Readers on 2 Tim. 3:14.
- ¹² Pulpit Commentary on 2 Tim. 3:14.
- ¹³ http://www.workingpreacher.org/preaching.aspx?commentary_id=1836
- ¹⁴ <http://wwwstaff.murdoch.edu.au/~loader/CEpPentecost22.htm>
- ¹⁵ http://www.workingpreacher.org/preaching.aspx?commentary_id=1836
- ¹⁶ Cambridge Bible for Schools and Colleges on 2 Tim. 3:15.
- ¹⁷ <http://www.lectionarystudies.com/sunday29ce.html>
- ¹⁸ Ellicott's Commentary for English Readers on 2 Tim. 3:15.
- ¹⁹ Cambridge Bible for Schools and Colleges on 2 Tim. 3:15.
- ²⁰ <https://net.bible.org/#!/bible/2+Timothy+3:9>
- ²¹ <https://net.bible.org/#!/bible/2+Timothy+3:9>
- ²² <http://www.lectionarystudies.com/sunday29ce.html>
- ²³ <http://www.lectionarystudies.com/sunday29ce.html>
- ²⁴ Pulpit Commentary on 2 Tim. 3:17.
- ²⁵ <https://net.bible.org/#!/bible/2+Timothy+3:9>