

2nd Timothy Ch 3:10-11

“Christian Characteristics”

We left off last time in examination, and discussion of those “Last Days” signs of the times that would permeate, escalate and ultimately culminate in that generation that immediately precedes the Lord’s return for His church. Those qualities of man that would surround us all about, not only in the world, but contextually, these things would surface and be a *reality* and happening in *actuality* with in the confines of what’s recognized as the church. How that in the last days we would see with in what’s recognized and identified as the church, men come in under *that* covering who are lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boasters, proud, blasphemers and so on, unholy, unthankful, and notice vs 3 of ch 3.

Vs 3-4

We read there in vs 5 that though they may stand behind a pulpit, or exude real charisma and charm, they may wear certain liturgical garments and all the rest. But in reality they’ve denied the Holy Spirit His place in their lives, there’s no real godliness in their lives, but rather they’re given over to the lusts of the flesh, they have their own self-centered agendas and ulterior motives, be it to make merchandise of the people of God, or they’re looking for power or prestige or whatever. Paul tells us in the book of Rom, “*And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a debased mind, to do those things which are not fitting.*” Rom 1:28 and Here the bible tells us that we’re to turn away, or have nothing to do with these types of people, why? Notice vs 6-7

Vs 6-7

Now he mentions here “gullible women” and we understand that women are more emotionally driven which can be a good thing, but it can also work against them because there are those who seek to play on their compassion and sensitivity for deceptive purposes. and Women were in the homes much more in Paul’s day than in our own, but the point of the vs is that we’re to exercise extreme caution concerning what it is that we allow to “creep” into our homes. and I’d encourage you to take inventory as what you’ve allowed to *creep* into your home through the television, or the Internet, videotape, or DVD. Or even in person, as this passage warns us, be careful to safeguard your homes. Because we can be so gullible, so susceptible to just about anything if it’s packaged just right, and people want to tantalize you, and entice you by appealing to your flesh and in doing so lead you astray through various lusts. Be to entice you in a sexual or romantic way, to appeal to your desire for comfort, or wealth, or status or whatever, the appeal is always to the flesh. Why, because that’s the natural way that we all gravitate, we love to indulge the flesh. That’s why the bible tells us to, “*Put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to fulfill its lusts.*” Rom 13:14

Be sober concerning the condition of your home, don't make subtle provisions for your flesh. That's what this word "creep" here is speaking of; it's not like the people or the product packages itself in such a way as to say, "Hey! Let me come in and destroy your life!" It sneaks in there, literally this word speaks of putting on a garment, or to wrap around so as to say it/they just subtly wrap themselves around you until you're completely enveloped in their snare and by the time you realize it, you're completely addicted to pornography. Or you're enveloped in that radically wrong relationship, or you've been taken from a simple love relationship with Jesus and bound up in legalism, and in some manner you've been taken captive.

That's why Paul is being so candid about these things, so that we might guard against them. That we be careful to know the truth that we might recognize the lie, not always learning but never able to come to the knowledge of the truth because we're so open to anything that we'll take in everything. That's why he wrote in Eph, "*That we should no longer be children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, in the cunning craftiness of deceitful plotting.*" Eph 4:14 But rather we should "grow up" in Christ, being mature believers, wise as serpents, but gentle as doves, recognizing circumstances for what they are lest we be deceived and enslaved. Because there are plenty of counterfeits out there, and they want to lead you away from the genuine article, Jesus Christ and you should know that so as not to be led astray.

Now we come to this distinct dividing line whereby Paul encourages Timothy, as well as you and me in that though those are some things we should know, *this* is the way that we should go. Know that those things are out there, people only concerned about propelling their own agendas and feeding their flesh being lovers of themselves, *but you* steady on in the direction that *you've* learned and been assured of. The pursuit of Christ, and the denial of self, notice again vs 10-12

Vs10-11

The 1st thing that we want to observe and draw out of vs 10 is that even though these are some personal characteristics, and qualities found in Paul the apostle and the Lord has allowed us to glean a bit of his heart in these vs, the primary focus is on *Timothy*, and speaking of *Timothy's* life. Paul says, "But *you*" have carefully followed my doctrine, manner of life, purpose and so on down the list of these 9 attributes we have listed for us here. and The exhortation that Timothy's receiving here is to consider (in contrast) his own life, to allow himself to be searched out so as to see where he's at. and This is a good exhortation for us all to receive, that we would allow the Holy Spirit to shine His light upon our own hearts so that we might know where we stand. (Not to reveal to us that our hearts are desperately wicked, we know that.)

But where are we really at with the Lord? Not where do I think I am, or where do I want to believe that I am, but where am I in truth in my growth and development, and maturity in the

Lord? Are we growing? Are we abiding, and remaining being steadfast and immovable in Christ? Or have we allowed our footing to slip just a bit, have we allowed that subtle compromise, are we regressing in our relationship with Jesus? Or am I more in love with Jesus right now in this point in my life than I've ever been before? Is my life more modeled after Christ's now than it was last year at this point?

This is where Paul is going with Timothy; he's reminding him that there's a certain pattern of life that Timothy had embraced. and We need to see that so that we might do likewise, and Paul having known Timothy now for a few decades or so was able to look back over his life and take inventory so that he could say, "But *you* have carefully followed." Timothy had patterned *his* life after men who were patterning *their* life after Christ. and Specifically Timothy had chosen to pattern his life after the manner of life that Paul had chosen to follow after.

He says here, "You have *carefully followed*" let's consider for just a moment this phrase, "carefully followed." and From the very onset of consideration let's not be ignorant, or play naïve to the fact that the people we surround ourselves with have a profound influence in our lives. The Proverbs tell us, "*He who walks with wise men will be wise, But the companion of fools will be destroyed.*" Prov 13:20 In other words, you *become* like those you *befriend* so choose your friends carefully. As a matter of fact we read very plainly in Prov 12:26, "*The righteous should choose his friends carefully, For the way of the wicked leads them astray.*" and Of course in the NT we have 1 Cor 15:33 which says as equally clear, "*Do not be deceived: 'Bad company corrupts good morals.'*" (NAS)

More than not the people we live with, work with, and serve with are generally the 3 groups of people that have the most significant influence in our lives. Sometimes its very direct influence, other times it's indirect, but being cognizant (or very mindful) of the fact that we're as people impressionable and easily influenced by those we surround ourselves with, we need to be very careful who it is that we surround ourselves with. Because they're going to have an impact and influence in our lives, and obviously where we need to be the most sensitive is concerning those who are going to influence us spiritually. Every now and then you hear that phrase by someone who really isn't thinking along these lines say something about a place that they're going that they don't really fully agree with (which I've never understood that principal anyway) and they say, "Well, I just chew on the meat and spit out the bones." But unfortunately most people wind up choking on the bones to the detriment of their relationship with Jesus Christ You guys it's important to consider soberly whom it is that we're going to "carefully follow." If you can't observe a man's life and follow him carefully, then you do well not to follow him at all.

Now the only *perfect* man we'll ever follow is Jesus Christ, but you need to be assured of someone's uncompromising love for Jesus Christ and solid understanding of His Word before you sign on for the long haul with someone. Timothy had observed Paul's life, he'd been beside

Paul many years, he'd heard him preach and exposit the Word of God, he'd seen the way that he handled himself in various situations, and had conceded to pattern his life after Paul's realizing through observation that Paul had conceded to pattern *his* life after Christ's. You can tell what or who someone's life is patterned after by simply spending a little bit of time with that person, because as Jesus said it's out of the abundance of the heart that the mouth speaks. It doesn't take long to find out where someone's really at when you see them away from the pulpit, or the ministry, and see how they handle themselves in day-to-day life. and Timothy had spent some real hang time with Paul, and so he'd chosen to pattern his life *after* Paul's, or as our text reads in the NKJV he had "carefully followed" Paul's example.

This phrase, "carefully followed" means to, "conform to" or to "trace out" as when you lay one sheet of paper over another so as to trace what's on the paper behind it so that it might be an exact likeness to that which you're seeking to emulate. A commentator by the name of William Barclay says of this term, "It means to follow a person *physically*, to stick by him through thick and thin, to be by his side in fair weather and in foul. It means to follow a person *mentally*, to attend diligently to his teaching, and fully to understand the meaning and the significance of what he says. It means to follow a person *spiritually*, not only to understand what he says, but also to carry out his ideas, and to be the kind of person that he wishes us to be." and This is the manner in which Timothy patterned his life after Paul's, physically, mentally and spiritually, he made a conscious effort to, "lay his life" over the apostles and trace around it, using Paul's life as a pattern so that he would stand, and think, and act like Paul would because Paul would stand, and think, and act like Christ would.

Before us here in these vs there are 9 characteristics of the Christian life that Paul mentions of which Timothy used as a pattern in order to model his own life after. and Even as with the 19 attributes of the ungodly listed above, the 1st one on the list is the wellspring from which the others flow. and We see it mentioned here in vs 10 where Paul says, "But you have carefully followed my *doctrine*." How is it that the other 8 characteristics are issued forth from this one? Because as you've heard me say so often, what we *believe* determines how we *behave*, so it's critical that our doctrine be correct so that I might lead my life after the manner that God would have me to lead it. It was Paul's doctrine that determined how these other qualities played out in his life. His understanding of the Word of God, this word "doctrine" means "teaching" and it speaks of the giving out of instruction with the idea of learning coupled with teaching. and What was it that Paul taught, what was it that Timothy was so careful to pattern his life after that we would do well to have ears to hear that we might do the same?

You recall when Paul called for that final meeting with the Ephesian elders there in Acts ch 20 when he knew that he'd see them no more on this side of eternity that he said to them there, "*You know, from the first day that I came to Asia, in what manner I always lived among you, serving the Lord with all humility, with many tears and trials which happened to me by the*

plotting of the Jews; how I kept back nothing that was helpful, but proclaimed it to you, and taught you publicly and from house to house, testifying to Jews, and also to Greeks, repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ.” Acts 20:18-21 and In vs 27, “For I have not shunned to declare to you the whole counsel of God.” Acts 20:27 In other words the totality of the council of the written Word of God, Paul taught it all, illustrating and demonstrating through the scriptures the Lord Jesus Christ and Timothy was careful to follow that pattern. How does this apply to us? In a radical way, we need to be careful to study the Word of God, the whole council, not just this portion, or that portion, only the NT, or just ear tickling topicals. We need the whole council, cover to cover, and as much as we want to have our ears scratched and have people tell us what we want to hear, sometimes we need it put to us straight in a manner that’s difficult to hear. That spurs on our reasoning that we might be led to repentance because we’ve ventured off into sin in some area of our lives. and That’s what I love about going through the whole bible, because as you just go through the Word you hit every topic that pertains to man. Love, grace, forgiveness, sin, marriage relationships, the lifestyles of singles, financial stewardship, you name it, lying, stealing, murder, mercy, compassion, fornication, condemnation, justification, salvation and on and on. Its all God breathed so we need it all, even the portions that are difficult to palate. and Paul was careful to establish the example of studying God’s Word so as to *divide* it right, *divulge* it right, and live it right before others.

We do well to do the same, to take in the whole council of the Word of God dividing it right, divulging it right, and living it right before others, that’s the pattern that we’re to carefully follow, the Christian life involves disciplined study of God’s Word. What else?

A certain “manner of life” Paul had a marked manner of life that was easily distinguishable as different from someone who didn’t know Christ. Why, because he practiced what he preached. and To me all of these things are not only leadership qualities as seen in the apostle, but in reality they’re characteristics that need to be prevalent in everyone who loves the Lord. We should all be diligent to know the Word of God; we should all have had a transformation of life that marks an observable difference to others around us, because we follow through with what the Word tells us, these are things that the Christian life involves. Are they leadership qualities? You bet, they were in the apostle, they were in Timothy; are the Christian characteristics in general? Yes, every believer should have a notably different manner of life than the non-believer, and beyond that we should aspire to lead lives that can serve as examples for other believers to pattern their lives after.

That’s what Paul is speaking of here, he knew that not only the non-believer, but the believers were watching his life, so he was careful to lead his life in a manner that was healthy for them to behold. As a matter of fact not only was he aware that people were watching his life, he encouraged them to, and even more he dared them to imitate him. To the Corinthians he said, “*Imitate me, just as I also imitate Christ.*” 1 Cor 11:1 The implication there being if I don’t imitate Christ, don’t imitate me, Paul wasn’t into making disciples after himself. But he knew

what it meant to follow Jesus, and he was comfortable telling people that if they would just emulate the habits and patterns they saw in him, then they'd be leading a life that was sold out to Jesus Christ

He was willing to stand up and be accountable as an example to those who would desire to look to him. But here's the catch, whether you're willing or not, we're all examples; we're either a good example or a bad example. Maybe you're the example of how to lead a lukewarm life for Jesus, but God has given you the opportunity to be used of Him to set the standard that others might be inspired by in order to reach that stature of godliness that they so long to be. Remember a vessel of honor, or dishonor it's up to you, (we spoke of that back in vs 20-21 of ch 2). He told those in Philippi, "*The things which you learned and received and heard and saw in me, these do.*" Phil 4:9 Over and over again throughout his letters he makes reference to his manner of life, not only that he *preaches* God's Word, but that he *practices* God's Word, in order that others might see him in such a way as to say, "Hey, it's possible to lead a life that's *completely* sold out to Jesus Christ" and The combination of those 2 qualities, preaching and practicing God's Word are absolutely imperative for anyone who's to have an effective ministry. We realize that Jesus is our standard, but at the same time it seems like such an unattainable mark, but Paul serves as an example how that by God's grace it's possible for a man to imitate Christ on this side of eternity. Not in the sense of sinless perfection, but that we exude those same qualities and characteristics that were so prevalent in Him. Handling situations and scenarios the way that He would, so again the Christian life involves study and application of the Whole council of God's Word, a manner of life that's set apart from the world and even an example to fellow believers, iron sharpening iron.

It involves "purpose", now this is an interesting word, and you'd probably never guess how else this word is translated in the NT and when the Hebrew scriptures were translated into Greek, the word that this word translated into. "Showbread" as in the showbread that's laid out in the tabernacle before God, that's set forth there before God. Think about that, when I saw that it really wracked my feeble brain. You've followed my "showbread." and As I began to research it I began to understand that what he's saying is that, "You've been careful to follow my own pattern of being set forth before God, not really being able to do anything of my own accord but rather viewing my life as its laid out its order according to God's express direction and desire." Or as our translators have done such a great job in capsulizing that, "My purpose" the Christian life involves purpose, not my own purpose, but rather it's a life that's laid out in its order according to God's express and explicit direction and desires. In short the Christian life is one that's set forth by God with no ulterior motives other than to please and glorify God, you're His, His purpose is your purpose, His motive is your motive.

Far from being a lover of self, the true Christian life is motivated and driven by the love of God, it's the love of Christ that constrains us, or compels us and drives us on, us decreasing and Him increasing in our lives.

That's basically the ministry side, now as for personal virtues Paul says here in vs 10, 1st of all, "faith." The book of Hebrews tells us that with out faith it's impossible to please God, so

in the life of every Christian there has to be faith, it's a fundamental Christian characteristic. Now how do I know you have faith, by what you say? Not according to my bible, but rather by what you do, remember what James said, "*Show me your faith without your works, and I will show you my faith by my works.*" James 2:18

Paul's whole life from the moment he met Christ on was a demonstration of faith, trusting God for food, for clothes, any possession, to see me through any hardship, loneliness or whatever. and Timothy purposed to do likewise, not to lead a life of presumption, but a life that works hard and trusts the Lord for his every need, big and small alike. "Longsuffering" or patience, every believer knows that the Christian life demands patience. Patience with circumstances, waiting on God to move in a certain direction, or patient with those people who just get on our nerves but we're seeking to minister to them and their just not responding or changing in a manner that is pleasing to you, but we need to be patient.

If we're going to bear with situations, and scenarios, circumstances and people in the patient way that God would have us to, then under-girding that patience has to be "love." That non-self seeking, others oriented, deny myself, and give my life away for others type love that was seen 1st in Jesus, and modeled in Paul, and traced over and carefully followed by Timothy. The type of love that you can read of in 1st Cor Ch 13 on your own time.

"Perseverance" and as to where long-suffering deals with fortitude, and stick-to-itiveness, this word speaks more of that bearing up and enduring through hardships, and afflictions. and To varying degrees at various times hardships and afflictions visit us all, and the Christian life involves a patient upholding and endurance through those times. and If anyone endured through hardships and afflictions (outside of Christ) it was Paul, and he served as an example to us whereby we can trust in the grace of God to be sufficient for us in our hour of need. But because this word deals with endurance under hardships that's why he segues out of this speaking here in vs 11 about the (read).

Vs11

This word "endured" is a relative to the word "perseverance" in vs 10. Now as for the persecutions, and afflictions that Paul endured time forbids us to really exhaust them. But Timothy lived in the province, or the region there of Iconium, and Lystra, Lystra specifically. Now leave 2nd Timothy and turn to Acts ch 14. In the 1st 7 vs you can read where the people turned violent against Paul and nearly stoned him, we see in vs 5.

Vs 5-19

Now Timothy is there, and he's seeing all this go down, he's *familiar* with the persecutions and the afflictions that happened to Paul there in Lystra and Iconium, but check out what he's also aware of.

Vs20

Or as Paul puts it in vs 11 of Ch 3 of 2nd Timothy, “*And out of them all the Lord delivered me.*” 2 Tim 3:11 Paul could bare witness to the words, “*Many are the afflictions of the righteous, But the LORD delivers him out of them all.*” Ps 34:19 So I’m not sure what afflictions or hardships you may be enduring today, but receive God’s Word today. God’s altogether familiar with your situation, and He’s seeking to mold you and shape you, and refine you, but nothing will separate you from His love. He’s bigger than your trial, and He has every intention of working His plan *for* you, *into* you, and *out through* you that you might serve as a pattern for others to follow after. You’re His showbread, you’re life is set forth according to His express direction and desire, that He might use you for His glory.

So know that there’s hope in your hour of affliction, but if you don’t know the Lord than you’re with out hope being with out God in the world, but today all that can change. God can deliver you from the affliction of an empty soul and fill you with His Spirit and hope in Christ. Doesn’t mean life’s going to be a bed of roses, Jesus never promised a life of catering to our whims. He said we’d experience hardship and tribulation in this world. So salvation isn’t from troubled times, it’s from the penalty of sin, we’ve all sinned and fall short of God’s glory. We’ve all broken the Law of God, there are none that are righteous, no not even one, so as we look into the Law of God all we see is how inadequate we are, how desperately we need a Savior. That’s where Jesus comes in, who was in all ways tempted as we are and yet with out sin. and Yet He willing laid down His life on the cross, He who knew no sin, becoming sin for us that we might become the righteousness of God in Him. So that He could boldly proclaim, “I’m the way the truth, and the life and no one comes to the Father but by Me.” and If you’re willing to come to Him, He take your sin that’s like scarlet and wash you white like snow, casting your sin as far as the east is from the west, and give you everlasting life and fill the void that’s in your heart. But you have to be willing to come to Him.