

Sermon Topic: Living Under Scriptural Authority, Ps David Ho
Sermon Text: 2 Timothy 3:1-17

But mark this: There will be terrible times in the last days.² People will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boastful, proud, abusive, disobedient to their parents, ungrateful, unholy,³ without love, unforgiving, slanderous, without self-control, brutal, not lovers of the good,⁴ treacherous, rash, conceited, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God—⁵ having a form of godliness but denying its power. Have nothing to do with such people.

⁶ They are the kind who worm their way into homes and gain control over gullible women, who are loaded down with sins and are swayed by all kinds of evil desires,⁷ always learning but never able to come to a knowledge of the truth.⁸ Just as Jannes and Jambres opposed Moses, so also these teachers oppose the truth. They are men of depraved minds, who, as far as the faith is concerned, are rejected.⁹ But they will not get very far because, as in the case of those men, their folly will be clear to everyone.

A Final Charge to Timothy

¹⁰ You, however, know all about my teaching, my way of life, my purpose, faith, patience, love, endurance,¹¹ persecutions, sufferings—what kinds of things happened to me in Antioch, Iconium and Lystra, the persecutions I endured. Yet the Lord rescued me from all of them.¹² In fact, everyone who wants to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted,¹³ while evildoers and impostors will go from bad to worse, deceiving and being deceived.¹⁴ But as for you, continue in what you have learned and have become convinced of, because you know those from whom you learned it,¹⁵ and how from infancy you have known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus.¹⁶ All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness,¹⁷ so that the servant of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.

Introduction

We need to be intentional about building a culture of living under Scriptural Authority and exhorting others to do the same, whether as a receiver (from someone older – “Paul” equivalent), sharer (from a peer – “Barnabas” equivalent) or as a giver (to someone younger – “Timothy” equivalent)

Why must we live under Scriptural Authority?

- 1) We are living in distressing times and differing worldviews (v1-5; Isa 5:20)
 - Humanism: teaches that morality determined by human experiences, desires and needs (anthropocentric lenses)
 - Subjective/Relative Truth: teaches that “What’s good or true for you may not be good and true for me, and vice versa” (the meaning of the word ‘truth’ has become distorted – it can differ from person to person)
 - Hedonism: teaches that “If it feels good, just do it!”
 - Moral Fluidity: teaches that “As society evolves, morality evolves”

These secular philosophies (worldviews) are hinged on various fine sounding arguments and deceptive philosophies:

- Inclusiveness and Tolerance where “Everybody is right. Nobody is wrong”. But advocates of inclusiveness and tolerance, in reality, are intolerant over those who hold a different view from them.
 - Freedom of Choice (However there is no freedom from consequences)
- 2) There are false teachings in the church (v6-9, 13, 4:2-5)
- Prosperity Gospel (the notion that it is God’s will for us to be healthy and wealthy)
 - Hyper-Grace (Over-emphasis on the grace of God to the exclusion of other vital aspects such as confession of sin and repentance)
 - Antinomianism (the belief that the moral law is of no use or obligation because faith alone is necessary to salvation¹)
 - Universalism (everyone will be saved)
- 3) Scripture must be our Canon of life (v10-15). Canon means measure or yardstick. It should define who we are and be the basis of all we do:
- Our teaching
 - Our daily conduct (in our relationships with others)
 - Our aim in life
 - Our faith in which we rest all things)
 - Our patience in Hope
 - Our love and passion
 - Our steadfastness/faithfulness in persecutions and suffering
- 4) Scripture is THE Word of God, God’s Positioning System (v16-17)
- Teaching – shows us what is right (v15-16)
 - Reproof – shows us what is not right (v16; Ps 119:9,11)
 - Correction – shows us how to get right (v16)
 - Training in Righteousness – shows us how to stay right (v16; Ps 119:105, Col 3:13)
 - Thoroughly equipped for every good work (v17, Jas 1:22; Jos 1:8)

Conclusion

- Scripture is not just for Information → but for Conformation → leading to Transformation
- **The Wise and Foolish Builders** (Matt 7:24-27) both heard, but only one obeyed. But worse than the foolish builder is the one who doesn’t even read the Word!

¹ The NT does not deny nor refute the laws introduced in the OT, but in fact reinforces their importance by promising that those born of the Holy Spirit will be given a new heart and desire to obey God’s laws.
Living Under Scriptural Authority

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

(1 Tim 3:1-7)

1. The picture that Paul paints of the last days in verses 2-5 bears a striking resemblance to what we see in our own day. What are some ways that you see this godless mindset promoted in our society – in others AND in yourself?
2. What does it mean to be “always learning and never able to arrive at a knowledge of the truth?” (3:7) Where is ultimate truth found?

(1 Tim 3: 10-13)

3. What are some ways that you may experience suffering or persecution for following Christ and in what He says?
4. What do you think Christ would say to you?

(1 Tim 3: 14-17)

5. If Scriptures are the means by which God preserves our faith and conforms us to the likeness of Christ, then they are absolutely essential for our eternal well-being. Why, then, would we ever neglect the study of Scripture?
6. How does knowing that “the words of Scripture are the words of God” give you confidence?
7. Now that you know this, what would you do differently this week?