



CAPITOL COMMISSION™

CONTINUE IN CHRIST! - 2 TIMOTHY 3:14-15

COLORADO

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Satan will never give up on trying to destroy the faith of God's people. He is the adversary of our souls and there will always be evil men. Persecution today is so wide spread; in Nigeria, China, Sudan, Syria, Iran, Saudi Arabia just to mention a few. Even we are being challenged here where tolerance is given for anything except true Christianity. But, we must remain firm in our resolve and refuse to compromise. We must trust God for our needed strength and grace.¹ We must continue with Christ as Paul emphasizes in the next verse... 2 Timothy 3:14 "You however, continue in the things you have learned and become convinced of, knowing from whom you have learned them, and that from childhood you have known the sacred writings which are able to give you the wisdom that leads to salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus." Continue in Christ!

I. CONTINUE IN CHRIST! - 2 TIMOTHY 3:14-15

*(14) "You, however, continue in the things you have learned and become convinced of, knowing from whom you have learned them; (15) and that from childhood you have known the sacred writings which are able to give you the wisdom that leads to salvation through faith in Christ Jesus."
2 Timothy 3:14-15*

Timothy stands out in bold contrast to the evil men and imposters which Paul has exposed. He has carefully followed Paul's example and teaching. Paul's strong convictions were built on a strong spiritual foundation lived out not just in principle, but practice and so must Timothy's life. It is easy to begin something, but continuing with it is much more difficult. There will always be escape routes and many more voices calling you to quit or come back. But, we must not be distracted in our aim to follow Christ. And thus Paul writes this to Timothy. His life was about to end...but Timothy must continue the race and so must we.

A. CONTINUE AND CONVINCED- 2 TIMOTHY 3:14

Paul begins verse 14 by distinguishing Timothy from the evil men and imposters as one who is vastly different because Timothy continues faithfully in Christ. Paul's emphatic statement of Timothy exhorts him to be different by continuing in the Word and by preaching the Word reminding Timothy of his godly heritage.

"continue" Greek **"meno"** means to abide in, hold to, remain, a present active imperative having the force of a command, abide in what you have learned and believed, remain in these things.

Paul strongly exhorts Timothy to stand firm and continue in what he has learned with untiring zeal, refusing to alter his course but remaining firmly fixed on God's truth as his sure anchor.

What was Timothy to continue in? Paul makes that clear. Continue in what he has learned. That word "learned" in the Greek refers to intentional learning, learning by inquiry and observation. Learning that took place not incidentally but by intent. Just learning was not enough. Timothy pursued the truth. What Timothy learned he applied to his heart by the Holy Spirit so that he also became convinced with a conviction that transformed his life. So we see that two things happened in 2 Timothy 3:14. First there was intentional learning and teaching that took place. And second, Timothy became convinced of that truth. He had become firmly persuaded with an inner conviction that was fixed on the non-negotiable truths of Scripture that are not subject to compromise or dilution. These strong convictions were held with equally strong tenacity and unshakable firmness in Timothy's life.²

And Paul wanted Timothy to remember the godly people from whom he had framed these truths in his life and so in the next verse Paul commends this godly heritage.

B. "THAT FROM CHILDHOOD"- 2 TIMOTHY 3:15A

God placed godly people in Timothy's life from whom he learned eternal truths from Scripture. It was the glory of the Jews that their children from their earliest days were trained in the Law. They claimed their children learned the Law even from birth and drank it in with their mother's milk. They claimed the Law was so imprinted on the hearts and minds of Jewish children that they would sooner forget their own name than forget Scripture.³ That's what Timothy grew up with.

"From childhood", from infancy, Timothy heard God's Word through his family. From his earliest recollections, he was faithfully taught the truths of Scripture. 2 Timothy 1:5 reminds us, *"For I am mindful of the sincere faith within you, which first dwelt in your grandmother Lois, and your mother Eunice"*. We learn from Acts 16 that Timothy's father was probably a Greek Gentile. Timothy heard God's Word at the knees of his Hebrew Mom and Grandmother. From Timothy's earliest recollections he was faithfully taught the truths of the Old Testament. Timothy had the privilege of learning from the lips and lives of these, together with Paul, and they had a saving effect on his life. John Calvin wrote that if any have acquired from his youth a knowledge of Scriptures, he should count it a special blessing from God.⁴

Just think what it could mean today if we could say the same thing. That our kids might *"continue in the things they have learned"* about God in our homes from our lives and our lips. That our children

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might "become convinced of and know the sacred writings which are able to give you the wisdom that leads to salvation".

C. "YOU HAVE KNOWN THE SACRED WRITINGS"- 2 TIMOTHY 3:15B

In the Greek text, there is a force of present tense together with a continuous action as Paul writes, "you have known". Timothy's knowledge began early at childhood and continues to grow in understanding of the "sacred writings". The "sacred writings" would be the Jewish Scriptures which is our Old Testament; Genesis through Malachi. It was on this that Timothy's faith was built upon. And as he was exposed to New Testament truth, the reality of the Old Testament's anticipation turned to a realization by fulfillment in Jesus Christ.⁵ This was the foundation for Timothy's devotion, faith and character. The ultimate source and authority for Timothy's faith rests on Scripture. And Paul has more to say about the significance of God's Word as we continue. What does God's Word do?

D. "WHICH ARE ABLE TO GIVE YOU WISDOM" 2 TIMOTHY 3:15C

"Which are able" points to a continuous, abiding power resident in these writings that are able to make you wise unto salvation and continue to make you wise. Scripture has an abiding power on the human heart. God's Word gives a wisdom that reveals the holiness, majesty and loving kindness of God and His gracious offer of forgiveness and redemption from sin for those who would trust Him and not themselves and seek His great mercy.⁶

The Old Testament Scriptures point to Jesus Christ as we see in Luke 24:25-27, 44-47. Christ fulfilled the sacrificial system with the Passover Lamb, the Tabernacle and all the Messianic prophesies. Scripture gives a wisdom that leads to salvation. It makes an individual wise because it leads us to salvation by pointing to Jesus Christ and the necessity for faith in Him. That's what happened in Timothy's life.

E. "THAT LEADS TO SALVATION"- 2 TIMOTHY 3:15D

These "sacred writings" and the value of knowing them lies in the fact that they are able to do what no other secular writings can do, namely, make one wise unto salvation.⁷ The Old Testament anticipated Jesus Christ and the New Testament explains Christ. God's Word in total has a Christ centered story line.

The Old Testament gave the moral law which was intended to set a righteous standard which no one could keep. Thus, everyone would know they were a sinner under God's judgment. No one could be made righteous under the Law, only condemned. So all were in desperate need of grace and forgiveness which God was eager to give to those who repented and asked. The sacrifices offered by the

Jews in the Old Testament did not save the Jews but rather showed they recognized the fact that sin demanded death. And every sacrifice under the Old Covenant depicted the ultimate, perfect and complete sacrifice of the coming Savior, Jesus Christ. (Hebrews 7:27, 9:11-12) Jesus obtained an eternal redemption for all who believe. The death of Christ provided the satisfaction of divine justice by which God can forgive the repentant sinner.⁸

So, Scripture shows people their need for salvation and points them to Christ Who alone can give it. God's Word gives the wisdom that leads to salvation. Knowledge does not assure salvation. It's only that knowledge that leads to wisdom that brings one to salvation together with a personal commitment through faith on our part in Christ Jesus.

E. "THROUGH FAITH WHICH IS IN CHRIST JESUS"- 2 TIMOTHY 3:15E

Paul wrote, "that from childhood you have known the sacred writings which are able to give you the wisdom that leads to salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus." Salvation is not gained by works, but only through faith which is in Jesus Christ. The Old Testament bears witness of Christ, "If you believed Moses, you would believe Me; for he wrote of Me." (John 5:46) The Jews offered many a lamb as a sacrifice for their sin, looking forward to the One ultimate sacrifice to which Jesus referred in John 1:29 when He said, "Behold, the Lamb of God Who takes away the sin of the world." Paul wrote in Galatians 3:24 that the Law, was our tutor to lead us to Christ. The Jews in Berea didn't know about Christ but were students of the "sacred writings" for sure, maybe like Timothy had been. When Paul came with the gospel, Acts 17:11-12 says, "they received the word with great eagerness, examining the Scriptures daily, to see whether these things were so. Many of them believed..." Faith in Christ linked the Old Testament with the New. Jesus is the sum of Scripture and the focus of it. Faith in Jesus Christ alone is the means through which the salvation given by the Word of God is grasped. And so, it is God's Word that gives wisdom that leads to salvation in Jesus Christ alone!

¹Williams, Peter, *Opening Up 2 Timothy*. One Day Publications: Ryelands Road, Leominster, New Zealand, 2007. Pg. 78.

²MacArthur, John, *MacArthur Commentary on 2 Timothy*. Moody Press: Chicago, 1998. Pg.134.

³Barclay, William, *The Letters to Timothy, Titus, and Philemon*. Westminster John Knox Press: Louisville, Kentucky, 1956, revised 1975 and 2003. Pg.224.

⁴Calvin, John, 1509-1564. *The Crossway Classic Commentaries; 1 & 2 Timothy, Titus*. Crossway: Wheaton, Illinois, 1998. Pg.154.

⁵MacArthur, John, *MacArthur Commentary on 2 Timothy*. Moody Press: Chicago, 1998. Pg.138.

⁶MacArthur, John, *MacArthur Commentary on 2 Timothy*. Moody Press: Chicago, 1998. Pg.138-139.

⁷Hiebert, D. Edmond, *Second Timothy*. Moody Press: Chicago, 1958. Pg. 98.

⁸MacArthur, John, *MacArthur Commentary on 2 Timothy*. Moody Press: Chicago, 1998. Pg.139-140.