

GOD'S WORD FOR THE NEW YEAR
2 Tim. 3:1-4:8

Intro: The message of 1 and 2 Timothy -- seems to center around:

- 1) The great prevalence of error -- therefore, the need to stand by the Word of God.
- 2) The terrible corruption of lives -- which always accompanies the rejection of the truth. And this in turn is a threat to true spiritual life. And so we have Paul's emphasis on "godliness."
- 3) The certainty of opposition -- persecution.

All of these are seen in the closing verses of 2 Timothy -- which gives us Paul's final words to the Church throughout this present dispensation.

Note how he approaches his subject as a conclusion to his letter.

I. PERILOUS TIMES TO LIVE IN (2 Tim. 3:1-9).

"Perilous" means hard, dangerous, trying, perilous.

Obviously Paul is concerned about the threat this is to godly living even more than to the physical safety of Timothy or anyone else.

It is not easy to live for the Lord in this world at any time.

This sets the tone and gives the reason for that which is to follow.

What are we to do in such times?

II. FOUR GUIDELINES TO LIVE BY (2 Tim. 3:10-4:8).

- A. Follow the example of a godly person (2 Tim. 3:9-13).

The best place to look for these examples is in the Word.

The next best place is among your daily acquaintances. Do not follow the crowd, even what the majority of believers may be doing. Look for a godly man or a godly woman -- and live like they live!

The next best place is Christian biography -- Packer mentions four men who helped him more than any others: John Charles Ryle, John Owen, John Calvin, and Jonathan Edwards. Who would you mention? Do you have any?

WHAT ARE YOU
GOING TO READ
THIS YEAR?

The greatest example of all is our Lord!

What do you always see? Cf. v. 11 & - the faithfulness of the Lord.

- B. Learn to recognize the difference between what can never change, and that which must change (2 Tim. 3:14-17).

The Word does not change.

Salvation does not change.

The Lord does not change.

But we need to change -- not to become like the world, but to become like the Lord -- "thoroughly furnished unto every good work."

- C. Always remember what our divinely given charge is (2 Tim. 4:1-5).

We are not to be guided by what men want, but by what the Lord has commanded us to do.

"Preach the Word" are the words which give us our orders.

Paul spoke to the Corinthian church about wood, hay, and stubble. What would he say today? Have we gotten side-tracked in our ministry? What are we doing that we should not do -- and what are we leaving undone?

These are questions for every child of God to ask. The Church is occupied with a lot of non-essentials which are taking our money, our time, and our strength.

- D. Keep your eyes on the goal (2 Tim. 4:6-8).

Paul mentions this also in Phil. 3.

It may come sooner than we think! How will we face the Lord -- this is the all-important question.

Concl: Look at the way Paul concludes this Epistle -- down esp. to that great word of personal assurance which he is able to give Timothy in vv. 17, 18.

These can be great words of encouragement for us as we begin a new year living in times like these.