

False Teachers

The Predictions of the Last Days,

2 Timothy 3:1-17

2 Timothy 3:10-13

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The Contrasting Marks of Godly Believers

(2 Timothy 3:10-13) Introduction: this passage is a contrast with the former passage which dealt with the godless marks of the last days. Here we have the contrasting marks of godly believers.

1. Mark 1: following a godly example (v.10).

2. Mark 2: enduring persecution (v.11-12).

3. Mark 3: guarding against evil men (v.13).

1. (2 Timothy 3:10) Testimony— Godliness: a godly person follows a godly example.

This is a sharp contrast from the godless marks of false teachers ([2 Tim. 3:1-9](#)). Timothy had known (*parakolouthēō* [PWS: 1625](#)) and had closely observed and followed the godly example of Paul. Kenneth Wuest points out that the Greek word means to follow a person so closely that one is always by the person's side, conforming his life to the person (*The Pastoral Epistles*, p.148). It means to join oneself to the person, to become his disciple and to follow his example. Paul had lived a godly life, and Timothy had followed in his footsteps. Paul mentions seven things about his life that stand out as a dynamic example, eight things that a person must focus upon and follow if he wishes to live a godly life.

1. There is *doctrine or teaching*. What was the source of Paul's doctrines? What was it that Paul had taught? The Scriptures, the very Word of Christ and of God. Paul declared this time and again.

"Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle, separated unto the gospel of God, (which he had promised afore by his prophets in the holy scriptures,) concerning his Son Jesus Christ our Lord, which was made of the seed of David according to the flesh; and declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead" ([Romans 1:1-4](#)).

"For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek" ([Romans 1:16](#)).

"Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand; by which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain. For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our

sins according to the scriptures; and that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures" ([1 Cor. 15:1-4](#)).

"For this cause also thank we God without ceasing, because, when ye received the word of God which ye heard of us, ye received it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which effectually worketh also in you that believe" ([1 Thes. 2:13](#)).

"All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness" ([2 Tim. 3:16](#)).

"Holding fast the faithful word as he hath been taught, that he may be able by sound doctrine both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers" ([Titus 1:9](#)).

"But speak thou the things which become sound doctrine" ([Titus 2:1](#)).

The point is this: the godly person must follow the doctrines of godly teachers. He must have nothing to do with the teaching of false teachers ([2 Tim. 3:1-9](#)).

⇒ A person cannot live godly unless he knows godliness.

⇒ A person cannot teach godliness unless he follows after godliness.

A godly person closely observes and follows after those who live godly lives. He is a disciple of godly examples. He follows the godly teaching of godly people.

2. There is godly behavior and conduct. Paul practiced what he preached. He lived what he taught. He professed to be a follower of Christ; therefore, he followed Christ.

⇒ He did not live in sin; he lived in righteousness.

⇒ He did not profess one thing and do another.

Timothy was to do the same, and so are all other believers. A godly person is to behave himself—to conduct his life like he should. He is to live what he professes. He is not to pull down what he teaches by what he does. The believer is to teach godliness, *but first* he is to live godly.

"I have showed you all things, how that so labouring ye ought to support the weak, and to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he said, It is more blessed to give than to receive" ([Acts 20:35](#)).

"Wherefore I beseech you, be ye followers of me" ([1 Cor. 4:16](#)).

"Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ" ([1 Cor. 11:1](#)).

"Brethren, be followers together of me, and mark them which walk so as ye have us for an ensample" ([Phil. 3:17](#)).

"Those things, which ye have both learned, and received, and heard, and seen in me, do: and the God of peace shall be with you" ([Phil. 4:9](#)).

"For yourselves know how ye ought to follow us: for we behaved not ourselves disorderly among you" ([2 Thes. 3:7](#)).

"Hold fast the form of sound words, which thou hast heard of me, in faith and love which is in Christ Jesus" ([2 Tim. 1:13](#)).

3. There is purpose or what Donald Guthrie calls a person's "chief aim in life" (*The Pastoral Epistles*. "Tyndale New Testament Commentaries," p.160). The chief aim of believers is to be one thing and one thing only: Christ and His great mission—the mission of saving people from sin, death, and judgment, and of ministering to people. Eternal life—the glorious privilege

of never dying and of living forever—is now possible. Christ made it possible. That was His every purpose for coming to earth—to die for man and to set man free from the terrible sufferings and evils of this corruptible world. Just imagine! Every person on the face of the earth can now be delivered from suffering and evil and live forever. But they have to know how. This was the mission of Christ: to tell them how. And it is to be the mission of the believer: to tell people how to conquer evil and to live forever. The believer's very purpose for living—his chief aim in life—is to proclaim the glorious news of salvation: there is deliverance from death and evil; man can now live and live forever.

Thought 1. William Barclay has some very practical questions to ask:

"As individuals, we should sometimes pause and ask ourselves: what is our aim in life? Have we got one at all? As teachers we should sometimes ask ourselves: what am I trying to do with these people whom I teach? Once Agesilaus, the Sparta king, was asked, 'What shall we teach our boys?' His answer was: 'That which will be most useful to them when they are men.' Is it knowledge, or is it life, that we are trying to transmit? As members of the Church, we should sometimes ask ourselves: what are we trying to do in the Church? It is not enough to be satisfied when a Church is humming like a dynamo, and when every night in the week has its own crowded organisation. Sometimes we should be asking: what, if anything, is the unifying purpose which binds all this activity together?" (The Letters to Timothy, Titus, and Philemon, p.225f).

As Christian believers, the unifying purpose of our lives is set: it is Christ and His great mission of life, life now and life eternal ([John 10:10](#); [John 3:16](#)).

"Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many" ([Matthew 20:28](#)).

"Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world" ([Matthew 28:19-20](#)).

"And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature" ([Mark 16:15](#)).

"For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost" ([Luke 19:10](#)).

"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life" ([John 3:16](#)).

"I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more more abundantly" ([John 10:10](#)).

"Then said Jesus to them again, Peace be unto you: as my Father hath sent me, even so send I you" ([John 20:21](#)).

4. There is *faith* (see [1 Tim. 6:11](#)).

5. There is *longsuffering* (*makrothumiai*) which means patience, bearing and suffering a long time, perseverance, being constant, steadfast, and enduring.

Long-suffering never gives in; it is never broken no matter what attacks it.

⇒ Pressure and hard work may fall upon us, but the Spirit of God helps us suffer long under it all.

⇒ Disease or accident or old age may afflict us, but the Spirit of God helps us to suffer long under it.

⇒ Discouragement and disappointment may attack us, but the Spirit of God helps us to suffer long under it.

⇒ Men may do us wrong, abuse, slander, and injure us; but the Spirit of God helps us to suffer long under it all.

Two significant things need to be noted about longsuffering. Longsuffering never strikes back. Common sense tells us that a person who is attacked by others could strike back and retaliate. **But** the Christian believer is given the power of longsuffering—the power to suffer the situation or person for a long, long time.

The point is this: a godly person closely observes and follows after those who are longsuffering. A godly person is a disciple; he follows after those who know how to plow through the trials and problems of life. He learns from the longsuffering of others.

6. There is *love* (see [1 Thes. 3:12](#)).

7. There is *patience* (*hupomonē*). Patience means endurance, fortitude, steadfastness, constancy, perseverance. The word is not passive; it is active. It is not the spirit that just sits back and puts up with the trials of life, taking whatever may come. Rather it is the spirit that stands up and faces life's trials, that actively goes about conquering and overcoming them. When trials confront a man who is truly justified, he is stirred to arise and face the trials head on. He immediately sets out to conquer and overcome them. He knows that God is allowing the trials in order to teach him more and more patience (endurance).

The godly person follows the example of those who are actively patient, who endure by walking through the trials of life, conquering all for Christ.

⇒ He learns to be patient with people no matter what they do.

⇒ He learns to be patient in trials no matter how severe they are.

"In your patience possess ye your souls" ([Luke 21:19](#)).

"Rejoicing in hope; patient in tribulation; continuing instant in prayer" ([Romans 12:12](#)).

"For ye have need of patience, that, after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise" ([Hebrews 10:36](#)).

"My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations; knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience. But let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing" ([James 1:2-4](#)).

"Be patient therefore, brethren, unto the coming of the Lord. Behold, the husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, and hath long patience for it, until he receive the early and latter rain" ([James 5:7](#)).

2. (2 Timothy 3:11-12) Persecution: a godly person endures persecution.

Note two points.

1. Paul suffered severe persecution and affliction.

He mentions three experiences that Timothy knew about.

- ⇒ In Antioch the civil leaders of the city had risen up against Paul and expelled him from their city ([Acts 13:50](#)).
- ⇒ In Iconium a large mob with the city officials set out to arrest and to stone Paul. He had to flee for his life ([Acts 14:4-6](#)).
- ⇒ In Lystra a rioting mob stoned Paul and dragged his limp body out of the city thinking that he was dead. Apparently God worked a miracle and raised him up ([Acts 14:19-20](#)).

Paul was constantly persecuted, attacked time and again. But the Lord delivered him. Paul never failed to witness for Christ; therefore, Christ never failed to deliver Paul. But note: deliverance does not mean *deliverance from persecution, but deliverance through persecution*. God strengthens and carries the believer through persecution, not out of persecution. This is what Paul is declaring.

2. The believer will suffer persecution; he cannot escape it, not if he is a genuine believer. (See [2 Tim. 1:8](#)) Believers suffer persecution because they are not like the world; they do not live like the world lives. Therefore, the world persecutes them.

Scripture gives **four specific reasons** why believers shall suffer persecution.

- a. Believers shall suffer persecution because they are not of this world. They are *called out* of the world. They are in the world, but they are not of the world. They are separated from the behavior of the world. Therefore, the world reacts against them by ridicule and mockery, by verbal and physical abuse, and by discrimination.

"If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you" ([John 15:19](#)).

- b. They shall suffer persecution because believers strip away the world's *cloak of sin*. They live and demonstrate a life of righteousness and they do not compromise with the world and its sinful behavior. They live pure and godly lives, having nothing to do with the sinful pleasures of a corruptible world. Such living exposes the sins of people, and this exposure stirs them to react against believers.

"If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you....If I had not come and spoken unto them, they had not had sin: but now they have no cloke for their sin" ([John 15:18, 22](#)).

**"Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution"
([2 Tim. 3:12](#)).**

- c. They shall suffer persecution because the world does not know God nor Christ. The ungodly of the world want no God other than themselves and their own imaginations. They want to do just what they want—to fulfill their own desires, not what God wishes and demands. However, the godly believer dedicates his life to God, to His worship and service. The ungodly wants no part of God; therefore, they oppose those who talk about God and man's duty to honor and worship God.

"But all these things will they do unto you for my name's sake, because they know not him that sent me" ([John 15:21](#)).

"And these things will they do unto you, because they have not known the Father, nor me" ([John 16:3](#)).

- d. They shall suffer persecution because the world is deceived in its concept and belief of God. The world conceives God to be the One who fulfills their earthly desires and lusts ([John 16:2-3](#)). Man's idea of God is that of a *Supreme Grandfather*. They think that God protects, provides, and gives no matter what a person's behavior is, just so the behavior is not too far out. They think God will accept them and work all things out in the final analysis. However, the true believer teaches against this. God is love, but He is also just and demands righteousness. The world rebels against this concept of God.

"They shall put you out of the synagogues: yea, the time cometh, that whosoever killeth you will think that he doeth God service. And these things will they do unto you, because they have not known the Father, nor me" ([John 16:2-3](#)).

"Remember the word that I said unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord. If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you; if they have kept my saying, they will keep yours also" ([John 15:20](#)).

"These things have I spoken unto you, that ye should not be offended. They shall put you out of the synagogues: yea, the time cometh, that whosoever killeth you will think that he doeth God service. And these things will they do unto you, because they have not known the Father, nor me. But these things have I told you, that when the time shall come, ye may remember that I told you of them. And these things I said not unto you at the beginning, because I was with you" ([John 16:1-4](#)).

"That no man should be moved by these afflictions: for yourselves know that we are appointed thereunto" ([1 Thes. 3:3](#)).

"For unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake" ([Phil. 1:29](#)).

**"Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution"
([2 Tim. 3:12](#)).**

"Marvel not, my brethren, if the world hate you" ([1 John 3:13](#)).

"Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you: but rejoice, inasmuch

as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that, when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy. If ye be reproached for the name of Christ, happy are ye; for the spirit of glory and of God resteth upon you: on their part he is evil spoken of, but on your part he is glorified" ([1 Peter 4:12-14](#)).

3. (2 Timothy 3:13) Unbelievers— Ungodly, The— Deceivers— Hypocrites— Imposters: a godly person guards against evil men and seducers.

- ⇒ Evil men refers to those who actively oppose righteousness and morality; those who live immoral and ungodly lives—who curse, lie, steal, cheat, injure, and live in carnal pleasures and immorality.
- ⇒ Seducers refers to imposters and deceivers; those who live hypocritical lives—who call themselves Christians and join the church for what they can get out of it. They join the church seeking acceptability, a good image, friends, fellowship, popularity, business clientele, self-image, a following, and a host of other benefits.

The point is that both evil men and imposters will grow worse and worse. Men will become *more and more evil*, more and more...

- ungodly
- lawless
- pleasure-minded
- recreational-minded
- selfish
- foul-minded
- immoral
- unclean
- addicted to drugs
- party-minded
- murderous
- violent

Men will also become more and more of an imposter religiously. They will be religious, professing belief in God, but they will deny the power of godliness. ([See 2 Tim. 3:5](#)) Note: they will deceive themselves and deceive others. They will think that they are acceptable to God, and others will even think they are acceptable to God. But both they and their friends are deceived; they are not acceptable to God.

"And this is his commandment, That we should believe on the name of his Son Jesus Christ, and love one another, as he gave us commandment" ([1 John 3:23](#)).

The only way to be acceptable to God is by believing on the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and loving others. Believing means to follow Christ—to live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world and to love others even as Christ loved them—to love them to such a point that we give all that we are and have to minister to their desperate needs. But note the point: men will become more and more religious, but as seducers or as imposters—as men who use religion for their own selfish purposes and for a livelihood and profession.

"For false Christs and false prophets shall rise, and shall show signs and wonders, to seduce, if it were possible, even the elect" ([Mark 13:22](#)).

"Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them" ([Acts 20:30](#)).

"Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them" ([Romans 16:17-18](#)).

"For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ. And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light. Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness; whose end shall be according to their works" ([2 Cor. 11:13-15](#)).

"That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive" ([Ephes. 4:14](#)).

"Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils" ([1 Tim. 4:1](#)).

"But evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived" ([2 Tim. 3:13](#)).

"These things have I written unto you concerning them that seduce you" ([1 John 2:26](#)).

"For many deceivers are entered into the world, who confess not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh. This is a deceiver and an antichrist" ([2 John 7](#)).