



the Source

Let anyone who is thirsty come to me...

It is the challenge we have...not only to walk the walk, but to bring others along the Way that leads to holiness. For years, Paul had instructed young Timothy to imitate him in every Christian manner. Paul accurately read the signs of the times and knew how easily Timothy, and hosts of other Christians, could stray from the faith which Paul had so painstakingly sought to spread throughout the region.

It was not simply that Paul was hoping that all his labor would not be in vain. The stakes were far greater. Paul was in it to shed light on God's promises for humanity both now and in the fulness of the kingdom, and to offer gift of the Holy Spirit to change lives. He urges Timothy, knowing there would be an accounting of how he and others had fulfilled their ministry. Timothy was his successor, a voice to continue preparing the way of the Lord in the hearts of people. On the streets, in the wilderness, in worship with congregations, the challenge for Timothy to fulfill his ministry now takes flesh in our lives. Can you believe it?

Rev. Van Dickens, Retired Clergy-in-Residence

**Consider
the Source
2 Timothy 3:14-4:4**

A Family Affair

Do you have a favorite book? How many times have you read that book? Did you read the whole book over, or just your favorite parts? If you only read your favorite part of the book, was the story the same? Or did the story change?

Now read 2 Timothy 3:14-16 together as a family. These verses claim that all scripture is inspired by God and is all useful. Even though the Bible is a collection of very, very old books, Christians believe it was inspired by God. There are many different kinds of writings in the Bible: there are historical writings, parables, and even poems. Each different type of literature can be useful in different situations. Sometimes the Bible can be challenging to understand. Sometimes the Bible asks us to do things that are very hard, like forgiving others and praying for our enemies. It would be easy to skip over those parts to our favorite parts, like the birth of baby Jesus. However, we must remember that all the words have the Spirit of God in them and even though we live in a different time, God's Word can still teach us and prepare us for good works.

Dear God, thank you for the Holy Word that is our scripture. Help us to remember that all of the Bible was inspired by you. Be with us when we read your Word and help us to apply it to our daily lives and share it with others. Amen.

— Jennifer Hall, Director of Children's Ministry

Monday: 2 Timothy 3:14-16

"Remember who you are!" With these words, my father admonished me when, as a teenager, I would go out on Friday nights with friends. He knew the temptations for mischief, to get involved in those things that would bring embarrassment on myself and the family. He knew I was better than that, and with those words, he reminded me of the "me" I should always be, to stay true to the Christian man I claimed to be. Likewise, Paul reminded Timothy to stay true to his calling.

- What voices do you hear when tempted? Whose mentoring helps keep you on the straight and narrow?
- These verses, Paul says, are the building blocks, the foundation for salvation. Why do you read the Bible? What difference does it make in your life?

Tuesday: 2 Timothy 4:1-2

The message Timothy must proclaim from scripture is the good news of Jesus Christ! Doing so isn't optional. There is an urgency here. "I solemnly urge you..." It is as if Paul has Timothy raising his right hand, promising to follow through with what he has been entrusted (so help me God). Will he do it? Will we? Not just today, but tomorrow, and the next day...?

- Have you ever gone to a restaurant and asked the waiter to bring you something, and the waiter promises to do so, only doesn't? What's that like? Have you ever made a promise to God? How well have you kept it? Who on earth is helping you?
- How faithful are you in your calling to convince, rebuke, and patiently encourage others to consider Jesus? Ever taught a class on basic Christian beliefs? The best way to know what you believe is to try teaching it.

Wednesday: 2 Timothy 4:2b

"...whether the time is favorable or unfavorable..." In good times, and in bad, Timothy, and now we, have a story to tell.

- Times were certainly unfavorable for of Timothy and the early church, including imprisonment and execution, for belonging to the Way. How have you been faithful to your calling as a mouthpiece for the Lord when it wasn't easy or popular?
- How do you, without conceit, demonstrate your commitment to the beliefs you hold most dearly, when it would be so easy not to? When others want you to act otherwise?

Thursday: 2 Timothy 4:3-4

"I have an itch I've gotta scratch." It means satisfying one's appetite with anything that's interesting, or that feels good. Hanging around people who love to gossip is one example, satisfying an "itching ear."

- What attractions and distractions occupy the world today?
- How are we susceptible to the world's "noise?"

Friday: 2 Timothy 4:3-4

Paul likes long sentences, with much to be considered in them. The idea of "accumulating" teachers who suit one's own desires is very disturbing and relevant to our time. The temptation is to listen to only those who say what we want to hear, instead of listening to what we need to hear. Successful companies usually bring in consultants willing, in all truth, to point out the elephants in the room. The church must do likewise in spiritual, as well as practical matters.

- What current myths go against "sound doctrine?"
- How do you encourage someone who has "wandered away?" How do we, as a congregation, encourage people to take root in the truth we have to offer through Christ?