

Message #12**II Timothy 3:10-13**

As most of you know, my father in the faith was John Miles. He was the greatest man of God I have ever or will ever personally know. In fact, I am almost embarrassed to tell you I knew him intimately because I am such a lousy example of the caliber of man that he truly was. We spent a lot of time together and we talked about a lot of things and one of the things we talked about was Lewis Sperry Chafer. Lewis Sperry Chafer had a great impact on Mr. Miles. One time I asked him when he got to heaven who would he want to see, and Dr. Chafer was high on his list.

He said that Dr. Chafer was a man who was devoted to teaching the doctrine of the pure grace of God. But Mr. Miles also said the thing that stood out to him about Dr. Chafer was that he lived what he taught. He said he didn't know what impacted him more, his teaching or his lifestyle that modeled what he taught. He cited an example. He said Dr. Chafer had a total and complete trust in God and he would never ask for one dime. No matter what the financial picture was, he would not ask people for money. He never solicited money from anyone. He totally and completely trusted in God to supply it and God did in fact supply it. Now men like Lewis Sperry Chafer or John Miles don't end up on satellite TV. Men like that don't end up owning their own private jet. But both of those men are rich now. Both are in heaven experiencing all the wealth of God.

Can you imagine a philosophy of ministry that doesn't ask people for money? That certainly would go against the grain of what most religious leaders do. When it comes to religious programming on TV, a great percentage of the people are those, like we saw last week, who are graphically described in II Timothy 3:1-9. They are powerful, charismatic men, who are able to influence millions of people into giving them millions of dollars. Most of these men are TV charlatans who do not teach sound doctrine; they do not demonstrate a true godliness; yet they ask people for money and emotionally appeal to the people and the people send it and they get it.

If you are the average person going to church; if you are a pastor or an elder or deacon; or if you are a SS teacher you can begin to question your impact and your worth. When you try to humbly and faithfully minister God's Word in a world in which most religious places are trying to entertain the world, it can be very lonely and very depressing. It is in these moments when we need to remember the teaching and the lifestyles of men like Lewis Sperry Chafer and John Miles. They taught the Word of God and, at times, they did not sit flush while doing it.

Timothy was trying to minister in a big time religious world. He was surrounded by religious professionals who seemed to be making it big in the ecclesiastical world. Those religious leaders were drawing in the big crowds and the big money. In Ephesus, there are impressive ruins of many religious places that were flourishing. Just the ruins are impressive. There is a huge column still standing that was part of the temple of Diana. That was a massive and impressive structure. Timothy saw all the success of various religions and then he also saw the fact that his father in the faith, Paul, was about to be executed.

Timothy was struggling a bit and Paul knew it. Paul also knew that Timothy needed to remember what a real ministry actually was. He needed to remember the importance of teaching the Word of God and what had happened to many of those who did that.

Paul knew he needed to say some final things to Timothy that could motivate him to keep at it. What he says here is this:

A CRITICAL KEY TO COPING WITH THE SUCCESS OF FALSE RELIGIOUS MEN AND THEIR MINISTRIES IS TO REMEMBER THOSE WHO TAUGHT THE TRUTH AND EXPERIENCED SOME VERY NEGATIVE THINGS FOR TEACHING THE TRUTH.

When I read this text, I cannot help but think of Mr. & Mrs. Miles. Their lives exemplified faithfulness in every way. Even on their honeymoon, they went to a camp to teach the Scriptures. Now who does that? They did. These are the kinds of servants we need to remember.

We may observe that the first word of **verse 10** is the word “now.” The NIV translates the opening word “however.” Actually in this context, the King James gives the best translation of the word “but.” This is a very sharp contrasting conjunction, which is the key point.

Paul is saying to Timothy, “Timothy, in sharp contrast to those false religious frauds, you have my example.” Timothy knew of Paul’s teaching; his doctrine; his philosophy; his hardships; and he knew of his faithfulness. Timothy knew of the impact Paul had made all over the world by teaching the truth of God. He knew that Paul had a close relationship with Jesus Christ in an insane religious world and he wanted Timothy to remember him.

There are three specific memories Paul wanted Timothy to have:

MEMORY #1 – Remember what you actually saw when you followed me. **3:10-11**

Timothy had travelled with Paul and had followed alongside of him very closely. That is important to see here about Timothy. That word “follow” is one that means to closely follow and accompany to the point that one completed a full investigation (G. Abbott-Smith, *Greek Lexicon*, p. 341). Timothy would have been in a position to see the chinks in the armor, but there weren’t any.

He had been with Paul and had experienced what life was like for a real apostle. It wasn’t anything like that described in the previous verses. Paul was no self-lover, money-lover or pleasure-lover. Timothy knew that and saw that. Paul’s life was completely different.

There were nine areas of which Paul reminded Timothy:

Area #1 - Timothy knew Paul's teaching. **3:10a**

The number one action that Paul brings to Timothy's mind was the importance of his teaching. He puts this as number one on the list, even before he mentions his conduct. This shows us the high priority Paul placed on teaching God's Word. The whole focal point of Paul's ministry was about teaching God's Word and specifically teaching about the grace of God. He was the apostle God chose to reveal the entire grace system.

Now Paul wanted Timothy to remember this point because he was in a religious world that taught all kinds of religious things. Those who are right with God put a high priority on teaching the Word of God. Timothy had fully followed Paul around and he knew the seriousness in which he took his teaching ministry.

No matter what happens in a ministry, a Pauline-type minister will always be very serious about accurately teaching the Word of God.

Area #2 - Timothy knew Paul's conduct. **3:10b**

Timothy had been around Paul and had seen his conduct and it was conduct of a life of integrity. Paul was always interested in following God's leading even to the places he went to minister. He maintained a lifestyle that was consistent with his instruction. What he taught he backed up with his life. We know that one of the things he did was refuse to give into those who said you must keep the O.T. Law or follow men's religious traditions. Paul's conduct refused to give into that.

Dr. Warren Wiersbe told the story one time of a church member who thought himself to be this great Christian. He happened to be visiting a S.S. class in the church and the teacher asked him to say a few words. He began by asking the class this question: "Why do you think that people call me a Christian?" A voice from the back said, "Because they don't know you."

Well Timothy knew Paul and he knew that his conduct was after true godliness.

Area #3 - Timothy knew Paul's purpose. **3:10c**

Paul's single purpose of life was to do the will of God and Timothy knew that. A man's purpose is his goal in life; it is that which he gives himself to with an eager and ready mind. Paul had one objective—God's will. His goal was to serve the Lord and preach the Word.

Timothy had personally traveled with Paul and he knew that because Paul lived that. He lived with Paul; he ministered with Paul and he fully knew that Paul was a man devoted to doing God's will in any given situation.

Area #4 - Timothy knew Paul's faith. **3:10d**

Paul was a man who had a tremendous faith and trust in the Lord. By faith he tackled every assignment and put up with every hardship. Timothy had seen this Pauline faith in action. He believed God and trusted God and lived a life pleasing to God even when most people were against Paul. He continued to trust God.

Area #5 - Timothy knew Paul's patience. **3:10e**

The emphasis of this particular Greek word is one that means Timothy had seen that Paul patiently had a forbearing spirit when undergoing troubles and difficulties.

Timothy knew of the junk that Paul patiently endured. He put up with all kinds of negatives for the cause of Christ. He patiently depended on God and waited for God to help and answer.

Area #6 - Timothy knew Paul's love. **3:10f**

Paul demonstrated the highest level of love that one can demonstrate. This is the agape level kind of love that is described in I Cor. 13:4-7. This is not some sentimental and emotional and irrational kind of love; this is a love that always seeks to do the highest good in any given context.

Area #7 - Timothy knew Paul's patience. **3:10g**

The particular emphasis of this different Greek word has to do with patiently persevering and not running or quitting. This has to do with remaining under something while patiently waiting on God.

Area #8 - Timothy knew Paul's persecutions. **3:11a**

The word "persecutions" is interesting because it means that persecution pursued and followed Paul. Paul was always being followed by some form of negative persecution and Timothy knew it.

Negative things tracked Paul wherever he went. He was not loved in the majority of places where he ministered, he was persecuted.

Area #9 - Timothy knew Paul's sufferings. **3:11b**

The word used for sufferings refers to things that really play havoc with emotions. This refers to suffering that really affects the emotions. Now Timothy was fully aware of these things because he was with Paul when some of this was happening. **There are three specific locations that Paul mentions and in every location, the thing that got him in trouble was his teaching.**

(Location #1) - Timothy knew of the sufferings in Antioch. Acts 13:14, 38-39, 44-45, 50, 51.

The suffering Paul experienced in Antioch was due to the fact that his teaching was making a real impact on people and his teaching contradicted the religion and traditions of men.

(Location #2) - Timothy knew of the sufferings in Iconium. Acts 14:1-5

The problem in this city is that the teaching of Paul divided the city and people wanted to stone him.

(Location #3) - Timothy knew of the sufferings in Lystra. Acts 14:8-19

The problem in this city is that the teaching of Paul so stirred up the people that some people wanted to worship Paul and other people wanted to kill Paul. In fact, people stoned him and left him for dead. All of these hardships were due to Paul's teaching.

Timothy knew of all of these things because he had been there and had seen how Paul went through these sufferings and also how God delivered him (Acts 14:19-20).

MEMORY #2 – Remember the mistreatment of those who are faithful. **3:12**

Back in the 1950's a heretical doctrine started sweeping through the United States at various charismatic healing revivals. The doctrine became known as the prosperity gospel. Prominent charismatic preachers jumped on the bandwagon and started telling people that if they gave their money to them, they would be healthy, wealthy and successful. People like Oral Roberts, Robert Tilton, Joel Osteen, Kenneth Copeland, Ken Hagin, Benny Hinn, Joyce Meyer and Paula White all preach this heresy.

But if you honestly follow Paul around, who taught the real Gospel, or if you simply honestly read this verse here, you cannot possibly believe in a "prosperity gospel" or "prosperity theology."

What this verse specifically says is that any person who desires to live a godly, pious, devout life WILL, not might, suffer persecution. Notice just the desire to live godly will produce that which is negative. This is anything but a worldly prosperity gospel.

Those who desire to live godly will suffer. Don't overlook the fact that in order to live godly, one must be "in Christ Jesus." You cannot have a godly life unless you are "in Christ Jesus." You can have a religious life but not a godly life. You must be truly saved to live a godly life.

I challenge any person who owns a Bible to honestly look at this word "suffer" and parse the verb. The word means to suffer in the sense of being pursued by hostile and negative things (*Ibid.*, p. 119). Now the verb "suffer" is a future, passive, indicative verb.

What that means is it is a fact (indicative mood) that the future for one godly (future tense) will be that which features the person being the recipient of many negative hardships and difficulties (passive voice).

If a person desires to live godly, negative things will track him. He will be the target of harsh criticism, subtle hatred, blatant rejection and personal attack. If you stand up and teach the truth concerning the pure grace of God and then desire to live it, you will suffer.

Now this seems so foreign to most because it seems to us that being a Christians does not come with too much of a high priced price tag. But the truth is if one truly is a Christian, who desires to live godly, there will be a suffering price tag. There will be some form of suffering at your school, on your job, in your neighborhood and perhaps even with your family. You stand for truth and you will soon discover you are the odd man out.

You are putting yourself on a course that is contrary to this world. When you proclaim God's grace and truth, you confront the world and when you do that, you will suffer.

Jesus said when the righteous suffer, they are blessed (Matt. 5:10-11). Jesus said if the world hated Him it would also hate us (John 15:17-20). Jesus said we would have tribulation in this world (John 16:33). Paul said godly people will suffer affliction (I Thess. 3:4). This is anything but a prosperity message for this life.

Like it or not the clear testimony of the Scriptures is that those who desire to live godly will be persecuted. This is the way it is. You purpose to live godly by applying the Grace Age Scriptures and watch what happens in your world.

Some family and friends will not rally around you. In fact, they may turn against you.

MEMORY #3 – Remember the multiplication of those who are unfaithful. **3:13**

As we near the end, things, spiritually and religiously speaking, will go from bad to worse. There will be a rise of more and more imposters who claim they are ministers, who will be able to emotionally and religiously trick people into thinking they are really right with God, when in fact they are not. These will be evil men, not saved men.

There will be an intensification and infestation of deceptive, religious, unsaved charlatans. There will be more and more people who will continue to be deceived and they will continue to deceive others.

As we near the end, we will discover that things will not become more godly in this world; but more godless. In fact, what this text says is more and more people will be moving into a direction of embracing false doctrine rather than true doctrine.

In the midst of this world, we need to remember faithful men like Paul, like Lewis Sperry Chafer and like John Miles. Those men loved the Lord; they loved the Word of God and they lived it.