

**IN TIMES LIKE THESE**  
**2 Timothy 3:16- 4:5**  
**5/21/17**

**2 Timothy 3:1-5**

We are living in times like these.

In an age of conflicting theories and alternate life-styles how are we to know what is true and how to live.

**1. In times like these we have a message from God. 3:13-17**

**a. It is inspired of God. v. 16a**

- **Theopneustos-** “God breathed”
  - ◆ It is the scriptures, not the authors or readers, that are inspired.

**b. It is life transforming. vv. 16b-17**

- It is God’s Word that transforms lives, not pop psychology and contemporary fads.
  - ◆ It is a **sword** that penetrates our hearts. Hebrews 4:12  
**Hebrews 4:12** For the word of God is living and active and sharper than any two-edged sword, and piercing as far as the division of soul and spirit, of both joints and marrow, and able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart.
  - ◆ It is **truth** this age of contradictory theories and alternate lifestyles. John 17:17
  - ◆ It is **food** for our souls. 1 Peter 2:1-2; Jeremiah 15:16
  - ◆ It is a **fire** which separates the true from the false. Jeremiah 23:29
  - ◆ It is a **hammer** which will shatters false ideas. Jeremiah 23:29
  - ◆ It is a **mirror** to reveal areas in need of change. James 1:23
  - ◆ It is **water** to cleanse. Ephesians 5:26
  - ◆ It is a **lamp** to guide our paths. Psalms 119:105
  - ◆ It **guards** us from sin. Psalms 119:9, 11

**Charles Spurgeon** wrote: “. . . the Book has wrestled with me; the Book has smitten me; the Book has comforted me; the Book has smiled on me; the Book has frowned on me; the Book has clasped my hand; the Book has warmed my heart. The Book weeps with me, and sings with me; it whispers to me, and it preaches to me; it maps my way, and holds up my goings; it is the Young Man’s Best Companion, and is still my morning and evening Chaplain.”

*In times like these we have an authoritative, life-transforming word from God.*

**2. In times like these preach the word. 4:1-4**

**a. This is a solemn charge from God. v. 1**

- You are preaching under the watchful eye of God.
- Christ will one day judge the living and the dead
- He will judge the saved and the unsaved.

- He will reward us for faithful service. (2 Corinthians 5:10)

**b. Preach the word in season and out of season. v. 2a**

- Preach the word when it is popular and when it is not.
  - ◆ It is God's Word that transforms lives, not pop psychology and contemporary fads.
- Preach the Word when it is welcome and when it is not welcome.
  - ◆ When it is politically correct and when it is not.
- It is NOT your job to make God's Word cool.
- It is NOT your job to make the Bible culturally acceptable.
- We are NOT called to be politically correct.

**Galatians 1:10** For am I now seeking the favor of men, or of God? Or am I striving to please men? If I were still trying to please men, I would not be a bond-servant of Christ.

**c. Reprove, rebuke, and exhort . 4:2b-4 cf Titus 1:13; 2:15**

**Reprove** (elegcho)- confront sin , call people to account.

***BUT MANY TODAY SAY THAT THIS ISN'T LOVING.***

Jesus is our loving example. Matthew 23:23-28, 33

**Revelation 3:19** 'Those whom I love, I reprove and discipline; therefore be zealous and repent.

**Rebuke** (epitimao)- warn or reprimand those who are sinning or teaching things contrary to the Scriptures.

Unfortunately people make all kinds of excuses for themselves, their kids, and their friends.

**Exhort** (parakaleo)- admonish and encourage people to do the right thing.

**d. Demonstrate great patience and instruction.**

**1 Thessalonians 5:14** We urge you, brethren, admonish the unruly, encourage the fainthearted, help the weak, be patient with everyone.

*Why do we need to preach the word with great patience and instruction?*

**e. Recognize that many people will reject God's word and listen to people who will tell them what they want to hear. vv. 3-4**

- They will not endure sound doctrine.
  - ◆ People want to be encouraged while they continue to live sinful lifestyles.
  - ◆ They don't want to hear what the Bible says about their gossip, bitterness, and slander.
  - ◆ They don't want to hear what the Bible says about their drunkenness and pre-marital sex.
  - ◆ They don't want to hear what the Bible says about the differences in Biblical roles between men and women.
  - ◆ They don't want to hear about what the Bible says about gender identity and same sex marriage.
- They will accumulate for themselves teachers in accordance with their own desires.

In reality people today are forming their own religion and then they pick teachers who agree with them.

Over my 50 years as a Christian I have seen the demise of Biblical preaching in evangelical churches.

1960's Christians craved in-depth Bible teaching in churches, on campus, and through Bible seminars

- ◇ Christians wanted to know what the Word of God said

1970's Christian music and entertainment became more important to many than sound doctrine

- ◇ Christian Concerts replaced Bible Conferences
- ◇ The Charismatic Movement took hold
- ◇ Feelings trumped truth

1980's Pastors preached Politics

The moral majority took over the church

1990's Pastors preached Pop psychology

It replaced the Bible as the source of answers to life's deepest problems

2000 Church growth movement

- ◇ We began to see the marketing of Christianity and the arrival of the mega-church with all its entertainment, glitz and glamour.
- ◇ Church services were designed for "seekers" not God or the church members
- ◇ There was an attempt to make Christianity cool.

2010 The arrival of the emergent church movement

- ◇ The age of tolerance and political correctness
- ◇ Postmodern philosophy invaded the church
- ◇ Truth either didn't exist or was unknowable
- ◇ Everyone's ideas were equally valid
- ◇ There is no ultimate right and wrong.

Today are in the era of Contemplative Christianity

- ◇ The "ancient fathers" (3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> century mystics) are being promoted more than the Bible.
- ◇ Meditation, Prayer circles, and Spiritual formation techniques
- ◇ Supposed experiences of direct revelation from God are more important than the study of the Scriptures.
- ◇ One popular "Christian write wrote:

“I knew that God communicated with me through the Bible, but I yearned for more. Increasingly, I wanted to hear what God had to say to me personally on a given day.”  
(Sarah Young in *Jesus Calling*)

- They will turn away from the truth and will turn aside to myths.

When people reject the truth, they become vulnerable to fanciful myths and false teachings.

**Romans 1:21-22** For even though they knew God, they did not honor Him as God or give thanks, but they became futile in their speculations, and their foolish heart was darkened. <sup>22</sup> Professing to be wise, they became fools

People today fill huge sports stadiums to hear false teachers preach a prosperity gospel.

**DON'T AVOID TEACHING THINGS THAT GO AGAINST POPULAR CULTURE.**

**REMEMBER WHO YOU REPRESENT!!!**

**3. In times like these be sober in all things. 4:5**

**a. Sober means clear thinking.**

- “Without wine”- To abstain from wine
- To think seriously about all things.
- To use sound judgment
- To have a Biblical perspective of the situation
- ◆ Don't be controlled by your emotions or the culture

**b. Endure hardship.**

- Cf 3:12

**c. Do the work of an evangelist.**

- Preach the good news

**d. Fulfill your ministry.**

2 Corinthians 5:20 We are ambassadors for Christ

- ◆ We don't represent ourselves.
- ◆ We represent God!

**2 Corinthians 5:17** Therefore if anyone is in Christ, *he is* a new creature; the old things passed away; behold, new things have come. <sup>18</sup> Now all *these* things are from God, who reconciled us to Himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation, <sup>19</sup> namely, that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and He has committed to us the word of reconciliation. <sup>20</sup> Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were making an appeal through us; we beg you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God. <sup>21</sup> He made Him who knew no sin *to be* sin on our behalf, so that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.