

BYOBible

How To Read Your Bible Part III – from Bible to Life

October 24, 2021

Overarching Theme: In 2021, FUMC will be SENT with the peace of Christ!

Instructions:

When using this material as teacher, feel free to pick and choose the point you want to emphasize in the lesson. *The format of the curriculum is designed to have an abundance of information in which to refer as desired.*

Core Point:

On Easter evening, the Risen Christ appears to his gathered disciple for the first time since Good Friday and speaks these words: "Peace be with you. As the Father sent me, so I send you." Just as Jesus sent his disciples into a divided, conflicted 1st Century with his peace, so he sends us into a divided, conflicted 2021 with his peace.

2 Timothy:

The second letter to Timothy along with the first and the letter to Titus are together known as the Pastoral Letters of the Apostle Paul. It is thought that Paul wrote 1 Timothy and Titus around AD 64, after he was released from being a prisoner in Rome, and 2 Timothy around AD 66, after he was arrested again and before he was executed, during the time when Emperor Nero was carrying out his campaign to eliminate Christianity. However, due to the vocabulary and style of these letters being different from the other letters of Paul, many scholars consider that a loyal disciple of Paul probably later composed these letters with fragments incorporated that were written by Paul. In those times it was common to use a well-known and respected name to give authority to a writing which was written by someone else, as scholars call it pseudonymous authorship. The purpose of these letters was to present Paul's teaching (as it was then understood among the churches) as a set of instructions to church leaders, so as to curb wrong teaching and practice.

While 1 Timothy and Titus consist of general teachings for the churches, 2 Timothy is the most personal of the Pastoral Letters because of what is directed specifically to Timothy who was a trusted companion and fellow worker of Paul, like a son to

him, a missionary and young pastor of the church(es) at Ephesus. Therefore, scholars see 2 Timothy to have substantial fragments written by Paul in comparison to 1 Timothy and Titus and these Pastoral Letters to be in the form of a personal letter along with more general forms of instruction to give teaching that could be applied beyond the situation of a particular recipient. 2 Timothy is presented as an earnest pastoral letter from a veteran missionary to a younger colleague as Timothy is shown to be responsible for a group of churches and he is exhorted to preserve them from destructive influences from outside and from dissidents within. Paul's life was given as an example to Timothy even as he knew that he was now at the end of his ministry facing certain martyrdom.

- Adapted from The New Oxford Annotated Bible, pp. 300, 306 NT and Life Application Bible, pp. 2185, 2197

Reflect on this Scripture:

2 Timothy 3:14-17 NRSV

¹⁴ But as for you, continue in what you have learned and firmly believed, knowing from whom you learned it, ¹⁵ and how from childhood you have known the sacred writings that are able to instruct you for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. ¹⁶ All scripture is inspired by God and is useful for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, ¹⁷ so that everyone who belongs to God may be proficient, equipped for every good work.

This Week:

This second letter opens with personal encouragement for Timothy to remain faithful to Christ, reminding him about the good news of Jesus, of Paul's call to the ministry of this Gospel and the consequences suffered for it by being imprisoned with most of his companions having abandoned him. It then goes on to describe the duties assigned to a pastor and the responsibilities for Timothy as a young pastor giving sound advice.

Thereafter, the letter warns of the sort of evil people to be expected in the 'last days' who will cause many to leave the Christian faith or to remain in the Christian fold with only an outward form of godliness. A description of the evil and examples of those who would easily stray are mentioned along with the stress on the point that those who will desire to be faithful and live a godly life will face certain persecution. What is brought out in all of this is that even as from before the ungodly prosper while the godly suffer, although having blessings that this world cannot offer, the final period of time in human history from the time of God's Kingdom in the world begun through Christ's coming and culminating with his

coming again soon, this situation would intensify and Timothy should be aware of this.

However, as a prescription, having diagnosed the problem and proposing safeguard against ungodliness and promotion of godliness among the believers in the churches, two preventive measures are put forward: 1) to continue in the work of God with Paul's own ministry offered as a pattern with his character and conduct along with persecutions faced from which God delivered; 2) to continue in the word of God which are the Jewish Scriptures that Timothy knew from his childhood that helped him to wisely recognize Christ as its fulfillment and therefore to believe and receive him as Savior and Lord and which being divinely inspired by the Holy Spirit of God is useful to help all believers, whether leaders or members of the churches, to be taught, convicted, amended, and disciplined in submitting to God's standard and receiving God's righteousness through faith so that ultimately they would be able to meet all the demands required for leading a godly life and doing good in the church and in society.

- Adapted from The New Interpreter's Bible Commentary, Vol XI, pp. 849-853

Questions to Ponder for Accountability in the Group:

1. Do you find the Old Testament to be very different and in contrast to the New Testament or do you see the New Testament as a continuation and fulfillment of the Old? What parts of the Old and New Testaments attest whichever view you have?
2. Just as Paul's life was offered as a godly example to Timothy and to the believers in the churches to whom the letter was written, can you think anyone similar for your life, either personally known or otherwise? What is the one thing in their life that is an inspiration for you to be faithful to Christ?
3. What do you understand about the divine inspiration of the Bible and how would you explain that to one who doesn't believe in it?
4. What is the ultimate purpose for reading and studying the Bible? How should it be expressed and what is the way of achieving it?

Activity for the Life of a Disciple:

1. Remember to find encouragement for the day by reading the daily devotional from FUMCC and/or to journal in the '*Morning by Morning*' gratitude resource.

2. Take the 'Chapter Challenge' to read or listen to a chapter a day from one of the Gospels each day this week.
3. Check out a study Bible or two from the Resource Table near the Ministry Center coffee area. Consider some of these resources for your continued study.
4. Ponder and pray on this scripture this week: 2 Timothy 3:16-17 NRSV
16 All scripture is inspired by God and is useful for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, **17** so that everyone who belongs to God may be proficient, equipped for every good work.