



Much of the New Testament is made up of letters. This is a personal letter from Paul, the Jewish Pharisee who came to put his life in jeopardy for his Christ (Messiah), to Timothy, a younger man who became a leader in the congregation of Christians. Timothy was half Greek, but his mother was Jewish. He was educated in the Jewish faith by his mother and grandmother and was an early convert of Paul's to Christ.

From Paul's letters to Timothy, we learn that leading a congregation of people is hard work, and Paul had to encourage the younger man on a number of issues. Firstly that the moral state of the world around them was going to deteriorate, and so affect the followers of Christ. That even from within there would be rebellion, and that incorrect ideas would fool some. Paul's last advice is that Timothy himself retain what he has learnt, even in persecution.

2 Timothy 3

- (1) This know also, that in the last¹ days² perilous³ times shall come.
- (2) For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous⁴, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy,
- (3) Without natural affection, truce breakers, false accusers, without self control, fierce, despisers of those that are good,
- (4) Traitors, heady⁵, high minded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God;
- (5) Having a form of piety, but denying the power of it: from such turn away.
- (6) For of this sort are they which creep into houses, and lead captive silly women laden with sins, led away with various lusts,
- (7) Always learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth.
- (8) Now as Jannes and Jambres⁶ withstood Moses, so do these also resist the truth: men of corrupt minds, reprobate concerning the faith.
- (9) But they shall proceed no further: for their folly⁷ shall be made evident unto all men, as theirs also was⁸.
- (10) But thou hast fully known my doctrine, manner of life, purpose, faith, longsuffering, charity⁹, patience,
- (11) Persecutions, afflictions, which came unto me at Antioch, at Iconium, at Lystra; what persecutions I endured: but out of them all the Lord delivered me.
- (12) Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution.
- (13) But evil men and impostors shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived.
- (14) But continue thou in the things which thou have learned and have been assured of, knowing of whom thou have learned them¹⁰;
- (15) And that from a child you have known the holy scriptures, which are able to make you wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.
- (16) All scripture is given by inspiration of God¹¹, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness¹²:
- (17) That the man of God may be perfect, equipped unto all good works.

(King James Version updated with reference to the Greek texts including the minority text)

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- 1 Greek *eschatos* the 'furthest end', or final end. This word gives a for the scholars a fancy word 'eschatology', meaning the study of the period in time before the day of judgement. Paul is referring to the ancient Hebrew understanding there was to be a 'day' where all would be judged. The furthest end is still in the future, yet these, according to the contemporary Jewish historian Josephus were, also characteristic of the end of the Jewish world in Timothy's day.
 - 2 A full 24 hour day so 'days' by extension means a period in time, an 'age' or era.
 - 3 Dangerous, or testing of a person's strength.
 - 4 Specifically that they are fond of money.
 - 5 Rash, headstrong. In Greek literally 'falling forward' or going forward without thought.
 - 6 Jannes and Jambres are not mentioned in the Bible. Paul was quoting Rabbinical tradition regarding two chiefs of the magicians at the court of Pharaoh who had opposed Moses. Eusebius, though 200 years later than Paul, mentions them also.
 - 7 Stupidity or madness.
 - 8 Being Jannes and Jambres who were legendary as fools even in pagan Greek literature.
 - 9 Greek *agape* meaning care for others see previous [1 Corinthians 13](#)
 - 10 The authority of the apostles who were eye witnesses of Christ's ministry, including Paul.
 - 11 In Greek *theopneustos* meaning literally 'God breathed'. This a Greek word for a Hebrew concept as in Hebrew the word for 'breath' and God's 'spirit' is the same.
 - 12 Justice and equity in character or action.