

Equipped to Live in a Faithless World for the Gospel (Sept. 17)

(2 Timothy 3:1-17)

“Continue in the Gospel”

I. Acknowledge What is Counterfeit (2 Timothy 3:1-9) Paul is giving Timothy and us a grave warning concerning those in verse 5 “having the appearance of godliness, but denying its power.” That’s a large group of Americans. Many have bought into a non-biblical counterfeit Christianity that is all about one’s self and not about Christ or others! How do you know a counterfeit? FBI agents examine the real thing so well that once a counterfeit \$100 bill comes across their investigation, they spot it clearly. The Word of God helps us spot counterfeit Christianity. Did you know that the cults of Mormonism and Jehovah Witnesses are built off of church goers who have been swayed because of their failure to examine God’s Word to see counterfeit theology? What does Jesus tell his disciples in **John 8:31-32** *“...If you abide in my word, you are truly my disciples, and you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.”* Both cults have pockets of truth, but lack major tenants of orthodox Christianity. We love these people, but they are counterfeit. Paul gives us a list of counterfeit in verses 2-5.

a. The counterfeit are self-centered. (vv.2-4)

b. The counterfeit do things for show. (v.5) One of the largest growing false doctrinal movements in America is salvation without the necessity of repentance. Salvation must have repentance, otherwise it’s counterfeit.

c. The counterfeit prioritize sin. (vv.7-9) In verse 8 Paul names two parallel examples Jannes and Jambres. Based upon Jewish tradition, these were two Egyptian magicians who opposed Moses in front of Pharaoh. Their example is a reminder that there will always be very scholarly people who know a lot, yet don’t know the truth of Jesus Christ. There will also be those who know about Jesus, but who have never been born again, placing faith in Christ!

II. Adjust to the Fact of Conflict (2 Timothy 3:10-13) Three main take a ways here in these three verses, 1. Endure, Jesus is worth it. John 15:18 *“If the world hates you, know that it has hated me before it hated you.”* 2. Expect opposition, Jesus is worth it. Know that conflict will happen if we are in Christ, but be reminded that Christ is worth it! **Romans 8:18** tells us *“For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory that is to be revealed to us.”*

3. Be Encouraged, Jesus is worth it. Listen to what Peter and James tell us about persecution. **James 1:2** *“Count it all joy, my brothers, when you meet trials of various kinds, for you know that the testing of your faith produces steadfastness.”* **1 Peter 4:12-13** *“Beloved, do not be surprised at the fiery trial when it comes upon you to test you, as though something strange were happening to you. But rejoice insofar as you share Christ’s sufferings, that you may also rejoice and be glad when his glory is revealed.”*

III. Arm Yourself Correctly (2 Timothy 3:14-17) Arm yourself correctly to live in a faithless world for the gospel. Paul tells the Ephesians in Ephesians 6:10-18 concerning how to correctly do spiritual warfare in a faithless world. He list a lot of defensive protective types of armor

that a person should wear, but he does list two offensive weapons. In verses 17-18 he writes, "...and the sword of the Spirit (1), which is the word of God, praying (2) at all times in the Spirit, with all prayer and supplication..." These weapons of warfare are showing your dependency not on your own strength, but on the strength of Christ alone! Through His Word alone and Through Praying to Him alone! These passages talk specifically concerning the Word of God!

a. Learn the Word (v.14) ***Psalms 119:11 "I have hidden your word in my heart that I might not sin against you."***

b. Lean into the Word (v.15) ***Proverbs 3:5-6 "Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make straight your paths." Hebrews 4:12 "For the word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the division of soul and of spirit, or joints and of marrow, and discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart."***

c. Love the Word (vv.16-17) ***Psalms 119:140 "Your promise is well tried, and your servant loves it."*** Will Farmer says: "The Word of God does three things: 1. It Preserves, It Protects, and Points away from sin."

When the Word of God is preached, it demands a response, how will you respond?