

## **Sermon Notes, 2 Timothy 3:10-17, Sunday 21<sup>st</sup> June 2026: “Keep Going”**

Bunyan, Pilgrim's Progress 1678 never been out of print. A picture of the Christian life. Vanity Fair – many ways on offer to live for pleasure, Christian and Faithful end up imprisoned cages in the public square. As someone travelling to the Celestial City, there will be many pleasures on offer to distract you, and many hardships to deter you. Last time, learnt offer of a life of pleasure can come from people within the church, even Christian leaders, offering an easier, pleasurable way to follow Jesus. Verses 1-2a, 4-5a.

Why would you keep going following Jesus on the path you're on, when you hear of greater pleasures not following him, of ways to be a Christian where you don't have to say no to things you want, when the following Jesus costs you? Why?

### **Keep Going**

Look for the commands in the epistles. Only one here – verse 14a. People will do this stuff. “But as for you ...”. Two things. What he learned, but also what become convinced of. You learned about Jesus, as you live for him your conviction grows (become convinced). Paul is saying: Don't move from the convictions you started out with.

But why? Verses 14b-15a, “because ...” Two things there, we'll look at each in turn.

### **Paul suffers**

Chapter 1 – learned it from mother / grandmother. But Paul disciplined and trained him, and in these verses the focus is on Paul. “Keep going ... because you learned it from me, and you know me.”

Verses 10-11.

Paul says, “you know”. Timothy was from Lystra (Acts 16:1). Paul arrived in Lystra from Iconium, fleeing a plot to stone Paul and Barnabas. Left Lystra after a group arrived from Iconium and Antioch, formed a mob, and did stone him and left him for dead. Turns out he wasn't and got to preach another day.

Continue, because you know this. In other words Paul was not an armchair general. Best top-level military generals have real battlefield experience, risen through armed forces. Paul hasn't studied evangelism and church planting, and now expects Timothy to carry on struggling. He's got the battle scars.

Paul says what he's asking of Timothy is normal. Verse 11b. How would you end what comes next? Verse 12 “... be rescued?”. That's not the promise. “... will be persecuted”. Notice: It's not the preaching that gets Timothy there, and it's not just preachers who are persecuted. A godly life threatens people. Christian and Faithful thrown into the cage for being dressed differently, not stopping to look at the market stalls, when asked what they'd buy they said they want to buy the truth. Notice: It's not just being different, not fitting in. Verse 12. Normal experience, if you live a godly life in Christ Jesus is to be treated badly by others.

Books of Bible promises, or Bible promises on fridge magnets / Instagram. This is a Bible promise not in any of those – verse 12.

This is normal. Which is why you keep going. The plan hasn't gone wrong if this happens. You're just experiencing what normal Christians experience. Not saying go out of your way to get yourself into trouble. If God gives you a quieter season be thankful. But if someone offers you a version of Christianity where this is not normal, that's the one to keep away from. Paul knows this, because Paul has lived this.

So one reason to keep going: You know those you learned it from. We all became Christians in different ways. God uses all kinds of people. Some of them had lifestyles not to emulate. God's truth can shine through outright heretical preachers, and he saves people. Some of us were brought to Christ, disciplined, trained, by people who have completely gone off the rails since. Others of us have wonderful people that can inspire us to keep going. But we all have Paul's example (which we too know all about). And we have the example of Jesus.

## **The Bible**

Second, you know the Holy Scriptures. Verses 14b-15a. He gives 4 truths about the Bible. Knowing the Bible gives you lots of reasons to keep following the real Jesus.

## **The Bible saves through Jesus**

Verse 15

To be clear: Not the Bible that saves. It's Jesus. Jesus doesn't say he'll save us if we read the Bible; he calls us to trust him. "Salvation through faith in Christ Jesus". What the Bible does is make us wise so we can do this. It tells you what you need to know.

Please read the safety information in the seat pocket in front. Tells you how to evacuate the plane in an emergency. Reading the card doesn't save you if the plane goes down. You need to act on what the card tells you. Of course, that's no guarantee you'll be saved. Tragic accidents do happen. It tells you how to maximise your chances. Jesus saves all who trust him without fail. The Bible tells you all about him. Read it, it tells you to trust him. Trust him, and he saves you.

Timothy's known this since infancy. That is the word for a very small infant. Babes in arms. "How since your dedication or baptism you have known the HS". "Since you were in Rockets you have known the HS". How precious it is to teach young children – your own, and others you know – not just about God, but the Scriptures. The Bible is God's gift to keep them going with Jesus throughout their lives. Take the youngest children into the Scriptures, so they can say in adult life they have known the Scriptures from infancy.

So – if want become a Christian, the Bible tells you how.

Why keep going with the Jesus you started with? Because he's the Jesus of the Bible. You started there for a reason. Keep going.

## **The Bible speaks God's truth**

Verse 16a.

Literally, carried on God's breath. My words are carried to you on my breath. I'm speaking those words. So the Bible is carried on God's breath – he's the one speaking to you.

God did this through many human writers, who wrote what they wanted, for a variety of reasons, and their personality shines through. But ultimately every word, "all Scripture", is what God wanted on the page.

We say "this is the word of the Lord" after Bible readings. We don't just mean "this contains a few ideas God approves of". God speaks through the preaching of his word. But only because the Bible itself is God's word. In a sense the Bible reading matters more than the sermon. At that point you are hearing God's actual words.

So much rubbish gets said about the Bible. "It's just a record of human attempts to figure God out, and they gradually got better at it." It's God communicating. Every word is what he wants on the page.

Why keep going with Jesus? Because this is not just one version of Jesus amongst many to pick from? The Bible is God speaking to you about God.

## **The Bible steers through life**

Verse 16. Because God speaks it, it's useful. For 4 things.

Teaching and correcting = how you think.

Rebuking and training = how you live

Teaching and training = shaping you positively

Rebuking and correcting = fixing the problems in our thinking and behaving.

The Bible can do all those things. Direct you along the right track, and put you back on track – both in how you think and in how you live.

That's comprehensive. It's not God's book just to fill our heads. It's God's book to shape and steer our lives in every area.

Rockets going to space to land on moon. Don't put it on launchpad, point very accurately and hope. Team of engineers and well-trained flight crew to adjust with small burns so it gets exactly there.

Why keep going with Jesus? Because he doesn't just launch you and hope you go in the right direction. He speaks to you every time you open the Bible, to keep you on track. If you want Jesus to save you and get you to heaven, read it. He'll steer you all the way there.

## **The Bible sufficiently equips for ministry**

Because the Bible is all these things, here's the result: verse 17.

Who is the "servant of God". Literally "man of God" (but NIV avoids gendered language when not in the original). That's an OT term (70x). First used of Moses.

Angelic messenger to Samson's parents. Samuel. Elijah. Elisha. People who spoke God's word to God's people.

So this is not a promise for every Christian; it's for those who are involved in word ministry – helping people hear God's word. In this church, many men and women do this, in many ways. Because God has poured out his Spirit on his church, we all stand in the line of the OT “man of God”.

Because of what the Bible is and does, if you have the Bible you have all you need for word ministry.

Go into a bike repair shop, or some people's garages – rows of tools, all neatly sorted, hung up; bike stands; specialist tools that look really clever, and you don't even know what they do. It might even be deliberate, but it makes you think: I couldn't possibly repair my own bike unless I had all that. Guarantees you'll either bring your bike to them, or go shopping for tools yourself.

Easy to feel a bit daunted. Lots of things you think you need, but don't, even if they could be useful.

Tech (those are great tools to serve us)

Training. Many Christians lack confidence. You don't need loads of training, background knowledge. It's good for pastors to be properly trained; it's good to train our ministry teams and our small group leaders. But don't think: Because I haven't had this piece of training, I can't do it.

Trendy thinking. “I need to have something clever to say. Need a grasp of cultural trends / the arts / etc.” You just need the Bible.

Whoever you are, man, woman or child. If you have the Bible, you have God's way of bringing Jesus into people's lives. You are thoroughly equipped for every good work.

## **Conclusion**

Verses 14-15a.

The word here for “continue” is the word you get elsewhere as “remain”.

You know those who taught you the gospel. You know of Paul, and his typical persecution. You know Jesus. Authenticity.

You know the Bible. It is God's word, to save through Jesus, to steer you through life, to equip you sufficiently for ministry.

So keep going. Continue in what you have learned and have become convinced of. Remain in Jesus. Stay the course.

John 15:1-8