

## How To Make The Most Of Your Life – 2 Timothy 3:10-17

### 2 Tim 3:10-17

The title of the message is – How To Make The Most Of Your Life

B/c that's what Paul, at the end of his, is essentially getting across to Timothy

#### Intro

- When I was growing up, there's was this kid named Matt in our town  
He was about 6 years older than me, my brother's age . . .  
And he had it going on; I mean as an 8<sup>th</sup> grader

He was smart off the charts; Athletic beyond his years

Strong, good-looking, charismatic in his personality

And had a future that was brighter than bright

And yet, as his high school years went by – he squandered it

He started drinking and smoking; His grades went down the tubes; Quit playing sports

Got into terrible fights, usually over girls; Was arrested several times for drugs

Suspended from school, and the list goes on and on

Every time I think about him, I think – what a waste

Instead of making the most of his life, he wasted it

- And I wonder if that's what God sometimes thinks of us  
Even those who are “living life well” quote, un-quote  
You know – nice home, good job, great kids, community-minded  
And yet, far from making the *most* of their life – fr God's perspective, they're *wasting* it

There's no glory given to him; There's no investment in kingdom things

There's no influence of eternal significance on others

There's just nothing of any eternal value

Which makes their life, from God's perspective – a total waste, lived well or not

I don't know if that's you or not, but if it is – you can change all that

And it starts where Paul ends in this passage, by seeing the Bible for what it is

Those who make the most of their life . . .

#### See the **Bible** for what it is (v15-17)

Get this book wrong, or ignore it altogether, and your whole life will be wrong

But get it right, and you're well on your way to making the most of it

To that end, there are 6 characteristics of the Bible in this passage that we'd do well to see/embrace, starting with the fact that it's . . .

#### • **Sacred Scripture**

*Sacred* b/c that's how he refers to it in v15 – as *the sacred writings*

And then *Scripture* from v16

Both in this context, referring to the same thing – the Old *and* New Test's of the Bible

Not just the Old

We know that's true of *Scripture* b/c by this time, the NT writers themselves were referring to the other NT letters as *Scripture*

Like when Peter referred to Paul's writings as *Scripture* in 2 Pet 3

And it's true of *sacred writings* b/c though that phrase was commonly used to refer only to the OT . . .

Here, Paul says that it's *able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus* – something the OT did not, nor could not, do

OT believers were saved through faith in God's spoken word, his promises – including his promise of a messiah, a savior

Whereas NT believers (you and I) are saved through faith in God's living word – Jesus

So in saying the sacred writings are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus, he's including the NT as well b/c faith in Jesus is a NT thing

Therefore, both *Scripture* and *sacred writings* refer to both the Old and New Testaments

Which is why we can combine them, and think of this book, in its entirety, as sacred *Scripture*

Or as you see on many covers – The *Holy Bible*; same thing

The point being – if you're going to make the most of your life, it starts with a proper view of this book

It starts with seeing it as consecrated and hallowed and set apart in a class by itself, with divine connections

#### • **Powerful**

*Able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus* (15b)

IOW the Bible contains the information you need to be saved, and the soul-piercing power to convict and convince you of your need

That's powerful – combining information w/ conviction, that results in faith/salvation

And if you're looking for evidence of that power, you need only look around

Our church is full of people whose lives have been changed by th powerful word of God

#### • **God-breathed**

That's what the Greek word here in v16, means – it's “theopneustos”

*All Scripture* is theopneustos – *breathed out by God*

Meaning that the words of this book, every last one of them, are *God's* words, as written by men who were moved by his Spirit

The implication of which is – every last word conveys truth, and carries authority

Truth b/c God doesn't lie; And authority b/c God is God and we are not

Meaning we should live and abide by it

#### • **Profitable**

Beneficial and advantageous, for things like . . .

\**For teaching* (16) – teaching what?

The doctrines or truths about God, man, sin, redemption . . .

And how to make the most of the life God has given you

It's profitable for teaching

\**For reproof* – for confronting sin and convicting of error

IOW the words of this book are profitable/helpful, when it comes to . . .

Piercing the darkness of our clouded minds, exposing our wrong beliefs or bad attitudes, and convicting us of our sin

I think I've mentioned the story about the young man in my office several years back  
He and his wife came in b/c they were having marriage problems – most of which was due to him  
And though he had somewhat of a soft heart, our time together was going nowhere  
So finally, I opened my Bible to Gal 5:19-21, and turned the Bible around for him to read it out loud

**Gal 5:19-21** – *Now the works of the flesh* [our sinful nature] *are evident: sexual immorality, impurity, sensuality, idolatry, sorcery* [so far so good], *enmity, strife, jealousy, fits of anger* [by this time he was whispering and starting to weep], *rivalries, dissensions . . .*

And he could barely get *divisions* out of his mouth, when he stopped – he couldn't go on  
B/c those last 6 or 7 were *his* sins, and they had just been exposed by the reproof of God's word, convicting him of his error  
The Bible is *profitable* for that (**end slide**)

But it doesn't just leave you there, it's also profitable . . .

*\*For correction* – for restoring someone to their proper condition  
In extra-biblical writings, this word was often used to describe the process of setting upright an object that had fallen over – it was “corrected”  
So whether it's picking us up when we've fallen, or getting us back on track when we've swerved – the Bible is profitable for correction in our lives

Last, it's profitable . . .

*\*For training in righteousness* – for telling us what's right, what's good, what's best, what's godly . . .  
And then showing us how to live it out, and make the most of our life

It's profitable, and . . .

- **Useful**

17 – [It's profitable for these things] *that the man of God* [God's messenger, think ambassador] *may be competent* [and] *equipped*  
That is, capable and fully proficient

You can't see it in English, but there's a play on words here with *competent* and *equipped*  
They're essentially two forms of the same word, used back to back . . .  
To convey that the Bible is *super*-useful for equipping you, and making you competent when it comes to a life well-lived for the glory of God

- **Sufficient**

It's able, in and of itself – to prepare you, equip you, and make you competent for *every good work* (17b) – *that's* sufficient  
There's nothing it lacks when it comes to conforming you to the likeness of Christ – to have his mind and live his way  
It's all right here when it comes to making the most of your life  
But it starts by seeing and acknowledging it for what it is

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Now, if you're thinking, “Ya right”

“If I were writing a book and wanted people to believe it was from God, I'd say the same things, but that doesn't make them true.”

And you'd be correct – just b/c a book says it's God-breathed, doesn't mean it is

But if the *external* evidence confirms the internal testimony, which it does, like the powerful effect it has on people – then you'd be a fool to ignore it

I spent a whole message on that a while back

And I'd encourage you to pick it up if that's your hesitation

It's called *Beyond a Reasonable Doubt: 10 Reasons the Bible can be Trusted as God's Word*

You can get a copy at Books & Things, or online

But whatever you do, don't ignore the Bible and waste your life

Make the most of it by seeing it for what it is

**Find leaders worth following (v10-13)**

In v10-13, Paul does 3 things:

1. He contrasts himself with the false teachers
2. He commends Timothy for following him and staying away from them  
And the word *followed* in v10 means – “to study with at close quarters, and take as an example; to emulate and imitate”
3. He high-lights those things about his life that *make* him worth following  
Which serve as a kind of checklist for the qualities we s/b looking for in a leader  
IOW we'd do well, like Timothy, to find leaders like Paul, who are worth following

*\*Leaders* who first of all *teach* the whole counsel of God, like Paul did (10)

Including the things Jesus taught, the things the apostles taught, and the things the prophets taught in the OT

Leaders who teach with their finger on the text (D.A. Carson; Howard Hendricks?)

Who make sure that what they're saying is from the Bible, and show you where it is

And find leaders whose . . .

*Conduct* is God-honoring – they live for One

*Aim* in life is to glorify God

*Faith* is *Christ*-centered – not man-centered, not religion centered, but Christ-centered

B/c faith apart from Christ as its object, is useless, in leaders or followers

Find leaders whose faith is genuinely Christ-centered

And leaders whose . . .

*Patience* is extraordinary

They confront sin, and then wait patiently for repentance

They preach the word, and are patient to see it embraced

*Love* is genuine and Christ-like

Leaders whose consistency, or *steadfastness*, is admirable

They keep on no matter what; Dependable through thick and thin

Leaders whose *endurance* is inspiring

That's what he's getting at in v11 – that despite all he suffered, including his stoning in Lystra, he endured

Which undoubtedly would have made a huge impression on Timothy, b/c according to Acts 16, he lived there growing up  
So it's not unlikely for Timothy to have witnessed the stoning himself, and been inspired by Paul's subsequent endurance  
Find leaders who don't quit when the going gets tough

Leaders whose *provision/protection* is supernatural  
They always seem to come through  
Like Paul (11b), who was rescued by the Lord from all his persecutions  
Not necessarily without mark or injury, but he came through  
Not unscathed, but triumphant  
That's supernatural provision and protection

Leaders who say it like it is, like Paul does in v12-13  
There's no sugar-coating such a hard reality; There's no avoiding the truth  
He just says it straight and keeps it real

- If you want to make the most of your life . . .  
Lose the lone-ranger mentality, stop thinking you know more than everybody else, stop following somebody just b/c they're likable . . .  
And find leaders like Paul – from whom you can learn, and follow their example

That could be any one of our staff, or elders, or deacons, or their wives, or one of our SG  
Leaders – *all* are men and women worth following, as they follow Christ

Find them, get involved in their ministries, do what they do . . .  
And so make the most of your life, like Timothy

### **“Stick to your guns” (v14-15)**

When I was a freshman in high school, I remember getting a ride home from church with a neighbor – he was a young adult, maybe 19 at the time  
And much to my surprise, we stopped at someone's house on the way, saying these were some friends of his, and he thought we'd hang out for a bit  
But I quickly realized that the real reason was to drink

So here I was, sitting in a stranger's living room, with 3 others guys, only one of whom I knew, and they were offering me anything I wanted to drink  
Beer, cooler, mixed drink, wine, vodka  
And after saying “no thanks” 2 or 3 times, they then started to push a bit, trying to persuade me – which I continued to resist

Until finally, the guy giving me a ride home said, “Well, good for you; stick to your guns; I know I sure can't” and took another drink  
We left 20 minutes later and it was over, but that phrase stuck w/ me – stick to your guns

It was the first time I had ever heard it

And I realized then and there that doing so may not make you popular, but in the long run, it *will* enable you to make the *most* of your life

And there are at least 4 things from this passage that you can and should do, in order to bolster your resolve in this respect

The first of which is . . .

#### **• Set your course**

When he says *continue* (14a), the implication is that Timothy had set a course in the first place

If you're going to stick to your guns and make the most of your life . . .  
Set your course *now* as to who you're going to follow – Christ being first and foremost  
Make up your mind *now* regarding those with whom you're going to associate  
Determine *now* who you're going to be – *well* before the pressure of an unexpected moment, later on

#### **• Learn all you can**

Paul says – *continue in what you have learned*  
Stating that from childhood Timothy was *acquainted with the sacred writings*  
Evidently Timothy learned much as a child, and therefore had something to which to stick, when he was older

One of the reasons there's such a lack of conviction and passion in some people, is a lack of knowledge  
Their understanding of the Bible is shallow at best, and non-existent at worst . . .  
Making them easily swayed by whatever comes along

And the only way to combat that, is to learn all you can, while you can  
To apply yourself, no matter how old you are, to knowing the Scriptures, and knowing yourself in light of them  
B/c the more you do, the more bullets you'll have, to fight the good fight and stick to your guns, when the heat is on

#### **• Solidify your convictions**

14 – *Continue in what you have leaned and have firmly believed*  
That's a conviction – something you firmly believe; which doesn't happen by itself

You have to not only know *what* you believe by learning all you can . . .  
But reinforce it by knowing *why* you believe it

It's like the soldier who literally “sticks to his guns” when the opposition is overwhelming  
Why? B/c his sense of duty and the cause for which he fights, is firmly entrenched in his mind and heart  
He not only knows *what* to do, but *why* he's doing it

And the same is true of you and I in the spiritual battles *we* face  
We will stick to our guns most, when we not only know what we believe, but why we believe it  
And when we reinforce it week-in and week-out; Day-in and day-out

And when we study the Bible to learn all we can, and then re-study it to solidify our convictions

In the next few weeks, we're going to roll out several different kinds of Bible Studies along those lines – some advanced, some foundational

I want to encourage you to get in one that fits you – so that you can learn all you can, and solidify your convictions

It's your only hope of sticking to your guns and making the most of your life

- **Remember everything**

In order to stick to your guns – set your course, learn all you can, solidify your convictions, and remember everything

Notice the tense of the verbs in v14-15 – *But as for you, continue in what you have learned and have firmly believed, knowing from whom you learned it and how from childhood you have been acquainted with the sacred writings*

All past tense

The implication of which is – remember it

B/c you certainly can't continue in what you forget

If you want to make the most of your life – make it a point to remember everything

Including the example and faithfulness of those from whom you learned it

How big is that?

To recall the life of your CM teacher, or youth leader, or SG leader – when you're tempted to give in, or let down, or waste your life?

It's huge; And another good reason to find leaders worth following

B/c in the long run, *their* example in life, goes a long way toward encouraging you, in yours

Toward encouraging you to stick to your guns, and make the most of your life