

Scrapbook of the Sisterhood: the instruction manual

2 Timothy 3 (ESV)

1But understand this, that in the last days there will come times of difficulty. 2For people will be lovers of self, lovers of money, proud, arrogant, abusive, disobedient to their parents, ungrateful, unholy, 3 heartless, unappeasable, slanderous, without self-control, brutal, not loving good, 4treacherous, reckless, swollen with conceit, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God, 5having the appearance of godliness, but denying its power. Avoid such people. 6For among them are those who creep into households and capture weak women, burdened with sins and led astray by various passions, 7always learning and never able to arrive at a knowledge of the truth. 8Just as Jannes and Jambres opposed Moses, so these men also oppose the truth, men corrupted in mind and disqualified regarding the faith. 9But they will not get very far, for their folly will be plain to all, as was that of those two men.

10 You, however, have followed my teaching, my conduct, my aim in life, my faith, my patience, my love, my steadfastness, 11my persecutions and sufferings that happened to me at Antioch, at Iconium, and at Lystra—which persecutions I endured; yet from them all the Lord rescued me. 12Indeed, all who desire to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted, 13while evil people and impostors will go on from bad to worse, deceiving and being deceived. 14But as for you, continue in what you have learned and have firmly believed, knowing from whom you learned it 15and how from childhood you have been acquainted with the sacred writings, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. 16 All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, 17that the man of God may be competent, equipped for every good work.

1. If you were not a Christian and you continually met believers who rarely read the Bible or were largely ignorant of its content, what would you think of Christianity?
2. Re-read Paul's description of "times of difficulty" in vs. 1-9. Practically speaking, what role does Scripture play in such times of difficulty?
3. Jannes and Jambres, in Jewish tradition, were names given to two Egyptian magicians who opposed Moses before Pharaoh (Exodus 7-8). Why would Paul mention them in vs. 6-9? What's the point of comparison?
4. Paul says in vs 15 "the sacred writings, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus." Without using Christian vocabulary, what does it mean to be "wise for salvation through faith in Jesus Christ"? Theologically? Practically?

Reflect

Compare with Psalm 119:97-104