



## North Coast Church Growth Groups 2 Timothy 3:1-17

### Context

- Choose 3-5 words you would use to describe the people of Perth in 2022  
There's no right answer here. We're just looking to get people thinking about the culture around them and sharing thoughts on the times we live in. Use this opportunity to listen to your own groups reflections, thoughts and concerns about our city.

### Observation

- Read 2 Timothy 3:1-17  
If you had to summarise how Paul feels about the people of the last days – what 3 words would you use? (try to put it in your own words if you can)  
The task here is to spend time grappling with verses 1-9. The summarising task is intended to be open-ended (no wrong answers) and really just a way of putting Paul's teaching about the people of the last days into our own words.
- If you had to summarise what kind of person Paul want Timothy to be – what 3 words would you use? (try to put it in your own words if you can)  
The task here is to spend time grappling with verses 10-17. The summarising task is intended to be open-ended (no wrong answers) and really just a way of putting Paul's teaching about his goals for Timothy into our own words.

### Meaning

- What does Paul mean by "the last days"?  
Reading Hebrews 1:1-2 might help to see this expression in the Bible referring to the time of Jesus' first coming (in contrast to the Old Testament era when God spoke through the prophets) You may then need to fill in the information that the Bible thinks we're still in the last days until Jesus returns and closes this phase of history.
- Do you agree with this characterisation of people? Why / Why not?  
You may have to push back on people / ask questions like: is everyone you know like this? How can Paul describe people in such absolute terms etc. Aim to help people test Paul's assertions so that they see how these qualities show up in everyone in different ways.
  - If Paul said these things to you in conversation, what questions would you have? / how might you respond?  
Just a second way to think about the question above or to flush out any questions from your group

- Where 3:1-5 describes people in general, verses 6-9 show how these general attitudes work out in the actions of some in the religious world
  - How does Paul describe these people?  
Write a list from what's in verses 1-5
  - Where does their failure primarily begin?  
It's expressed in their thinking: depraved minds, folly, unable to come to knowledge of the truth. But Paul seems to indicate that the starting point for this failure is in their evil desires and sinful, selfish motivations which drive them to exploit vulnerable people.
- Why do you think Paul shares his experiences in verse 10-12?  
Paul shares his life and experiences as an example to follow – of enduring in following Christ in love and faith in the face of persecutions and trials. This provides a model for Timothy and us.
  - How does this help Timothy?
  - How does this help us?
- Why does wanting to live a godly life lead so certainly to persecution?  
Because we will necessarily stand apart from the surrounding culture with different priorities and desires for our life. This draws
- What do we find out about where Timothy's learning has come from? Why is this important?  
This question picks up the fact that Timothy learned the gospel from people he knew (probably thinking his mother and grandmother from chapter 1, but also Paul himself) – this is important because he learnt not just content but the way of life that goes with the gospel. AND we find out that he learned from the Scriptures, which have their source in God himself (you might want to help your group explore what it means for Scripture to be God-breathed). This is important for him to know they are true and reflect who God himself is and what he wants for us.
- How do the Scriptures help in the task of living a godly life in the context of the last days?  
First and foremost – they make us “wise for salvation” so we know what it means to be saved by Christ and belong to God. This is the starting point for godliness! You may have to ask so extra questions like: what do the Scriptures do?  
You can then help your group unpack how we need the following: “teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness” in order to be “thoroughly equipped for every good work”.

### **Application**

- From this passage, how does God equip us for living in the last days?  
His word and the life and example of others who model that life of perseverance.
  - In what ways do you currently take advantage of this equipping?

This question is an attempt to get people to reflect on the extent to which they are reading the Bible and engaging with the correction and training of God's word (without simply leading people to feel guilty because they don't read the Bible enough!). People might be surprised to see all the ways they are being equipped – on Sundays, at Growth Groups, in personal devotions OR they might realise it's not as much as they need!

- What practical steps could you take to grow in this?

### **Pray**

- Thank God for people from whom you learned the Scriptures who provided a model of love, faith and endurance for you.
- Pray that God would use his word to strengthen our grasp on the salvation we find in Christ and teach, rebuke, correct and train us to live for him.