

2 Timothy 3

Read 2 Timothy 3:1-4: It sounds like the direction for the future is towards unrestrained behavior. Men will disregard their parents, common welfare and civility, and the concept of fairness and justice. They will feel free to take what they want, at the cost of others. It seems that there will be less public control; or fear of the law. Some cities are currently cutting down their police departments; because some citizens have found flaws with some policemen. Isolated abuses will be true for any profession. We only have flawed people to fill the positions. God has set up standards, requiring consequences for dangerous behavior. The answer is not to remove the peace keepers. The crime in New York city went up immediately; after the announcement of a reduced police budget. The clipping below is from this week's newspaper:

It has been nearly a quarter century since New York City experienced as much gun violence in the month of June as it has seen this year.

The city logged 125 shootings in the first three weeks of the month, more than double the number recorded over the same period last year, police data show. Gunmen opened fire during house parties, barbecues and dice games, and carried out coldly calculated street executions.

More than a dozen people have been fatally shot, including a teenager at

A new survey reveals almost three-quarters of Washington, D.C. cops are ready to quit the force, while violent crime is surging in New York City amid growing anti-police sentiment.

Protesters across the country are calling for police departments to be abolished or defunded following the death of George Floyd, sparking violent clashes between cops and demonstrators.

Floyd's death has prompted politicians to pledge that they'll make radical changes to their police departments - a move which has angered many officers.

The Washington, D.C. Council passed an emergency police reform bill last week which expands the training requirements for officers and orders the public naming of cops involved in shootings.

The bill also adds legal protections for people who are searched by police, among a whole host of other changes.

Many D.C. police officers have been left disillusioned by the bill's passing, and feel as if they've been thrown under the bus by lawmakers.

A D.C. police union survey of 600 cops shows that a staggering 71 percent of them are now considering leaving the force, according to **The Washington Examiner**.

There seems to be a pattern for changes in recent years. A special-interest group advocates for different treatment. That turns into political correctness and public acceptance. Then, that new agenda goes beyond what was described; and begins to disassemble long-standing moral principles that are in conflict. Minority interests

have been able to establish hiring quotas. Homosexual advocates have been able to pass domestic partner laws; and forcing the public to accept and pay for the trans-gender agenda. Inner-city interests have turned the blame of patterns of bad behavior back on to those who protect the public. Crime statistics are misinterpreted to protect those who need to be incarcerated.

There seems to be a shift in public opinion. There seems to be a rapid acceptance of various social trends. People are not as able to think for themselves; and weigh the consequences of following the sound bites. Why is that? The Bible tells us that believers are like a well-rooted tree; which is not moved by the winds of public opinion. Conversely, unbelievers are like chaff that blows in every direction that the wind blows.

How blessed is the man who does not walk in the counsel of the wicked, Nor stand in the ^[w]path of sinners, Nor sit in the seat of scoffers! ² But his delight is in the law of the LORD, And in His law he meditates day and night. ³ He will be like a tree firmly planted by ^[w]streams of water, Which yields its fruit in its season And its ^[e]leaf does not wither; And ^[e]in whatever he does, he prospers. ⁴ The wicked are not so, But they are like chaff which the wind drives away. (Psalm 1:1-4)

Today, the whole world speaks in unison; as the winds of public opinion change. These winds can represent demonic influence. It is an unseen power that moves people in the same direction. People do not believe that others are shaping their opinions. Our news media and entertainment are decisively prejudiced, with an agenda. Those who advocate changing public opinion have infiltrated our school districts, children's cartoons, and our governmental social services.

We should not fret. This has happened before, throughout history. We need to pray that God will heal our land; before we lose it.

Read 2 Timothy 3:5-9: Paul describes people who see a value in Christianity; but have other desires which master their impulses. Their affiliation with the church does not control their passions or thought life. They are not in a quiet-time fellowship with God. It is more of a legalistic membership and perceived boundary. To some; the world is divided into *us and them*. All of those outside of our membership boundary are thought to be lost. In reality; it is God's word that cuts through all of that self-delusion...and brings about more intellectual honesty about our fallen state.

It is possible to attend Bible study and church; and still be living in our lusts. Paul described the feeling of being torn between his fallen flesh and his spiritual eyes. Paul wrestled with this internal ugliness, and appetite for sin.

I found that the very commandment that was intended to bring life actually brought death. ¹¹ For sin, seizing the opportunity afforded by the commandment, deceived me, and through the commandment put me to death. ¹² So then, the law is holy, and the commandment is holy, righteous and good. ¹³ Did that which is good, then, become death to me? By no means! Nevertheless, in order that sin might be recognized as sin, it used what is good to bring about my death, so that through the commandment sin might become utterly sinful. ¹⁴ We know that the law is spiritual; but I am unspiritual, sold as a slave to sin. ¹⁵ I do not understand what I do. For what I want to do I do not do, but what I hate I do. ¹⁶ And if I do what I do not want to do, I agree that the law is good. ¹⁷ As it is, it is no longer I myself who do it, but it is sin living in me. ¹⁸ For I know that good itself does not dwell in me, that is, in my sinful nature.^[c] For I have the desire to do what is good, but I cannot carry it out. ¹⁹ For I do not do the good I want to do, but the evil I do not want to do—this I keep on doing. ²⁰ Now if I do what I do not want to do, it is no longer I who do it, but it is sin living in me that does it. ²¹ So I find this law at work: Although I want to do good, evil is right there with me. ²² For in my inner being I delight in God's law; ²³ but I see another law at work in me, waging war against the law of my mind and making me a prisoner of the law of sin at work within me. ²⁴ What a wretched man I am! Who will rescue me from this body that is subject to death? (Romans 7:10-24)

We are all equally likely to be ruled by our passion; except that the Holy Spirit gives us power to get past that. It is not a tug-of-war contest, as much as it is to raise the white flag in personal moral failure; and pursue a deeper relationship with God. We can really only do one thing at a time. Walking towards Jesus is the only thing that can keep us from walking away from Jesus. We have to realize that our moral boundary system by itself is a guarantee of failure. Jesus tells that we can only serve one master.

"No one can serve two masters. Either you will hate the one and love the other, or you will be devoted to the one and despise the other. (Matthew 6:24)

Our two masters (as Christians) are Jesus and the self-will. The self will is subject to a performance standard of good works and non-offense. It is a bridge to nowhere except self-delusion and intellectual dishonesty.

Mark my words! I, Paul, tell you that if you let yourselves be circumcised, Christ will be of no value to you at all. ³ Again I declare to every man who lets himself be circumcised that he is obligated to obey the whole law. ⁴ You who are trying to be justified by the law have been alienated from Christ; you have fallen away from grace. (Galatians 5:2-4)

Our spiritual fellowship with God displaces our time feeding our lusts.

So I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh. ¹⁷ For the flesh desires what is contrary to the Spirit, and the Spirit what is contrary to the flesh. They are in conflict with each other, so that you are not to do whatever^[c] you want. ¹⁸ But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law. ¹⁹ The acts of the flesh are obvious: sexual immorality, impurity and debauchery; ²⁰ idolatry and witchcraft; hatred, discord, jealousy, fits of rage, selfish ambition, dissensions, factions ²¹ and envy; drunkenness, orgies, and the like. I warn you, as I did before, that those who live like this will not inherit the kingdom of God. ²² But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, ²³ gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law. ²⁴ Those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. ²⁵ Since we live by the Spirit, let us keep in step with the Spirit. ²⁶ Let us not become conceited, provoking and envying each other.
(Galatians 5:16-26)

Read 2 Timothy 3:10-17: Paul is pleased that Timothy has been a good student of the LORD. Timothy has kept to scriptural truths. He has also structured his life around becoming a platform for the gospel. He has led a quiet and dedicated life. He, like Paul, has experienced setbacks and personal losses for the cause. Paul reflected on how many hardships that he has experienced. God had delivered him from all of them.

Timothy would find that he will have less in common with the people of the world. Mankind has been walking away from God. The ungodly are becoming worse; and false teachers are getting worse. Timothy has been on the right track, largely due to his faithful grandmother and mother. They taught him the scriptures. Paul reassures Timothy that the Bible is a valuable tool to: discern the truth, to correct messed up situations, and to train up disciples of Christ.