

2 Timothy 3:10

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

But thou hast fully known my doctrine, manner of life, purpose, faith, longsuffering, charity, patience,

Analysis

But thou hast fully known my doctrine, manner of life, purpose, faith, longsuffering, charity, patience. Paul contrasts Timothy's knowledge of his teaching and life with false teachers' error. "But thou" (sy de, σὺ δέ) creates sharp contrast—"you, however." "Hast fully known" (parēkolouthēsas, παρηκολούθησας) means followed closely, traced accurately, understood fully—from para (alongside) and akolouthéō (follow). Timothy didn't merely hear Paul's teaching but observed his entire life pattern.

Paul lists nine areas Timothy observed. First, "my doctrine" (mou tē didaskalia, μου τῇ διδασκαλίᾳ)—Paul's teaching, the apostolic gospel. Second, "manner of life" (agōgē, ἀγωγῇ)—conduct, behavior, lifestyle. Third, "purpose" (prothēsei, προθέσει)—resolve, intention, life aim. Fourth, "faith" (pistei, πίστει)—faithfulness, trust in God. Fifth, "longsuffering" (makrothymia, μακροθυμίᾳ)—patience under provocation. Sixth, "charity" (agapē, ἀγάπῃ)—self-sacrificial love. Seventh, "patience" (hypomonē, ὑπομονῇ)—endurance, perseverance under trials.

This comprehensive list demonstrates that authentic Christianity requires consistency between teaching and living. False teachers' corruption was exposed by their immoral lives (vv. 2-5); Paul's authenticity was validated by observable godly character. Ministers must not merely teach truth but embody it. Their lives either commend or contradict their message. Timothy had fifteen years of observing Paul, providing ample evidence of genuineness.

Historical Context

Ancient philosophical schools emphasized teachers' character as much as doctrine. Students lived with teachers, observing daily life, not just hearing lectures. Hypocritical teachers who taught virtue while living viciously were exposed and ridiculed. Paul appeals to this expectation: Timothy observed Paul's life intimately during years of missionary partnership. Unlike false teachers who infiltrated sneakily (v. 6), Paul lived openly, inviting scrutiny. His suffering, far from discrediting his gospel, validated it—he practiced what he preached, enduring hardship without compromise.

Related Passages

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

Study Questions

1. How closely does your life align with your profession—would close observation validate or contradict your Christian claims?
2. Who are the godly mentors whose lives and teaching you've 'fully known' and can imitate with confidence?
3. In what areas—doctrine, conduct, purpose, faith, patience, love, endurance—do you need growth to better reflect Christ and commend the gospel?

Interlinear Text

Σὺ δὲ παρηκολούθηκάς μου τῇ διδασκαλίᾳ τῇ
thou But hast fully known my G3588 doctrine G3588
G4771 G1161 G3877 G3450 G1319 G3588

ἀγωγῆ τῇ προθέσει τῇ πίστει τῇ μακροθυμίᾳ τῇ
manner of life G3588 purpose G3588 faith G3588 longsuffering G3588
G72 G4286 G4102 G3115

ἀγάπη τῇ ὑπομονῇ
charity G3588 patience G5281

Additional Cross-References

1 Timothy 6:11 (Faith): But thou, O man of God, flee these things; and follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness.

Titus 2:7 (Parallel theme): In all things shewing thyself a pattern of good works: in doctrine shewing uncorruptness, gravity, sincerity,

1 Timothy 4:6 (Faith): If thou put the brethren in remembrance of these things, thou shalt be a good minister of Jesus Christ, nourished up in the words of faith and of good doctrine, whereunto thou hast attained.

Philippians 2:22 (Parallel theme): But ye know the proof of him, that, as a son with the father, he hath served with me in the gospel.

Hebrews 13:9 (Parallel theme): Be not carried about with divers and strange doctrines. For it is a good thing that the heart be established with grace; not with meats, which have not profited them that have been occupied therein.

Acts 11:23 (Parallel theme): Who, when he came, and had seen the grace of God, was glad, and exhorted them all, that with purpose of heart they would cleave unto the Lord.