



# TALKINGPOINTS WALKINGPOINTS



**Talk** together about the glory of God's kingdom. —Psalm 145:11  
Love the Lord your God and **walk** in all his ways. —Joshua 22:5

## Questions for Reflection and Discussion

- Open your Bible to **Second Timothy 3**. Let's get an overview of life during the "last days / end times". According to v. 1, the last days will be "**difficult**", and v. 2-5 give us **twenty reasons why!** List all twenty characteristics of people during that period (v. "For men will be..."). Which of those characteristics have you already seen in action? Give examples.

Notice the multifaceted contrasts between the wicked (v. 2-9, 13) and the righteous (10-12, 14-17). From v. 10-12, 14-17, devise a game plan for following God during "difficult times".

Notice the central role the Bible plays in our ability to "continue in the things we have learned" (v. 14-17). Now flip to **First Timothy 4:1**. Have you heard of any Christians who've "fallen away from the faith"? **To what** did they pay attention (v. 1)? What will keep **you** from falling away from the faith?

- Now review Peter's **four commands** for life during these "difficult last days" (see **Sermon Summary**). How could you envision these pragmatic actions helping you "stay true to the faith" in difficult times? (Consider how being the **giver** of these actions could help you. Consider how **receiving** them would help.)
- **How** does having **one goal—God's glory—motivate** our obedience and steadfastness?

Now, let's trace the chain of motivation back one more link: Read 2 Corinthians 5:14-15. How does a profound appreciation for the love and sacrifice of Christ motivate our obedience?

What are you doing on a daily basis in order to enhance your love and appreciation of Christ?

*Need help honoring God in these "last days"?*  
Let a biblical counselor help you!  
[counseling@tcc.org](mailto:counseling@tcc.org)

## Application-Challenge

In these "end times", Christians must...

- Use good judgment and stay focused so that we can pray effectively
- Stay fervent in our love for one another
- Be hospitable to one another
- Use our gifts and talents to serve one another
- Be energized by one goal: that God be glorified



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# Sermon Summary      Key Text: 1 Peter 4:7-11

Jesus (Matthew 16:21-26 & 24:3-8), Paul (1 Timothy 4:1-6) and Peter (1 Peter 4:7-11; 2 Peter 3) all voiced practical concerns regarding how to behave in difficulties we will encounter in “the end times”. During times of suffering, persecution and growing immorality, Christians should look forward to Jesus' return, when he judges the world in righteousness. Peter—a very practical person—when he addressed the realities of living in the end times, becomes very pragmatic, simple, and direct. He gives **four commands** to obey and **one goal** to pursue.

**[1] In “the end times”, Christians must use good judgment and stay calm and focused so that we can pray effectively.** Peter tells us to be of “sound judgment and sober spirit for the purpose of prayer” (v. 7). “Sound judgment” means thinking about and evaluating situations maturely and correctly, remaining calm, cool and collected under pressure. Being “sober in spirit” describes someone who is mentally alert and watchful, living in light of Jesus second coming. Prayer is our greatest asset because it is through prayer that we join our weakness to God's strength, and our ignorance to God's wisdom. On the night he was betrayed, Jesus' prayers strengthened him to face the cross, while Peter's lack of prayer led up to his famous denials (Matthew 26:40-43). Are you using good judgment in light of the knowledge that Jesus could return any day (Luke 12:35-40)? Are you on the alert and watchful, alert to Satan's ploys and your need for spiritual armor each day?

**[2] In “the end times”, Christians must stay fervent in our love for one another** (v. 8). “Fervent” is an athletic term, used of athletes straining to reach the finish line or to clear the bar. The end times require that we “stretch our love to the limit for one another in the body of Christ”, anticipating others' needs and making sacrifices to meet them (John 13:35). Nothing is more destructive to our witness than strife among Christians. On the cross, Jesus said: “Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.”—and we are called to be like Christ (Galatians 6:10, Mark 11:25-26).

**[3] In “the end times”, Christians must be hospitable to one another** (v. 8). Fervent love finds practical expression in hospitality. Hospitality is a Christian duty, and we must not be selective. Hospitality does not ask, “Do I know you well?” or “Do I like you?” It asks, “How can I love you, serve you, minister to you?” And we are to offer hospitality without complaint or grumbling. There is always a cost attached to hospitality. Someone else is in your space, eating your food, taking up your time. Notice the word “your”! When we think of ourselves as owners rather than as stewards, we can become selfish and resentful. When you think of it as your house, your food, your chair, your time, you are not thinking biblically. We are owners of nothing, stewards of everything. It's God's house, food, and time—not yours, so such grumbling is ultimately a complaint against God! He's the one who commands us to be hospitable. God wants us to love and care for one another, so he blessed you with that extra bedroom, that extra car.

**[4] In “the end times”, Christians must use our gifts and talents to serve one another** (v. 10-11). God has entrusted every Christian with at least one spiritual gift; there are speaking gifts and serving gifts—and both are important to maturity and proper functioning of the church. For example, not everyone is gifted as a teacher, and that's fine. God has gifted you to do other things: to show mercy, or to organize things and help them run efficiently, or given you the ability to make money and to love to bless others through it. To learn more about spiritual gifts, study these passages: Romans 12:6-8; 1 Corinthians 12:8-11 & 12:28-30; Ephesians 4:11 and of course, 1 Peter 4:10-11. Peter says: “Whatever gift God has given you—use it to serve others. And make sure you don't serve in your own strength, but by the strength which God supplies.” (v. 11b) And for those of us with speaking gifts, Peter warns: “Don't share your own opinions. Speak the utterances of God. Say what God says!” (v. 11a).

All four of these commands are energized by **one goal: that God be glorified** (v. 11c). How many church conflicts could be resolved, how many egos would be put in place, if God's glory, not our own, were our goal?! When we make it our goal to glorify God, we're comfortable leaving the results of our prayer-bathed daily decisions in his hands. We're quicker to grant forgiveness to those who have hurt us, to show hospitality to others, and to use our spiritual gifts. And, understanding that “the end of all things is at hand” (v. 7), that Jesus is coming and he is going to make all things right, makes Peter's four commands “easy and light” (Matthew 11:30).

## Talking To Others About This Week's Message

If a neighbor or friend at work asked you, “*What kind of stuff do they talk about at your church?*”, how would you summarize the most important elements of this week's sermon and the key lessons you intend to apply to your life? Can you explain it in **plain language** anyone could understand?

## Digging Deeper in Your Daily Quiet Time

**"Five Question Bible Study"** (see page below) is a simple way to study any passage.  
Let's use it to learn more about living in "the end times"...

**Monday**— Luke 21:34-36

**Tuesday**— Matthew 24:44-51

**Wednesday**— Matthew 25:1-12

**Thursday**— Matthew 25:13-30

**Friday**— 2 Peter 3:3-18

**Saturday**— ***In preparation for worshipping your risen Lord tomorrow with your church family,*** study 1 Peter 4:12-19.

*Need blank copies for doing more*

**"Five Question Bible Study"?**

e-mail: [Dan.Clement.TCC@gmail.com](mailto:Dan.Clement.TCC@gmail.com)

Bible Text: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_



What idea particularly strikes me from this text? [Note in which verse(s) it is found.]



What question does this text raise in my mind—and how would **this text** answer it?



What about Jesus Christ—his character and/or his redemption—relates to this text?



What action must I take as a result of this text? Be concrete and specific.



With whom will I share what I learned from this text? [and what was their response?]