

PAUL'S SWAN SONG

God-Breathed Truth

2 Timothy 3:14–17



LET'S BEGIN HERE

No one enters a race hoping to come in second. Runners run to win. And though it's important how runners start and maintain their pace, the real difference in the outcome depends on the amount of “kick” each runner has on the last lap. What's true on the track is true in life—the goal is to finish well. If it wasn't, Paul wouldn't have told the Corinthians: “Run in such a way that you may win” (1 Corinthians 9:24). Paul ran to win (2 Timothy 4:7–8). And he wanted the same for Timothy—for him to finish well. But how? Second Timothy 3:14–17 provides the answer.



LET'S DIG DEEPER

1. Continue in What You Have Learned (2 Timothy 3:14)

It's been said that life isn't a sprint; it's a marathon. According to Paul, life is like the 4 x 400-meter relay in the Olympics. If we run each leg well, we'll finish well. The first leg is *knowing the truth*.

2. Become Convinced of What You Know (2 Timothy 3:15)

Knowing the truth gets us out of the starting blocks. But we only hit our stride when we become convinced that the truth is more than mere facts. That's the second leg: *being convinced that the truth is “sacred.”*



Quotable

*When we
place value
each day on
what God has
revealed in
the Bible, we
are well on
our way to
finishing well.*

— Charles R. Swindoll



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3. Place Value on What God Has Revealed (2 Timothy 3:16)

With the race in full stride, it's time to quicken the pace. It's not enough to know truth or be convinced of truth's sacredness. In the third leg, we must also *believe that the sacred truth is the Word of God and treasure it*.

4. Allow Truth to Change Your Life (2 Timothy 3:17)

It's the last lap, and the finish line is in sight. We need one more “kick” as we lunge toward the tape and accomplish our goal of finishing well. The final leg is *applying the sacred truth of God's Word*.



LET'S LIVE IT

Timothy finished well (Hebrews 13:23). And he did so as a man of God who was first and foremost a man of the Word of God. This is a lesson to take to heart. For we can only finish well if we too take seriously our commitment to Scripture—to *know it, believe it, treasure it, and live it*.

How would you describe the spiritual environment of the home you grew up in?



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Regardless of your childhood environment, what do you know and believe about Scripture today?

Lives have been changed just from reading Scripture. How has the simple Word of God affected your life?

What needs or difficulties are you facing today? Look at the concordance in your Bible (or online) for key words, and jot down passages that speak to those needs. During the next week, meditate and memorize some of these passages, and write down what God is teaching you.



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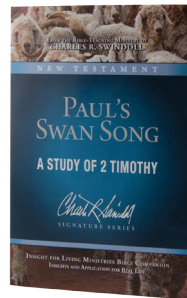
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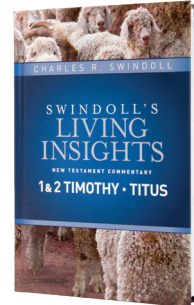
Tools for Digging Deeper



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