

# PAUL'S SWAN SONG

## Making a Lasting Difference

2 Timothy 3:10–14



### LET'S BEGIN HERE

One person can make a lasting difference. Moses led the obstinate Israelites to freedom from Egypt's yoke. Martin Luther nailed his 95 Theses to the Wittenberg door and catalyzed the Protestant Reformation. Rosa Parks refused to be treated as anything other than a child of God, as she sat in a Montgomery bus and started a two-year bus boycott.

One person's conduct, passion, and determination blazed a fire of change, and his or her actions impact our present.

We can be tempted to think that lasting differences can only be accomplished by a few famous people. Not so. Every day, we also have opportunities to make lasting differences in the lives of those around us—our parents, siblings, and friends; our spouses and children; our peers at school and at work. We may not recognize this because pain and loss are integrated into our everyday experiences. Consider John the Baptist as he languished in a cell, or the apostle Paul as he wrote Timothy from prison.

As Chuck Swindoll says in his message: "You may feel your life is [in vain]. What you don't know is the lives who are watching you, who are being changed by your example."



### HELPFUL HINTS

- Reading different Bible versions can help you to read the same passage with fresh perspective. If you don't have different versions handy, there are plenty of Web sites that can help you, such as BibleGateway.com.
- Remember: *Observation* is a critical beginning technique you will want to use to put together the pieces of a passage of Scripture. Paying particular attention to 2 Timothy 3:10–14, make some initial observations about what you see—for instance, *are there any repeated words? Did Paul use any connecting words that offer clues into what he was emphasizing?* Write down your observations and discoveries.

## Quotable

*To make a lasting difference be ready for whatever may occur, regardless of how dark everything appears.*

*To make a lasting difference we must hold to the truth, stand on our convictions, and refuse to be fearful.*

— Charles R. Swindoll





## YOUR TURN IN THE SCRIPTURES

Using 2 Timothy 3:10–14, apply the primary approaches to studying the Scriptures—*observation*, *interpretation*, *correlation*, and *application*. Take some time first, however, to read any material you find in your commentaries, Bible dictionaries, and online tools that covers this section of 2 Timothy 3. *Pray* for the Holy Spirit's guidance. As you go, jot notes in the margins of your Bible or on a separate sheet of paper.

### **Observation: What Do You See?**

Use the space below to record your findings as you look closely at 2 Timothy 3:10–14. Remember: Look for repeated words, commands, questions, emphatic statements, and images or figures of speech. Your notes can be specific and detailed as you examine the passage.

### **Interpretation: What Does It Mean?**

In 2 Timothy 3:11, Paul mentioned three locations where he had endured persecution during his first missionary journey. Read the following passages, and jot down what happened to Paul in each city.

Antioch (Acts 13:50)

Iconium (Acts 14:5–6)



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Lystra (Acts 14:19)

Second Corinthians 11:25 is a “resumé” of Paul’s suffering. What else did he endure for the sake of the gospel?

How do these passages shape your definition of persecution?

### ***Correlation: How Does It Compare?***

Read the following passages, and write a note or two on how they help confirm the concept of suffering in 2 Timothy 3:10–14.

Matthew 5:10–11

Matthew 24:9



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John 15:18–20

Acts 14:21–22

Romans 12:14

Philippians 1:29

1 Thessalonians 3:2–3



### Application: What Difference Does It Make?

Despite external opposition . . . despite discomfort . . . despite a culture rife with deceptive theology and lascivious practice, Paul urged Timothy to persevere. Paul challenged Timothy to make a difference where he lived, in Ephesus—a city filled with every conceivable falsehood. Paul's letter was, however, inspired by God and preserved for us. We, too, can be encouraged to make a lasting difference by holding fast to the truth, standing strong on our convictions, and refusing to be fearful.



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What convictions do you want to pass on? List them here:



**A FINAL PRAYER**

*Lord, help us to pursue the values and disciplines that will propel us toward making a lasting difference in the lives of others. Let us pursue this, not for selfish gain but for Your glory. Amen.*



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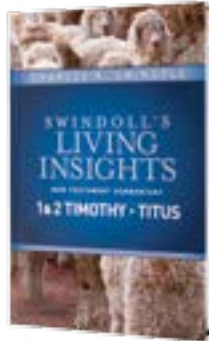
STUDY



### Tools for Digging Deeper



**Paul's Swan Song:**  
A Study of 2 Timothy  
by Charles R. Swindoll and  
Insight for Living Ministries  
CD series



**Swindoll's Living Insights**  
New Testament Commentary  
*Insights on*  
*1 & 2 Timothy, Titus*  
by Charles R. Swindoll  
hardcover book



**Paul: A Man of Grace  
and Grit**  
by Charles R. Swindoll  
softcover book

For these and related resources, visit [www.insightworld.org/store](http://www.insightworld.org/store)  
or call USA 1-800-772-8888 • AUSTRALIA +61 3 9762 6613 • CANADA 1-800-663-7639 • UK +44 1306 640156

For the 2017 broadcast, this *Searching the Scriptures* study was developed by the Pastoral Ministries Department in collaboration with Mark Tobey, based upon the original outlines, charts, and sermon transcripts of Charles R. Swindoll's messages.



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