

There may be trouble ahead! (vs.1-2)

- Warning for Timothy
 - same warning applies for all of us
 - the Christian life isn't always simple or straightforward
 - there is opposition that is at its heart spiritual
 - and that opposition will come to us through people - often those within the church
 - when he says "abandon the faith" he is **both** talking about those who explicitly walk away from faith, **and** those who retain the veneer but whose faith is not rooted in faith in Jesus Christ and in his sacrifice on our behalf, as revealed by the Scriptures...

Twist, Twist and Twist, Inc (vs.3)

- *Talk about Steve Turner poems, and this collection about the Devil in particular, then read poem...*

Twist, Twist & Twist Inc.

Tobacco builds your muscle
Candy will help you grow thin
Coffee improves relationships
Glucose makes sure that you win

Lipstick will get you a lover
Clean hair is better than brains
Cola can unite the nations
Money can soothe away pain

Truth is whatever you make it
The fires of hell don't exist
The world will go on for ever
I'm not the real King of Twist.

- (From "The King of Twist" by Steve Turner, Hodder & Stoughton, 1992)

Truth tells (vs.4-7)

- Paul's response - and both his example and advice to Timothy - is to tell the truth:
 - rooted in the Word of God (**Scripture**) and in relationship with God (**prayer**)
 - (either without the other will go wrong!!)
- And there is value also in avoidance of people and situations and topics that distract away from living a godly life
 - in recent Christian history end-times controversies were such an issue
 - its harder to be sure with more current stuff...
 - things like disagreements over how exactly the Holy Spirit ministers and works, and the manifestations of that might be one - its important, but if we harp on about it, define ourselves in terms of which side of the debate we might feel comfortable, and reject or hold general suspicions about people who differ from us...

Keep fit (vs.8)

- We all know exercise is a good thing - even in its absence in our own lives!
 - but what is training in godliness?
- One aspect of physical training is the discipline of choosing to impose the right course of action (exercise) when the message our bodies are sending us is to stop (or not start!)
 - and its that aspect of discipline, of making conscious choices that build up over

time into patterns of living

- choices to read the Bible each day
 - choices to pray
 - choices to avoid places where a particular temptation ensnares us
 - choices to give away money or resources
 - choices to offer hospitality, perhaps even if we are not feeling like it
- Not because those things win us favour with God, but because we choose to align our lives with his rhythms and priorities:
 - and like physical exercise, which ultimately makes us feel better and able to perform better
 - so also spiritual discipline will ultimately help us draw close to God, and deal with sins and issues that keep us at a distance from him
 - its a tool, not the only one, but a helpful one...
 - eg "[Celebration of Discipline](#)" by Richard Foster

Foundations (vs.9-10)

- Foundations are rooted in grace relationship with God through Jesus, our Saviour

So lead!! (vs.11-16)

- Paul's call to Timothy in response to all of that is that he [step up](#), that he lead
 - get stuck in, don't settle for second best, for mediocre, for acceptable, for good enough!
 - God didn't give a second best sacrifice for you...
 - and his call is for us to live all out lives of service in response to his grace!
 - in particular that seeks the spiritual growth of both self and those we engage with
 - not merely self