

Subject: *Living in the Last Days*

Scripture: *2 Timothy 3:1-13*

We are living in the last days and according to the Bible we have been living in the last days since Jesus came to earth the first time. ***Hebrews 1:1-2*** ¹ *God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets,* ² *Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds.* ***1 Peter 1:20*** *Who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you.* Biblically speaking, the last days is a time period that begins with Christ first coming to earth and ends with His second coming.

1 Timothy 4:1 *Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils.* We are living in the last days and “the latter times” refers to the last of the last days. The Bible said those days would come, it describes what those days would be like, and we are now living in them.

The Bible describes the last days as a time of apostasy and moral decay, persecution, and a time when people resist the truth, discard it, and replace it with something else to their liking. This is a picture of our times. What can we expect to see in the last days and how can we survive in these days?

GOD’S DESCRIPTION OF THE LAST DAYS

1. Serious dangers in the last days

We are not only living in difficult days, we are living in dangerous days. The word “perilous” means dangerous. It is the same word used in Mt. 8:28 to describe two demon-possessed men (“exceeding fierce”).

2. Selfish desires in the last days

lovers of their own selves – People often ask, “What’s in it for me?” Love of self is the basic sin out of which all others flow. Whenever a person makes himself the center of his world, true love for God and love for others is impossible. The world says to put self on the throne, but God’s Word says put Christ on the throne.

covetous – means “lovers of silver, money.” Remember that Timothy was serving as a pastor in Ephesus, one of the wealthiest cities of that time. It was the hub of business and the trade routes from East to West. Ephesus was called “the treasure house of the ancient world.” Jesus asked, “What shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul?”

boasters – People love to brag about what they have and what they do. One ancient writer said this word applied to people who pretend that they are richer than they are or braver than they are, and to those who promise to do what they cannot do. Socrates said that they were to be found in every walk of life but were worst of all in politics.

proud – They are arrogant, proud of their accomplishments, and even proud of their sins; some American cities now celebrate a gay pride week. ***James 4:6*** *But he giveth more grace. Wherefore he saith, God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble.*

without natural affection – speaks of callous indifference. It is natural for a husband to love his wife and a wife to love her husband, for parents to love their children and children to love their parents, for citizens to love their country. We hear of so many crimes against family members. This describes the awful sin of abortion.

trucebreakers – people who break promises

false accusers – slanderers; this comes from the Greek, *diabolos*, a name for Satan. In a sense it is worse to slander someone than to steal their money. Stolen money can be replaced, but not stolen character.

incontinent – without self-control

lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God – Paul mentions those who love self, love money, and now who love pleasure. The world has gone mad over entertainment and amusement. People love to have a good time more than to serve God.

We know that all these sins of the last days are merely the evidence of men's evil hearts. **Mark 7:21-22** ²¹ *For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders,* ²² *Thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness:*

3. Sinful defiance in the last days

Look at the words that describe this defiant attitude: “blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy... fierce. What a sad but accurate picture of our day.

blasphemers – This word carries the idea of someone who love an insult, someone who has a contempt for God and man.

fierce – savage, untamed, uncontrollable

We have a craving for violence that is evident in all forms of entertainment (movies, video games). You can tell a lot about people by what it takes to entertain them.

despisers of those that are good – describes people who think Christians are the problem, like wicked King Ahab who said to Elijah, “Are you the one who troubles Israel?” (1 Kg. 18:17). The last days are described in **Psalms 2:1-3** ¹ *Why do the heathen rage, and the people imagine a vain thing?* ² *The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the LORD, and against his anointed, saying,* ³ *Let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us.*

Paul refers to Jannes and Jambres and how they resisted Moses (vs. 8). These were evidently the names of two of Pharaoh's magicians in Egypt who resisted the obvious truth that God was at work and was speaking through His servant Moses. They not only resisted Moses but helped to harden Pharaoh's heart against God's will to set Israel free. Such resistance to God's truth and God's power is arrogant and foolish. Just as Jannes, Jambres, and the magicians were exposed as fakes and frauds, sooner or later God will expose foolish rebels for who they are.

4. Spiritual deception in the last days

The word “form” refers to outward appearance. Like the scribes of Bible times, many will give the outward appearance of religion, even Christianity. They are only concerned with external appearance. This would include some churches and some colleges and seminaries. Outwardly they appear to be Christian and that makes them all the more dangerous.

Millions of people are deceived by false religion. The world is full of religion. There are more different religions today than ever before. People love religion and the devil loves religion. Religion can't change a person's heart and it only provides a false cure. It's like putting a band-aid on cancer. It has a “form of godliness, but denies the power thereof.”

Many are deceived by thinking that more information is the answer (vs. 7). We are living in the information age. We are like the pilot of a jet plane who told his crew: “The good news is we're making good time. The bad news is our navigation equipment is not working and we're lost.” We are more interested in speed than direction. We have more books, more schools, more opportunities for learning than ever before, but knowledge and information have not solved our problems. And it's only going to get worse. More people will deceive and more will be deceived. This is not a pretty picture, but it is an accurate picture.

GOD'S PRESCRIPTION FOR THE LAST DAYS

We feel like the psalmist who asked in **Psalms 11:3** *If the foundations be destroyed, what can the righteous do?*

The last days are dangerous days, defiant days, deceptive days, and dark days, but we have the light of God's Word. We still have “the faith” (vs. 8), the foundational truths of the Christian faith that are revealed in God's Word. The world is getting darker, but God's Word is still a lamp unto our feet and a light unto our path (Ps. 119:105).