

Dangerous Times are Coming (2)

Text: 2 Timothy 3:5-9

Introduction:

1. This chapter: Paul warns Timothy of the coming apostasy of the last days (Vs.1-9), cites his own example as a contrast to the apostates (Vs. 10-13) and then exhorts him to live a life distinct from the apostates in conformity to the Scriptures (Vs. 14-17).
2. Outline of Vs. 1-9
 - I. The Certainty of Perilous Times (Vs. 1)
 - II. The Depravity of Perilous Times (Vs. 2-4)
 - III. The Religiosity of Perilous Times (Vs. 5)
 - IV. The Immorality of Perilous Times (Vs. 6)
 - V. The Illiteracy of Perilous Times (Vs. 7)
 - VI. The Obstinacy of Perilous Times (Vs. 8-9)
3. This lesson: We will cover the last four of the above 6 points.

I. The Religiosity of Perilous Times (Vs. 5)

A. Their Outward Appearance of Godliness (Vs. 5a)

1. 'form' = the outward form or appearance. It appears genuine on the surface but is superficial and fake.
2. 'godliness' = reverence and respect for God
3. Note: What an accurate portrayal of the modern church which is virtually indistinguishable from the world apart from its label. It has the same appearance, sound, lifestyle and message with some Christian trappings.

B. Their Inward Absence of Godliness (Vs. 5b)

1. 'denying' = they refuse the transforming power of the truth
2. 'power' = the true spiritual power connected with genuine holiness. Likely a reference to the transforming power of the Gospel (Rom. 1:16)

C. Our Required Avoidance of these Apostates (Vs. 5c)

1. "from such" = the men who fit the preceding description
2. "turn away" = an deliberate and active separation. Present tense indicates habitual action. Timothy must continually turn himself away from people like this.
3. Rom. 16:17 *"Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause division and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them."*
4. Note: 21st century Evangelical Christianity broadly speaking, largely ignores the doctrine of separation.

II. The Immorality of Perilous Times (Vs. 6)

A. Their Deceitful Approach (Vs. 6a)

1. 'creep' = lit. to put on, to clothe with a garment, to hide in. They are sly and subtle in their activities. Their actions indicate stealth and secretiveness (Hiebert).
 - a. Word used in Jude 1:4 "crept in unawares" What creeping creeps!
 - b. Deception a trademark of false teachers. In this, they resemble their master, Satan. 2 Cor. 11:13-15 *"For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, **transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ.** And no marvel, for **Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light.** Therefore, it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as ministers of righteousness; whose end shall be according to their works."*
2. "into houses" = subversion to falsehood often takes place in homes

B. Their Defiled Activity (Vs. 6b)

1. "lead captive" = to take captive at spear point, to make a prisoner of war, to capture
2. "silly women" = simple minded and naïve. Expression of contempt in ancient world. Lit. "little women"
 - a. False teachers often target women. Many cults started by women (e.g. SDAs, Christian science).
 - b. Many women at the forefront of modern charismatic confusion (e.g. Joyce Meyer).
 - c. Women, due to their tendency to be trusting, can be more prone to being deceived (1 Tim. 2:14).
3. "laden with sins" = corrupt, immoral women. Note: If you are a woman of loose morality, you are not accomplished and sophisticated like the world would have you believe. You are foolish, ignorant and simple minded.
4. "diverse lusts" = many-colored, various, many different kinds. Immorality rampant within professing Christendom. If not outright condoned, it is often overlooked or dealt with lightly.
5. Illustration: Adultery and marriage breakdown rampant within the field of Contemporary Christian Music (CCM): E.g. Sandy Patty, Deniece Williams, Sheila Walsh, John Talbot, Randy Stonehill, Larry Norman, Tom Howard, Kevin Prosch, Ralph Carmichael, Steve Archer, Amy Grant, Stacy Jones, Melody Green etc... (David Cloud)
6. Perverted morals and perverted beliefs are natural companions.

III. The Illiteracy of Perilous Times (Vs. 7)

A. Always Learning (Vs. 7a)

1. They are eager to acquire new knowledge and are open to being taught “new ideas”. They are open to every wind of doctrine. Note 4:3-4 and the multiplication of teachers
2. Today’s digital culture similar to the Athenians of Paul’s day – “(For all the Athenians and strangers which were there spent their time in nothing else, but either to tell, or to hear some new thing.)”
3. Note: We live in the age of information and education and yet we there is such appalling and widespread ignorance of the most fundamental and basic truths.
4. Note: While growth as a Christian is a continual process that doesn’t end until we go home to glory, there are some fundamental things we know!
 - a. The truth of the Person of Jesus Christ (John 14:6)
 - b. The truth of the Word of God (John 17:17)
 - c. The truth of salvation (1 John 5:13)

B. Never Understanding (Vs. 7b)

1. “never able” = they never come to a settled position. We live in the age where everything is subject for review, everything is questioned and it is said there are no absolutes.
2. “knowledge of the truth” = an experiential knowledge of salvation. “Not just an intellectual understanding of the truth but a heart submission and appropriation of the same, resulting in salvation.” (Wuest)

IV. The Obstinacy of Perilous Times (Vs. 8-9)

A. The Symbols of their Resistance (Vs. 8a)

1. “Jannes and Jambres” = Believed to be the chief Egyptian magicians who opposed Moses in Pharaoh’s court (e.g. Ex. 7:10-13; 8:7, 18-19). Not mentioned by name in Exodus account but names familiar in Jewish tradition. Paul is here lead by the Holy Spirit to validate this fact.
2. “withstood Moses” = reveals the motive of the Egyptian magicians. They sought through their sorceries to disprove the truth as presented by Moses.
3. “so do these also” = Paul draws a connection between the opposition of the Egyptian magicians and the end time apostates
4. “resist the truth” = ‘withstood’ and ‘resist’ come from the same root word. It means “to set oneself against, oppose & withstand.”
 - a. We are living in a day when there is fierce opposition to the truth, not just from the world but from much of professing Christendom.

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- b. Note the warning of chapter 4:3-4 *“For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; And they shall **turn away their ears from the truth**, and shall be turned into fables.”*

B. The Source of their Resistance (Vs. 8b)

1. “corrupt minds” = lit. “having been corrupted in the mind”. The perfect tense indicates a permanent state of depravity. The passive voice indicates that they have submitted to this corrupting process. Points to the destructive work of sin, Satan and error in their lives.
2. “reprobate” = rejected after testing. Word used for the testing of metals.
3. “concerning the faith” – they have been tested in regards to “the faith” and like a counterfeit coin have been found wanting, hence they must be discarded as worthless. (Hiebert)

C. The Stupidity of their Resistance (Vs. 9)

1. “proceed no further” = to promote, further, forward. They will not enjoy unbroken success in their evil works. God will stop them!
2. ‘folly’ = madness, foolishness
3. ‘manifest’ = their deceit will eventually be exposed. Evil eventually outwits itself.
4. “as theirs also was” = just like the Egyptian magicians were proven no match for the Almighty power of God and were exposed for what they were, so also those who in our day resist the truth.

Conclusion:

1. Are you walking in the power of genuine holiness or are you living a double life?
2. What is your attitude to the truth? Are you a receiver or an opposer of sound doctrine?