



WEEK 4



**2 TIMOTHY  
CHAPTER 3**

## THE DANGERS OF THE LAST DAYS

<sup>1</sup>You should know this, Timothy, that in the last days there will be very difficult times. <sup>2</sup>For people will love only themselves and their money. They will be boastful and proud, scoffing at God, disobedient to their parents, and ungrateful. They will consider nothing sacred. <sup>3</sup>They will be unloving and unforgiving; they will slander others and have no self-control. They will be cruel and hate what is good. <sup>4</sup>They will betray their friends, be reckless, be puffed up with pride, and love pleasure rather than God. <sup>5</sup>They will act religious, but they will reject the power that could make them godly. Stay away from people like that!

<sup>6</sup>They are the kind who work their way into people's homes and win the confidence of vulnerable women who are burdened with the guilt of sin and controlled by various desires. <sup>7</sup>(Such women are forever following new teachings, but they are never able to understand the truth.) <sup>8</sup>These teachers oppose the truth just as Jannes and Jambres opposed Moses. They have depraved minds and a counterfeit faith. <sup>9</sup>But they won't get away with this for long. Someday everyone will recognize what fools they are, just as with Jannes and Jambres.

## PAUL'S CHARGE TO TIMOTHY

<sup>10</sup>But you, Timothy, certainly know what I teach, and how I live, and what my purpose in life is. You know my faith, my patience, my love, and my endurance. <sup>11</sup>You know how much persecution and suffering I have endured. You know all about how I was persecuted in Antioch, Iconium, and Lystra—but the Lord rescued me from all of it. <sup>12</sup>Yes, and everyone who wants to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution. <sup>13</sup>But evil people and impostors will flourish. They will deceive others and will themselves be deceived.

<sup>14</sup>But you must remain faithful to the things you have been taught. You know they are true, for you know you can trust those who taught you. <sup>15</sup>You have been taught the holy Scriptures from childhood, and they have given you the wisdom to receive the salvation that comes by trusting in Christ Jesus. <sup>16</sup>All Scripture is inspired by God and is useful to teach us what is true and to make us realize what is wrong in our lives. It corrects us when we are wrong and teaches us to do what is right. <sup>17</sup>God uses it to prepare and equip his people to do every good work.

# DAY 1 - MONDAY ██████████

## DISRUPTION

2 TIMOTHY 3:1-5, 2 PETER 3:9, EPHESIANS 5:11, 1 CORINTHIANS 15:33, 1 PETER 3:8-18

Evil affects all of us. At our worst and weakest times, it leads us to submit and give in to sin. At the best of times, it leads to a consistent daily battleground to stay away from sinful living and live in righteousness. When Paul writes of the difficulties to come, he is writing of the natural response evil has towards its defeat, which is to make a mess. When Christ was crucified, he defeated evil's hold on our souls and eternity. He has won, and He is victorious, but as Christ waits patiently to allow His people to have the chance to receive His grace and salvation, evil is trying to burn the town down.

Evil is working to disrupt and deconstruct our lives by leading us to hearts full of pride, disobedience, and unforgiveness or, at the very least, by making life difficult for us by surrounding us with people that give in to these things. Paul gives Timothy the only advice he can of what to do with this work of evil, and these people that give in and embrace it, "stay away."

### REFLECTION

Why do you think Paul says to simply stay away from evil and not to try and fight it?

What practical steps can you take to avoid evil today?

The trick of evil is that it can be deceptive and try to hide within our actions and words. Evil tries to justify itself to us as coping, venting, or just living freely, but ultimately evil is a liar and deceiver. End this time today by reflecting on how you have found evil trying to work into your life. Evaluate your thoughts, words, and actions today to see how evil may affect you, and finally, take steps to remove its destruction from you by praying for help and beginning to take action to stay away.

# DAY 2 - TUESDAY ██████████

## WICKEDNESS

2 TIMOTHY 3:1-9, EXODUS 7:11 AND 22

"Some of the people he's describing (Paul) are active in propagating their own views. One of the ways they do this is by preying on the vulnerable. I've seen it happen; I've watched people with particular agendas, and a strong belief in the rightness of their cause, approach people who can't say no to them and persuade them to go to a meeting with them, to listen to their ideas, to join their club. There are many people - the ones Paul seems to have known were women, but many men come into this category too - whose moral or immoral past and whose muddled present makes them easy targets for such predators...

So who were "Jannes and Jambres", and when did they oppose Moses? According to ancient Jewish legend, these were the two principal magicians of Egypt referred to in Exodus 7.11 and 7.22. When Moses was performing the God-given signs to convince Pharaoh to let the Israelites go from their slavery, the Egyptian magicians did their best to copy the signs so that Pharaoh wouldn't take Moses seriously. Paul's point is that when the liberating, healing gospel is going forwards in power, there will always be people who oppose it by whatever means and tricks they can. His words of comfort ('they won't get very far') are meant to give us hope; in Exodus 7.12, when the magicians turned their staves into snakes as Moses had done, Moses' own serpent ate theirs up. We have to pray and watch for the equivalents in today's church and world. But this hope shouldn't lull us into thinking that there won't be problems to face. We shall need all the good advice of the whole chapter and letter if we are to stay calm and unafraid in the face of the wickedness of the 'last days'."

-N.T Wright

### REFLECTION

There's something important to be studied in this passage. Paul describes these people who prey on others that are weaker, more desperate, and more easily swayed to try and get them to believe what they want. It's vital for us, as Christians, to ask ourselves: do I do this? Am I like this when sharing my faith with family, friends, and co-workers? Take time today to reflect and seek guidance on these more difficult questions.

Paul talks about these people who prey on the weak as having a "counterfeit faith" What do you think he means by that? How can we be sure we do not have a counterfeit faith?

-How can we share our faith with people in an honest but not manipulative way?

# DAY 3 - WEDNESDAY ██████████

## SOMEONE WITH FAITH

2 TIMOTHY 3:10-13, JAMES 2:14-26

### REFLECTION

Paul told Timothy he could trust him because he had proven his faith and motives for sharing that faith through his actions. Paul lived out his faith in patience, love, and endurance. Take a moment and think about someone you know or admire for their faith. Reflect or journal the specific qualities that stand out to you about them that make their expression of faith unique.

Why do you think faith, when it is genuine, comes out in our actions?

How does faith build and develop our character?



# DAY 4 - THURSDAY ████████████████████

## GOD'S WORD

2 TIMOTHY 3:16-17, HEBREWS 4:12, MATTHEW 4:4

Paul has repeatedly pointed to the positive influences in Timothy's life in this letter. At the beginning of chapter one, he talked to Timothy about his mother and grandmother raising and influencing him in the faith. Paul has spoken of his work in Timothy too, but in 2 Timothy 3:16-17, Paul points to the most significant influence on Timothy's life and ministry work, scripture.

The importance of 2 Timothy 3:16-17 cannot be overstated. Paul's words in verse 16 summarize the entire reason for our dependence upon the Bible. He refers to scripture as our guide and means of knowing what truth is, what God desires for us, and to help us see and understand the wrong in our world. The world is a great mystery; the Bible is our guide and instruction manual for navigating it.

Just as Paul pointed to scripture as Timothy's way to continue to walk in faith, we need to be pointed this way too. This is why, as a church, we put money, time, and resources towards making this Grace in the Word Study happen each Fall and Spring semester. We need God's word like oxygen, and God's Word is like oxygen to our souls. Without it, we grow weak in our faith. Without it, we lose sight of where we're meant to go; without it, we fall out of fellowship with God. Don't lose sight of the necessity and gift that is God's Word for our lives.

### REFLECTION

What kind of relationship have you had with the Bible? Has it felt like a chore you had to do as a child? Does it feel like something you must do to gain favor from God? Has it been a source of knowledge and wisdom? Has it been a means of finding joy?

Our approach to God's Word is just as important as the words written within it. If we view His Word as an encyclopedia, that's all we'll get from it; if we view it as a chore, that's what it will be. But if we view it as God's breath of life into our souls, we will find a new life in it and through it. Reflect/journal how you can begin to approach reading God's Word differently in order to experience Him more fully in your life.

# DAY 5 - FRIDAY ██████████

## COMMUNION IN THE WORD

2 TIMOTHY 3:16-17, 2 TIMOTHY 3

### REFLECTION

Yesterday we looked at the last part of the third chapter of Paul's second letter to Timothy. We looked at and reflected on the importance of God's Word for our lives. The motive of this study is to help us better understand this book of the bible but also to help us establish a rhythm of regular communion in our Bibles. Today, in reflection on the importance of Paul's words to Timothy about scripture, reread 2 Timothy 3. As you read through it, consider highlighting parts that stand out to you and then journal here or in a notebook why that stands out to you. Finally, reflect on what you found about God in this chapter and how that can bring new life to your faith in Him.

