



Introduction to 2 Timothy 3:1-9

Sunday, June 9, 2019
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“It was the best of times, it was the worst of times...” So begins Charles Dickens’ masterpiece ‘A Tale of Two Cities’. Dickens goes on to describe a society that is torn in two. Both good and evil exist side by side. Paul and Timothy also lived in a society with such extremes. Paul needs to remind the timid Timothy of the real dangers the church faces in the Last Days (this being a term that connotes the time from Christ’s Resurrection to His Return). In the Last Days people’s love will be turned away from God and people and onto themselves and things. People will give into hedonism and misguided passions. Moreover, these are religious people. Not only will the world give into sinful passions, but they will use the broad umbrella of religion to hide their sin. Outwardly they will have to form of godliness, but inwardly they will rob it of its power. Fortunately, Paul comforts Timothy as well. Sin will not have the last word. Evil is self-contradicting and self-defeating. We also are to stand against evil in true Godliness. When we love God and people we can overcome the sin of the world and will ultimately commune with Him.

Context

In this section Paul has warned Timothy about the harsh reality of the world. The world is lost and trending away from God. Paul follows this up with an exhortation to study scripture. In a world opposed to God the only solid source of truth is to be found in the Word of God. Paul will also reiterate his charge to Timothy, that he needs to remain a minister of the Word and devoted to the Gospel. Given the sinfulness of the world it is especially important that Timothy is true to his charge. If he is unwilling to preach the Gospel the world will bury it under a mountain of falsehood.

Read and Reflect *(Use this section to write down any thoughts you had on the sermon. Make sure to note any questions you had about something in the passage or in the sermon.)*

“Best of Times, Worst of Times”

Read 2 Timothy 3:1-9

2 Timothy 3:1

- But mark this:

These will be terrible times in the last days.

Realism: need a dose of

- Terrible Times... they are here!
- Terrible Teachers... they are working!

Optimism: need a dose of

- Corruption... they will fail!
- Contrast... you be different!

Love God more than anything else

Discuss

- 1) Are you in need of a dose of realism or a dose of optimism?
Put another way, does your faith lead you to be overly cheerful about the state of the world or overly sorrowful?
- 2) What are some ways your Christian convictions lead you to stand in contrast to the world?
- 3) In what ways do you have the outward appearance of religion, but lack the inward power of true godliness?
- 4) What do you love? How does that love influence the way you act? Do you love other things above God? How does that distort your Christian walk?