

Final Thoughts

2 Timothy 3:1-9

Shoulders back, adjust expectations

'Difficult times will come'

vs. 1

'realize' - CONTINUALLY adjust outlook

'in the last days' – time between Jesus' DEATH and His RETURN

'difficult times' – grievous, PERILOUS, trying

Because *'people will be...'*

vs. 2-7

DETERIORATING in personal character

vs. 2-4

SHROUDED in religion

vs. 5

HARMFUL in personal conduct

vs. 6-7

But victory is ASSURED

vs. 8-9

The story of JANNES and JAMBRES

JESUS assured us of His victory

Matthew 16:18

Aaron's snake reveals that TRUTH wins

2 Timothy 3:8-9 "Just as Jannes and Jambres opposed Moses, so these men also oppose the truth, men of depraved mind, rejected in regard to the faith. But they will not make further progress; for their folly will be obvious to all, just as Jannes's and Jambres's folly was also."

DISCOVER (Read 2 Timothy 3:1-9)

1. What is the relationship between knowledge, experience, wisdom and truth?
2. How can someone always be learning but never come to the knowledge of the truth? Have you ever been guilty of this? What is the solution to the problem?
3. In v. 1, Paul mentions the "last days." What days is he referring to? Why would it be helpful to think of the last days correctly?
4. In v. 4, we see that people will be "lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God." Are we supposed to choose between pleasure and God? Is there pleasure in loving God? How so?

EXPLORE

1. Read Exodus 7:8-13. It's quite likely these sorcerers were the Jannes and Jambres Paul mentions in the above passage. What was the folly of these two? Explain how this drama before Pharaoh is an illustration of a widespread, active rejection of the truth in the last days. (See 2 Peter 3:3-4)
2. In what ways are Timothy's opponents like the ancient adversaries of Moses and Aaron? How might this comparison have encouraged Timothy? How does it encourage us?
3. Read 2 Timothy 3:5 and 2 John 1:9-11. Why do you think the admonitions are so strong (to avoid, to not receive, to not greet) these certain kinds of people? If we see them on the street or in the grocery store, should we turn away from them? How can we reconcile this teaching with 2 Timothy 2:24-25?
4. Describe the problem Paul is addressing in vv. 6-8. What are some of the ways this problem might manifest itself today? What are some of the ways a person might know they are being taken advantage of in this way?

EXPERIENCE

1. In these last days, many followers of Christ who have spiritually matured over many years through a Church community may have noticed an impulsive shift in some church members to (non-biblical) moral codes and a resulting personal character change. Are these "charlatan Christians"? Explain.
2. Read vv. 2-4. Have you witnessed any of these tendencies within the church? How can you make sure that you are not ensnared and inadvertently follow along with such people? Have you observed people that held on to the guise of holiness but yet denied its power? What are the benchmarks of these attitudes?
3. Have you been tempted to project a form of godliness, yet deny its power? Why? How can a right appreciation and application of the gospel protect you and others from this?
4. What kinds of false teachings do you see today? One way the folly of a false teacher might be aired-out is when they must be disciplined. Describe what this difficult process might look like.

PRAY

Pray... Have each group member silently re-read vv. 2-4 and spend a moment quietly going over this list with God, asking Him to show you why you struggle with any of them. Agree with Him and confess to Him, then ask Him for help in overcoming the specific area(s).

Apply... take time to reflect on someone you know who is struggling and wavering in their hold of the gospel. Pray that they would see the power of God working in their lives.