

Series: Add To Your Faith

LAST DAYS

2 PETER 3:3 & 2 TIM 3

Text:

Introduction:

Nearly 2,000 years ago, the Apostle John penned the following prayer, when Jesus promised to return quickly, "Even so, come, Lord Jesus.", Rev. 22:20. John thought he was living in the last days.

Paul expected that he would be alive when the Lord would return to this world.

Note:

1 Thessalonians 4:13-17

*¹³ But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope. ¹⁴ For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him. ¹⁵ For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that **we which are alive and remain** unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep. ¹⁶ For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: ¹⁷ Then **we which are alive***

and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.

Twice in that passage Paul uses the phrase, "we which are alive and remain."

He too believed that he was living in the last day.

Peter, in 2 Peter 3:12, tells us that he is "looking" for that day himself.

2 Peter 3:12

¹² *Looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat?*

Peter believed that he was living in the last days!

No one knows for certain when the Lord Jesus will return to the earth.

Matthew 24:36

³⁶ *But of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels of heaven, but my Father only.*

But what we do know for certain is that we are 2000 years closer today than they were when these words were penned.

While we cannot, with pinpoint accuracy, tell when the Lord will return to this world, we are told what the last days will be like. These verses give us the clearest portrait of all when it comes to accurately portraying the spiritual and social climate of the last days.

Note:

2 Timothy 3:1-5

¹ This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. ² For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, ³ Without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, ⁴ Traitors, heady, highminded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God; ⁵ Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away.

Are We Living In The Last Days?

Let's examine these scriptures for the answer.

Notice:

1. THE CLIMATE OF THE LAST DAYS (v. 1)

2 Timothy 3:1

¹ *This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come.*

The last days are described as perilous times.

Note these days are:

A. Dangerous Days

I think it is safe to say that we can describe our own times as "perilous". What we are seeing all around us is a society on the brink of collapse! This is proven by the 18 characteristics of the last days presented by Paul in verses 2-4. You see, we are living in an age when it is dangerous for men to live for God. Those who practice righteousness are called intolerant, bigoted, narrow-minded, and anti-social and are labeled dangerous.

While those who practice deviant, sinful lifestyles are praised and labeled heroes by society. These are indeed very dangerous days!

Just this week there have been some

Louisiana authorities say an 8-year-old boy intentionally shot and killed a 90-year-old woman who

was his caregiver after watching a video game with violent themes. Fox News August 24th 2013

Police in Spokane have arrested one of two teens suspected of fatally beating Delbert Belton, who was found by police with serious head injuries and died in the hospital Thursday.

Police contend that two 16-year-old boys approached Delbert Belton in his car at random Wednesday night. The other suspect remained at large early Saturday. Fox News August 24th 2013

Prosecutors on Tuesday charged two teenagers accused of gunning down an Australian student in Oklahoma for the “fun of it” with first-degree murder, and a third teen with being an accessory. Fox News August 21st 2013

Since January 1st 2013 there have been 271 homicides. That is more than one a day.

The list could go on and on but these illustrations should serve to remind us that we are living in dangerous days.

These days are:

B. Determined Days

It seems that more and more are determined to live more and more wickedly.

Note not only “The Climate of the Last Days” but also:

2. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE LAST DAYS (2 TIM 3:2-5)

2 Timothy 3:2-5

² For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, ³ Without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, ⁴ Traitors, heady, highminded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God; ⁵ Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away.

A. Their Deeds

- Lovers of self - selfish, intent on one's own interest

Remember:

Philippians 2:3

³ *Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves.*

Notice all the rest of these characteristics result from being a lover of self.

- Covetous – love of money

Hebrews 13:5

⁵ *Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have: for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.*

1 Timothy 6:10

¹⁰ *For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows.*

1 John 2:15

¹⁵ *Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him.*

God's plan is that we worship God, love other people and use things. When our priorities become skewed, we start to worship ourselves, ignore God, love things and use other people.

- Boasters – empty pretenders
- Proud – An over estimate of one’s value or worth

Proverbs 16:18

¹⁸ *Pride goeth before destruction, and an haughty spirit before a fall.*

1 Corinthians 15:10

¹⁰ *But by the grace of God I am what I am: and his grace which was bestowed upon me was not in vain; but I laboured more abundantly than they all: yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me.*

John 15:5

⁵ *I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing.*

- Blasphemers – Defiant toward God

These individuals speak evil of God, His children and His work.

- Disobedient to parents

Remember:

Ephesians 6:1-3

¹ *Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is*

right. ² Honour thy father and mother; (which is the first commandment with promise;) ³ That it may be well with thee, and thou mayest live long on the earth.

- Unthankful – No sense of gratitude

1 Thessalonians 5:18

¹⁸ In every thing give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you.

Colossians 3:15

¹⁵ And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which also ye are called in one body; and be ye thankful.

- Unholy - Wicked; profane
- Without Natural Affection
- Truce breakers - Failure to keep promises
- False Accusers – Slanderers
- Incontinent - Without self-control

1 Corinthians 6:12

¹² All things are lawful unto me, but all things are not expedient: all things are lawful for me, but I will not be brought under the power of any.

- Fierce - Untamed, savage, brutal
- Despisers of those that are good
- Traitors - People who express no loyalty but to themselves
- Heady
- High minded - Those who are puffed up with their own self importance
- Lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God

Note not only their deeds but also:

B. Their Deception

2 Timothy 3:5

⁵ *Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away.*

The last days will not only be characterized by wickedness and evil, but also that of religious people! We are seeing this trend in our society.

While morality continues to decline, 94% of Americans claim to believe in God. Over 70% claim that they have had a "born again" experience.

There is gluttony of churches in our society. One doesn't have to travel very far to find a church that embraces any doctrinal slant you want to believe.

We are running over with religion in America!

C. Their Denial

2 Timothy 3:5

⁵ Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away.

The last days will be characterized by people who want the security of a relationship with God, but who refuse to have Him rule their lives.

They want a god of their own creation and blatantly reject the cross and its life changing message!

What is the bottom line?

The world will be filled up with people who are religious but lost.

There will be an increase in powerless, Christ-less religion.

Religion that cannot save, cannot change and cannot satisfy.

We are in those days right now!

Note not on the Climate and Characteristics of the last days but lastly:

3. THE COUNSEL FOR THE LAST DAYS

We are to:

A. Remember

God's timing is not measured in hours

2 Peter 3:8-9

⁸ But, beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. ⁹ The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.

B. Remove

2 Timothy 3:5

⁵ Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away.

You see, we are supposed to be very selective with whom we associate as individuals and as a church!

There comes a time when, because of sin and wickedness, we must cut ties and walk apart from evil!

The word "turn" in verse 5 means "to shun and to avoid."

That sounds harsh, but it is the path to power! It's hard to think about, but it is biblical! If we refuse, we will forfeit the power and presence of God!

C. Regard

2 Peter 3:12-14

¹² Looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat? ¹³ Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness. ¹⁴ Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent that ye may be found of him in peace, without spot, and blameless.

Close:

Are we in the last days?

All the signs seem to indicate that we are. If that is the case, then what do we need to do?