

Avoid Such Men As These

In 2 Timothy you can see what Paul was up against, and why he was so emphatic with Timothy. He saw the handwriting on the wall — what was coming and creeping in. He said, “Evil men and impostors will grow worse and worse...” They were bad then, but they were going to get worse. That was prophecy.

¹⁰You, however, have followed my teaching, my conduct, my aim in life, my faith, my patience, my love, my steadfastness, ¹¹my persecutions and sufferings that happened to me at Antioch, at Iconium, and at Lystra; which persecutions I endured; yet from them all the Lord rescued me. ¹²Indeed, all who desire to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted, ¹³while evil men and impostors will go on from bad to worse, deceiving and being deceived. ¹⁴But as for you, continue in what you have learned and have firmly believed, knowing from whom you learned it. (2 Tim 3:10-14)

So we see that this is true. Paul saw the rising up of false believers or false brethren. They were coming in over the wall. They are contrasted here with the teaching and conduct of Paul. He also wrote to the Corinthians about people coming and preaching a different Yahshua than the one He preached (2 Cor 11:4). Then it goes on to talk about people who are actually servants of Satan (verses 13-15). They transformed themselves into ministers of righteousness. This is talking about the false prophets who came into the Edah.

You can see that this element that crept in wrecked the testimony of the true Church. In 2 Tim 3:1 Paul said, “But know this, that in the last days perilous times will come!” Imagine that, he said, “Know this!” That’s emphatic. He said, “...these days will come.”

¹But know this, that in the last days perilous times will come: ²For men will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, ³unloving, unforgiving, slanderers, without self-control, brutal, despisers of good, ⁴traitors, headstrong, haughty, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God, ⁵having a form of godliness but denying its power. And from such people turn away! ⁶For of this sort are those who creep into households and make captives of gullible women loaded down with sins, led away by various lusts, ⁷always

learning and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth. ⁸Now as Jannes and Jambres resisted Moses, so do these also resist the truth: men of corrupt minds, disapproved concerning the faith; ⁹but they will progress no further, for their folly will be manifest to all, as theirs also was. (2 Tim 3:1-9)

Has this come true yet? The prophecy in verses 1 through 8 has come to pass, but it awaits verse 9. Has this come about? It says their folly will be plain to all. So who is going to make it plain? We are.

²⁹For I know this, that after my departure savage wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock. ³⁰Also from among yourselves men will rise up, speaking perverse things, to draw away the disciples after themselves. ³¹Therefore watch, and remember that for three years I did not cease to warn everyone night and day with tears. (Acts 20:29-31)

You have to have the right emphasis there: “Among your *selves* men will rise up...” He was talking to the leaders that were right there at the meeting with him. It’s not *what* you say, but *how* you say it. Can you imagine what he was saying right there from the Holy Spirit? He saw it coming.

So 2 Tim 3:9 hasn’t happened yet. But then Revelation 17 is pretty obvious in what it says about the two women and about what happens to the harlot in verses 16-18. 2 Tim 3:9 is going to be fulfilled there. It’s going to be revealed.

In 2 Tim 3:5 it says, “A *form* of godliness...” It doesn’t say, “*the* form,” but “*a* form.” They professed godliness, but they denied the power. What does it mean by that? They didn’t have the power to live together in community. They denied the power to live the life it speaks of in Acts 2:42-45 and Acts 4:32-37. It takes power to live together in unity and love — laying down your life for one another, forbearing and praying for one another, thinking the best of one another. And when you see a brother is faltering, you go to him. It takes power to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

Jn 13:34-35 is a litmus test. “All men will *know* you’re my disciples...” That’s pretty definitive there. That’s far from *a* form of godliness. It is *the* form. It has to be the light of the world. Our life is the light. Our Master’s life was the light (Jn 1:4), and His

life in us is the light of the world. It has to come about. It's prophecy. We have to be that light of the world. Isa 49:6 says that the twelve tribes will be the light that goes through the world. That's not talking about the next age. It takes twelve tribes being raised up in this age for the gospel of the Kingdom to be witnessed.

In 1 Timothy, Timothy was commanded to oppose and silence the false teachers. The second letter to Timothy predicts the ruin of the Church. That's why our Master said there has to be a restoration of all things. He also said the Kingdom was going to be taken away from them and given to a nation producing the fruit of it. But then He prophesied through the infinite foreknowledge of our Father that they would fall. Night was coming — the ruin of the Church.

Timothy was commanded to turn away from *such* (2 Tim 3:5). Avoid such men as these. What does that mean?

Hakam — It says turn away because there is a path that they're in. They're learning how to apply the words of the Bible to civilian life. And that's what we have to turn away from. Those who are true and are part of the restoration are going to realize that there really is a war. They're going to be able to sense where the Commander is. They're going to join His army. They're going to be very serious soldiers.

Yahshua is waiting until we put all of His enemies under His feet. That's the war. All these things that Paul talks about here crept in and destroyed the Church. They didn't listen to the authority and didn't become good soldiers. They didn't pay attention to those things. All manner of evil came in and destroyed the Church. The people that are raised up in the last days are going to understand that there is a war going on.

Shipwrecked

...having faith and a good conscience, which some having rejected, concerning the faith have suffered shipwreck. (1 Tim 1:19)

There's the word *shipwrecked*, what does that mean? It means the ship took off, but it went off course and didn't reach the safe harbor on the other side. It's so

wonderful that we have the scriptures and we can see what happened. Christians don't see it. They have blinders. They can't see. They're held under the power of the evil one.

Therefore I exhort first of all that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks be made for all men. (1 Tim 2:1)

That means we're supposed to pray so that what happened to the First Church won't happen to us. "Now make sure that this is what you do: stand every morning and every evening and pray, make supplication, entreaties, intercessions, give thanks." This gives us understanding of how we're going to make it. We won't make it if we don't pray. Pray means something more than just things coming out of your mouth.

Therefore I want the men in every place to pray, lifting up holy hands, without wrath and dissension. (1 Tim 2:8)

We gather every morning and evening and lift up holy hands without wrath or dissension between us, only peace and unity and love.

...from which some, having strayed, have turned aside to idle talk. (1 Tim 1:6)

Strayed from what? Paul's instruction (verse 5).

¹²Let no one despise you for your youth, but set the believers an example in speech, in conduct, in love, in faith, in purity. ¹³Until I come, devote yourself to the public reading of Scripture, to exhortation, to teaching. ¹⁴Do not neglect the gift you have, which was given you by prophecy when the council of elders laid their hands on you. ¹⁵Practice these things, devote yourself to them, so that all may see your progress. ¹⁶Keep a close watch on yourself and on the teaching. Persist in this, for by so doing you will save both yourself and your hearers. (1 Tim 4:12-16)

That was Paul's exhortation to Timothy. We can be shipwrecked. But glory is inner worth that demands the respect of others. It's not just what you say, but how you say it. In Acts 20:28-30, Paul was talking to the elders. They met him in that place. They didn't have to travel very far. He said, "Even from among your *own selves*, brothers." It's like our Master talking about Judas who was even among the twelve. We need to keep watch on our selves, because the power of the evil one is tremendous. That's what destroyed the First Church — Judases among them.