



The Last Days

Paul has just warned Timothy about false teaching and false teachers in 2 Timothy 2:14-26. Timothy might be tempted to think that dealing with these things are just temporary. However, in our passage today, Paul “wants to emphasize that opposition to the truth is not a passing situation, but a permanent characteristic of the age.”¹

We are still in the same age as Timothy. There are certain characteristics to our age today that has been the same for the past 2000 years. It should not surprise us since God told us about it through Paul in 2 Timothy. We recognise and know that Jesus Christ has decisively defeated the power of sin and the hold of death over us. He “has destroyed death and has brought life and immortality to light through the Gospel.” (2 Tim. 1:10). But that doesn’t mean smooth sailing in our Christian life and ministry today. How then should we live? What mindset should we have?

Launch

- 1) How would you describe our current day and age? What would you say characterises our day and age?

THE LAST DAYS

Read 2 Timothy 3:1-9.

- 2) How does Paul describe the last days? (v1)
 - a. When do the “last days” begin? (cf. Acts 2:17, Heb 1:1-2, 2 Pet. 3:3)
- 3) List out all the characteristics of the people in these last days. (v2-4)
 - a. How would you summarise these characteristics?

¹ John Stott, *The Message of 2 Timothy: Guard The Gospel*, New Ed edition. (IVP, 1999), 82.



- 4) What do you think having “form of godliness but denying its power” looks like?
 - a. What does Paul ask Timothy to do with these people?

- 5) What do these people do? (v6)
 - a. What are the main characteristics of the people who fall prey to such people?

- 6) How else does Paul describe these false teachers? (v8-9)

- 7) What kind of mindset do you think Paul is asking Timothy to have in this age?

- 8) How can we avoid being deceived by false teachers?

Conclusion

The last days is the time between the resurrection and the return of Christ. Christ has begun to fulfill all the great promises of God. However, these promises are not completed yet, and we live in an age that is still characterised by sin. Paul describes this time as “terrible” and lists out all the self-centred tendencies of people. People will love themselves, money, power, and pleasure. At first glance, it seems like Paul might be describing people outside of the church. It comes as a surprise then that Paul says these people have “a form of godliness but denying its power.” He was referring to people within the church. They would have a form of godliness, and through this they are able to worm their way into the homes and hearts of those who are vulnerable and gullible.

However, at the heart of their “godliness”, they deny the true power of godliness found in Christ himself. These teachers “oppose the truth” with “depraved minds”. We are to “have nothing to do with such people.” Paul will go on to contrast these teachers with his own example of his life and doctrine (cf. 2 Tim. 4:10-11). We are not to have a complacent mindset in our Christian walk as we live in the last days. We are not to be surprised if we encounter sinful people within the church. This is why we are called to keep reminding God’s people of the Gospel message of Christ (cf. 2 Tim 2:14). Paul will go on to further press home and encourage Timothy on this point in Chapter 4.