**ENDURE. . . TILL THE END**

**2 TIMOTHY 3**

Paul, in his last will and testament, is going to shed light on the condition which our culture will be living out in the days leading up to the second coming of Jesus Christ. You will notice many of these actions and attitudes are happening now in these last days, but it will become even more intense and apparent.

**Read 2 Timothy 3:1-17**

**OBSERVATION** – Asks the question: What do you see or what does the passage say? (Don’t read into it.) What do you see in the passage that stands out to you? Look for key words, phrases, comparisons, contrasts. You are seeking to answer the questions – Who? What? Where? When? How? and Why?

Notice all the different characteristics Paul gives us, about what our culture will look like just prior to the coming of Jesus. And as we survey this, one can’t help but think or verbalize we must be getting close to the return of Christ because these things are knocking at the door. He says in the last days, perilous times will come. This word perilous means reckless and dangerous.

**Conditions of the Culture in the “Last Days”**

* **Lovers of themselves:** People will become self-absorbed, self-centered, narcissistic.
* **Lovers of money:** They put money before their conscious, friendship, family, even God.
* **Proud, arrogant, abusive:** They no longer need or believe in God. They will speak out against God and have an irreverence for holy things.
* **Disobedient to parents:** Listen as it gets closer to the Lords return there will be more and more disrespect for authority. We have been seeing the intensity of this all over the place. If a child or teenager was disobedient to their parents in the Old Testament it was a capital offense (Deuteronomy. 21:18-21). They would be stoned to death if they were disobedient to their parents. If we had this law, today, we would not see too many teenagers sassing their parents. I say we bring this back!! Just for a day.
* **Ungrateful, Unholy, Without love**
* **Unforgiving:** Folks will grow bitter and resentful toward others. Imagine a world where everyone carries a grudge. That’s where we’re headed.
* **Slanderous:** Social media has made this possible, where people can tweet or post just about anything slanderous and get away with it. And people believe it.
* **Without self-control**, **brutal:** Did you know every 22 seconds in America someone is beaten, or stabbed, or shot? Today we live in a violent society.
* **Not lovers of the good, treacherous, reckless, swollen with conceit:** Someone who betrays or is a traitor, for the sake of selfishness or material gain. There was a day in America when a man’s word was his bond, but no longer. Everyone looks for loopholes. Contracts are renegotiated. Handshakes mean nothing these days.
* **Lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God**
* **Having a form of godliness but denying its power:** A religious appearance but no heart, no relationship with Jesus. People will have an interest in spiritual things, but they literally are rejecting God’s power. Self-promoting religion. It is very superficial. They may have head knowledge of God but no heart relationship with God, because to know Him is to be transformed by the power of Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit. Listen as we get closer to the return of Christ, we need to be very wise and discerning, because there’s going to be a lot of people who give God talk but their heart is far from Him.

So, if we could sum up the culture prior to Christ return it could be described as this:

**It will be a self-absorbed generation that loves self, money, and**

**pleasure rather than God, appearing spiritual and being “religious,”**

**but denying the true power of God.**

**Two things that stand out from this list as the coming of the Lord draws closer.**

1. **There will be a distortion of Love.**

I don’t know if you saw it when you were working your way through this list, but 5 out of the 19 deal with the distortion of love. Matthew 24:12 tells us, because of the increase of wickedness, the love of most will grow cold. It’s going to be a loveless society.

1. **A denial of truth**

(Look up 2 Timothy 3:7-8; 4:3-4)

We live in a world that believes there is no such thing as absolute truth. The standard of what truth is today has been twisted and is obscured. Isaiah the prophet said, Woe to those who call evil good, and good evil. Friends, we are living in that time.

As believers of the church of Jesus Christ our biggest challenge is to stop being tolerant of every little thing that is popping up today, but to promote the truth regardless the consequences, and embrace the Word of truth!

**Time Out! How do we remain anchored in truth and discerning in a culture that opposes these things?**

**Time Out! How do we stand firm in our faith and unmoved by the shifting sands of society that are trending from bad to worse the closer we get to the second coming of Christ?**

**The answer is right there in 3:13-17.**

*“. . .while evildoers and impostors will go from bad to worse, deceiving and being deceived. But as for you, continue in what you have learned and have become convinced of, because you know those from whom you learned it, and how from infancy you have known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus.*

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*“. . .so that the servant of God may be* ***thoroughly equipped for every good work****.”*

What does this phrase mean to you?

Paul is saying to Timothy, “The Word of God has been handed down to you through your mother Eunice and grandmother Lois. It is the Word of God that will keep you centered. Let the Word of God dwell in you richly.”

The Word gets you where you need to be

Keeps you where you need to stay

And calls you back when you tend to stray.

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**INTERPRETATION –**What does the passage mean?What’s the author’s main intent or purpose in sharing this truth?

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**APPLICATION –** Asks the question: How can I put this into practice? How can I apply this to my marriage, family, church, spiritual life, workplace, etc.

What can the church do corporately to turn our culture toward God rather than turning away from God?



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