

God's

A Verse By Verse Study of First & Second Timothy

Church Manual

Second Timothy Chapter Three

A LIST OF CHURCH MEMBERS IN THE AGE OF APOSTASY

At the beginning of chapter three God gives us a list of people who will be members of churches during what He calls “*perilous* (hard to do) *times*.”

Verses 1-7 - “*This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, Without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, Traitors, heady, highminded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God; Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away. For of this sort are they which creep into houses, and lead captive silly women laden with sins, led away with divers lusts, Ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth.*”

THE CONTEXT

The focus of First and Second Timothy is not on evangelizing the lost. That is a very important subject; however, it is not the subject of these two epistles. Paul is giving instructions to the pastor concerning how he must “...*know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth.*” (First Timothy 3:15)

APOSTASY IN THE LOCAL CHURCH

The context has nothing to do with the wicked people of the world; it has to do with how the wickedness of the world has become acceptable in what we like to call fundamental

Baptist churches. It is speaking of those who sit in our churches every week faking their spirituality with a “*form of godliness.*”

It speaks of standard-keeping, fundamental Christians, pastors included, who look good while we are “...*denying the power thereof,*” and opposing the power of God in allowing Him to change our lives.

We know this is speaking of professing Christians within the local church because Paul said, “...from such turn away.” If he was speaking about people in the world, we would not be able to witness to anyone. He also said these people would be “*Ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth.*”

“THE KNOWLEDGE OF THE TRUTH”

The phrase, “...*the knowledge of the truth,*” is found three times in the Bible and **always refers to Christians.** First Timothy 2:4 refers to people being saved and coming to “...*the knowledge of the truth.*” Hebrews 10:26 says, “*For if we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth.*” Second Timothy 3:7 speaks of professed Christians who are “*Ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth.*”

There has never been a time when it was not a “*hard to do*” time, as far as reaching the world with the Gospel is concerned. It was difficult to reach the world in Noah's day when “...*the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of*





the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.” (Genesis 6:5)

It was difficult 2000 years ago when the local church age began. They “...had trial of cruel mockings and scourgings, yea, moreover of bonds and imprisonment:

They were stoned, they were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain with the sword: they wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins; being destitute, afflicted, tormented; Of whom the world was not worthy:) they wandered in deserts, and in mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth.” It has always been hard to do times when it comes to evangelizing the lost.



First and Second Timothy does not deal with evangelism it deals with issues in the local churches. It deals with how the pastor is to, know “...how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth.” (First Timothy 3:15)

It deals with our Laodicean fundamentalism when pastors refuse to preach the whole counsel of God because they are more interested in having a crowd listen to them on Sunday.

PERILOUS TIMES IN OUR CHURCHES

As many as 95% of the people who sit in our services week after week do nothing for the cause of Christ except drop a few dollars in the collection plate.

CHRISTIANS WILL NOT ENDURE SOUND DOCTRINE

The Bible warns that in the days of apostasy many Christians will obtain a surface knowledge of Bible doctrines and yet never make them a part of their lives. Year after year, they listen to the preaching, and year after year, there is no change in their lives. They are content to miss two-thirds of the church meetings, and pastors have made it acceptable. If the preaching gets too demanding they, like many pastors, “...will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to

themselves teachers, having itching ears.” (Second Timothy 4:3)

CHRISTIANS WITH NO CONCEPT OF BIBLE PRINCIPLES

Second Timothy 3:7 says they are “Ever learning, (Church goes) and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth.” The dictionary says a concept is “something conceived in the mind.” When the Bible says they are “...never able to come to the knowledge of the truth,” it means they simply can't understand.

YANOMAMO INDIANS WITHOUT CONCEPT

Recently, missionaries from our church ministered to the Yanomamo Indians in the Amazon jungle.



When attempting to teach the Indians about Bible principles, it was discovered that the Indians had no word for love, forgiveness, hope, patience, sacrifice, character, honor, shame etc. The reason they have no words for these character traits is because they have no concept, or understanding of what these things are; and without a concept or mental understanding of these things, it is impossible to understand them.

NO REASONING ABILITY

For example, one of the self-ascribed spiritual leaders in the village testified that God wanted the men to beat their wives so they would not sin. The missionaries tried to reason with him from the Scriptures; however, it was impossible to reason with him because the Yanomamo Indians have no concept of what reasoning is.

NO APPRECIATION

The Yanomamo Indians have no concept of appreciation. Our missionary wrote, “You hope that one day you will receive a note or listen to the testimony of a Yanomamo who thanks you for giving yourself to bring Jesus to them. But the Yanomamo are thankless. **Being thankful is not a concept the Indians know anything about.** It appears to be no closer to their culture than being a rocket scientist.” He continued, “Sarah gave seven years of her



life in the jungle village of Cuwa. Every day she taught the Indians how to read. Recently the Indians decided they didn't want a foreigner teaching them, and they voted in a young man (who thanks to Sarah has a Grade two education) to be their new teacher.”

When Sarah left the village **for the last time** only a few Indian women came to the river to see her off. The rest of the Indians were in her hut fighting over the things she left behind. The Yanomamo culture causes the Indians to do whatever they feel like doing, and it does not matter if it hurts anyone else **just as our modern day church hoppers do.**

CHRISTIANS IN THE LOCAL CHURCH

The Bible warns that in the last days this problem will be prevalent **in the church.** People will sit there like the Indians in the jungle: “*Ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth.*” They will have no real appreciation for the leadership God has give them to help them through the storms of life. If they don't like something that is done, or not done at the church, they simply leave with no concern who gets hurt as a result of their actions. Like the Indians in the jungle their philosophy of life is, “***It is all about me!***”

WHAT ARE WE TO DO?

The Old Testament records the times of apostasy among God's people. It also tells us in First Chronicles 12:32 that God had “...*men that had understanding of the times, to know what Israel ought to do.*” God has always had a remnant. I am going to repeat it again because this is one of the most important sentences in this series of articles. **God has always had a remnant!**

GOD'S REMNANT WERE SMALL

- **Isaiah 16:14** - “...*the remnant shall be very small and feeble.*”
- **Ezekiel 14:22** - “...*behold, therein shall be left a remnant.*”
- **Romans 11:5** - “*Even so then at this present time also there is a remnant.*”

The remnant can say with the Psalmist, “*I am small and despised: yet do not I forget thy precepts.*” (Psalm 119:141)

The remnant was always small and despised; however, there never was a time when God's people or unsaved people, could accuse God of not having someone to show them God's will and the way God wanted His will accomplished.

In Ezekiel 2:4-5 we read, “...*I do send thee unto them; (God's people) and thou shalt say unto them, Thus saith the Lord GOD. And they, whether they will hear, or whether they will forbear, (for they are a rebellious house,) yet shall know that there hath been a prophet among them...And thou shalt speak my words unto them, whether they will hear, or whether they will forbear.*”

WHAT DOES GOD WANT FROM OUR CHURCHES?

As individual Christians, we are always under orders to be witnessing for Christ. I want to repeat that statement because in this apostate age we are living in, it seems we have developed an “*either, or*” mentality. It has never been a case of one or the other. Pastor and people alike are always under orders to be witnessing for Christ.

As pastors, we are commanded to “*Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine. For the time will come when they (Christians, pastors included.) will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears.*” (Second Tim. 4:2-3)

God does not expect the pastor to compromise the Word of God to reach anyone. During the days of apostasy in Israel the prophet was commanded to say, “...*Thus saith the Lord GOD!*” We are to do the same! God wants His apostate people in our local churches to know “...*that there hath been a prophet among them.*” God does not want the people to know there is a compromiser among them. The command is the same as it was for apostate Israel: “*And thou shalt speak my words unto them, whether they will hear, or whether they will forbear.*”

GOD WANTS A REMNANT IN YOUR AREA

Like the days of apostasy in Israel, God wants a remnant. We should not be surprised in our age of apostasy when the remnant is, “...*very small and feeble.*” (Isaiah 16:14) **God does have some larger churches that have not compromised,** for which



we should be very thankful, however, the pastor who can honestly look to God in this age of apostasy and say, “...I forget not thy precepts” will, in most cases also say, “I am small and despised.” (Psalm 119:141) The remnant was always small and despised in Scripture; however, there never was a time when God’s people could accuse God of not having someone to show them God’s will and God’s way.



NO LICENSE TO QUIT WITNESSING

Again, this does not give us a license to stop witnessing in the world for Christ. The Bible is very plain about that responsibility, however, we must never compromise the Word of God to keep the pews full.

NO COMPROMISE

May God deliver us from compromising any part of the Word of God to appease the wishes of anyone on earth, be he unsaved or professed Bible believer. Let us plainly preach the whole council of God so that none will misunderstand. Let us never be willing to sacrifice the favour of the Lord so that we may win the favour of any man or to satisfy our desire to see the attendance grow in our local churches.

AN OLD TESTAMENT EXAMPLE OF THE SAME PROBLEM:

Verse 8 - “Now as Jannes and Jambres withstood Moses, so do these also resist the truth: men of corrupt minds, reprobate concerning the faith.”

In First Timothy Paul referred to teachers of false doctrine within the church as “...men of corrupt minds...” who were “...destitute of the truth...” He said they were “...reprobate concerning the faith,” and they were in the assembly.

Titus 1:16 refers to people in the local church who “...profess that they know God; but in works they deny him, being abominable, and disobedient, and unto every good work reprobate.”

Verse 9 - “But they shall proceed no further: for their folly shall be manifest unto all men, as theirs also was.”

Paul reminded the pastor that there is a payday someday! Jannes and Jambres withstood Moses; however, the day came when they died. Their bodies have been in the grave for about two

thousand years, and we are still reading about them. Surely, “...their folly” is “...manifest unto all men.”

Verses 10-12 - “But thou (Pastor Timothy) hast fully known my doctrine, manner of life, purpose, faith, longsuffering, charity, patience, Persecutions, afflictions, which came unto me at Antioch, at Iconium, at Lystra; what persecutions I endured: but out of them all the Lord delivered me. Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution.”

Paul was making a comparison of his life and the lives of those who did “...resist the truth: men of corrupt minds, reprobate concerning the faith.” He concluded saying, “...all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution.” While there is certainly an application to every Christian, the context is that every pastor who holds the line in the day of apostasy “shall suffer persecution.”

MANY TYPES OF PERSECUTION

Persecutions are not always physical. The dictionary says that persecution is, “...the act of persecuting especially those who differ in religion...to cause to suffer because of belief.” In Matthew 16:21 Jesus explained to His disciples that He must, “...suffer many things of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed...” Jesus faced many different types of persecution. Some of it was physical; however, He



spent most of His life facing verbal persecution from His own people.



It is noteworthy that the persecution that came to Paul, like that of Christ, was also usually as a result of his own people, the Jews. In Acts 13:50 we read, “But the Jews stirred up the devout and honourable women, and the chief men of the city, and raised persecution against Paul and Barnabas, and expelled them out of their coasts.” This time the persecution they faced was verbal and it ended up by them being, “...expelled them out of their coasts.”

Verses 13,14 - “But evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived. But continue thou in the things which thou hast learned and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned them.”

Paul was not a proud man; however, he was not timid to say he lived the life God wanted him to live, and Timothy knew it. In verse ten referring to his lifestyle, he said, “...thou hast fully known...” In verse fourteen he said Timothy knew “...of whom” he had “...learned.”

Verse 15 - “And that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.”

Paul was referring to the fact that Timothy knew the Old Testament Scriptures as the New Testament was not yet written. Timothy’s mother had taught him the Word. Jewish writings reveal that a boy of five years of age studied the Scriptures. It is noteworthy that when Paul said, “...the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus,” he was referring to the Old Testament. In John 5:39 Jesus also referred to the Old Testament when He said, “Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me.”

WE NEED TO GET BACK TO THE SCRIPTURES

Verse 16 - “All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: **That the man of God** may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.”

As previously stated, the majority of professed Christians who sit in our fundamental churches will gladly listen to the “doctrine” as long as they do not have to make any personal applications. Most

modern day fundamental church members will leave the church if the pastor gets involved in the area of “...reproof.”

Most fundamental Baptist church members will listen to the “...instructions in righteousness” for an hour on Sunday and fill their minds with the filth and unrighteousness of television for five or six hours a day, seven days a week. This has become acceptable in our apostate fundamental churches because we fundamental pastors have made it acceptable.

IT WAS WRITTEN TO THE PASTOR
We cannot overemphasize that this portion of Scripture is dealing with the pastor. God is speaking to pastors about understanding, “doctrine, reproof, correction,” and “instruction in righteousness.” It says, “...that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.”

Everything the pastor does should be based on the Scripture rather than on what he learned in a forty-five minute class in a Bible college or a few minutes in a Bible commentary.

Everything the pastor does should be based on the Scripture rather than being based on what he thinks his peers expect him to do.



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“...ye shall be witnesses...unto the uttermost part of the earth.” (Acts 1:8)