Fan the Flame: A Study of 2nd Timothy

Part 8 - The Last Days

Hebrews 1:2 (ESV) but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed the heir of all things, through whom also he created the world.

In the last days, 3 things will change:

1. **A Change in Affection**

   2 Timothy 3:1-2 (ESV) 1 But understand this, that in the last days there will come times of difficulty. 2 For people will be lovers of self, lovers of money, proud, arrogant, abusive, disobedient to their parents, ungrateful, unholy,

   - will be lovers of self (3:2a) When our love for self is over elevated through ego, then our love for God and the things of God is lowered.

   - lovers of money or covetous, or materialistic (3:2b). The accumulation of assets becomes a means of self-gratification.

   1 Timothy 6:10 (ESV) For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evils. It is through this craving that some have wandered away from the faith and pierced themselves with many pangs.

2. **A Change in Attitude**

   2 Timothy 3:2 (ESV) For people will be lovers of self, lovers of money, proud, arrogant, abusive, disobedient to their parents, ungrateful, unholy,

   - proud (3:2c). This is just a manifestation of self-love. It is bragging about one's accomplishments, acquaintances, or assets. Boastful people love to be in the spotlight or the center of attention.

   - arrogant (3:2d), which means they put themselves above others and their opinions above the Word of God.

Prosperity causes us to become proud and arrogant. When the Israelites were on the border of the Promised Land, Moses warned:

Deuteronomy 8:13-14 (ESV) 13 and when your herds and flocks multiply and your silver and gold is multiplied and all that you have is multiplied, 14 then your heart be lifted up, and you forget the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery.
Proverbs 16:5 (ESV) Everyone who is arrogant in heart is an abomination to the LORD; be assured, he will not go unpunished.

3. A Change in Actions

- abusive or blasphemers (evil speakers). The word in Greek is blasphemoi (3:2e). This means to slander people or God. People who have an over-inflated view of themselves are always verbally abusive and irreverent.

Matthew 12:34 (ESV) You brood of vipers! How can you speak good, when you are evil? For out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks.

2 Timothy 3:2-5 (ESV) For people will be lovers of self, lovers of money, proud, arrogant, abusive, disobedient to their parents, ungrateful, unholy, 3 heartless, unappeasable, slanderous, without self-control, brutal, not loving good, 4 treacherous, reckless, swollen with conceit, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God, 5 having the appearance of godliness, but denying its power. Avoid such people.

- disobedient to parents (3:2f)

Exodus 20:12 (ESV) Honor your father and your mother, that your days may be long in the land that the LORD your God is giving you.

- ungrateful or unthankful (3:2g), which is the result of pride and arrogance. People think they deserve everything and therefore feel gratitude for nothing. Unthankful people are always miserable, regardless of what they have.

1 Thessalonians 5:18 (ESV) give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.

- unholy (3:2h). This translates a Greek word that literally means "profane" or "gross indecency". It refers to people who gratify every immoral lust and passion.

- heartless or without natural affection (3:3a). The word used here for natural affection (storge) is the Greek word for love of family. Therefore, without natural affection is a lack of love for one's own family.

- unappeasable (3:3b) means "unrelenting" or "irreconcilable". It refers to people who will not forgive and are filled with bitterness and anger beyond reason. They refuse to forgive, even when presented with the opportunity.

- slanderous or false accusers (3:3c), which translates the Greek word for "devil" (diabolos). It means "malicious talkers". It refers to people who delight in spreading rumors and gossip. Destroying another person's good name gives them a demented delight.
Ephesians 4:29 (ESV) Let no corrupting talk come out of your mouths, but only such as is good for building up, as fits the occasion, that it may give grace to those who hear.

- without self-control (3:3d) refers to people who do not have the self-control to restrain their words or actions. They are shameless in their conduct.

- brutal or fierce (3:3e) means insensitive, rude, and crude. It translates a word that pictures a savage wild animal attacking and tearing its victim to pieces. It refers to those who ruthlessly violate others with words or actions.

- not loving good or despisers of those that are good (3:3f) describes those people who in the last days will hate what they should love and love what they should hate.

Isaiah 5:20 (ESV) Woe to those who call evil good and good evil, who put darkness for light and light for darkness, who put bitter for sweet and sweet for bitter!

- treacherous or traitors (3:4a). This refers to people who will betray the trust of family and friends to make a dollar or get ahead. There will be people everywhere trying to take advantage of others.

- The word translated reckless (3:4b) means negligent. It is people who act foolishly without concern for the consequences of their actions.

- swollen with conceit (3:4c) or blinded by their pride and arrogance. They think they are above the consequences of their actions.

- lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God (3:4d). This means they are controlled by pleasures rather than by God.

Paul concludes this list by writing: having the appearance of godliness, but denying its power (3:5a).

Titus 1:16 (ESV) They profess to know God, but they deny him by their works. They are detestable, disobedient, unfit for any good work.

Regarding such people, Paul writes: Avoid such people. (3:5b). This means flee those who claim to be Christians but who deny the transforming power of the Gospel.