

**2TI 3:1** But mark this: There will be terrible times in the last days. <sup>2</sup> People will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boastful, proud, abusive, disobedient to their parents, ungrateful, unholy, <sup>3</sup> without love, unforgiving, slanderous, without self-control, brutal, not lovers of the good, <sup>4</sup> treacherous, rash, conceited, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God-- <sup>5</sup> having a form of godliness but denying its power. Have nothing to do with them.

**2TI 3:6** They are the kind who worm their way into homes and gain control over weak-willed women, who are loaded down with sins and are swayed by all kinds of evil desires, <sup>7</sup> always learning but never able to acknowledge the truth. <sup>8</sup> Just as Jannes and Jambres opposed Moses, so also these men oppose the truth--men of depraved minds, who, as far as the faith is concerned, are rejected. <sup>9</sup> But they will not get very far because, as in the case of those men, their folly will be clear to everyone.

**2TI 3:10** You, however, know all about my teaching, my way of life, my purpose, faith, patience, love, endurance, <sup>11</sup> persecutions, sufferings--what kinds of things happened to me in Antioch, Iconium and Lystra, the persecutions I endured. Yet the Lord rescued me from all of them. <sup>12</sup> In fact, everyone who wants to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted, <sup>13</sup> while evil men and impostors will go from bad to worse, deceiving and being deceived. <sup>14</sup> But as for you, continue in what you have learned and have become convinced of, because you know those from whom you learned it, <sup>15</sup> and how from infancy you have known the holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. <sup>16</sup> All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, <sup>17</sup> so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.

1. <sup>V1-5</sup> – **2TI 3:1** But mark this: There will be terrible times in the last days. <sup>2</sup> People will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boastful, proud, abusive, disobedient to their parents, ungrateful, unholy, <sup>3</sup> without love, unforgiving, slanderous, without self-control, brutal, not lovers of the good, <sup>4</sup> treacherous, rash, conceited, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God-- <sup>5</sup> having a form of godliness but denying its power. Have nothing to do with them.

This is what it is like right now!

Are we in the end times? –

Could be. So be ready.

Here is the thing – if we see people acting in this way – we are to avoid them. Remember that this letter is talking to Tim who is a pastor – it is talking about churches. Yeh, this is what Timothy had to deal with in the church.

What's that, in the church?– Yep, Paul is writing to Timothy and staying stay away from these people. Remember in chapter 1 those two guys who left Paul in the lurch

## **2 Timothy 1:15 (NIV2011)**

<sup>15</sup> You know that everyone in the province of Asia has deserted me, including Phygelus and Hermogenes.

They were church guys, members even.

This is the problem, we tend to fight inside more than be persecuted from outside. As I mentioned a few weeks ago.

It is natural for people to want power. If the only place they can get it is in church, they will try and get it there. Be aware of it.

Look at the list. Lovers of themselves – they will want to put themselves forward

The next part of the list seems to explain what these lovers of themselves are like: Lovers of money, boastful, proud, abusive, disobedient, ungrateful, unholy the list goes on. But notice at the end it says having a form of godliness but denying its power.

I think we can work out from here – they look like they are godly but they aren't. Pretenders.

There may be pretenders among us!!!! I was reading a book on leadership during the last few weeks and it said the most important aspect of any leader (not just church leaders) is trust and integrity. If these people are pretenders – they lack the trust and integrity needed to lead. True? Would you want a leader like what is written here? No. But how can you work out what a pretender is like? Is it important? Yes because we are told to have nothing to do with them.

Hang on as Pastor how do I do this? That is taking some working out for me.

How can we recognise them? Next verse

2. v 6 – 9 **2TI 3:6 They are the kind who worm their way into homes and gain control over weak-willed women, who are loaded down with sins and are swayed by all kinds of evil desires, <sup>7</sup> always learning but never able to acknowledge the truth. <sup>8</sup> Just as Jannes and Jambres opposed Moses, so also these men oppose the truth--men of depraved minds, who, as far as the faith is concerned, are rejected. <sup>9</sup> But they will not get very far because, as in the case of those men, their folly will be clear to everyone.**

People try to control. Now we have a warning here not only to avoid people who do it but not to do it ourselves.

Eg. When I was youth pastor, some well meaning deacons wanted certain things done with the youth group, why, because their kids went to the youth group. But to do what the deacs wanted would not have been best for the total group. But they tried to manipulate the situation for what they saw as good reasons. Interestingly, we have spoken about this recently, as these former deacons are good friends, and they agreed that they had their children's good at heart rather than the whole youth group – but isn't that their job as parents. That's an interesting tight rope we walk isn't it. As parents and as church leaders. Whose good do we place as a priority?

**Our good reasons may not be God's will.**

It is interesting that weak willed women are mentioned here. I don't think that it is only women who are weak willed nor do I think Paul thought so. He is pointing out who can be manipulated. Real people can be manipulated. Notice that they are learning but not seeing the truth.

**Being close to God isn't educational – it has to do with truth.**

It's like the biblical concept of wisdom – its about knowing how to use the information you have not having a lot of information. Biblical wisdom is about knowing how to do life.

It isn't how much you know, what skills you have, or how many people you disciple. It is about the truth. Knowing God's grace active in your life. That truth. Recognising sin, accepting Christ's forgiveness and living in obedience to God. That truth. Truth is vitally more important than education. In some ways truth and wisdom give you **"the how to"** use your education at whatever level.

Just a note about verses 8-9 Jannes and Jambres are not mentioned in the OT, but there was a Jewish tradition that they were two of the Egyptian magicians who withstood Moses and Aaron. Have you seen the animated movie Prince of Egypt. They are the ones who have a magic show. All entertainment no substance.

Notice that for all their spectacular magical skills – they could not beat Moses and Aaron. Why? You can't beat God. They did not get very far. Their silliness became clear.

Does this mean then that we can just let these people go and they eventually will hang themselves?

No- Have nothing to do with them.

Give them no place of leadership and defend truth – in other words don't let them teach bad stuff to the people.

3. v 10-13 **2TI 3:10** You, however, know all about my teaching, my way of life, my purpose, faith, patience, love, endurance, <sup>11</sup> persecutions, sufferings--what kinds of things happened to me in Antioch, Iconium and Lystra, the persecutions I endured. Yet the Lord rescued me from all of them. <sup>12</sup> In fact, everyone who wants to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted, <sup>13</sup> while evil men and impostors will go from bad to worse, deceiving and being deceived.

**Credibility and integrity.** This is what is needed in christian leadership today. It is what is needed in Christian life today. Credibility is what people perceive.

This is not just a message for me – it is a message for the eldership, the diaconate, our department leaders – credibility and integrity.

And you know my theology, you've heard me talk about it and preach about it: every Christian is a leader in some way – in other words this is a message for all. Right the way along from my desk to your pew.

It is a message for every person in leadership in this church. credibility and integrity. In fact all christians are called to lead – to exercise credibility and integrity in the lives. It is for all of us. Credibility and integrity. There is no christian who is not expected to lead. Sorry about that! If you thought you were too old, too young or not specially gifted. If you are a christian – you are a leader of community. You have Christ's credibility. He gave it to you to use. Remember Matt 28:19-20 "Go into all the world and preach etc.

But knowing you have that credibility means you have to have integrity to use it right. Leadership in our day is associated with posers, show ponies, show off's.

**Leadership in the bible is about servanthood.**

Check it out. Leaders are servants in the bible. Even the kings – servants of God, Paul is a servant of Christ. That is why we will be persecuted – because we do it differently. We put ourselves in places that we can be abused and taken advantage of. I guarantee that this year some of us will be ridiculed, laughed at, criticised, for just doing what a christian is supposed to do – serve. Be ready – not to fight it but to accept it.

So where does all this leave us. Have nothing to do with certain people, remember what it says

4. **be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boastful, proud, abusive, disobedient to their parents, ungrateful, unholy, <sup>3</sup> without love, unforgiving, slanderous, without self-control, brutal, not lovers of the good, <sup>4</sup> treacherous, rash, conceited, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God-- <sup>5</sup> having a form of godliness but denying its power. Have nothing to do with them.**

Ok there is the identification process.

Next comes the tactics they use.

**They are the kind who worm their way into homes and gain control over weak-willed women, who are loaded down with sins and are swayed by all kinds of evil desires, <sup>7</sup> always learning but never able to acknowledge the truth.**

Then Paul gives us the way we are to do it.

**You, however, know all about my teaching, my way of life, my purpose, faith, patience, love, endurance, <sup>11</sup> persecutions, sufferings--what kinds of things happened to me in Antioch, Iconium and Lystra, the persecutions I endured. Yet the Lord rescued me from all of them**

The book of Timothy is fast becoming a template for our Christian lives not only individually but also corporately.

Now this passage is hard. It's hard to hear and its hard to apply so this week look over it a couple of times. See what reaction you should have to it. Pray about it.

Next week, something different and someone different.