

THE CHARACTERISTICS OF OUR AGE

II Timothy 3:1-9

Intro:

- A. We know that perilous times shall come.
 - 1. They will characterize this last age.
 - 2. Paul warned Timothy how God sees it.
 - 3. We see it as an age of progress, etc.

- B. "This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come..." Vs 1
 - 1. "But realize this..." - NASB
 - 2. "Last" = εσχατος = "that which concludes anything".
 - 3. "Perilous" = χαλεπος = "hard to bear".
 - 4. "The final age of this world is to be a time of troubles" - NEB

- C. The cause of perilous days.
 - 1. It will be caused by man.
 - 2. He will throw off God's restraints.
 - 3. Environment didn't make us, we made it!

I. The Characteristics Of Those Who Live In The Last Dispensation.

- A. "For men shall be lovers of their own selves,..." Vs 2
 - 1. "Self lover" = φιλαυτος = "lover of one's self"
 - 2. "Men will become utterly self-centered" - PHI
 - 3. Is this self-esteem?

- B. "...covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers,..."
 - 1. "Covetous" = φιλαργυρος = "money loving"
 - 2. "Boaster" = αλαζων = "bragger". One who boasts about his accomplishments and overstates them in order to impress others.
 - 3. "Proud" = υπερηφανος = "haughty", "arrogant" One who thinks himself better than others.

4. "Blasphemers" = βλασφημος = "abusive speech", "one who slanders".
 5. Mercenary, boastful, haughty, abusive.
- C. "...disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy,"
1. "Disobedient" = απειθης = "unwilling to be persuaded", "to parents unyielding".
 2. "Unthankful" = αχαριστος = "ungrateful".
 3. "Unholy" = ανοσιος = "unholy", "wicked".
- D. Vs 3 "Without natural affection, trucebreakers,..."
1. "Natural affection" = αστοργος = "without family affection", "without family love, a love that nature dictates".
 2. "Trucebreakers" = ασπονδος = "without truth". One who will not make a truce to end hostility.
- E. "...false accusers, incontinent, fierce,..."
1. "False accusers" = διαβολος = "slander" One who sets at variance by false statements.
 2. "Incontinent" = ακρατης = "without any self-control in any area of their lives".
 3. "Fierce" = ανημερος = "uncivilized", "savage".
- F. "...despisers of those that are good."
1. αφιλαγαθος = "without laws for good", "one who refuses to love good men", "unfriendly"
 2. "Brutal and hostile to what is good" NOR
- G. Vs 4 "Traitors, heady, highminded,..."
1. "Traitors" = προδοτης = "betrayers". One who is willing to abandon another in time of trouble.
 2. "Heady" = προπετης = "one who pushes ahead", "hasty in speech or action".
 3. "Highminded" = τυφω = "to be beclouded". Someone who has no clear vision, "hot-headed".
- H. "...lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God."
1. φιληδονος = loving + ηδονη = "Hedonism", "delight", "enjoyment", "pleasurable sensations"

2. φιλοθεος = God lover
 3. "And prefer good times to worshipping" - TAY
 4. Aren't they the same?
- I. Vs 5 "Having a form of godliness,..."
1. "Form" = μορφωσις = "outline", "outward form".
 2. "And will keep up a make-believe of piety"
- J. "...but denying the power thereof:..."
1. "Denying" = αρνεομαι = "disown", "to say no".
 2. "Power" = δυναμιν
 3. "They say no to the power of it"
- K. "...from such turn away."
1. "Turn away" = αποτρεπομαι = "to turn one's self away from".
 2. "Keep away from these people!" - NOR

II. What These People Do.

- A. "For of this sort are they which creep into houses,..."
6a
1. "Creep" = ενδυνω = "to enter in by sneaking".
 2. "Some of this ilk worm their way into families".
- B. "...and lead captive sill women laden with sins,..."
6b
1. "Lead captive" = αιχμαλωτιζω = "to make a prisoner of war" To gain complete control.
 2. "Silly" = γυναικαριον = "a little woman" In contempt, a weak, silly woman.
 3. "Laden" = σωρευω = "to heap or to pile up".
 4. "...and there get miserable women into their clutches" - NEB
- C. "...led away with divers lusts," 6c
1. "Led away" = αγω = "to lead", "to drive".
 2. "Divers" = ποικιλος = "diversified", "many facets".
 3. "...and controlled by all sorts of impulses" - BER

- D. Vs 7 "Ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth."
1. "Ever" = ΠΑΝΤΟΤΕ = "always".
 2. "Learning" = μανθανω = "to be informed".
 3. "Able" = δυναμαι = "to have power".
 4. "Knowledge" = επιγνωσις = "full knowledge". The kind of understanding that brings change.
 5. "Continually getting information, but never attain to recognition of the truth."

III. An Example Of Their Attitude.

- A. Vs 8 "Now as Jannes and Jambres withstood Moses,..."
1. "Withstood" = ανθιστημι = "to stand against".
 2. "...were hostile to Moses".
- B. "...so do these also resist the truth:..."
1. "Resist" = ανθιστημι = "to oppose".
 2. "So these are also hostile to the truth".
- C. "...men of corrupt minds, reprobate concerning the faith."
1. "Corrupt" = καταφθειρω = "to be completely depraved".
 2. "Reprobate" = αδοκιμος = "rejected after trial".
 3. "They are depraved in mind and they have been found counterfeit in faith."

IV. The End Of These False Teachers.

- A. Vs 9 "But they shall proceed no further:..."
1. "Proceed" = προκοπτω = "to cut before".
 2. "But their successes will be short-lived" - NEB
- B. "...for their folly shall be manifest unto all men, as theirs also was."
1. "Folly" = ανοια = "without understanding".
 2. "Manifest" = εκδηλος = "clear", "evident".
 3. "Someday their deceit will be well-known" - TAY

Deceivers of women are among the apostates who afflict the church. Such men furtively gain access (endunontes) to the houses of their victims, and succeed in captivating the allegiance of silly women (gunaikaria, diminutive form used contemptuously). The women so victimized are heaped with sins (sesoreumena hamartiais). This type of woman, perhaps neurotic and depressed by the guilt of sin, is easily led astray by religious quacks who may satisfy the desire for some sort of religion without demanding abandonment of sin. Church history is full of female victims and companions of false religionists, from the tradition of Simon Magus and Helena to the multitudinous wives of Brigham Young. Satan's method in the garden was to insinuate himself into the confidence of Eve.

These women-victims are further described as continually learning, but never arriving at real knowledge (epignosin). They remind us of the Athenian pastime, which in its desire to always find something new prevented concentration on real spiritual truth in order to assimilate it (Acts 17:21). These women never come to the truth because they know not Him who is the Truth (John 14:6).

The final description pictures the apostates as active resisters of the truth. For illustration of this resistance, Paul names Jannes and Jambres who withstood Moses. Since these men are not named elsewhere in Scripture, the source from which Paul derived the names can legitimately be asked. The best answer is that the names were preserved in Jewish tradition (either oral or written), and were thus known to Paul. Some of the data in Stephen's speech (Acts 7) must have come from such sources. Although much of the material in Jewish traditional literature is legendary and allegorical, the Holy Spirit so guided that only what was true was included in Scripture. Jannes and Jambres are named in the Targum of Jonathon (Exod. 7:11, 22). They are described as counselors of evil in Egypt, who ultimately perished either in the Red Sea or in the slaughter which followed the making of the golden calf.

Jannes and Jambres withstood Moses by imitating his works. So these apostates in Christendom are imitators of true religion. However, they are in a state of corruption (perfect tense of katephtharmenoi) in their minds. Their intellectual faculties, having refused the light of the truth, have become unable to receive the truth which cleanses the life and enlightens the understand. Consequently, when these men are tested by the standard of the Christian faith, they are disapproved (adokimoi)

as worthless metal.

3. The exposure of the apostasy.

But they shall not progress further, for their folly shall be clearly clearly evident to all, as even that of those men came to be (v.9).

Ultimate defeat is certain, just as occurred with the opposers of Moses. The senselessness (anoia) of these men will eventually be unmasked and become clearly evident (ekdelos) to men generally (pasin). Even the magicians of Moses, who were successful for a time, came to see their rods swallowed up (Exod. 7:12), and their inability demonstrated (Exod. 8:18-19; 9:11).

This restriction upon the progress of the apostates must refer to their influence and success in gaining followers, rather than personal advance along their evil ways. God will see to it that His faithful remnant is preserved in every difficult season. (This explanation is confirmed in 3:13 since evil men are definitely predicted to "proceed further" in their ungodly ways.)

THE PASTORAL EPISTLES, Homer A. Kent, Jr., Moody Press, 1958