

## 2 Timothy 3

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[0:00] Mark this, there will be terrible times in the last days. People will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boastful, proud, abusive, disobedient! Disobedient to their parents, ungrateful, unholy, without love, unforgiving, slanderous, Without self-control, brutal, not lovers of the good, treacherous, rash, conceited, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God, having a form of godliness but denying its power, have nothing to do with such people. They are the kind who worm their way into homes and gain control over gullible women, who are loaded down with sins and are swayed by all kinds of evil desires, always learning but never able to come to a knowledge of the truth.

Just as Janus and Jambres opposed Moses, so also these teachers opposed the truth. They are men of depraved minds, who, as far as the faith is concerned, are rejected, but they will not get very far because, as in the case of those men, their folly will be clear to everyone.

You, however, know all about my teaching, my way of life, my purpose, faith, patience, love, endurance, 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. In fact, everyone who wants to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted, 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. All scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting, and training in righteousness, so that the servant of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.

Thank you, Moriah, and that's the word of God. Moxie, thank you. All right. Hi, everybody. Hi. Been a lot of rain lately, right? Whether in New Zealand, Asia, Hong Kong, China, what happened if all these rains and the flooding and, you know, have you been into that sort of situation before? Oops, what happened? Hi. Is my...

Coming? All right. Yeah. It was something on the news that there was a car, it was a couple in a car that... Hi. Coming? Is it coming? Right. That got swept down the river. It was in New Zealand.

[3:29] It was in New Zealand, Australia. Okay. And sadly, the woman died. Okay. They were... They thought it was okay, it was the car, you know, stable enough. But when the... If the current was too strong, if the flood water was too strong, then even the car cannot help you. You want something that is more stable and more solid. Okay. Now, this is a picture. It's actually a place in China.

Okay. And you couldn't read those four characters in the middle, even if you know Chinese. All right. But that four characters, it was actually this. If you know Chinese, you know what it means. Okay.

It really means a solid tower in midst of strong currents. This is what it said. All right. So, if you're in a flood, in a strong current, you want to hold on to something that is absolutely unmovable. You don't want to, you know, hold on to a piece of log. You just go with the flow.

Right. But something that really, really solid, even in midst of this strong currents, you are safe. Now, this is what exactly what the passage was talking about. Paul was saying that in the evil times, at the end, that's near the time of Jesus when he comes back, Paul said, you have to hold on to the teaching of the scriptures. Just like the solid rock in midst of the currents. You have to hold on to it. Otherwise, you just go with the flow. And you'll be very dangerous. All right. So, today, I

believe this passage is 17 verses of the passage teaching us to stand firm on the biblical truth because the times we're in now and we're close to Jesus coming back. And Paul described times will be dangerous, treacherous. And we'll see later on how dangerous it could be. Okay. So, today, I want to share with you the topic is the tower. What's the solid tower? The tower of truth. That is the biblical truth truth. And the currents of these end times. These currents can be quite dangerous. Okay.

Firstly, Paul was saying, describing the currents of these end times in the first nine verses. But first, verse 1, it says, mark this. There will be terrible times in the last days.

[6:35] Last days. Last days means what? Prior to Jesus coming. All right. That word last, it really means, you know, you've heard of a word called eschatology. Okay. Eschaton. That is last things. All right.

And actually, that's the very word, Paul, no, the Acts, Dr. Luke was describing ends of the earth. Ends. The very end. The very end. Very last. So, in the time before Jesus comes back to the very end of time. Very last of the times. Those will be terrible times. Dangerous. Violent. Difficult. Treacherous.

And how he described those times. He used 19 descriptions. All right. But when it boils down, there were two things. Two attitudes of people.

That is, lovers of self and lovers of money. All right. Those two attitudes. I did not make this up. I actually, it was this guy, Donald Guthrie, who had his, who was a New Testament scholar during my time when I was studying theology.

[8:05] I really like this guy. Evangelical guy. Yeah. He produced quite a few books that I really, it really blessed me. Okay. This guy says, look, all these 19 descriptions, it really, it was the two attitudes that drove us to be boastful, proud, abusive, all this kind of stuff. Because they were lovers of self and lovers of money.

Now, we all love money. We all like money. And we do like ourselves at times. Nothing wrong with that. All right.

If you don't like money, give it to me. All right. Okay. Right. We all, we all need money. We all like money. But we don't, I mean, we should not love money. And the grammar of this, this word, this trying to describe lovers of self and lovers of money, it really meant that they love only money and nothing else.

They love only themselves and no one else. That is the problem. You see, all of these descriptions came out of these two primary attitudes.

If I love money, I can be abusive. I, and then I'll be no, I have no room to love others. Right.

[9:31] And I'll, I'll do anything to grab money. All right. I'll be, I'll be, it'll be, it'll be arrogant. Okay. If I love myself and there's no room to love others.

These were the times at the end. And probably we have, we're facing it now. The more towards Jesus coming back, the more you see we have now.

Look, I've, I've come to New Zealand about 73. That's 52 years ago. Okay. And I felt that, I don't know whether, have you lived that long enough?

Billy, you were there. You were here. Ben, you should be here. All right. You know, when I, when I came first to New Zealand, I, I felt that, um, there was sort of right and wrong generally in a New Zealand society.

Okay. We're agreed on certain, um, values, families, um, marriage. You know, generally when people accept what is right, what is wrong.

[10:40] Okay. But today there's no rights and wrongs. Everybody has their own subjective truths. Truth is no longer objective.

It's only 50 years that that changed that much. You know, when I first came in and I was in, in, in intermediate, we're singing hymns at schools and the teachers teaching us, uh, that they did not quote directly from above, from the Bible, but they said, this is right.

And somehow we knew that there was, we're Christians teachers at the time. There was, they were giving us the right teachings, proper teachings of life. Right.

Today, even though if you were teachers, you probably, you'd be too scared to quote what is right and wrong. Right. You have to write reports.

People will report you. Right. And this is the time we're living in. The impact of such times. And Paul was describing in verse 13, 13.

[11:43] People that at those times, they were deceiving others, but, but they were being deceived themselves. That's, this is the time we're living in.

We no longer have the courage to speak. If you want, if we do have the courage to speak, be prepared.

You'll be persecuted. Paul says. You don't have to be a Christian. Even if you want to speak something you think is right, you have to stand up for it. Be prepared.

All right. To be attacked. And he was describing that, you know, in those nine verses.

Those are times that people no longer speak the truth. And, and, and as will be chaos, uh, will be falsehood. Just, just imagine.

[12:43] You don't need to imagine. Just, just think of where we are today. At work. In schools. Can we be genuine? Can we have the courage to speak up what is right and what is not right?

This is just time. There are prices to pay. So, either we go with the flow, or do we actually know and adhere to the, to the truth that we believe and hold on to.

Right? Um, there was, in verse 8, Paul, uh, um, Paul was quoting, uh, these two names.

Janus and Jambres. And who are these guys? On the context that people's deceiving and being deceived. That he was saying that a lot of falsehood.

All right? And a lot of falsehood. And, and, and, and try pretending to be truth. To be real. So, we need to know in our times, um, we need to identify ourselves.

[13:58] What is right and what is not. A lot of sayings outside. A lot of, a lot of talking. And, and just camouflage truth.

Do we know the truth. Now, those two figures, some people said that they were actually, because they were, Paul was describing that they were against Moses.

But, who was these guys? Perhaps, uh, some commentator says, these, those were the, the, uh, magicians or sorcerers of Pharaoh.

Okay? That was a time when Moses was commanded by God to go to Pharaoh and let, tell Pharaoh to let my people go.

And God gave Moses the staff. All right? To, to, uh, perform miracles. And those Egyptian sorcerers and the magicians said, oh, we can do that too.

[14:55] We can, you can, we can make the snakes happen as well. You can, we can do that too. Okay? Okay? But they could not reverse that. They could not do, perform other miracles.

And those two, perhaps, were, uh, those magicians from Pharaoh. They were against Moses. And there was a lot of this falsehood at the time.

And in verse 6, and these, these, one who deceived, especially for those gullible women, in verse 6. And those ones themselves, it was not particularly just women, but anyone.

All right? But it was women at the time. But, um, those at the time, they were ignorant and vulnerable. And those false teachers were aggressive.

So beware. Don't just go online and watch anything. We have to know.

[15:57] We have to be discerning. Right? What are the real stuff? What are the real stuff? What are wrong? All right? Now, traditionally, you know, people with those badges say, the Church of Jesus Christ for the Latter-day Saints.

we can identify now, all right, they're not Christians, all right? And maybe there are people who knock on your doors, very polite, very well-dressed, and we know those were not Christians, right? But there are more subtle ones today. I invite you to go to Bible studies, okay? We want to know the truth of God, and when you're invited, firstly, maybe once a week, and then they invite you to join more often, and more often, and then you feel that you're being controlled, all right?

And we've experienced these people. They even came to our church, the SCJs, all right? So beware, all right? We need to know our times.

Paul says, have nothing to do with such people. Now, not to disassociate with them, but be careful with all these things that they are doing.

[17:27] And at the time, these people were being talked to, being warned, but they still persist in these actions and false teachings.

And Paul says, have nothing to do with such people. Some commentator says, be careful to admit them into church membership.

We know they have problems. Once this thing come in, and it's like a yeast, and then they just make the whole bread, and just spoil the whole piece, all right?

So be careful, knowing what the people we are associating with, all right? Know what the teachings are.

Especially, be careful when you go online. Don't just listen to anything, even Bible, even Jesus. We need to be careful. If you're not sure, ask Pastor William, Eva, or Vincent, or us.

[18:36] I hope just to protect ourselves, okay? But Paul, on the positive side, he says that, okay, these were the currents of the end times.

But more importantly, there is the tale of truth we can hold on to. Yes, this chaos, this mess will always happen, even more so prior to Jesus' return.

But don't worry. You don't need to be, you know, scared, and just be afraid. Oh, how, who, who, where are these false teachers?

Now, if we know the truth, we don't need to be scared, okay? So the tale of truth, it manifested in two ways.

First, in testimony of life, verses 10 and 11. Paul says to Timothy, you, however, know all about my teaching, my way of life, my purpose, faith, patience, love, endurance, and persecution, suffering, and all kinds of things happened to me in that particular place, Antioch, Iconium, and Leicester.

[20:01] Now, it may sound, oh, Paul, why are you so bragging, why are you bragging about yourselves?

You're being so proudful, you know? Something wrong with you? Now, if someone tells you about, look, follow me. If you want to follow Jesus, follow me.

If I say that, I could be very proudful. But if you, if we know the context, all right, Paul was speaking to his spiritual son in a very personal way.

Timothy, you know, you have been following me closely. Now, knowing my teaching, that really means that you followed me all along, right?

You know, you've seen it. You've served with me all these times. You know my way, my purpose, and all these things I have experienced.

[21:06] So, that, for Paul, that kind of conversation was not bragging, but it was really want to encourage Timothy, look, it can be done. You've seen it.

You witnessed it. You experienced it. All right? So, for Timothy, when he sees what Paul was saying, he would remember, especially Antioch and the times in Antioch, Iconium and Lystra.

Timothy was with him. The persecution being stoned. Now, if you would read, if we read Acts 13, 14, you would know what happened during the first journey of Paul's missions, all right?

There was all kinds of temptations, all kinds of difficulties, and people with, at the time with, they thought they were, they were gods, and then they were trying to worship them, offer sacrifices to them, all right?

But when they explained, no, no, we're not gods. We're just gods' servants. You know, we just do what God wants us to. And then, the next minute, they stoned them.

[22:22] Goodness me, how can you comprehend that? One minute, you want to worship them, and the next minute, you stoned them.

That was what happened. And if you read carefully, in Acts 14, they actually did stone them. And Paul could have died.

And perhaps he died. And here, when Paul says, the Lord has rescued me from all of them, but he actually was stoned in Lester.

But Luke just very simply just explained that, oh, he just walked out. But if you were actually, literally stoned, if you're not bruised, if you're not, you're not fatally wounded, you know, you only have half of your life left.

And Paul says, actually, God rescued me from them. How did God rescue me from them? There's an interesting passage in 2 Corinthians 12.2.

[23:47] He says that Paul experienced that I was caught up in the third heavens. Right? And there, I've heard inexpressible things.

And some scholars recall, says that that maybe, maybe, no, no, 100% explanation, but maybe that was a time when he was stoned, nearly died, or in a state, or in a state, it was very, very fatal, and somehow he, his soul was actually taken up to third heavens.

And perhaps the Lord said, it's not time for you yet, you go back. All right? And the Lord rescued him. Now, this is pure speculation. This is no, no, not accurate Bible exegeses.

But it would be interesting if it was. And how the Lord would rescue him. And perhaps Timothy would recall those times as well.

And the important thing, what Paul was trying to say, look, in those terrible times, you see, we can walk the truth.

[25:14] The truth is not just written in the Bible. The truth can be seen in your and my life if we genuinely follow him.

This is what Paul was saying. I believe when Timothy was, when he was reading this, he would be very, very encouraged.

Yes, my spiritual father, he endured all that. And this is how the Lord kept him. And I believe you and me.

There's nothing in me that really, you know, we can brag, okay? But if we hold on to the truth, if we have the courage to speak and stand on the truth, people will see it.

We had the Gospel Sunday this morning, okay? It was one who committed himself to the Lord.

[26:21] That's fine. Just one. But I believe there will be more than one. It's just we have to read God's timing and how he works in people's life. But when Dennis, Dennis Cham, the dentist, he shared his testimony, okay?

It was quite powerful. He shared something I never knew. It was coming, he came from a broken family. He told people, he said, have you actually seen your mom jumping into the sea to commit suicide?

That was my mom. Have you actually have the fear of mom getting alive, trying to poke you? I almost did.

That was the kind of experiences he had. But how the Lord had brought him through. And he was sharing that and how he was sharing how he was growing up and how the Lord revealed his love to him and how he brought him through, through the troublesome teenage years, to his adulthood, coming to New Zealand.

And we just see, wow, yes, truth can be seen. It can be manifested in our lives. It's not about us. But about how we experience his power.

[27:40] Right? So, say to the one next to you, the truth, the Tao of Truth can be experienced, can be manifested in your life.

Tell others. It's not me. But if we allow him, he can.

I'm sure you know people. They put their lives into the hand of the Lord. And you see the miracles, the authority.

Right? The power of his word manifested. Especially in treacherous times. You know, it's difficult to read the words in the Bible.

But there are people, the lives of people remind you the power of the word. And secondly, truly, the authority of the Bible.

[28:53] Ultimately. My life has those testimonies because it's the written word and the word of God who became flesh.

That changed me. Alright? This is our text of the month. Yay! Let's read this together again, eh? Alright?

All scriptures is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting, and training in righteousness.

So that the servant of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work. Now, the first part. We all like to know the Bible. We all want to exegete the Bible well. We all want to correctly understand the Bible.

[29:51] Alright? Hard works. But if we just fall short in the first part in verse 16. Yes, the Bible is for teaching.

Bible for rebuking, correcting, and training. I know all that. But actually, even in this fourth description in the first 16, it's not easy.

I was talking to Ben just before. And, oh, it's hard, you know, when you're being rebuked. Who wants to be rebuked? You know? As I'm a pastor, and friend come to me.

Pastor, I believe this verse actually is talking to you. Talking to you. You're being a bit arrogant, I think. Oh, no. How could I take that from a young girl? You rebuking me with the word of God? It takes a lot of humility. Right? And maybe at times I will need to listen. If I shove it off right away, perhaps I really need to be rebuked.

[31:02] Yeah. Everybody stands under the authority of God. No one is perfect.

All right? When I say, I'm fine. I'm good enough. Perhaps I really need to be corrected and rebuked and taught.

Okay. But if we're just treating that in verse 16, and that's it. I know all about it.

I have the best of the most accurate exegesis. I interpret the text well. Not enough. The purpose of teaching, rebuking, correcting, and training, so that the servant of God might be thoroughly equipped for every good work.

Information, not enough. We need to be transformed. And ongoing being formed.

[32:21] Being equipped. Trained. So that my life can be good vessels. Whether I speak.

Whether I serve. Or actually just. That's what Paul was actually describing. Being manifested in this life.

Look. The word of God shaped me for me. So that now you can see the word of God working in me. And the end times.

When there is a. And truth is so relative. When truth is not. Not. Clear. Perhaps God is using you and me.

To manifest. His truth. In our lives. When people come to you. What do you think about that? I have. I base. My understanding.

[33:27] On the word of God. I can't tell you what is right. And what is wrong. This is what Paul.

Was trying to address. Timothy. In the currents of the end times. May we. Know.

It's truth. So that we can stand on it. We don't. We won't be swept away. Stand. Stand.

On the word of God. So maybe. In our reflections. How well. Do we know. The Bible. We open up the Bible.

Can I. Identify. The falsehood. With the truth. Sure. I mean. We all need to work harder. No one. No one can claim.

[34:28] I know. The Bible. Back to front. But. If we have. Become Christians. Through these years. With my spiritual formation.

My spiritual. Life. Be compatible. With the years. That have come to know Jesus. Three years. Five years. Ten years. Do I have. The three years. Five years. Ten years. Of the spiritual status. Or am I just. A spiritual baby.

How are we going to. Stand. With enough faith. In midst of these. Current. Dangerous times. If we. We're not sure.

We can be. Easily. Easily. Swept away. Before we knew. Probably. We will deny. Jesus.

[35:29] We're not. Standing. Firm. On the word of God. So be careful. All. This is a.

Reminder. And also. It's a warning. For us all. But. We don't need to be. We're. Striving all. By ourselves. There is.

The truth. The word of God. Preserved. Throughout. All these centuries. For us. The word. The Bible. Is. God. Breathed. All right.

It's directly. From God. He breathed. Okay. When we. When we. Hear this word. God. Breathed. Actually. In Genesis. This is exactly.

What happened. God. Breathed. Is breath. Into. Into. Into. Adam and Eve. Right. It's. Directly. From God. And the Bible. Is God.

[36:25] Breathed. And it. And. He has. The eternal. And the. At the power. And. And. Authority.

That can sustain us. And our responsibility. Is to know. To read. To study. And to be changed. By his word.

Let's pray. Father. I just. Thank you. For your word. Thank you. Through all. Throughout all these. Centuries. That your word.

Remain. The heavens. And the earth. Might fall. Might fail. But your word. Remains. Thank you. Lord.

And. Thank you. For the. Tangible. Bible. That. We have. Preserved. Translated. And. Into our hands. Thank you. That we can read. And we can.

[37:22] We can study. And. We can. Hear. And we can. Be transformed. By it. Through your Holy Spirit. So Lord.

We ask that you will. Transform us. Form us. To be your. Appropriate. Acceptable. Vessels. So. To. To know your word. And to share your word. To others. Thank you Lord. In Jesus name we pray. Amen.