

THE PASTORAL EPISTLES

Study 14

2 Timothy 3

Gospel Stewardship (2 Tim 3:1-17)

Verse 1

2 Tim 3:1

1 But mark this: There will be terrible times in the last days.

1) Objective question, choose the most appropriate answer. In verse 1, The 'last days' refers to:

A. Not only future times, when things will worsen (Matt 24:21-31), but also the present.

B. Far away in the future, don't need to worry about it now.

Verses 2-5

2 Tim 3:2-5

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

2) In verses 2-5, Paul listed out 19 traits that evil people have when the end of times come. In your own words, add a little description/expand a little on each trait.

Traits	Description
Lovers of themselves	selfish/narcissistic, always put their own wants and needs first
Lovers of money	\$\$\$\$\$ money minded, everything is about profit, cares too much about money
Boastful	someone who likes to show off

Proud	someone who puts themselves higher than others, elite mentality
Abusive	takes advantage of others whether mentality of physically
Disobedient to their parents	does not listen and obey their parents in general
Ungrateful	spoiled little brats, does not appreciate people or God
Unholy	<u>very stained with evil</u>
Without love	<u>does not act or intend to act out of loving intentions</u>
Unforgiving	<u>thinks themselves as victims all the time</u>
Slanderous	<u>gossips and say bad things about others behind their back</u>
Without self-control	<u>let themselves go on everything, any desires they just let it be fulfilled or ensures it is fulfilled without caring about the cost or consequences</u>
Brutal	<u>cruel, excessive in strength or reaction</u>
Not lovers of the good	<u>does not support or contribute towards a bigger, good goal of humanity</u>
Treacherous	<u>can betray you anytime</u>
Rash	<u>does not process their emotions before acting</u>
Conceited	<u>think they know it all and won't bother to listen what others have to say</u>
Lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God	<u>want the cake(created items) but not the baker of cakes(God/Creator)"</u>
Having the appearance of godliness, but denying its power	<u>Fake Christians. Pretending to be goody two shoes, puts up an act or pretends to be good, doesn't really apply it, preventing real good from changing peoples' lives. Like someone pretending to be a doctor but can't</u>

	<p><u>save lives, denying someone of proper treatment to live.</u></p> <p><u>Dr Peter ans:</u></p> <p><u>The appearance of godliness refers to them performing useless miracles.(eg. Slayed in spirit, gold fillings incident.)</u></p> <p><u>The real power of the gospel comes from obedience that conforms to 'good work' in v17, it comes in the form of suffering and persecution.</u></p>
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3) Objective question, choose the most appropriate answer. All these negative traits in the letter are referring to:

- A. All types of sinners including Christians.
- B. Non-believers who reject Jesus or haven't received Jesus.
- C. People who are pretending to be Christians but actually do not love God.**

Background information

Verse 4-5 speaks of 'such people' who are 'lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God', the modern versions of it is called the 'Prosperity Gospel' and 'Word of Faith' movement and have these 4 signs/symptoms:

- i) Preaches that "Jesus purchased all the benefits of salvation for this life NOW"
- ii) Preaches that "We can receive the Abrahamic blessings NOW"
- iii) We give to get (always quoting 2 Corinthians 9:6 "Remember this: Whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows generously will also reap generously.")
- iv) Name it and claim it now (always quoting Matt 7:7 "Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you.")

4) Objective question, choose the most appropriate answer. With the background information, we know how to identify these 'lovers of pleasure'. Now that we can identify them, verse 5 is Paul's instructions to 'Have nothing to do with such people'. So, we should...

- A. Literally avoid them like they are Covid Positive, don't talk to them forever.
- B. Not applicable, because we are all sinners, we can't avoid sinners. <not this answer because passage is not referring to typical sinners but fake Christians who are disruptive>

C. Exclude them from the congregation's activities, but open to talk and guide them to repentance.

Verses 6-9

2 Tim 3:6-9

6 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, 7 always learning but never able to come to a knowledge of the truth. 8 Just as Jannes and Jambres opposed Moses, so also these teachers oppose the truth. They are men of depraved minds, who, as far as the faith is concerned, are rejected. 9 But they will not get very far because, as in the case of those men, their folly will be clear to everyone.

5) Open discussion questions: False teachers.

a) Are 'gullible women' the only victims of these false teachers?

The 'gullible women' is likely situational to the context. The women in Ephesus are already victims as they are described in 1 Timothy 5:15 to have 'already strayed after Satan'. However, all Christians and especially recent converts or the younger teens may be more vulnerable, gullible and are potential victims.

b) In verse 8, it says 'always learning but never able to come to a knowledge of the truth.' So should we still try to lead them back to God?

You won't be able to tell who falls into this category. All you can do is to share, but this is just a warning that people who never learn still exists and so don't be disheartened, because the fault isn't with your lack of ability to explain.

c) In verse 8, it refers to the false teachers as 'men of depraved minds, who, as far as the faith is concerned, are rejected'. Does this mean they can't be saved and that we should 'have nothing to do with such people'?

I would leave it to the church leaders to handle false teachers, to lead the conversation of repentance.

Verses 10-15

2 Tim 3:10-15

A Final Charge to Timothy

10 You, however, know all about my teaching, my way of life, my purpose, faith, patience, love, endurance, 11 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. 12 In fact, everyone who wants to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted, 13 while evildoers and impostors will go from bad to worse, deceiving and being deceived. 14 But as for you, continue in what you have learned and have become convinced of, because you know those from whom you learned it, 15 and how from infancy you have known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus.

6) Open discussion questions: Imposter Syndrome.

a) Since even Christians are sinners and also struggle with our own comforts and pleasure, rather than God’s purpose for us, does that mean we are fake Christians or the ‘imposters’ in verse 13?

Not necessarily. I believe it is a process, depending on whether you are aware of it and are working towards a change or not.

b) Does this mean we haven’t ‘truly’ repented, or we are a work in progress that needs repeated repentance to continuously realign our purpose with God?

I believe it is not a complete transformation to totally love God at the point of repentance, else there will not be a need for verse 16 where there are occasions for ‘teaching, rebuking, correcting and training.

Verses 16-17

2 Tim 3:16-17

16 All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, 17 so that the servant of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.

7) Open discussion questions: Teaching and correcting others.

a) Is the instruction in verses 16-17 only meant for Timothy and the leaders or is it meant for all Christians regardless of maturity?

Meant for all. However leaders and those with matured understanding take priority or precedence in this responsibility.

b) Do you see or do this in your Christian fellowship groups?

i) In your life group or gamma group?

ii) In your external mixed denomination bible study groups (eg.BSF)?

iii) In your own family? What if you have non-Christian family members?