



End of the World Part 3

Sunday, March 21, 2021

2 Timothy 3:5-9

The world and our culture have many people who appear to be religious. How do we know we know they are legit and worth listening to?

Setting the Scene

- Paul is writing Timothy in the last days of life, warning him that in the last days, false teachers and prophets will rise up. (2 Tim. 3:1, Romans 1:30-32) Even spiritual leaders will turn a blind eye towards sin.
- "Your actions speak so loudly, I can not hear what you are saying."— Ralph Waldo Emerson
- Timothy is pastoring a church of young believers and amongst those believers were many widows.

²⁵ "And there will be strange signs in the sun, moon, and stars. And here on earth, the nations will be in turmoil, perplexed by the roaring seas and strange tides. ²⁶ People will be terrified at what they see coming upon the earth, for the powers in the heavens will be shaken. ²⁷ Then everyone will see the Son of Man^[a] coming on a cloud with power and great glory. ²⁸ So when all these things begin to happen, stand and look up, for your salvation is near!" Luke 21:25-28

²¹ "But you may wonder, 'How will we know whether or not a prophecy is from the LORD?' ²² If the prophet speaks in the LORD's name, but his prediction does not happen or come true, you will know that the LORD did not give that message. That prophet has spoken without my authority and need not be feared. Deuteronomy 18:21-22 ²⁰ Do not scoff at prophecies, ²¹ but test everything that is said. Hold on to what is good. ²² Stay away from every kind of evil. 1 Thessalonians 5:20-21

- It would be very convenient if all false prophets appeared as ranting, wild-eyed weirdos. But unfortunately, as the Scriptures make plain, many appear, and sound, perfect and righteous:

¹³ These people are false apostles. They are deceitful workers who disguise themselves as apostles of Christ. ¹⁴ But I am not surprised! Even Satan disguises himself as an angel of light. ¹⁵ So it is no wonder that his servants also disguise themselves as servants of righteousness. In the end, they will get the punishment their wicked deeds deserve. 2 Corinthians 11:13-15

⁵ for many will come in my name, claiming, 'I am the Messiah.' They will deceive many. Matthew 24:5

²³ "Then if anyone tells you, 'Look, here is the Messiah,' or 'There he is,' don't believe it. ²⁴ For false messiahs and false prophets will rise up and perform great signs and wonders so as to deceive, if possible, even God's chosen ones. ²⁵ See, I have warned you about this ahead of time. ²⁶ "So if someone tells you, 'Look, the Messiah is out in the desert,' don't bother to go and look. Or, 'Look, he is hiding here,' don't believe it! ²⁷ For as the lightning flashes in the east and shines to the west, so it will be when the Son of Man^[a] come Matthew 24:23-27

A Description of False Prophets

- False Prophets will reject the Power of God (Vs. 5)
- False Prophets Take Advantage of Vulnerable People (Vs. 6-7)

These homes were apparently well-known because the original Greek says "the homes." They were probably the spacious homes of the wealthy, where house churches often met. The verb literally suggests "creeping in" under false pretenses. The idea is stealth. They were religious sneaks.¹

- They will play on felt needs. All major cults in our world began with those who had a form of godliness but no power prey on people's emotional and spiritual needs, such as guilt without the Gospel.

These women are described in three ways: (1) **overwhelmed with sins**, (2) **being led by manifold passions**, and (3) **always learning and never being able to come into a knowledge of the truth** (3:6-7). **Overwhelmed** (sōreuō) is a metaphor, literally signifying "to heap together" or "to heap up."²

¹ Hughes, R. K., & Chapell, B. (2000). *1 & 2 Timothy and Titus: to guard the deposit* (p. 225). Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books.

² Spencer, A. B. (2014). *2 Timothy and Titus: A New Covenant Commentary*. (M. F. Bird & C. Keener, Eds.) (p. 122). Eugene, OR: Cascade Books.

- False Prophets Have Counterfeit Faith. (Vs. 8-9)
 - ✓ They will entice people will sinful desires
 - ✓ Play on the desires for learning
 - ✓ Oppose truth with counterfeit results

How Do We Know?

1. Is what they are saying Biblical?

- Our standard for all "new" ideas should be from the Word of God
- Do not quote men on certain subjects. Go directly to the Word of God!
- Don't believe Anyone Who Ignores, Or Disagrees With, God's Word
- Familiarity with the Scriptures, all of the Scriptures, is a strong defense. Incredible as it may seem, many Christian-professing people have not read all of the Bible at least one time.

¹⁶ All Scripture is inspired by God and is useful to teach us what is true and to make us realize what is wrong in our lives. It corrects us when we are wrong and teaches us to do what is right. 2 Timothy 3:16

2. Do They Produce Spiritual Fruit?

²² But the Holy Spirit produces this kind of fruit in our lives: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, ²³ gentleness, and self-control. There is no law against these things! Galatians 5:22-23

- Are there signs of fruit?
- What does this teacher say about Jesus?
- Do they preach the Gospel?
- Minister" means servant, "apostle" means messenger, "evangelist" means announcer) are not offended if you check to see if what they say is correct, or question them if you find something that you think is wrong. They expect you to do so.
- What kind of reputation do they have?

³³ "A tree is identified by its fruit. If a tree is good, its fruit will be good. If a tree is bad, its fruit will be bad. ³⁴ You brood of snakes! How could evil men like you speak what is good and right? For whatever is in your heart determines what you say. ³⁵ A good person produces good things from the treasury of a good heart, and an evil person produces evil things from the treasury of an evil heart." Matthew 12:33-35

3. Do they have a lifestyle marked by pride and lust?

- Watch out for people who exalt themselves over Christ.
- God's true servants are not interested in taking from you. They want to give to you not worldly money that is quickly spent, but true wealth, the knowledge and understanding that will enable you to obtain the eternal spiritual riches that will last forever. God's true servants don't want your money. They want you to obey God.

4. True Prophets Reflect Jesus

- Do they center their talks on God's kingdom, or are they centered on things of the world?
- Do they have the joy of the Lord?
- Goodness is evident in their life

¹¹ Even children are known by the way they act, whether their conduct is pure and whether it is right. Proverbs 20:11

One last thought: Not everyone who sounds religious is godly. You know they are speaking the truth by the signs you see in them.