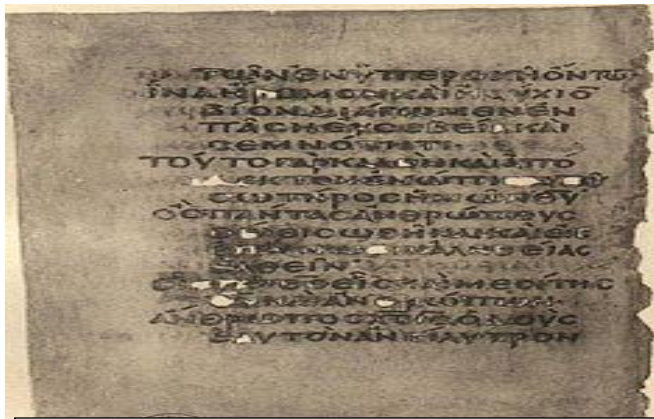


Study Guide

2 Timothy 3

“Being Effective in Tough Times”



2 Timothy 3

The emphasis in this chapter is on *knowledge* and *responsibility*. Paul informed Timothy about the character of the last days, and then instructed him how to respond. Action must be based on knowledge. Too many Christians are like the pilot who informed his passengers, “We are lost, but we are making very good time.”

“These last days” began with the ministry of Jesus Christ (Heb. 1:1–2) and will continue until He returns. They are called the “last days” because in them God is completing His purposes for His people. Because our Lord has delayed His return, some people scoff at the promise of His coming (2 Peter 3:3ff); but He will come as He promised.

Within this period of “last days” there will be “times” (seasons) of different kinds; but as the “times” draw to a close, they will become perilous. This word means “dangerous, hard to deal with, savage.” This is the same Greek word that is used to describe the two violent demoniacs of Gadara (Matt. 8:28). This suggests that the violence of the last times will be energized by demons (1 Tim. 4:1).

There is no doubt that these characteristics started to appear in Paul’s day, and now they have increased in intensity. It is not simply that we have more people in the world, or better news coverage. It appears that evil is deeper and of greater intensity, and that it is being accepted and promoted by society in a bolder way. It is not that we have small pockets of rebellion here and there. All of society seems to be in ferment and rebellion. We are indeed in “terrible times” (2 Tim. 3:1, NIV).

Paul gave Timothy three instructions to obey in order that his ministry might be effective during perilous times.

Turn Away From The False Teacher 3:1-9

- Paul describes the false teacher with 18 different characteristics. List 5 of them. a) _____
b) _____ c) _____ d) _____ e) _____ (3:2-5)
- Who are their converts? _____ (3:6-7)
- Who are their leaders? _____ (3:8-9)

Follow Those Who Are True 3:10-12

- What are the characteristics of the faithful?
a) _____ (10a), b) _____ (3:10b), c) _____ (3:10c)
d) _____ (3:10d), e) _____ (3:11-12)
- Is there any doubt that the faithful Christian will be persecuted? _____ (3:12)

Continue In God’s Word 3:13-17

- List the five things Paul says the Word of God does. a) _____ (3:15a),
b) _____ (3:15b), c) _____ (3:16a),
d) _____ (3:16b), e) _____ (3:17)