

A Father's Farewell

2nd Timothy

Moral Decay In the Last Days

Key idea:

We live in the last days, which are terrible times marked by moral decay and deception, but the Gospel and Spirit provide power to deliver us from the dominance of sin and error.

Key text:

2 Timothy 3:1–5

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

Key points:

1. The last days, which is the entire period from the 1st to the 2nd coming of Christ, will be marked by moral decay and deception.
2. People have a natural tendency to give in to sin and moral decay.
3. The vice list in 2 Timothy 3:2-5 has several notable parts to sin and moral decay:
 - a. The root problem is disordered love - desiring something or someone more than we love and desire God Himself.
 - b. Disordered love leads to pride, arrogance, and conceit - considering myself as the center of the universe and the determiner of truth.
 - c. Disordered love and pride lead to a breakdown in relationships with others - from family, to personal relationships, to society as a whole.
 - d. The end result of all of this is total moral decay, loving evil rather than good, and a loss of any ability to say no to our own desires.
4. Many people who give in to sin and moral decay still claim to know and love God, but they have an outward form of godliness while denying the power of God's Spirit and the Gospel to change us and deliver us from the domination of sin and error.

Questions for discussion/application:

1. What part of Sunday's text and teaching stood out most to me? Why?
2. When I think of 'the last days' do I think of the entire time from the 1st coming of Christ until His return, the resurrection, and final judgment, or do I think of the last few years just prior to His return? What does the Scripture mean by 'the last days'?
3. Why does Paul remind Timothy of the nature of the last days? How does this help Timothy (and me) to be prepared and to live faithfully?
4. When I read the list of vices in 2 Timothy 3:2-4, how representative does it seem to be of our own time? Does this list seem overly harsh, or does it seem realistic as a description of our age?
5. Why is disordered love - loving something or someone more than I love God - the root of all sin? How have I experienced this in my own life?
6. How do I see the vices of disordered love (loving myself, money, and pleasure rather than God) and pride (placing myself at the center of the universe and as the determiner of truth) at work in our culture? How do I protect myself from being seduced by these deadly deceptions?
7. How do I think disordered love (loving myself, money, and pleasure rather than God) and pride (placing myself at the center of the universe and as the determiner of truth) are leading to the social breakdown we see in our country at present? Do I see evidence of any of the relationship destroying attitudes and actions Paul mentions in my own life?
8. Why do people who deny the essentials of biblical truth and who want to re-define the biblical teaching on sin still want to keep an outward form of godliness?
9. Are there any specific sins the Spirit is revealing to me that God wants to root out of my life? How can I draw on the Spirit's power and the Gospel to grow in godliness in these areas in the coming weeks?
10. Who will I call to encourage this week? What specific members of BRCC will I commit before God to pray for and call?

For Further Study:

[Systematic Theology - Chapter 54 - The Return of Christ: When and How - Part 1](#)

Se7en - The Root Vices (Teaching Series - Lent 2018)

Preview of Next Week: 2 Timothy 3:6-9