

Theme: The last days are full of deception, but Christians must strive to be faithful to the truth in their belief and conduct regardless of the consequences.

## I. Intro - The Power of Propaganda & Deception

- A. A lot of reading on Nazi Germany this year
- B. Goebbels was a master of propaganda & deception
- C. They slowly deceived a whole nation and distorted their whole view of reality - with horrible results
- D. Goebbels whole family committed suicide at the end
- E. Today - deception and truth in the last days

## II. Deception In the Last Days

- A. False teachers will oppose the truth to encourage sin  
They are the kind who worm their way into homes and gain control over weak-willed women...<sup>8</sup> Just as Jannes and Jambres opposed Moses, so also these men oppose the truth — men of depraved minds, who, as far as the faith is concerned, are rejected. 2 Timothy 3:6–8
  - 1. Paul turns to the false teachers again
  - 2. These men are deceitful and wicked - worm their way/sneak into homes, gain control over/take captive people who are vulnerable to their deceptions.
  - 3. This language has military overtones of a surprise ambush that takes people captive.
  - 4. They are like the magicians of Pharaoh who opposed Moses and God.
    - a. Jannes and Jambres are not named in the OT

- b. Their names were part of a long tradition well established before the time of the NT
- 5. A strong analogy to compare them to these men
  - a. They were Egyptians, not part of the people of God
  - b. They opposed Moses and the truth of God
  - c. They used magic & deception to mimic God's work
  - d. They were judged by God and cursed with the plagues
- 6. They have depraved minds and are rejected - the opposite word of what Timothy is to be in 2 Timothy 2:15 (approved)

- B. A brief word about those who received these charlatans  
They are the kind who worm their way into homes and gain control over weak-willed women... 2 Timothy 3:6–7
  - 1. Paul uses strong language about the people being deceived by these teachers.
  - 2. He calls them immature/weak-willed women - 'little women'
    - a. This is NOT a description of Paul's view of women in general - it is these specific women
    - b. Paul often spoke highly of women, their spiritual insight, maturity, and service  

I commend to you our sister Phoebe, a servant of the church in Cenchrea. <sup>2</sup> I ask you to receive her in the Lord in a way worthy of the saints and to give her any help she may need from you, for she has been a great help to many people, including me. <sup>3</sup> Greet Priscilla and Aquila, my fellow workers in Christ Jesus. <sup>4</sup> They risked their lives for me. Not only I but all the churches of the Gentiles are grateful to them. Romans 16:1–4

1. Phoebe, a servant/deaconess has been a great help to Paul - spoken of in glowing terms
2. Priscilla (before Aquila), fellow workers, risked their lives, I and all the churches are grateful to them
3. Several other women greeted and commended in Romans 16
4. Similar praise for women in Philippians 4:1-3

c. The problem here in 2 Timothy is not that they are women, but their specific actions in receiving these false teachers and helping them.

They are the kind who worm their way into homes and gain control over weak-willed women, who are loaded down with sins and are swayed by all kinds of evil desires, <sup>7</sup> always learning but never able to acknowledge the truth. 2 Timothy 3:6–7

1. They were being seduced by these men to follow lies
2. It is possible that there was an impure aspect to the relationship as well, which may account for why Paul told Timothy to make sure he treated women as mothers and sisters with absolute purity (1 Tim 5:1-2).
3. Young wealthy widows in the ancient world were especially vulnerable to these types of charlatans - and it seems this was a particular problem in Ephesus as we read 1 & 2 Timothy (see 1 Tim 5:11-15)
4. In any event, they engaged in idle speculation, loved the religious talk - but never arrived at the truth.

3. The key point is that these teachers, rather than helping lead these vulnerable people to the truth were sneaking up on them, taking them captive to lies, and using them for their own ends. This often “vaccinates” people against coming to the faith.

### C. Running hard - in the wrong direction!

while evil men and impostors will go from bad to worse, deceiving and being deceived. 2 Timothy 3:13

1. These false teachers are evil men and impostors

- a. γόητες - impostors - originally meant sorcerer/ conjurer - a link back to v8 magicians
- b. Also was used for swindlers, cheats, impostors
- c. These are truly evil men!

2. These teachers are progressing from bad to worse!

- a. προκόπτω - to advance
- b. 2 Timothy 2:19 - advance in ungodliness!
- c. Here the “advance/progress” is from bad to worse!

3. These teachers deceive and are deceived

- a. They are deceiving others - starting with the women but moving to others in the church
- b. But they themselves have been deceived by Satan and are being held captive to do his will

The Spirit clearly says that in later times some will abandon the faith and follow deceiving spirits and things taught by demons. <sup>2</sup> Such teachings come through hypocritical liars, whose consciences have been seared as with a hot iron. 1 Timothy 4:1–2

- c. These teachers may believe what they say - but they have been deceived and are simply deceiving others rather than helping them.

4. In the last days there will be false teachers who are the deceived mouthpieces for demonic lies, and who will try to sneak into God’s people to lead others into deception.

### III. The Power of Truth & Godliness in the Last Days

- A. Paul turns back to the power of positive truth  
You, however, know all about my teaching, my way of life, my purpose, faith, patience, love, endurance... 2 Timothy 3:10
1. You however - a big transition
  2. Paul sets himself up in contrast to the false teachers
  3. Timothy knows Paul's teaching - sound doctrine
  4. Timothy knows Paul's way of life - godly living
  5. Timothy knows Paul's consistency in ministry - purpose, faith, patience, love, endurance
  6. This points to Paul's encouragement to Timothy  
Be diligent in these matters; give yourself wholly to them, so that everyone may see your progress.  
<sup>16</sup>Watch your life and doctrine closely. Persevere in them, because if you do, you will save both yourself and your hearers. 1 Timothy 4:15–16
    - a. Watch your life and doctrine - godliness and truth
    - b. Godliness and truth - the opposite of the moral decay and deception of the last days.
    - c. Truth and godliness have power to save the church from the powerful deception of the last days.
    - d. Church leaders must give themselves fully to watching both of these areas carefully, for they are powerful tools for the Spirit's use in protecting the congregation.
    - e. The same thing is true for all believers - parents with kids, believers with family and friends - truth and godliness are powerful tools in the Spirit's hands

- B. The path of suffering in the last days  
You, however, know all about my teaching, my way of life, my purpose, faith, patience, love, endurance, <sup>11</sup>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. 2 Timothy 3:10–11
1. Paul then turns to persecution and suffering
  2. He reminds Timothy of persecutions in Paul's life
    - a. These are persecutions from Timothy's region
    - b. Timothy probably saw this firsthand, perhaps at the time of his own conversion - Acts 13-14
    - c. Progresses in severity from run out of town (Antioch), to threatened with stoning (Iconium) to actual stoning (Lystra, Timothy's town)
    - d. Timothy had observed these first hand and thus knew the cost of faithfulness in doctrine and life
    - e. But the Lord had rescued Paul (Psalm 34:19)
    - f. The rescue was from death, not suffering.
    - g. And though Paul was about to be martyred, the Lord would deliver him through death itself! (2 Timothy 4:18 - same verb)  
For I am already being poured out like a drink offering, and the time has come for my departure... The Lord will **rescue** me from every evil attack and will bring me safely to his heavenly kingdom. To him be glory for ever and ever. Amen. 2 Timothy 4:6, 18
      1. Paul knew he was about to be martyred (v6; also 8)
      2. God would rescue Paul even through death!
  3. Suffering is part of faithfulness for all Christians

In fact, everyone who wants to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted, 2 Timothy 3:12

- a. Suffering was not unique to Paul; it is the normal Christian life
- b. Everyone who desires godliness (εὐσεβῶς) in character will find themselves opposed, ridiculed, marginalized, and persecuted by the unbelieving culture.
- c. Those who desire to be faithful to the truth and godliness in this age of deception and moral decay must be prepared to suffer for their faithfulness.

#### IV. Applying the Word

##### A. Do I see the danger of deception invading the church?

1. This is about spiritual deception invading the church
2. False teachers try to redefine sin, redemption, spirituality to seduce God's people
3. They will shout "Hosanna to the Son of David" while denying Him with their lives
4. These teachers try to redefine the Gospel or simply focus on issues that are disputable and not core to the Gospel
5. This is why we must anchor ourselves firmly in the Word of God, so we know truth from deception  
When men tell you to consult mediums and spiritists, who whisper and mutter, should not a people inquire of their God? Why consult the dead on behalf of the living? <sup>20</sup> To the law and to the testimony! If they do not speak according to this word, they have no light of dawn. Isaiah 8:19–20
  - a. People were tempted to "alternate spirituality"

- b. This has similar overtones to Paul's description of these teachers as magicians/conjurers
- c. We are to go to the Word for it is our standard by which all 'truth' is judged and it is our protection against the infection of false teaching and sin

6. Am I growing in my knowledge of the Word?

7. Dig into the Word via teachings, daily quiet time, personal study - your life depends upon it!

##### B. A word about suffering and a word of encouragement

1. Paul again points out that faithfulness to Jesus and the truth will bring rejection, suffering, and persecution
2. We need to simply accept this fact - the effort to be accepted by the world is simply wasted effort
3. There may be an increasing price to be paid - though I pray for a great awakening!
4. Be encouraged - the truth will win out in the end!
5. Trust that God's Word can protect you, your kids and family, and BRCC - and He will rescue us!
6. Truth is stronger than error - trust God and sow the truth!
7. Our God will never abandon us - and will rescue us from death itself!

##### C. The Table of Refuge

1. Psalm 34:1-8 responsive reading
2. Simpler time today than normal - take refuge!

## Deception and Truth In the Last Days

2 Timothy 3:6-13

April 10, 2022

Communion

1 Peter 5:10

Teaching keywords: False teaching and heresy; truth; suffering; godliness

And the God of all grace, who called you to his eternal glory in Christ, after you have suffered a little while, will himself restore you and make you strong, firm and steadfast. 1 Peter 5:10

They are the kind who worm their way into homes and gain control over weak-willed women, who are loaded down with sins and are swayed by all kinds of evil desires, <sup>7</sup> always learning but never able to acknowledge the truth. <sup>8</sup> Just as Jannes and Jambres opposed Moses, so also these men oppose the truth — men of depraved minds, who, as far as the faith is concerned, are rejected. <sup>9</sup> But they will not get very far because, as in the case of those men, their folly will be clear to everyone.

<sup>10</sup> You, however, know all about my teaching, my way of life, my purpose, faith, patience, love, endurance, <sup>11</sup> 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. <sup>12</sup> In fact, everyone who wants to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted, <sup>13</sup> while evil men and impostors will go from bad to worse, deceiving and being deceived. 2 Timothy 3:6–13