

Today's main text: 2 Timothy 3

Last time: Pastor Randy; 2 Timothy 2:8-25

Review: 2 Timothy 2:24-26

24 And the servant of the Lord must not strive; but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient,

25 In meekness instructing those that oppose themselves; if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth;

26 And that they may recover themselves out of the snare of the devil, who are taken captive by him at his will.

“Recover themselves...”

Other translations say:

“...that they may come to their senses...” AMPC, NKJV, NIV, ESV, NASB1995

“...they may awake out of the devil's snare...” YLT98

“This will cause them to rediscover themselves...” TPT

Why are we commanded here to NOT quarrel, argue, or fight these people?

Those who are in opposition to God's truth are not the enemy.

So we are to correct them.

How? With God's Word!

Why? Because they are deceived!

They are literally **snared** or **trapped** by Satan himself; even to the point of being “...taken captive by him to do his will.”

Ephesians 6:12 points out who the real enemy is.

For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.

But next, in chapter 3, we have one of the most clear, concrete, and vivid descriptions of what the Bible says is coming just before Jesus comes back in the whole Bible.

Chapter 3.

1 This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come.

This also know = Τοῦτο δὲ γίνωσκε

= moreover - *de* - (what follows is absolutely critical)

= know – *ginosko* - [REALLY know; understand; be *intimately* acquainted with]

= This – *touto* - (active present verb; command!)

Do you think **knowing** (and I mean REALLY KNOWING) the signs of the End Times is optional?

“This know also” == **knowing** the signs of the end times is NOT optional. In fact, this is a clear and unmistakable COMMAND (imperative, which means COMMAND).

That in the last days = ὅτι ἐν ἐσχάταις ἡμέραις

Last days = ἐσχάταις

= Very last in a series; very last stop; very furthest you could possibly go

Of a ship: the very last port on the journey; there is not another one after.

When are the LAST DAYS?

Let's let the Bible tell us.

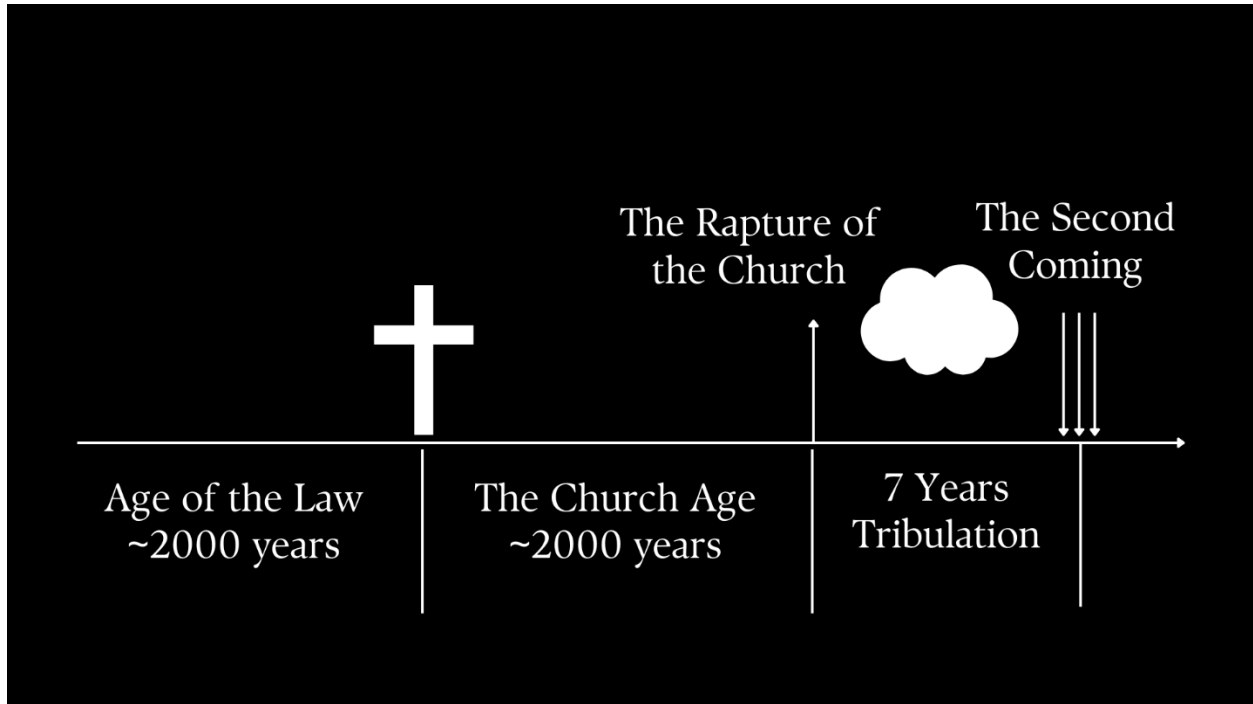
Acts 2:17

And it shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh: and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams:

The Church Age or The Age of Grace began at Pentecost in AD 33 at 9:00 AM. Peter tells us so!

So we have been living in the Last Days for nearly 2000 years! Only two days on God's timeline, as it turns out.

DIAGRAM



Age of the Law > JESUS > Age of Grace > The Rapture > the Tribulation (saints in heaven) > The Second Coming

Shall come = ἐνίστημι

= en + histemi = in + to stand

= enhistemi = to be surrounded by; standing in the very middle of something

Perilous times = καιροὶ χαλεποὶ

= times: appointed; due; seasonable time

Perilous = χαλεπός

= *chalepos*

= hard to bear, troublesome, dangerous

Only used 2x in the NT.

Only other time used besides here in Timothy:

Matthew 8:28

And when he was come to the other side into the country of the Gergesenes, there met him two possessed with devils, coming out of the tombs, exceeding fierce, so that no man might pass by that way

Perilous times *shall come*...

The Holy Spirit says that just before Jesus returns (and indeed, we are living in these very days) the times will be hard to bear, troublesome, dangerous, fierce, and unavoidable—you and I will feel as if we are being suffocated; surrounded by these things.

So, Holy Spirit... what kinds of **times** are we talking about here?

2 For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy,

For men shall be = for this reason; truly therefore, all mankind shall be

ἔσονται γὰρ οἱ ἄνθρωποι

lovers of their own selves = φίλαντοι = philo (love for another) + autos (oneself)

*The Holy Spirit created a new word here (not found ANYWHERE in literature) to describe this astonishing phenomenon!

This pictures a person literally kissing themselves; they love themselves so much! Can you imagine a person loving him or herself so much they are kissing themselves?!

The Holy Spirit says that just before Jesus returns, there will be a widespread and pervasive self-loving, self-absorbed, self-addicted mindset in culture.

Covetous = φιλάργυροι = philarguros = philos (love) + arguros (silver; riches)

The Holy Spirit says that just before Jesus returns, there will be a widespread and pervasive obsession with riches; obtaining riches at all costs, and a commonplace love of money.

Boasters = ἀλαζόνες = alazon = empty pretender; boaster; bragger.

The Holy Spirit says that just before Jesus returns, there will be a widespread and pervasive cultural norm that says it is acceptable to brag about oneself; to put on a front, and to put forward a false image of yourself if it gets you to where you want to go.

Proud = ὑπερήφανοι = huperephanos = huper (above; far above) + phaino (to be shiny in others' eyes; to seem to one's judgment or opinion)

Thus, the word huperephanos means: *to be exceedingly snooty*

The Holy Spirit says that just before Jesus returns, there will be a widespread and pervasive intellectual superiority that looks down on those who believe in objective morality; that Christians are narrow minded and thus idiots. "One way to heaven" is simply too primitive of an idea to the end-times culture; not tolerant enough.

Blasphemers = βλάσφημοι = blasphemos

It was a surprise to me when I found out this word does not refer to being blasphemous against God; blasphemous in a spiritual sense. This word technically carries the idea of *evil speaking; abusive or reproachful speech. Sluggish, stupid, or slanderous speech*. Thus this word really means to speak nastily about other people or even God. Nasty speech!

The Holy Spirit says that just before Jesus returns, there will be a widespread and pervasive injurious, abusive, nasty, and slanderous speech. The words people speak will be, on average, more gross, foul, and reproachful than ever before.

Next, the Holy Spirit makes EIGHT interesting statements.

There is a pattern here!

He takes eight normal words but places a cancellation effect on them which emphasizes each point.

1. *Disobedient to parents* = ἀπειθεῖς γονεῦσιν = *apeithes goneus*

Normally the word *pitho* means *to listen to, to comply with, to obey, to yield to, or to trust in or have confidence in something or someone.*

But with the letter a (alpha: α) in front of the word, it has a cancellation or reversing effect.

Thus, we have:

a-pithos or anti- or opposite of pithos, or *apeithes* = children who do NOT listen to, comply with, obey, yield, or even trust or have confidence in their parents.

The Holy Spirit says that just before Jesus returns, there will be a generation (or generations) of children who do NOT listen to, comply with, obey, yield, or even have trust or confidence in their parents. These are children who do not respect the authority of the parents any longer.

2. *Unthankful* = ἀχάριστοι

Normally the word *charizomai* (from *charis*; grace) would be used to describe something pleasant, agreeable, gracious, or something preserved; gracious.

But with the letter a (alpha: α) in front of the word, it has a cancellation or reversing effect.

Thus, we have: a-charis = anti-gracious or what we would call *entitlement!*

The Holy Spirit says that just before Jesus returns, there will be widespread and pervasive attitude of anti-graciousness or lack of thankfulness in all areas of life. People will not be thankful for what they have; the blessings they enjoy, but will instead have an overwhelming attitude of *entitlement.*

3. *Unholy* = ἀνόσιοι

Normally the word *hosios* means *undefiled by sin; free from wickedness; pure and holy*

But with the letter a (alpha: α) in front of the word, it has a cancellation or reversing effect.

Thus, we have: anti-holy, anti-pure, or simply *wicked*; this also describes a widespread and general disregard for things that are or should be considered holy.

The Holy Spirit says that just before Jesus returns, there will be a widespread and pervasive disregard for things that ought to be considered holy and pure; for instance, the innocence and purity of unborn children or the pure and holy concept of marriage and the family unit.

Summary so far:

1. You and I are living in the last of the last days! There are nearly no more days remaining in this dispensation!
2. The Holy Spirit says these days will be fierce, savage, and unavoidable.
3. The Holy Spirit says, in order to prepare His people, that in these days there will be widespread, pervasive, and culturally-acceptable norms:
 - a. Extreme love of self
 - b. Extreme love of money
 - c. Boasting, self-promoting attitudes
 - d. Snooty, intellectual superiority
 - e. Nasty, slanderous speech
 - f. Disregard for parental leadership
 - g. Unthankful – entitlement!
 - h. Unholy – lack of regard for innocence or holy things

But the list continues in verse 3!

3 Without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good,

4. *Without natural affection* = ἄστοργος

Normally the word *stergo* means *to cherish affectionately; specifically used for the cherishing bond of the family unit*

But with the letter a (alpha: α) in front of the word, it has a cancellation or reversing effect.

Thus, we have *astorgos*: an attitude that is hard-hearted, against, and opposed to the tender and affectionate love present in the family unit. Disintegration of the family unit!

The Holy Spirit says that just before Jesus returns, there will be a widespread and pervasive dissolution and breaking up of the family unit, with a specific attitude that is hard-hearted and opposed to the affectionate and tender love present in the family unit. There will be an attitude that is generally against raising traditional families and especially children.

5. *Trucebreakers* = ἄσπονδος

The word *σπένδω* (*spendo*) is very interesting! It literally carries the idea of being poured out as an offering; to have the blood poured out; or what we would recognize as a blood-covenant.

When the letter a (alpha: α) is placed in front of *spendo*, though, it has a cancellation or reversing effect.

Thus, the new word *aspondos* means the opposite of a covenant, or a “covenant-breaker” or something that is opposed to covenant relationships. In today’s world, this carries several ideas:

1. People in the last days will, by and large, be less likely to commit to anything
2. This very likely refers to divorce; the breaking of personal covenant (indeed, the original design behind marriage is a literal blood covenant) between man and wife.

The Holy Spirit says that just before Jesus returns, there will be a widespread and pervasive lack of commitments in general; the average person will not be apt to make commitments to anything. This will be such a cultural norm that even, if you can believe it, the covenant relationship between husband and wife—the marriage relationship—will be deteriorated as a holy institution and people will avoid committing to each other in this way and will even break their commitments to each other.

False accusers = διάβολος = devils!

This is interesting because this word breaks the pattern of the alpha prefix in the list of eight words that the Holy Spirit was using to describe the general culture at the end of the age, just before Jesus returns. Many scholars agree that this word is an interjection by Paul as he is writing; as if he has been overcome by what he is hearing from the Lord and just blurts out, “Devils! Devils are behind all this!” Which indeed they are. See Ephesians 6:12 and following.

The Holy Spirit says that just before Jesus returns, Satan’s demonic armies will be working overtime; the movement in the spiritual realm will be clearly more active and this movement is the primary source of all the *perilous times* the Holy Spirit warns us about.

6. *Incontinent* = ἀκρατής

Normally the word *kratos* means *power or strength*.

But with the letter a (alpha: α) in front of the word, it has a cancellation or reversing effect.

Thus, this new word, *akrates*, used only here in the NT, carries this idea of a culture that, as a whole, does not have the power to control themselves; they are powerless to control themselves. This really describes an entire culture who is out of control and who have thrown off restraint in nearly every area of their lives. No discipline. Credit, appetite, power, government, etc. All systems will go out of control!

The Holy Spirit says that just before Jesus returns, there will be a widespread lack of discipline and self-control in everything from credit to people’s appetites, to the hunger for power, to the government systems, etc. It will feel like everything is getting out of control!

7. *Fierce* = ἀνήμερος

The word *hemeros* which describes something that is cultured. But with the “a” on the front, this word describes something savage, barbaric, or violent.

This word was also used to describe the entertainment in the Roman colosseum.

The Holy Spirit says that just before Jesus returns, there will be this widespread normalization with violence even to the point of people being fascinated with violence as a source of entertainment, bringing it right into the heart of their homes. This also carries the idea of more brutal and violent events taking place.

8. *Despisers of those that are good* = ἀφιλάγαθος
Aphilagathoi = (oi ending means pervasive; plural!)

Only appears one other time in ANY kind of literature!

Normally, philagathos = love + good: the love of all that is good; that which is noble, excellent, praiseworthy.

But with the *alpha* prefix, this word *aphilagathoi* (widespread, plural) means a *loss of love for that which is decent and moral*. This word was only used to fictitiously describe a land that had no laws that protected good people, but this land only had laws that protected those that were wrong.

The Holy Spirit says that just before Jesus returns, there will be this widespread loss or lack of love for things that are good and noble; indeed, there will be the opposite of a love for decency. The love of that which is decent will become rarer and rarer as Jesus' return draws near.

Eight Things > Reversed in the Last Days – Just Before Jesus Returns!

1. Obedience to parents > disobedience and disregard
2. Gracious attitudes > Entitlement
3. Regard for the innocent and holy > Unholy
4. High value on the family unit > Disintegration
5. Marital and covenant commitments > Divorce
6. Restraint > No self-control
7. Cultured > Violence normalized
8. Respect for what is good and moral > Anti-morality

Questions to Think About

1. What is one thing you learned today that really stands out to you?
2. What is the ultimate solution to today's Christian living in such perilous times? The answer is in this chapter; we just didn't get there today.
3. Ask yourself this: am I guilty of compromising with any of these things we learned today?

Next week we will finish 2 Timothy 3.