

(3:1) – “**This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come.**” When the apostle speaks of ‘the last days,’ he means the days following the first coming to the second coming of Christ. We have the days from Adam to Moses, from Moses (under the law) to Christ, and from Christ's coming to the end of the world. Some mistakenly believed that these days would be a time of peace, holiness, and obedience to God and His Word, especially in the churches and among those who claim to know Christ. But Paul warns Timothy and all true believers to expect perilous, hard, and difficult times, not by reason of outward calamities, scarcity of food, and dangers from the sword, but by reason of the wickedness of men who profess religion! The pastors and people of God will have to contend with legalists, false teachers, hucksters, and evil and profane men and women in the churches. This situation already prevailed during the days of the apostles and has continued, growing worse, to this day (2 Tim. 1:15; 4:10-11, 14-16). It will not get better!

(3:2-4) – Paul gives a description of the hypocrites, false professors, and false preachers that would arise during these last days.

(1) “**Lovers of their own selves.**” This is put first because all error and vices flow from self-love and self-righteousness. He who loves himself and counts himself righteous based on his works does not love or truly believe in Christ. Like the Pharisees of old, he despises others, has no concern for the glory of God nor the good of others. Self-love and self-righteousness promote free-will, human merit, and seek honor and applause from men. When people fail to see their depravity, lack of righteousness, they will not submit to Christ as their righteousness before God. The Gospel commands us to forsake self and repent of our dead works and submit to Christ and is His merits alone.

(2) “**Covetous**” i.e. lovers of money and material gain, looking for personal gain and recognition in all that they do, not only from men but also from God Whom they do not know. They are not content with the salvation that God fully and freely provides in Christ, nor with the providence of God in what they have nor with where they are (Heb. 13:5).

(3) “**Boasters**” – They brag of their honor, wealth, gifts, numbers, and righteousness. Again, like the Pharisee of old, they thank God, not for His grace in Christ, but that they are not like other men (Luke 18:9-12; 1 Cor. 4:7).

(4) “**Proud**” – Nothing is more offensive in the sight of God than pride in the creature (Prov. 6:17; James 4:6). It is pride that keeps sinners from bowing and submitting to Christ and His righteousness imputed as the only ground of salvation (Rom. 9:31 – 10:5).

(5) “**Blasphemers**” – This has to do with thoughts and words regarding the Father, His beloved Son, and the Holy Spirit, to whom all glory, worship, reverence, and praise is due, in whom we live, move, and have our being (both natural and spiritual), and by

whom we are redeemed, kept, and made heirs of eternal life. Any thought or word that renders to God any less than full glory is blasphemy. To claim salvation from God based on our own works and righteousnesses is the ultimate blasphemy.

(6) “**Disobedient to parents**” – These are those who despise authority, whether in parents, magistrates, pastors, employers, or whatever authority God has ordained. They ultimately despise God’s authority as it is He Who established all proper authority revealed in His Word.

(7) “**Unthankful**” to God for what is enjoyed by them and unthankful to men, ascribing all to themselves and their own merit (Eph. 5:20; 1 Thess. 5:18). Gratitude to God, along with grace, and love is the only proper and godly motivation for all acceptable obedience to God.

(8) “**Unholy**” – Without fear of God nor regard for His word nor concern for the testimony of the Gospel, they live and walk in the indulgences of the flesh both inwardly and outwardly, both physically and religiously. God sets His people apart from the world so as to identify them as His own (1 John 5:19-21).

(9) “**Without natural affection**” to husbands, wives, children, parents, and friends. Also leaving the natural use of relations between men and women (Rom. 1:26-27).

(10) “**Trucebreakers**” or covenant breakers, loosing the marriage bond, making void contracts, agreements, and promises both to God and men.

(11) “**False accusers**” – Slanderers of character, careless gossipers and talebearers, falsely accusing God’s people (Matt. 5:10-12; Tim. 5:19).

(12) “**Incontinent**” – Not willing or able to restrain fleshly appetites, tempers, passions, and desires even for the glory of God, intemperate in eating and drinking, indulging themselves without restraint.

(13) “**Fierce**” – Unkind and hateful like cornered beasts striking out at all in reach, wounding and bent on vengeance.

(14) “**Despisers of those that are good**” – Hypocrites hate true believers as the Pharisees hated Christ. The Gospel of grace and Christ’s righteousness condemn their claims and bring out their hatred (John 3:19-20; 15:18-24; 1 John 3:11-13).

(15) “**Traitors**” – They will betray secrets of others (words spoken to them in confidence) to preserve themselves or to gain in some way.

(16) “**Heady, highminded**” – Puffed and swelled up with a vain conceit of their own intelligence, accomplishments, abilities, and righteousness which they imagine they have attained by their works and/or their wills (1 Cor. 3:7; 2 Cor. 12:11).

(17) “**Lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God**” – This comes back to the first word (lovers of self, pleasure, sin, applause, worldly honor, and making a god of their appetites, even their natural and sinful religious desires) and not loving the Lord Jesus Christ. Love for Christ puts all things in their proper place!