

*We exist to make disciples who delight in God and make Him known  
by proclaiming the gospel of Jesus Christ.*

## The Lord Shall Make All Things Clear

2 Timothy 3:6-12

**Keywords:** Persecution, Endurance, Heaven, Judgment, Hope

**PowerPoint Presentation included:** NONE

**SermonAudio Blurb:**

### I. Introduction.

- A. Last week we saw the reality of living in the last days.
  - 1. Began with the coming of the Holy Spirit upon the Church in Acts 2.
  - 2. The description is not of those outside the Church, but inside.
  - 3. Times and seasons that ebb and flow.
- B. The core of the problem is that of misplaced love.
  - 1. The failure to keep the glory and excellency of God at the forefront helps hearts to wander.
  - 2. The lack of true pastoral oversight, where the leadership does not take seriously the warnings in Scripture (Acts 22:17ff).
  - 3. The tendency to ignore clear commands of the Scripture (Romans 12:1-2).
- C. Summary:
  - 1. When we diminish the glory of God and exalt our self-centered desires in the church then these perilous seasons are not far behind.
  - 2. When the leadership does not carefully watch over the flock, and themselves, then men like these shall rise up in large numbers.
  - 3. When the sermons and discipleship resemble this age rather than the one to come, then those who love this age will become entrenched in the church.
- D. How do we interpret life when we see things like this take place?
  - 1. Church history is replete with examples where the wicked rise up into positions of leadership and influence in the church and the results are terrible.
    - a. Today in most of the major denominations those in charge are those who labor hard to denounce the centrality of the Gospel,

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diminish the sinfulness of man, call sin good, and cause the people to question the truthfulness or value of the bible.

- b. Seminaries are cranking out men and women who will not faithfully preach the Word. They utter platitudes to those who are perishing, they denounce those who speak boldly the message of the Scripture, and they shake their head with embarrassment at the narrow-minded folks who are silly enough to take the Scripture for what it says.

2. It is easy to give up and it is easy to lose hope.

- a. There seems to be an unrelenting pressure for a person who lighten up on the message of how to be right with God. Our problem with God is not our sin and rebellion. It is a relational
- b. But in our passage today we will see that God wins in the end.
- c. Silly sounding but it is important to remember because in many ways it is the proper basis of the hope for a Christian.
- d. Let me give it to you in a more full manner: Because all authority has been given to Jesus from His Father; and because He is coming again to judge the living and the dead; and because He shall bring out all that is hidden into the light of His perfect judgment; and because there is but one true God, making it impossible for anyone to hide from Him; and because Jesus has fully and wholly redeemed from sin and judgment those for whom He died; and because He is tasked with not losing one of those who come to Him through faith, entrusting their forgiveness and life to His sufficient care; and because He shall remove forever the great enemies of sin, Satan and death; and because He shall renew the heavens and earth; therefore, we can be confident that those who walk in hidden wickedness within the Church, seeking its harm shall be judged righteously and those who endure and suffer for the sake of the gospel and the glory of the Lord shall be utterly and wholly delivered.

E. Read passage (6-12)

F. We will approach the passage in a two-fold manner.

- 1. First we will consider an example of those who are wicked who enter the Church and see their end.

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2. Second we will consider an example of those who are faithful in the Church and see their end.

## **II. Examples of the wicked in the Church (6-9).**

- A. Their actions (6).
  1. This is a subset of the wicked described in the verses above.
  2. Notice that this group is one who takes advantage of those who have little by way of protection.
    - a. They are looking for those of whom they can take advantage.
    - b. They are looking for weaknesses and opening.
  3. The term “who enter” speaks of slipping in secretly, worming their way in. I like the ESV (creep) or the NET (insinuate) better than NASB. They capture the sense better.
    - a. These are not obvious men.
    - b. They are like their father, the devil. They come with good words that are designed to put off their victims. They are liars and deceivers.
    - c. The great peril of the church is not those outside it, but those who have crept in unnoticed but who are enemies of Christ, the gospel, and truth.
    - d. Though they come in appearing to be honest and faithful, they are merely using all that they need to use to be able to take advantage of their victims.
    - e. They exploit the weaknesses of their victims until they achieve whatever it is that they desire.
  4. They seek to “capture” their victims.
    - a. Though it can refer to actual imprisonment, here it is best to understand that they gain control over these women.
    - b. There may be a sexual overtone but it is not certain.
    - c. Essentially what you have is men who are seeking in one way or another to fulfill their true desires that are listed above.
    - d. Now I urge you, brethren, keep your eye on those who cause dissensions and hindrances contrary to the teaching which you

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learned, and turn away from them. For such men are slaves, not of our Lord Christ but of their own appetites; and by their smooth and flattering speech they deceive the hearts of the unsuspecting. (Rom 16:17-18)

## B. Their victims (7).

1. Paul choose a subset of women to illustrate his point in vss 1-5. This is not a statement of all women, but of a very specific group.
2. They are described as weak women. Actually the literal sense is a “little woman” which is a euphemism for women in the church who are not strong in faith and character.
3. Four descriptions help describe them.
  - a. Weighed down with sins.
    - (1) This is a person who has never understood the nature and fulness of the gospel.
    - (2) It is not so much that they are not a Christian as that they cannot come to grips about how free they truly are in Jesus Christ. Though it is very possible that they are not truly in Christ.
    - (3) They are instead filled with guilt and doubts. They apparently do not have anyone speaking into their lives to remind them of the greatness of their salvation.
    - (4) And these men come in with good sounding words that promise them relief, but all they get is more bondage.
  - b. Led on by various impulses.
    - (1) They are not in control of their desires, emotions and thoughts.
    - (2) They have not learned to bring every thought captive to the obedience of Jesus Christ.
    - (3) Therefore there is no stability in their lives. They go from one thing to another based on how they feel. They are not governed by the Holy Spirit nor established in the Word of God.

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- (4) So they become like those who are infants in Christ described in Ephesians 4, tossed here and there by every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, by craftiness in deceitful scheming.
- c. Always learning but never arriving.
  - (1) These are the final two of the four descriptors.
  - (2) This is a common problem today. There is a sense that there is nothing absolute and therefore people are constantly shifting and moving, hoping for more information and more understanding.
  - (3) The problem is that they are not really learning. They are just taking in information but they are not trusting in it or living by it.
  - (4) This leaves them incredibly vulnerable. Apparently there is no one in their life, a father, a friend, or a husband who is stable in the faith to help them. So in comes the false teacher who promises them deliverance but actually brings them great bondage.
- C. Their future (8-9).
  - 1. These men are described as being like Jannes and Jambres. What is interesting is that there is nothing biblically that helps us know who they are.
  - 2. Tradition assigns them as the key magicians of Pharaoh's court who opposed Moses early on with the miracles. You will recall in Exodus 5 how Moses would do a miracle and then the magicians replicated it with a counterfeit one.
  - 3. In similar ways these men seek to oppose those who are teachers of the Word of God.
    - a. This is clearly seen in the term "the truth." It is not merely "truth" in some general sense. Rather it is referring to the body of truth known to be orthodox Christian doctrine.
    - b. This is why every teacher is to handle the Word accurately.

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- c. This is why the faithful pastor must always and ever preach the Word in season and out of season.
- 4. But notice in verse 9. Their folly will be revealed just like Jannes and Jambres.
- 5. And this is the good word, lies and falsehood never stand up in the end. God is truth and in Him is no darkness. Therefore lies will ultimately be revealed.
- 6. Sometimes they are seen in the present, but I think that far more shall be revealed in the final judgment.
- 7. Then I saw a great white throne and Him who sat upon it, from whose presence earth and heaven fled away, and no place was found for them. And I saw the dead, the great and the small, standing before the throne, and books were opened; and another book was opened, which is the book of life; and the dead were judged from the things which were written in the books, according to their deeds. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it, and death and Hades gave up the dead which were in them; and they were judged, every one of them according to their deeds. (Rev 20:11-13)
- 8. on the day when, according to my gospel, God will judge the secrets of men through Christ Jesus (Rom 2:16)
- D. So here is an example of how those who are called wicked in the church work out their lies. Now let's look at a positive example.

### **III. Example of the faithful in the Church (10-12).**

- A. Their actions (10).
  - 1. Note the "you." It is in what is the emphatic position. In contradistinction to those Paul just wrote about he not is figuratively pointing his finger at Timothy.
  - 2. Though the false teachers were resisting and twisting the truth Timothy followed it.
    - a. This term is not a simple term that just means "follow."
    - b. Speaks of a meticulous, careful, and focused process.
    - c. It is the idea of watching and listening closely with the goal to understand it fully and then make it your own.

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- d. What a contrast to those who are always learning but never arriving.
3. Notice also that Timothy had decided that he would make it his effort to follow in this manner the life and words of Paul. Nine different terms that Paul uses regarding himself.
    - a. What stands out to me here is that Paul is not ashamed to say this. He is confident of his life as an Apostle and that it was worthy to be followed..
    - b. Are you?
    - c. To become stable and mature in the Lord is not some mysterious work that just sorta happens. It involves being a faithful student who listens and reads carefully. But it also requires that you then absorb the doctrine into your life so that how you walk and live and talk reflects that truth.
    - d. And that is what you see in vs 10. Paul made himself fully available to Timothy so that he could learn from Paul and watch him.
    - e. He saw the way Paul was committed to a purpose. He learned what it meant to be focused on a clear goal. He understood that he was to be always growing in the grace and knowledge of Jesus Christ.
    - f. When it speaks of faith it is referencing not just the believing in the gospel, but a life of active trust in Jesus Christ.
    - g. Patience speaks to the steadfastness of Paul to show kindness to those who resisted him and his message. It speaks of bearing up under unkind and harsh treatment.
    - h. Love is simply the supreme Christian virtue according to 1 Corinthians 13.
      - (1) It is the goal of Paul's teaching, "But the goal of our instruction is love from a pure heart . . ." (1Ti 1:5)
      - (2) It is found only in Jesus Christ. "Retain the standard of sound words which you have heard from me, in the faith and love which are in Christ Jesus." (2Ti 1:13)

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- (3) It is built up in the Christian through the work of the Holy Spirit according to Galatians 5.
      - (4) And according to 2 Timothy 2:22 it is something that the believer is to constantly pursue.
    - i. Perseverance requires no comment other than that it means to “remain under.” It is that ability to endure in the midst of persecution or hardship.
      - (1) Those are the things that most often reveals false faith.
      - (2) To persevere is a mark of true, saving faith.
      - (3) It comes only with a clear hope in the age to come.
  4. But a life of faithfulness to the Lord does not come cheaply. There are certain realities that require your understanding.
- B. Their experiences (11a).
1. Persecutions and sufferings are flowing from the term, perseverance.
  2. He references his early experiences from his first missionary journey as described in Acts 13-14.
    - a. It is possible that he chooses to refer to his early sufferings to highlight that these have been his consistent companion in ministry.
    - b. In Antioch he was seeing many Gentile believe, but then those who opposed him stirred up men and women who drove him and Barnabas out of the city.
    - c. In Iconium then they again preached and many believed again. But then people again became embittered toward them. Ultimately both Jew and Gentiles, along with the rulers tried to stone them and they again had to flee.
    - d. Then they went to Lystra. Paul healed a man and the crowds thought they must be gods. Once he got that straightened out he began to preach the gospel, however, men from both Antioch and Iconium came and stirred up the people against them yet again. Paul was stoned and his body dumped outside the city, yet miraculously he rose up and went back into the city.



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- e. Here is a contrast from those who are false teachers who seek their own self-centered desires to be fulfilled. Men and women who are fixed up on a love for God and a love of His good news who will endure.
- C. Their life (12).
- 1. Can you accept these words? Will you believe them?
  - 2. To live godly “in Christ” means that you are not just a pleasant person who is nice to people in a generic way. It means you live differently, one that reflects the holy character of God.
  - 3. This is not some super-group of Christians, this is expected to be the normal Christian experience. Which causes us to pause if we have not experienced persecution of any sort.
  - 4. Jesus said it already, “Remember the word that I said to you, 'A slave is not greater than his master.' If they persecuted Me, they will also persecute you; if they kept My word, they will keep yours also. But all these things they will do to you for My name's sake, because they do not know the One who sent Me. (John 15:20-21)
  - 5. Note that it doesn't say that we are to seek out persecution, just that it will happen as we conform ourselves to our Lord.
    - a. When we do that we have to talk differently and that talk will cause others to become hateful. Expect it.
    - b. When we conform to the Lord we will live differently. Make different choices. Raise our children differently. Do our work differently. And this will raise the hackles of those who seek a different lifestyle and hatred will be the result. Expect it.
    - c. It is a hard thing at times because you will desire their well-being. You will want them to see Jesus Christ and desire Him and trust Him. But in many situations that will not occur, rather enemies of the gospel will rise up. Expect it.
    - d. Expect it so that when it happens you are not shocked and you do not lose heart. Rather, like countless other believers since the beginning, you can rejoice that you are counted worthy to suffer for Jesus' name's sake.

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6. All of this now brings us to my final point, which will also be my conclusion.

## **IV. Conclusion**

- A. Their future (11b ).
  1. The one who truly believes will suffer in one way or another.
  2. Paul looks back upon those times of harm and evil and his conclusion is powerfully encouraging. “Out of them all the Lord delivered me.”
    - a. Good words.
    - b. But if we are not careful we can make a bad application of this. The Lord did not have to deliver him. He could have had Barnabas and Paul simply die like countless other Christians have experienced.
    - c. I grimace every time I read on FB well-meaning Christians declaring with confidence that God is going to deliver someone from an illness or a hardship. It expresses ignorance of how this all works.
    - d. There are many times that God will show you much grace. You will see Him bring you out of troubles and you will give Him thanks.
  3. But.....you will possibly eventually face something from which you cannot escape. Paul did.
    - a. Remember where he is writing this.
    - b. Remember what his fate was to be and remember that he knows this (4:7-8).
    - c. What will we do then? What happens when the cancer is not stopped? What happens when the violence does not relent and you realize that death is imminent?
    - d. You apply your sound theology and remain steadfast knowing that though you may not be delivered “out of” your trial, you WILL be delivered “through” it.
    - e. This is where the gospel become precious yet again. Whether we die from persecutions or old age we will all die. But the promise is

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sure, because Jesus rose from the dead we shall too. Because we are His death cannot defeat us.

- f. Rather, death becomes the means to come into the presence of our Lord. So much so that Paul says in Philippians 1, “to die is gain.”
- B. For those who are enemies of the gospel and of Jesus, their perceived victories shall come to nothing. They will ultimately find themselves before their Lord and judge.
- C. But for those who trust in Jesus as their Lord and Savior, though they might look like they are defeated they too will ultimately find themselves before their Lord and He shall say to them, Well done, good and faithful servant, enter into the joy of your Master.”

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## Small Group Questions

- What are ways that you see people who learn but never really come to a knowledge of the truth? What is the solution?
- How do you order your life in such a way that others in the church can watch and follow it? This should be discussed thoroughly for it is at the core of the mission of MDF.
- What does this passage teach us on how to reproduce disciples? It would be worth the group’s time to talk about the nature of true discipleship and challenge each to consider how they order their time so as to be available to either disciple or be discipled.