



Worship Service: 10am, 160 Paya Lebar Road, Orion@Paya Lebar #04-06, Singapore 409022
Sunday School: 11.45am, Prayer Meeting: 8pm Wednesday
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Message delivered at the ICCC Congress on 26 Jan 2020 Our Christian Witness in an Evil World (2 Tim 3:1-17)

INTRODUCTION

The World is Different from the kingdom of God. We live in a non-Christian world and hence we do not belong to this world. Paul takes us to the next verse telling us not to conform to this world in Romans 12:2. The 17th century Puritan was a non-conformist as he did not conform to the standards of the world, which is contrary to the Word of God. To conform to this world would mean we would have to compromise our spiritual values. This will affect our “bodies” – our thought life, our actions, our speech and our values. The world has a different set of standards and ideals from the word of God for which we must not compromise. However we are to have an eternal perspective of life & death. We see things differently from just a temporal and earthly perspective.

Peter refers to us as “strangers & pilgrims” and exhorted us to “abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul” (1 Peter 2:11). As pilgrims, our life is a long journey across the delectable mountains and to the celestial city one day as John Bunyan puts it. Our ultimate home and mansion is in heaven and not on earth. We have the Holy Spirit dwelling in us. We are the temple of God (1 Cor 3:16-17). How can we not defile the temple of God? How can we be undefiled in a sin filled world? James provides the answer in James 1:27, “**..and to keep himself unspotted from the world**” Secondly, Paul reminds us not to be conformed to this world but be transformed by the renewing of our mind. Renewing our mind involves a radical change of our mind and heart towards Christ. Our spiritual and moral values and our total worldview and outlook of life must change. In Eph. 4:23-24 Paul challenges us to be renewed in the spirit of our mind and to put on a new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness.

IN THE WORLD BUT NOT OF THE WORLD

How do we, as Christian, live in this world? How do we interact with our fellow neighbours, friends, relatives or even our siblings who may or may not be Christian? Although we may not be able to change the world that we are in, we can make an impact where we are as the Lord enables us Christians. We are in the world but not of the world.

Paul shares how we should live our Christian life in Romans 12:1 & 2. He exhorted us (beseeching us or pleading) to live an antithetical or a life of separation from the world and not compromise with it. Paul gave a good description of sinners in Romans 3:10-18. Let us consider the 4 Cs of this passage in 2Tim 3:

A. The Climate of evil times (vs 1-5)

We live in a "fallen and depraved world today. There is an increasing incidence of crime, moral ills, natural disasters and calamities everywhere. Man will never be safe nor satisfied with the present conditions. Many seek a hedonistic life style to satisfy their depraved and sinful desires but they cannot find rest for their soul without the saving grace of Christ. As God has said, "**the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his HEART was only evil CONTINUALLY**" (Gen 6:5). We are truly living in perilous days that have troubles, great disasters, distressful situations; these will mark the last days. The term describes the time immediately preceding the second return of Jesus and the consummation of all things. We should be able to discern when the last days are, or at least when world conditions are like the Bible described they would be in the last days in Mt 24:1-24.

B The Characteristics of men in evil times

a. Here we have a catalogue of the characteristics of men in end times. Men will be lovers of themselves: If there is ever an age when men and women are encouraged to love themselves, we live in that age. People are told to love themselves with the teaching of self-esteem and positive thinking. This love of self is the foundation for all the depravity that follows in Paul's description: The Christian is called to self-denial and sacrifice and humble service

The first of these qualities will be *a life that is centred in self*. The adjective used here means *self-loving*. Love of self is the basic sin, from which all other actions will flow. When a man makes his own will the centre of life, divine and human relationships are undermined, obedience to God and charity to men both become impossible. The essence of Christianity is not the enthronement but the obliteration of self." (Barclay) "Lovers of self" aptly heads the list since it is the essence of all sin and the root from which all the other characteristics spring. The word is literally 'self-lovers' and points to the fact that the center of gravity of the natural man is self rather than God." (Hiebert)

b. Men will be . . . lovers of money: The love of money is real and many have the ability to pursue their love of money like never before. Just look at our 2 Industrial Resorts and the number of people who will go there to gamble and try their luck to win quick money with a covetous spirit. This is a wealth hungry and power grasping generation and these are signs that we may be *in the last days*. Men will be . . . boasters, proud, blasphemers: Boasting, pride, and blasphemy are getting more and more pronounced - the power expression of the "me first" syndrome with an egoistic slant. Man or woman want to be the center of the universe and God does not matter to them anymore. All that matters is self-promotion, pride, arrogance, worldly pleasures and fun. Is this the spirit of our age?

c. Men will be . . . disobedient to parents: We see a frightening breakdown in the authority of the family, where recalcitrant children and youths openly defy authority and dare to be disobedient to their parents. Is this an indication that we may be *in the last days*? Men will be . . . unthankful, unholy, unloving, unforgiving: especially prevalent *in the last days*. Men or women will be false accusers of others. slanderers: Men or women have told hurtful lies, gossip, tale bearing and false allegations about one another, even to undermine the work of the Lord. Presumption is a great sin in the sight of God (see Psa.19:13-15). Many will be slanderers or liars and speak evil of others and accusers of one another in these *last days*. Men will be . . . without self-control: The world of no self-control can be seen in people obsessed with sex, drugs, alcohol, worldly pleasure, unedifying music, games and excessive work. Whatever we do, depraved fallen men often do it out of control as Satan leads them to their condemnation. Men live without self-control in a greater

measure today as violence increases. Is this an indication that we may be *in the last days*?

d. Men will be violent, savage and brutal: Cruelty to self, others and to animals is getting worse in the world. More people have been murdered in this day than ever before; these are violent, brutal times with much crime, hatred, revenge and fighting for money in which we live. Men will be . . . despisers of good: including the things of God i.e. the word of God. Today, we live in a culture where godliness is despised and attacked, through the glorifying of violence and murder (i.e. abortion) and through euthanasia and cloning ... Men will be . . . traitors, headstrong, haughty, lovers of worldly pleasure rather than lovers of God: These characteristics are all about one thing: *Self*. Men are traitors because of *selfish gain*, they are headstrong because of *selfish pride*, and they are lovers of pleasure rather than true lovers of God because of *self gratification*. The command is to turn away from people described by the characteristics in this list. Be vigilant of such depraved men who can adversely affect us into their transgressions.

C. (vs 6-14) Concern for the evil times.

Those who creep quietly and secretly into households to destroy them: Who and what have you allowed to *creep into* your family or household? This can come in the form of the ipod, HP games and videos, friends, Xbox play stations, internet, YouTube movies, magazines, books and bill boards. Satan has done effectively to seduce our children, youths and even adults. He make captives of gullible women: Many are gullible – for the evil one will package his seductive lures in an attractive way. Many are so called learning and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth: many are led away by a covetous spirit . Let us be given to the true knowledge of God found in his word lest we be like them and never come to *truth of God* .

An example of this sort of corrupt human condition: Jannes and Jambres, who resisted Moses. Now as Jannes and Jambres resisted Moses, so do these also resist the truth: men of corrupt minds, disapproved concerning the faith; but they will progress no further, for their folly will be manifest to all, as theirs also was.. Jannes and Jambres: Though they are not named for us in the book of Exodus, these two men are the Egyptian magicians who opposed Moses before Pharaoh (Exodus 7:8-13; 19-23; 8:5-7; 16-19). Paul warned us of them and such who oppose God.

Be prepared for some level of persecution, which is *certain* for people who carefully follow this kind of life: all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution. In our times, Voice Of Martyrs says that many Christians are being persecuted all over the world - in more than 30 countries and it is growing . Are we ready to face persecution in our times today? Evil men refer to the enemies of the gospel and of our Lord Jesus; impostors refer to those who "look" externally , but they are actually destructive forces among Jesus' followers and to undermine the work of the church.

D. The Counsel to believers in evil times (vs 14-17).

Paul was close to Timothy and the latter had carefully followed Paul's doctrine, manner of life, purpose, faith, longsuffering, love, perseverance, persecutions and afflictions. Paul did not merely *teach* Timothy these things in an academic sense; Timothy learned these things by carefully observing and following Paul's example. The best discipleship is not only *taught*, it is *caught* by observation. Timothy not only learnt Paul's doctrine. He caught Paul's manner of life purpose: that was established by God. Timothy saw that in Paul, he caught it, and he wanted to live his life that way. Timothy caught Paul's faith, longsuffering and love: Paul was longsuffering - that is, patient with the little irritations of people and life in a special way, and he had a unusual love for God.

Timothy also caught Paul's perseverance, persecutions, and afflictions. We might think that the person who lives their life with the right doctrine, with the right manner of life, purpose, faith, longsuffering, and love would be loved and accepted by everyone.

Timothy was given a book to learn and to continue studying in by his mother (and grandmother) and they taught him the Scriptures even when he was a child, and because of that, Timothy had been made wise for salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. This is the most important thing a mother can do for her child, to teach him or her the Holy Scriptures, the content of which will make him or her repent of their sins and be wise unto salvation.

The usefulness and aim of Holy Scripture and its counsel.

a. All Scripture is fully (plenary) and verbally inspired of God: Here, Paul tells us the *source* of Scripture: It comes from God alone (literally, it is *God-breathed*), and its inerrant and absolutely reliable and totally sufficient and infallible. The Bible is unique in its *continuity*: It was written over 1500 years, over 60 generations, by more than 40 authors, on three different continents, in different circumstances and places, in different times, different moods, in three languages, covering controversial subjects, but with one united voice, unity and harmony because there is only one author who is God (see Josh McDowell, Evidence that demands a verdict).

The Bible is not only an inspired book, but it is *God's* only authoritative book for the church that he has authored. Fulfilled prophecy is a testimony of this book. Since all Scripture is given by inspiration of God, we also see that it is profitable -for 4 areas, namely DRCI. Firstly, it gives us doctrine (defining what is right). Then the Bible gives us reproof (rebuking wrong i.e. what is not right) and then it corrects (restoring right - how to get it right), and finally the Bible gives us instruction in righteousness (nurturing right – how to stay right). It is all sufficient and does not need evolution, sociology, psychology or any other book to complement or supplement it.

CONCLUSION

We live in momentous days of profound spiritual and moral peril. We have witnessed the moral and social declension in these perilous days. Social, moral and spiritual compromises will increase with greater intensity. The day of our Lord's return is drawing nearer. It is not easy (nor impossible) to be separated from the world or things of the world but we must not allow the world to affect us adversely. We must not lose our spiritual bearing and ignore or neglect the guidance of the Word of Christ. We are to be directed and guided by the Spirit of God through the word of God in the straight and narrow way. Our minds are not to be infiltrated by the snares of this world. We can be the victors in Christ when we submit to his sovereign will and not become the vanquished. Let us draw near to the cross of Christ in humble adoration, faith and obedience. Let us run with patience the race that is set before us and looking to our Author and Finisher of our faith. Let us not forget that ***"if God is for us, who can be against us (Rom 8:31)"***. In all these, ***"we are more than conquerors through Him that loved us (Rom 8:37)"***

Jack Sin



Thank God for the 91 who attended the church second anniversary from different churches



A time of thanks giving and praise to the Lord for these 2 fruitful years of ministry



Rev Philip Heng gave the word on a Word Based Christocentric Reformed Church



Joseph Wee who sang a Hokkien hymn of consecration and new friends to the Church

Memory Verse

Joshua 8:34 And afterward he read all the words of the law, the blessings and cursings, according to all that is written in the book of the law.

Announcements

1. Rev Jack Sin speaks next Sunday on “Dangers of Being Friendly with the Enemy” (Joshua 9:1-27)
2. Prayer meeting continues on Wed at 8pm at the home sister Han Kin Kheng.
3. The church website is sovereignhopebpc.org
4. Rev Philip Heng is the speaker of the church camp from 10-13 June and it will be held in Pulai Springs Resort. The camp forms are available from the front counter of the church and Dns Choo Siang and Yue Kay.
5. Pastor is available for counselling anytime at 91160948 (hp).