Sermon Notes for June 23, 2013

Living in the Last Days
II Timothy 3:1-9

Introduction

This world can be a dangerous place for our faith.

“Our enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour.”  I Peter 5:8

Be self-controlled and alert.

I. Understand the times. II Timothy 3:1

There will be terrible times in the last days.

- Terrible means dangerous, violent and hard to deal with – as in Matthew 8:28.

There is a present and future aspect to the last days.

- On the one hand, we have been living in the last days since the time of Christ. “In the last days, God says, I will pour out my Spirit on all people. Your sons and daughters will prophesy, your young men will see visions, your old men will dream dreams.”  Acts 2:17
- Yet, there is a sense in which the last days are still to come. Godlessness and wickedness will increase before the Lord returns. “For then there will be great distress, unequaled from the beginning of the world until now—and never to be equaled again.”  Matthew 24:21

So what do we do?

We put everything we have into advancing the kingdom of God.

“The men from Issachar understood the times and knew what Israel should do.”  I Chronicles 12:32

Our loyalty is with Christ and his church.

II. Turn away from evil. II Timothy 3:2-8

In verses 2-8, Paul describes the heart of godless men.

- Verses 2-5 describe their character.
- Verses 6-8 describe their behavior.
Listen to Paul’s description of them:

- “They are lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God.”
- “They have a form of godliness, but deny its power.”
- “Have nothing to do with them.”

Doesn’t that list alone make you want to be a Christian?

Think about the difference Christ makes in a person’s life.

“But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law.” Galatians 5:22-23

The root problem – they are lovers of self rather than lovers of God.

Who is on the throne of our life? Is it self or Christ?

III. Live for the Day. II Timothy 3:9

The day is coming when we will all stand before the Lord to give an account for our life.

“For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each of us may receive what is due us for the things done while in the body, whether good or bad.” II Corinthians 5:10

Asaph wrestled with questions like, “Why do the wicked prosper?” and “Does it really pay to worship the Lord?” His answer is found in Psalm 73:16-19

“When I tried to understand all this, it troubled me deeply till I entered the sanctuary of God; then I understood their final destiny. Surely you place them on slippery ground; you cast them down to ruin. How suddenly are they destroyed, completely swept away by terrors!”

Live for the Day, knowing that your work for him is never in vain.

Conclusion

The Tale of the Tardy Oxcart by Chuck Swindoll

Understand the times in which we live.

Turn away from evil and do good.

Live for the Day and stay faithful.