

“THE TRUE MAN OF GOD VERSUS EVIL MEN AND SEDUCERS”

II TIMOTHY 3:6-13

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INTRODUCTION

Dennis Green: They are who we thought they were, and we let them off the hook! (Chicago Bears).

The same is really true of these false teachers/preachers, and we must not let them off the hook!

In fact, it is very important that we follow true men of God who preach the true Word of God!

REJECT DECEIVERS; FOLLOW AND SUPPORT TRUE SERVANTS OF GOD.

I. EVIL MEN AND SEDUCERS (6-9, 13)

A. The work of the Deceivers (6, 8)

1. They “creep into houses”—cf. Jude 4
2. They captivate women—word is military, usually at spear point.
 - Notice that false teaching is **enslaving, not liberating!**
3. They stand in opposition to the Truth (8).
 - Their predecessors are Jannes and Jambres who opposed Moses (Ex. 7-8).
4. They are men of **depraved mind**—having been completely corrupted and ruined.
5. They are men who have been tested and rejected as regards the faith—Christian doctrine.

B. The captivation of the Deceived (6b, 7)

1. They are “weak” or “silly” women—literally “**little women.**”
 - “It is amazing how gullible some women are with religious charlatans who pose as exponents of ‘new thought’” (624). The women of whom Paul speaks were “softies” (H. 286-87). No doubt Paul had some actual instances in his mind as he wrote these words, and that fact added to his intensity.
 - Robertson mentions some examples of his time—a false Messiah with a heavenly harem & the “house of David” likewise. In more recent times one may remember David Koresh and the Branch Davidian enclave at Waco, Texas, the fundamentalist LDS sect in northern AZ with Warren Jeffs, etc. It is no surprise that some of these pre-Gnostic cult leaders “led women into licentiousness under the guise of religion or of liberty” (624). In Paul’s time he could think also of the priestesses of Aphrodite and of Isis. In fact, Bernard, quoting from Jerome, notes that this use of women to attain success in religious ventures “**is a feature of all heretical systems** and has its root deep down in human nature” (131).
2. They are weighed down with sins (7).

They looked for some easy relief, possibly with the promise of no eternal retribution. The women were “overwhelmed in their consciences” and were extremely “conscious of the squalor and futility of their lives”. As Bernard puts it, they seek peace in spiritual dissipation.
3. They are led astray with varied lusts (7).

Such “lusts” are “undisciplined movements of the spirit”, in addition to “desires of the flesh.” Often the “flesh” and the “spirit” become confused in spiritual endeavors.
4. They are always learning, but never able to come to the genuine knowledge of the Truth.
 - These women learned through the instruction of others and listened to their advice, but had become “so fickle and warped that they had become incapable of obtaining the knowledge of the truth” (Rogers, 505). They were “avidly, and perhaps morbidly, curious about religion and prepared to fall for any novel theory put before them.”
 - They were more interested in the “sensational rather than serious information, and consequently they fall an easy prey to pseudo-Christian teachers” (G. 159). As Bernard notes, “**Their spiritual sense is dulled, through overmuch curiosity as to the solution of unpractical problems of speculative theology.**”

C. The worsening of the Deceivers (13) [“Proceed” is the same verb as in v. 6—no contradiction here!]

1. “Evil men”
 2. “Impostors”
 3. Movement from *bad* to **worse**.
 4. Deceiving and being deceived. . **Self-deception is common among false teachers, for “few men admit to themselves that they are deliberate impostors; the practice of deceit is intolerable unless it be partly hidden from the actor by self-deceit”**
- D. The Eventual failure of Deception
1. They will not make further progress.
 - As seen in 2:16, their “progress” is **more ungodliness**, and 3:13 and **from bad to worse**—same verb.
 2. Their folly—**mindlessness**—will eventually be evident to all!
 - Just like what happened to Jannes and Jambres.

II. THE TRUE MAN OF GOD (10-11)

- A. They have lives open to inspection—“You followed closely.” They can say like Christ, “In secret have I said nothing” (Jn. 18:20). And like Paul: “My manner of life from my youth....know all the Jews” (Acts 26:4).
- B. “They teach true doctrine.” It does not matter how appealing a preacher may be if he does not preach and teach sound doctrine; he does not then deserve our support. Wiersbe notes, “On radio and TV today [and online], we have a great deal of ‘pseudo-Christianity’ which is a mixture of psychology, success motivation, and personality cults, with a little bit of Bible thrown in to make it look religious. Beware!” (147).
- C. “They practice what they preach.” Paul “did not preach sacrifice and live in luxury....He stood up for the truth even when it meant losing friends and, in the end, losing his life. Paul was a servant, not a celebrity” (Ibid.).
- D. “Their purpose is to glorify God.” Paul’s desire was to do God’s will and to finish his course (Acts 20:24; Phil. 1:21. *Timothy noted the union of teaching and lifestyle in Paul and his consistency of promoting the Gospel even at the expense of self-interest—such as how Paul came back to Lystra after being stoned nearly to death (14:21) and was diligently “strengthening the souls of the disciples [including Timothy], and “encouraging them to continue in the faith” and reminding them to persevere “through many tribulations” (14:22)—Timothy had come to know and be convinced of the genuineness of Paul’s purpose. Timothy had become persuaded about such a purpose and had determined to copy it.*
- E. They are men of “faith,” “longsuffering,” “love,” and “perseverance.”
- F. “They are willing to suffer....Some people today have the idea that godliness means *escaping* persecution, when just the opposite is true” (Ibid.).

Wiersbe goes on to state: “I wonder how Paul would match up with today’s concept of a Christian leader. He would probably fail miserably. If he applied for service with a modern mission board, would he be accepted? He had a prison record; he had a physical affliction; he stirred up problems in just about every place he visited. He was poor, and he did not cater to the rich. Yet God used him, and we are being blessed today because Paul was faithful” (Ibid.).

CONCLUSION

Face the facts: *things are going to get worse!*

But, in the meantime, stand solidly for truth and reject false teachers and teaching.

Rejoice in the ultimate failure of deceivers and their followers. Error will fail; truth will prevail.

Focus on true Men of God who preach and live the true Word of God—more on that next message!

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