



# “Difficult Days For Leaders”

## 2 Timothy 3

### Lesson 12

#### *In A Nutshell*

Godly leadership is hard, not easy. We need to sympathize with the struggles of our godly leaders and commit ourselves to their support as we study Paul’s description of difficult days for leaders.

#### *To The Testimony!*

#### The Source of the Difficulty

2 Tim.  
3:1, 13

Luke  
18:8

1. In Titus 1 we learned about leading difficult people in a difficult place, the island of Crete. 2 Timothy 3 is a broader variation on the same theme in that this chapter speaks of difficult times, the last days. Paul wants Timothy to understand the times and how they fit into the plan of God. To do this, we need to understand what Paul means when he refers to “the last days.” Read the From The Honeycomb exercise, and then note two general characteristics of these days which Paul emphasizes in verses 1 and 13 of our passage.

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#### From The Honeycomb

What are "the last days?"

1. They are days whose prophetic purpose is the establishment of the kingdom of the Messiah, Jesus Christ, in Jerusalem. He shall rule the world once so established.

Genesis 49:1, 10

Isaiah 2:2

Micah 4:1

Acts 2:17-21 with Joel 2:28-32

2. They are days which began with the first coming of Christ.

Hebrews 1:1-2  
1 Peter 1:19-20

3. They are days which anticipate and find their completion in the judgments of the second coming of Christ, also known as the Day of the Lord.

Acts 2:17-21 with Joel 2:28-32  
2 Peter 3:3-10

4. They are the days that include the church age in the plan of God.

1 Timothy 4:1-6  
1 John 2:18  
James 5:3  
Jude 18

2 Tim.  
3:2-5

2. Times will be difficult because men will be immoral and ungodly. Paul says that those who live like this ought to be avoided by godly Christians (v. 5). The present tense Paul uses for the command *avoid* indicates that this separatist stand must be a constantly renewed commitment in the life of the believer. Below are listed the Ten Commandments from Exodus 20. Spend some time thinking about the immoral characteristics Paul mentions by listing them under the commandment they violate.

Commandment:	Violating Characteristic of the Last Days:
No other Gods.	
No idols.	
Do not use God's name in vain.	
Remember the Sabbath as holy.	

Honor parents.	
Do not murder.	
Do not commit adultery.	
Do not steal.	
Do not lie.	
Do not covet.	

2 Tim.  
3:5-7

3. The last days will be a good fit for the leadership of some religious leaders. They will find opportunity, not difficulty, in the conditions of society. What kind of people respond especially well to ungodly leadership? (vv. 6-7)

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2 Tim.  
3:8-9

Exodus  
7:10-13

4. Jannes and Jambres are new names to us today, but they were common to Paul and Timothy. The spiritual Laurel and Hardy of the Jewish world, these men are referred to in the *Targum of Jonathan* as the magicians of Egypt referenced in Exod. 7:11. Paul tells us that these men withstood Moses and that their folly became exposed. Read Exod. 7:10-13. How did they withstand Moses, how were they exposed, and what was the effect on Pharaoh?

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2 Tim.  
3:10-12

5. Paul references his own ministry as a contrast to the deceptive work of the popular false leaders of the last days. Today, many of these leaders guarantee their followers success, heal-

ing, and prosperity should they follow in a faithful way. What guarantee does Paul offer godly people living in the last days?

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## The Sword For The Difficulty

- 2 Tim. 3:14-17
6. The end of chapter three is one of the most doctrinally significant passages in regard to what we ought to believe about our Bibles. He speaks of the Scripture's power first with reference to its impact on Timothy (vv. 14-15), and secondly with reference to its impact on the man of God (vv. 16-17). How was Timothy affected by the power of the Scripture? What should the effect be on the man of God?
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- 2 Tim. 3:16
- 2 Pet. 1:21
7. The phrase "inspiration of God" is actually one word in the original, *theopneustos*, meaning *God-breathed*. Read 2 Pet. 1:21. How is the truth, "All scripture is inspired by God" different from the exclamation that "Shakespeare was truly inspired when he wrote Hamlet"?
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## Real Life?

Pastor asked Bob if he would consider teaching the Junior Boys Sunday School class for the summer term. A Bible major at Christian University, Bob was actually interested in teaching and willing to serve. After responding quickly in the affirmative, he later found himself a bit disappointed. Although he would not admit it to his pastor, his new duties did not excite him. The Junior Class assignment did not seem to take full advantage of the training he was receiving in theology at school. He had studied hard and was excited about what he had to share, but most of that was on an adult's level. Getting down on the Junior level was going to be awkward for him, and he just did not seem to feel the same enthusiasm he did while anticipating an adult class assignment. How should Timothy's childhood provide encouragement and instruction to Bob about the importance of his Junior class?