

**Opening:** The Bible tells us of a time in the near future when the inhabitants of our world will be caught unaware in a trap set by our enemy Satan. For the Church we are also warned and encouraged to know the times and seasons in which we live. The Bible is not silent on what the world will look like just before Jesus comes for His church and the tribulation hour begins. This message series is designed to expose the trap that is being set by our adversary for an unsuspecting world, do not let it be you.

### 1. Why preach on Bible Prophecy? Not to Scare you but to Prepare You

- a. **Luke 21:34-36** 34But watch yourselves, or your hearts will be weighed down by dissipation, drunkenness, and the worries of life—and **that day will spring upon you suddenly like a snare.** 35For it will come upon all who dwell on the face of all the earth. **36So keep watch at all times,** and pray that you may have the strength to escape all that is about to happen and to **stand before the Son of Man.**
- b. **Ungrateful or unthankful**, thankfulness will be uncommon because the world **just** before Jesus returns according to the text of scripture will become entitled.
  - i. **Entitlement will replace gratitude** and will cancel out normal gratitude and appreciation for others. Entitlement is the feeling that someone owes you something that they do not. a belief that for base reasons we are inherently deserving of privileges or benefits we have not earned.
  - ii. Entitlement is taking advantage of situations and circumstances without concern for the effect it will have on others.
- c. **Unholy:** Intentional irreverence towards anything that is sacred, a loss of respect for those institutions, covenants and relationships that should be honored.

### 2. 2<sup>nd</sup> Timothy 3:3 unloving, trucebreakers, malicious gossips, without self-control, brutal, haters of good,

- a. **Unloving** is the Greek word astorgoi and is a removal of love and affection between family members namely husbands, wives, brothers, and sisters. Hardheartedness. It represents the breakdown of the family unit.
- b. **Trucebreakers** is from the Greek aspondoi and is a removal of covenant or treaty. It would be used to describe the breaking of marriage covenants in divorce.

- i. Since the word is in the plural form it tells us that in the time just before Christ shall come for His Church divorce will be widespread.
  - c. **Malicious gossipers:** the original language is **diabolo** where we get “devils” from. This means Paul through the Holy Spirit is telling the Church just before Jesus comes for His Bride to be aware that in the last days demons will be prevalent and they will be in part to blame for expansion of evil.
  - d. **Without-self-control is the Greek word akrateis** which means a removal of or loss of power in society. It will be greater than just on an individual level but instead the word represents societal chaos, systems of government, finance will be out of control and won’t work properly.
    - i. As the Church we must take into consideration the current state of affairs in govt. and financial systems in relation to this word. We are seeing the demise of earthly governments and financial institutions at a rapid pace. 13% of people in an ongoing pew research study say they trust the government. down from 77% in the 1950’s. People have become less trusting of anyone and everyone in any position of leadership or authority, some for reason and some for no good reason.
  - e. **Brutal: Greek anēmeroi** meaning the destruction of culture to a degree where people will become fierce, violent, lacking common courtesy or control It will be like in the times of the Colosseum, it describes a culture that will delight in brutality and violence making it widespread.
    - i. **Genesis 6:11-12** Now the earth was corrupt in the sight of God, and **full of violence**. 12And God looked upon the earth and saw that it was corrupt; for all living creatures on the earth had **corrupted their ways**.
  - f. **Haters of good:** This word describes a society that will hate those who are good and that will champion and create a system of laws that promote that which is evil over that which is good.
3. **2<sup>nd</sup> Timothy 3:4 treacherous, reckless, conceited, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God,**
- a. **Treacherous is to betray a friend, the word means that people will work with each other as long as it is mutually beneficial for them. “What do I benefit from my friend?”**
  - b. **Reckless: Fast decisions made without thinking them through, being led by emotions, impatience.**

- c. **Conceited: Greek word for Typhoon, people will be puffed up, full of their own opinions, seeing themselves better than they actually are. They will blow in, blow up and blow out like a bad storm.**
- d. **Lovers of Pleasure more than lovers of God:** It is the pursuit of pleasure and happiness as the highest pursuit supplanting obedience to God as the aim of humanity. Notice it doesn't say they do not acknowledge

God simply that their devotion to God has little to no bearing on their real lives, being religious but no power

#### 4. What then should we do in light of this kind of world we are and will be living in?

- a. **2<sup>nd</sup> Timothy 3:14-17** 14But as for you, continue in the things you have learned and firmly believed, since you know from whom you have learned them. 15From infancy you have known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. 16All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for instruction, for conviction, for correction, and for training in righteousness, 17so that the man of God may be complete, fully equipped for every good work.
  - i. Continue in the things you have learned. Cling to the truth, dig deeper and set your anchor in truth.
  - ii. Remind yourself of the truth you have known and the testimony that has come because of it.
  - iii. Know the Bible, hold firm to it's truth's and remind yourself daily that it contains pure and unadulterated truth.
  - iv. The word is able to correct, in the original language this means to place a person back on their feet again after they have fallen on their back to the ground. Paul tells Timothy that the word of God which He has known from childhood can and will restore lives that were once broken.
  - v. "Fully equipped" Greek exērtismenos and this word applied to a boat in antiquity that was given special equipment that would allow it to overcome every obstacle, endure any storm and go farther distances than a boat that was not specifically equipped.
  - vi. **Life Lesson: The Word of God and what a believer does with it will differentiate a person who can make it the distance in life or one who falls short.**

#### 5. Moral Decline is slow and sets a trap subtly.

a. **2<sup>nd</sup> Thessalonians 2:9-12** 9The coming of the lawless one will be accompanied by the working of Satan, with every kind of power, sign, and false wonder, 10and with every wicked deception directed against those who are perishing, because they refused the love of the truth that would have saved them. 11For this reason God will send them a powerful delusion so that they believe the lie, 12in order that judgment may come upon all who have disbelieved the truth and delighted in wickedness.

- i. God is patiently calling the world to repentance in Jesus Christ.
- ii. Those who are perishing are doing so because they had no love for the truth.
- iii. God is the one who will at a point in the future allow the world to experience the anti-Christ
- iv. He will allow this because the world that is now forming and will be rejected the message of salvation.
- v. The delusion is for those who have willingly rejected Jesus offer of salvation delighting instead in wickedness. At the time of the end the way of salvation will be much more difficult to obtain.

## 6. What Trap is being set as we speak.

a. **The Rider on the Black Horse Revelation 6:5-6** 5And when the Lamb opened the third seal, I heard the third living creature say, "Come!" Then I looked and saw a black horse, and its rider held in his hand a pair of scales. 6And I heard what sounded like a voice from among the four living creatures, saying, "A quart of wheat for a denarius, a and three quarts of barley for a denarius, and do not harm the oil and wine."

- i. The economy of the world will collapse, a quart of wheat for a denarius is the measure of bread it took to live on purchased by the measure of money that one would earn per day. This means the economy of the future will be so bad that people will be working just to feed themselves.

b. **A Trap is sprung Revelation 13:16-17** 16And the second beast required all people small and great, rich and poor, free and slave, to receive a mark on their right hand or on their forehead, 17so that no one could buy or sell unless he had the mark—the name of the beast or the number of its name.

- i. After the collapse of the economies of the world a new economy will emerge where man's natural instinct for survival will be pitted against His soul's salvation.

- ii. Those who take the mark of the beast will forfeit their soul. They will want to take the mark of the beast because without it they would otherwise starve to death.
- c. Think about the world just before the tribulation begins. Man will be comfortable, enlightened, wealthy, greedy, prideful, unthankful and entitled. Satan will have perfectly set up a people for the tribulation
  - i. The world at that time will be controlled/motivated by the following things
    - 1. Pleasure 2. To themselves 3. To Possessions 4. To Pride 5. To Violence 6. Sexual promiscuity 7. To their own opinions of truth, 8. To drugs & drunkenness (Revelation 9:21)
- d. We are called to Stand Firm until the end. **Matthew 24:12-13** 12Because of the multiplication of wickedness, the love of most will grow cold. 13But the one who perseveres to the end will be saved. (escape the trap)
- e. What Manner of People should we be knowing these things? 2<sup>nd</sup> Peter 3:10-12