



CAPITOL COMMISSION™

"FOR AMONG THEM ARE THOSE..." - 2 TIMOTHY 3:6-7

WYOMING

FEBRUARY 17, 2016

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Paul gives a standing order regarding imposters within the church who teach falsely and live falsely. No matter how convincing or how sincere these false teachers may be, we are to avoid these men. We are to reject them and their ungodly ideas. Paul first gave a searing summation of their life in 2 Timothy 3:1-4 revealing how self-love had dominated their lives. And we must remember that just as it was possible to be a member or teacher in the church at Ephesus in Timothy's day, so it is possible to be lost and deceived in today's church. Unregenerate evangelicals are a growing reality in pastors and congregations. It's easy to have a form of godliness, use the right language and yet "deny its power" by the quality of our lives. Paul says have nothing to do with these false leaders who contradict the gospel. From the beginning, the church has endured hypocrisy and imposters and this is not to be taken lightly.'

I. "FOR AMONG THEM ARE THOSE..." - 2 TIMOTHY 3:6-7

(1) "But realize this, that in the last days difficult times will come. (2) Men will be lovers of self, lovers of money, boastful, arrogant, revilers, disobedient to parents, ungrateful, unholy, (3) unloving, irreconcilable, malicious gossips, without self-control, brutal, haters of good, (4) treacherous, reckless, conceited, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God: (5) holding to a form of godliness, although they have denied its power; and avoid such men as these. (6) For among them are those who enter into households and captivate weak women weighed down with sins, led on by various impulses, (7) always learning and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth." 2 Timothy 3:1-7

Paul now in 2 Timothy 3:6 directs his attention to a particular circle of evil men within this godless, hypocritical group of false teachers in the church. Their religion is a mere show and their proselytizing is absolute evil and deprave. These men that are filled with such self-love and malice not only profess but propagate their heresy in such a debase manner described in these next verses. Paul gives us clear perspective into their methods and victims. Less we think this was just in Paul's day or in the body of Ephesian believers, don't be so deceived, for all you need to do is turn on the TV and sadly you will see a host of charlatans peddling their lies and deceptive messages.

A. "FOR AMONG THEM ARE THOSE..." - 2 TIMOTHY 3:6A

Finally as if their corrupt lives and religious emptiness were not enough, Paul says that certain people would also try and win converts to their depraved religion and the way they would do so was wicked. Paul here describes their tactics and targets.

B. "WHO ENTER HOUSEHOLDS AND CAPTIVATE..." - 2 TIMOTHY 3:6B

We must keep in mind that these false teachers proclaim a religion which satisfies the flesh as we have seen from 2 Timothy 3:2-5. But

here their activity drops to a greater decline. Barclay calls it seduction in the name of religion.² Their victimizing is deceitful and ruthless with their desire to control. Their actions are described here by two present participles of "enter" and "captivate".

"enter" Greek **"enduno"** present participle which refers to creeping into, worming into, characterized by stealth and secrecy, undetected.

"captivate" Greek **"aichmalotizo"** present participle which means to take prisoner in war and came to mean to carry away, mislead, deceive.

These *"tradesmen of heresy"*³ as John Stott calls them, are sinister and treacherous using flattery or any means to gain influence. Their methods are secretive and cunning like serpents or wolves creeping in by stealth and secrecy. And where do they go? Paul says *"into households"* or into homes. They enter homes under false pretense with the primary goal of capturing their victims. By their winsome manner and propaganda they seek to bring these targets under their evil influence. These are crafty and devious men filled with a self-seeking love intent on preying on *"weak women"* who are especially vulnerable.

C. "CAPTIVATE WEAK WOMEN..." - 2 TIMOTHY 3:6C

This particular group of false teachers concentrate their attention on *"weak women"*. What does Paul mean by that phrase?

"weak women" Greek **"gynaikara"** little women, an expression of contempt referring to the state they have fallen, easily deceived.

Be assured Paul has a high regard for women as evident from various texts. (1 Timothy 3:11, 1 Timothy 5:9-10 as examples) His emphasis is on the imposters who prey on *"weak women"*. These are women who were weak in truth and weak in virtue. They lacked spiritual insight and were willing to give ready ears to false teachers. They were easy targets and very vulnerable because they were morally weak, loaded down with sin and swayed by desires. Paul referred to such women as examples in Ephesus but the same easy targets exist today as well.

D. "WIEGHED DOWN WITH SIN..." - 2 TIMOTHY 3:6D

Sinister, false teachers preyed on women who were weak and *"weighed down with sin"*. These women felt the heavy weight of their sin and the guilt it brings. They were heaped up, or their conscience was loaded with many sins of great variety. It was the accumulation of sin which was unbearable. It could be they were afraid of the

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consequences of their sin but not necessarily ashamed of them. Then along comes the charlatans with their propaganda and false teaching which attracts these women, offering soothing words which ease their conscience regarding the consequences of their sin.⁴ These women were overwhelmed with the weight of sin and especially vulnerable. They were morally weak because of their sin and their lives were *“led on by various impulses.”*

E. “LED ON BY VARIOUS IMPULSES...” - 2 TIMOTHY 3:6E

Paul doesn't give specifics here but reveals the conduct of these women were governed by their desires and cravings which were various and diverse. Thus their weakness combined with guilt made them an easy target. These women were especially vulnerable because they are morally weak, loaded down with sin and swayed by desires. In Ephesians 4:14 Paul warns Timothy to watch out for these men who would take advantage of those who are immature and vulnerable and easy targets of *“crafty and deceitful scheming”*.

F. “ALWAYS LEARNING...” - 2 TIMOTHY 3:7F

Not only are these women morally weak, but they are intellectually weak as well. Ignorance can make anyone an easy target for deception. Paul speaks here of a learning that is ineffective. This suggests that they were eager to receive instruction and open to hearing any new doctrine or teaching. They had a relentless quest for the new and the novel but they possessed little discernment to distinguish truth from error. Because they were weak, guilt ridden, unstable, these women would listen to anyone and were ripe for deception from these imposters of the faith. But, no amount of intellectual curiosity can ever take the place of serious moral resolve. There are always those to be found deeply involved in the latest fashionable religious movement, but who are quite unwilling to accept the day to day discipline-even drudgery-of living the Christian life.⁵ There are those who are always willing to listen to anyone, *“always learning”* yet never able to come to a real understanding of the truth, of the gospel.

G. “AND NEVER ABLE TO COME TO THE KNOWLEDGE OF THE TRUTH.” - 2 TIMOTHY 3:7G

While always learning, it is never about the *“knowledge of the truth.”* Knowledge here refers to a deep understanding, a discernment, a comprehension that results in a changed life. Paul is referring to true salvation found only in the gospel which is the truth. It is not merely an understanding of facts, but it is those facts that lead to a changed life. It is this *“knowledge of the truth”* which saves. 1 Timothy 2:4 says that God *“desires all men to be saved and come to the knowledge of truth.”* 2 Timothy 2:25 speaks of God granting repentance that would lead to *“the knowledge of the truth”*. But here Paul shows that

these *“weak women”* would listen to anyone yet at the same time never *“come to the knowledge of the truth”*. Their lives were never fixed on any convictions and thus they are tossed by every wind of doctrine and deception peddled by these charlatans of the faith. (Ephesians 4:14) They were running after error and living in sin. And while *“always learning”*, they never possessed the truth found in Jesus Christ alone, which is the foundation of all knowledge. As John 14:6 says referring to Jesus Christ, *“I am the way, and the truth and the life; no man comes to the Father but through Me.”* Without a basic knowledge and understanding of faith, the only true faith that leads to repentance and forgiveness of sins, people will only be confused and never able to understand the truth. Many are put off by the simple gospel because it actually deals with their sin. So here we find that in all their learning, these *“weak women”* never become free. So very sad. And these false teachers and those who take this extra step are adversaries to God Himself and His truth, the gospel...the simple gospel which is still true today.⁶

This passage serves as a warning to all. Jude 4 says, *“For certain persons have crept in unnoticed, those who were long beforehand marked out for this condemnation, ungodly persons who turn the grace of our God in to licentiousness and deny our only Master and Lord, Jesus Christ.”* Many warnings regarding false teachers are given throughout Scripture and not to be taken lightly for they would deceive even the *“elect astray”* if that were possible. (Mark 13:22) Even though they sound so religious, they are false. Our present age is loaded with such perilous false teaching that can't save. It's everywhere. Many never come to the truth because they don't know the One Who is the truth. (John 14:6) Churches with little Biblical content and weak teaching can so easily fall into this error and people who attend these churches are easy targets for false teachers because they don't know what they believe. How can we keep from falling and being deceived? 2 Peter 3:17-18 offers these words following warnings about false teachers, *“You therefore, beloved, knowing this beforehand, be on your guard lest, being carried away by the error of unprincipled men, you fall from your own steadfastness, but grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.”*

¹Hughes, R. Kent and Chapell, Bryan, *1 and 2 Timothy and Titus; To Guard the Deposit*. Crossway Books: Wheaton, Illinois, 2000. Pg. 223-225.

²Barclay, William, *The Letters to Timothy, Titus, and Philemon*. Westminster John Knox Press: Louisville, Kentucky, 1956, revised 1975 and 2003. Pg.215.

³Stott, John R.W., *The Message of 2 Timothy*. Inter-Varsity Press: Downers Grove, Illinois, 1973. Pg. 89.

⁴MacArthur, John, *MacArthur Commentary on 2 Timothy*. Moody Press: Chicago, 1998. Pg.119.

⁵Barclay, William, *The Letters to Timothy, Titus, and Philemon*. Westminster John Knox Press: Louisville, Kentucky, 1956, revised 1975 and 2003. Pg.217.

⁶Hendriksen, William. *Exposition of The Pastoral Epistles*. Baker Book House: Grand Rapids, MI, 1957. Pg. 287.