2nd Timothy: Swan Song

Be Discerning

***In chapter 3, Paul forewarns Timothy that dangerous seasons are coming…***

*But mark this: There will be terrible times in the last days.* ***(2 Tim. 3:1)***

***The danger comes from empty religion in the form of…***

* ***Misguided love –*** *“People will be lovers of themselves…lovers of money…not lovers of good…lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God.”* ***(vv. 2-4)***

*This is how we know what love is: Jesus Christ laid down His life for us. And we ought to lay down our lives for our brothers. If anyone has material possessions and sees a brother in need but has no pity on him, how can the love of God be in him?* ***(1 John 3:16-17)***

* ***Ungodly character –*** *“boastful…proud…disobedient to their parents…ungrateful…unholy…without love…unforgiving…without self-control…rash…conceited…”* ***(vv. 2-4)***
* ***Destructive conduct –*** *“…abusive…slanderous…brutal…treacherous…”* ***(vv. 2-4)***

🔍***Empty religion: outwardly connected to spiritual activity but inwardly disconnected from God’s power –*** *“…having a form of godliness but denying its power. Have nothing to do with them.”* ***(v. 5)***

*Such regulations indeed have an appearance of wisdom, with their self-imposed worship, their false humility and their harsh treatment of the body, but they lack any value in restraining sensual indulgence.* ***(Col. 2:23)***

***Empty religion always has a predatory messenger whose cause never wins…***

*They are the kind who worm their way into homes and gain control over weak-willed women, who are loaded down with sins and are swayed by all kinds of evil desires, always learning but never able to acknowledge the truth. Just as Jannes and Jambres opposed Moses, so also these men oppose the truth – men of depraved minds, who, as far as the faith is concerned, are rejected. But they will not get very far because, as in the case of those men, their folly will be clear to everyone.* ***(vv. 6-9)***

***Therefore…***

* ***Every church needs protection –*** *“Keep watch over yourselves and all the flock of which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers. Be shepherds of the church of God, which He bought with His own blood. I know that after I leave, savage wolves will come in among you and will not spare the flock. Even from your own number men will arise and distort the truth in order to draw away disciples after them.”* ***(Acts 20:28-30)***
* ***All people need Jesus –*** *“I am sending you to them to open their eyes and turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God, so that they may receive forgiveness of sins and a place among those who are sanctified by faith in me.”* ***(Acts 26:17-18)***