

Preparations for the Last Days (*introduction*)

Purpose: to introduce the series on the last days, preparing the us for what is to come, and to encourage us not to be afraid of the future.

I thing that most people would agree that we are living in difficult times:

- Economic pressures
- War and rumors of wars
- Global climate consideration
- Battle of the sexes
- Fight for the minds and control of our children
- Racism
- Secularism vs. religion

The bible speaks of this time that we are now in as the “Last Days”. This is a term that means future times, as compared to the times of the patriarchs (Abraham, Moses, etc.), Judges (Gideon, Samson, etc.), kings (David, Solomon, etc.), and prophets (Elijah, Jeremiah, etc.).

Act 2:17 - 'AND IT SHALL COME TO PASS **IN THE LAST DAYS**, SAYS GOD, THAT I WILL POUR OUT OF MY SPIRIT ON ALL FLESH; YOUR SONS AND YOUR DAUGHTERS SHALL PROPHECY, YOUR YOUNG MEN SHALL SEE VISIONS, YOUR OLD MEN SHALL DREAM DREAMS.

Heb 1:1 - God, who at various times and in various ways spoke in time past to the fathers by the prophets,

Heb 1:2 - has in **these last days** spoken to us by *His* Son, whom He has appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the worlds;

These are the times of the Messiah (Jesus), which is the last era and the times that we are now living in. It is therefore extremely important for every believer to understand the characteristics of the time (what people are like) and how we should strive to be different.

These times are clearly described in Paul’s second letter to Timothy. Paul encouraged Timothy to be faithful, diligent and hard-working and he also wanted him to understand the difficulties that he will face because of the times that he was in. We are also in difficult times, as we are no doubt at the end of the “last days”. I want to let you know the subtle nature of the times that we are in.

I am going to approach this subject in a different way: Paul tells Timothy what he needs to do to be prepared, then he tells him of the way people will be in the Last days. I’m going to tell you what people will be like and then tell you what you need to do to be prepared. In this series I also hope to consider four things that will oppose us in these last days:

- False teachers
- Scoffers
- Deceiving spirits

- Doctrines taught by demons

In Paul's second letter to Timothy, he tells him of 19 characteristics of people in the last days. These characteristics are the way that people are becoming more and more today, and are infiltrating the church as well. We must be aware of the subtlety of the things that we are hearing and are being taught, so that we are not deceived by them. In this series, I will be dealing with each of these characteristics in greater detail. Here is Paul's list of godlessness of the last days:

2Ti 3:1 - But know this, that in the last days perilous times will come:

2Ti 3:2 - For men will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy,

2Ti 3:3 - unloving, unforgiving, slanderers, without self-control, brutal, despisers of good,

2Ti 3:4 - traitors, headstrong, haughty, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God,

2Ti 3:5 - having a form of godliness but denying its power. And from such people turn away!

2Ti 3:6 - For of this sort are those who creep into households and make captives of gullible women loaded down with sins, led away by various lusts,

2Ti 3:7 - always learning and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth.

Perilous times – difficult, hard to bear, troublesome, dangerous, furious, fierce, hard to bear. These are the times that we are in, and they would be very difficult to deal with without the Lord. But no matter what these troublesome times bring forth, we are promised strength and help to overcome. This is what Jesus said:

Mat 11:28 - Come to Me, all *you* who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.

Mat 11:29 - Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.

Mat 11:30 - For My yoke *is* easy and My burden is light."

Paul said this:

1Co 10:13 - No temptation has overtaken you except such as is common to man; but God *is* faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will also make the way of escape, that you may be able to bear *it*.

So, it is true that we are in the "Last Days" and that these are troublesome times. But but don't be troubled or afraid. Jesus has overcome the world and so will we through Him!