

2 Timothy 3:1-9 Lesson 10

Beware of Sheep Rustlers

Day 1: Read 2 Timothy 3:1-9 Understand the Times

1. This week we used the example of how a “Wanted Poster” will often convey 3 things very clearly - 1) a warning that the criminal at large may be in your area, 2) a clear description of the perpetrator, and 3) an explanation of how he commits the crimes. Read verse 1 and explain if this warning about difficult people is for now or later. (1 Tim 4:1, 2 Tim 3:5, Heb 1:2)_____
2. Paul has addressed this concept of “**expecting difficulty**” quite a bit in this epistle. Explain how our “**expectations**” in church ministry can get us in trouble._____
3. We know as Christ followers that the world will persecute us, but where is Timothy’s persecution coming from?_____
4. In understanding this, how can we adjust our expectations so that we won’t get rattled when tough times come? In what ways could you encourage your leadership (rather than emotionally withdrawing) during times of stress?_____

Day 2: Read 2 Tim 3:1-9 Recognize the Rustlers

1. The “difficult times” Paul is talking about is promulgated by “**professing Christians**” who are actually false teachers. He is about to give a long list describing their nature. If they were a new creation, what would their life be characterized by? (Gal 5:22-23)_____
2. Verse 2 describes the foundational sin for all the others. What is it? Why is this true?_____
3. Look at the phrase in verse 2, “**disobedient to parents**”. In what way does “**passive parenting**” produce the next 4 qualities in that verse: ungrateful, unholy, unloving, and irreconcilable?_____
4. What is meant by “**passive parenting**”? (Prov 13:24)_____



5. The statement was made, *“If you really want to cultivate disobedience in your children, don’t hold them accountable for their actions.”* How does this impact one’s understanding of the gospel? _____

6. Our maturity as a body will only rise to the level of our parenting. Explain. _____

Day 3 Read 2 Tim 3:1-9 Recognize the Rustlers

1. The next 8 characteristics show how the character of false teachers fleshes itself out in action. How does the description **“malicious gossips”** prove that these people are not just misinformed in their doctrine? _____

2. Even though these characteristics describe unbelievers in the church, we know that Christians can also fall into these sins. How is listening to gossip, **“a sin of gossip?”** Explain a practical response when confronted with this situation. (Matt 18:15-18, Gal 6:1, Titus 3:10-11) _____

3. Paul comes full circle in verse 4 with the description **“conceited”**. Explain how pride is really the sin of idolatry. A great question to ask yourself in any situation is, **“Whose kingdom am I building?”** In what instances today would you have answered “mine”? _____

4. Verse 5 describes how these folks who bring “difficult times” are **“dressed in godly garb”**. They have the look of piety, but without the power. They are all show, but no go. What are some practical ways we as a body can grow in discernment so that we are not fooled by hypocrisy? _____

Day 4 Read 2 Tim 3:1-9 Beware of their M.O. (method of operating)

1. Read verse 6 and explain how Satan uses a similar method today of going after the sheep **“on the fringes”**. _____

2. Read about Jannes and Jambres in Exodus 7-9. In what ways are they like those causing difficulty in the church? (see also 1 Tim 3:15b) _____

3. What are some practical ways we can emulate Moses in this situation? _____

“Lord, make me a crisis man. Let me not be a mile-post on a single road, but make me a fork that men must turn one way or another in facing Christ in me.”

- Jim Elliot