

*Series: The Essential Church; Sermon: **Get Real**;
Delivered by **Josh Moody**, senior pastor, on July 21, 2019*

Bible text explored: 2 Timothy 3:1–9

¹But understand this, that in the last days there will come times of difficulty. ²For people will be lovers of self, lovers of money, proud, arrogant, abusive, disobedient to their parents, ungrateful, unholy, ³heartless, unappeasable, slanderous, without self-control, brutal, not loving good, ⁴treacherous, reckless, swollen with conceit, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God, ⁵having the appearance of godliness, but denying its power. Avoid such people. ⁶For among them are those who creep into households and capture weak women, burdened with sins and led astray by various passions, ⁷always learning and never able to arrive at a knowledge of the truth. ⁸Just as Jannes and Jambres opposed Moses, so these men also oppose the truth, men corrupted in mind and disqualified regarding the faith. ⁹But they will not get very far, for their folly will be plain to all, as was that of those two men. [ESV]

Review and application:

1. What reality was Paul facing as he wrote final letters to Timothy and Titus?
(See *2 Tim* 2:9 and 4:6.)
What do we know about the health and personality of Paul's loyal apprentice?
(See *1Tim.* 5:23 and *2 Tim.* 1:4, 7-8.)
2. Would the term "the last days" (v. 1) have meant a distant future to Paul and his associates, or included their current circumstances?
(See *Acts* 2:17 and *Heb.* 1:1-2.)
So should Timothy be surprised to encounter these "times of difficulty"?
3. What (vv. 2-5a) did Timothy need to understand about the total inversion of priorities that these developments revealed?
[Compare "lovers of _____" (v. 2a) with "lovers of _____" (v. 4b)]
Pastor Moody presented Paul's list of human defects as forming three concentric circles, moving from self, on to family, and then to society.
4. Do these random paraphrases of the terms in this passage sound all too familiar?
How so?
Self-defects (v. 2a): money-hungry, self-promoting, stuck-up, profane.
Family defects (vv. 2b-3a): contemptuous of parents, cruel, coarse, unloving, unforgiving.
Society defects (vv. 3b-4): slanderers, impulsively wild, savage, cynical, betrayers of friends, ruthless, conceited, addicted to lust.
5. Why (v. 5a) are political or social efforts inadequate to deal with this "natural orientation of humanity"?
What is the only power that can correct basic heart issues?
6. How (v. 5b) should we respond when characters like these creep into the church?
(See also *2 Tim.* 2:16 and 23.)
7. How (vv. 6-7) does Paul tell Timothy to protect the vulnerable sheep in his flock?
8. How does the story of the Egyptian court magicians (vv. 8-9) represent the false teachers? (See *Exod.* 7:10-12.)
How should its outcome be an encouragement to those defending the truth?
(See *Exod.* 9:11.)