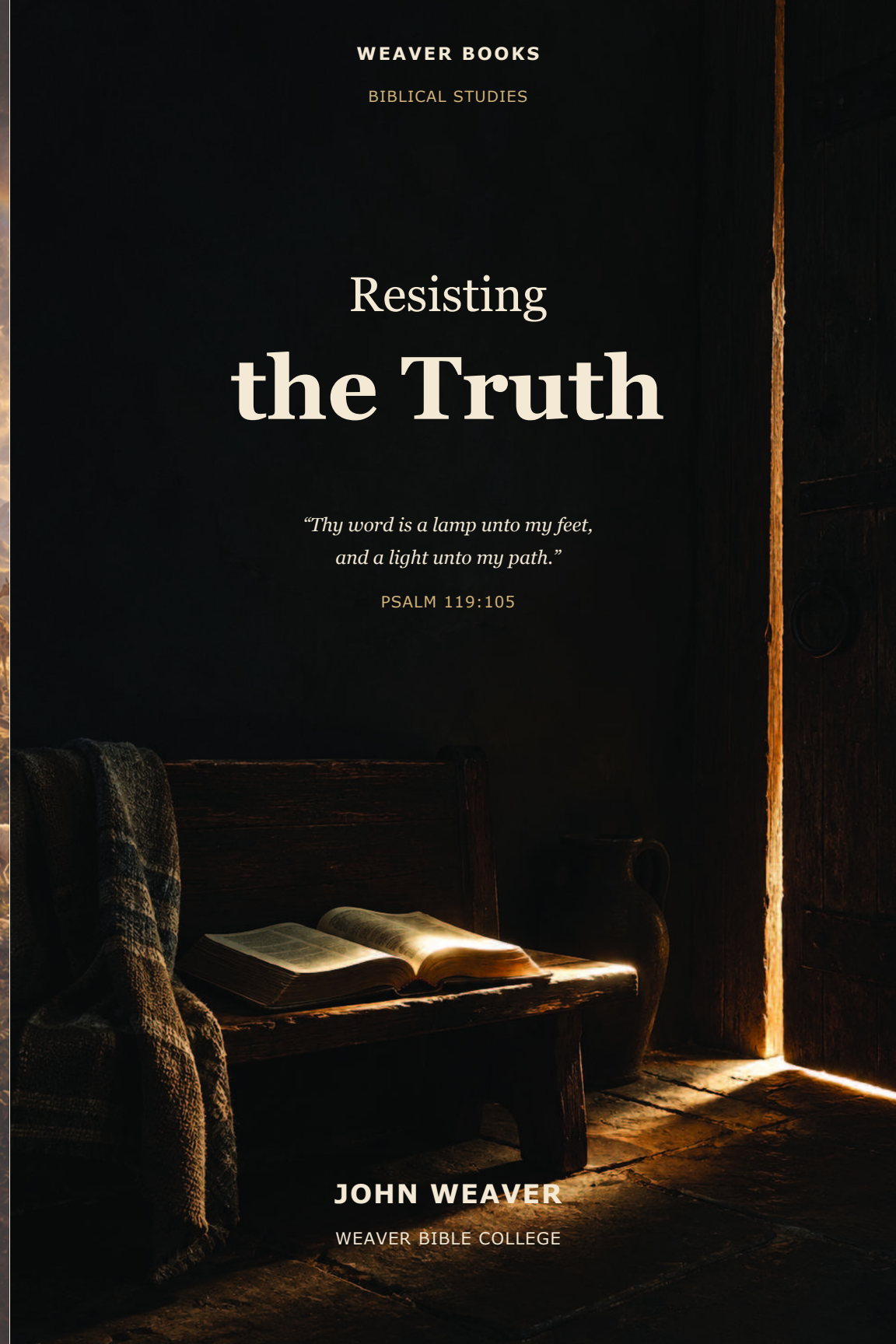
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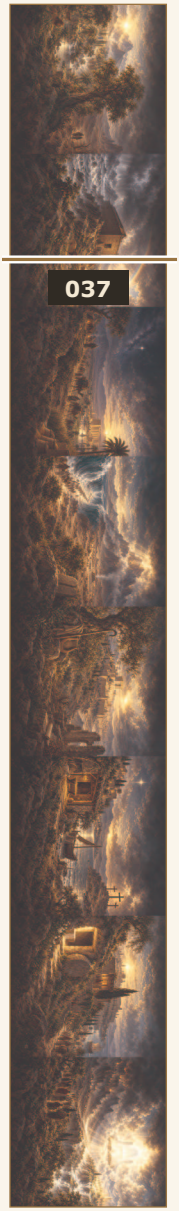
"Thy word is a lamp unto my feet,
and a light unto my path."

PSALM 119:105



JOHN WEAVER

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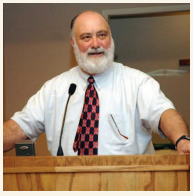
Buy the truth, and sell it not; also wisdom, and instruction, and understanding.

PROVERBS 23:23

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Contents

Chapter 1: Resisting the Truth - Part One 5

Introduction to 2 Timothy 3:1-9 5

The Nature of Resisting Truth 6

Characteristics of False Teachers 9

The Last Days Context 12

Resisting the Messengers of Truth 13

Method 1: Imitation 14

Method 2: Insinuation 17

Method 3: Intimidation 19

Consequences of Resisting Messengers 21

Application and Prayer 22

Chapter 2: Resisting the Truth - Part Two 23

Review of Part 1 23

Resisting the Message of the Truth 26

Introduction to Resisting the Message of the Truth 26

Denial 26

Denigration 28

Compromise 30

The Consequence of Compromise in the Church 33

Biblical Examples of Uncompromising Truth 34

The Hardest Lessons in Preaching 36

The Fate of Those Who Resist the Truth 37

Applications and Conclusion 38

Topical Index 43

Scripture Index 45

Study Guide Link 47

CHAPTER 1

Resisting the Truth

Part One

Introduction to 2 Timothy 3:1-9

2 Timothy 3:1–9 begins: “This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, traitors, heady, highminded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God; having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away. For of this sort are they which creep into houses, and lead captive silly women laden with sins, led away with divers lusts, ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth. Now as Jannes and Jambres withstood Moses, so do these also resist the truth: men of corrupt minds, reprobate concerning the faith. But they shall proceed no further: for their folly shall be manifest unto all men, as theirs also was.”

The Bible specifically says in verse 8 that Jannes and Jambres withstood Moses. That is, they resisted the truth. Then the Apostle

Paul says that likewise there are those who were alive in his day, as well as those who are alive in our day, who resist the truth. That is, they purposefully and deliberately resist the truth.

The Nature of Resisting Truth

Truth is so precious and so valuable. Who would not want to know it, embrace it, believe it, and apply it? Who would want to believe a lie? Who would want to follow error? Why is it that people fight against the truth, resist the truth, and hate it?

Some of you are aware that there is a theory known as cognitive dissonance. According to this theory, there is a tendency for individuals to seek consistency among their cognitions—that is, among their beliefs, understandings, and attitudes. Sometimes there is an inconsistency between what they believe and what they see happening or what they hear. That is dissonance. That is the inconsistency. Therefore, there is a conflict between what they think, what they observe, and what they hear. They are fighting with what they observe and what they believe, and consequently many times they simply fight against anything and everything because they are trying to eliminate the dissonance or inconsistency.

People often change their attitudes to conform to their behavior, or change their behavior to conform to their attitudes—what they believe, what they have been taught, what they hear, and what they observe.

Whether the theory of cognitive dissonance is true or not—I am not teaching that today—it is a fact that when we hear something contrary to what we have believed and been taught all our lives, our first response is to deny what we hear. Stop and think about that. Whenever you hear something absolutely contrary to what you have been taught and believed all your life, your first response is to deny it. It seems that we are incapable of processing what we hear, much less entertaining facts contrary to what we have already been taught and heard.

When we hear truth that we have never heard or been taught before, we must hear that truth over and over. Slowly but surely, we begin to grasp it, understand it, embrace it, and change what we

formerly believed, in order that we might believe the truth. That truth will then produce a change in our behavior.

Interestingly, after we have embraced the truth, we wonder why we fought against it to begin with. I never will forget when I first started taking Greek. I took Greek for three years. The first year, I thought, "Oh, Lord, have mercy. I will never learn this stuff." The second year, I thought, "Well, this is not so difficult." In the third year, I thought, "Why did I ever complain to begin with?" It was as easy as falling off a log.

When you first hear things you have never heard before, your first response is either to deny them or say, "That can never be." Do you realize how extremely disconcerting it is to discover that what you have heard and been taught all your life has been error and wrong? We fight against truth many times simply because we do not want to be proven wrong, or because we do not want our family and friends to be in error. We recognize that if what someone is teaching is truth, then our family and friends have always been in error.

This is especially true in relationship to history and religion. Can you imagine what it must be like for a Muslim or Roman Catholic to come to the true saving faith and the true saving knowledge of Jesus Christ? That means rejecting everything he has been taught from childhood. The same is true when an Arminian comes to the knowledge and belief of God's absolute sovereignty. He has to say, "Wait a minute, everything just about that I've been taught has been wrong," and then reinterpret everything in light of God's absolute sovereignty.

It is a fact that it can be disconcerting to hear things we have never heard before. Our natural tendency is to fight against truth when we hear it for the first time. Scripture tells us that there are those who hate the truth simply because it is truth, and who love unrighteousness far more than they love truth. You will find that in 2 Thessalonians 2. The Bible does say that some people simply hate truth because they love unrighteousness.

The Bible is speaking here particularly about Jannes and Jambres, two men who resisted Moses and Aaron. You will read about them in the book of Exodus. They were undoubtedly the head,

or lead, magicians and sorcerers under Pharaoh. Pharaoh undoubtedly had many more magicians and sorcerers, but these two were probably his best, and they were singled out to defeat Moses and Aaron. The Scripture tells us in verse 8 that they withstood Moses. These two men were chosen specifically to withstand him.

The word "withstood" is the Greek word "anthistemi," which means to resist, to withstand, to oppose, or to set oneself against. These men purposefully and deliberately set themselves against, resisted, and withstood everything that Moses and Aaron stood for and said. Moreover, "withstood" is a present middle indicative. If you understand Greek, this means that they were doing it themselves, purposefully and deliberately, consistently, constantly, and continually.

Their withstanding the truth was not a one-time act, but a constant and continual act. In verse 8, Paul says, “Now as Jannes and Jambres withstood Moses, so do these also resist the truth,” speaking of the false teachers. The word “resist” is exactly the same word as “withstood.” He is talking about men who are purposefully resisting the truth. Moreover, the tense and the mood are exactly the same in the Greek, which means that these false teachers were doing exactly what Jannes and Jambres were doing in the days of Moses and Aaron. Paul is saying that modern-day false teachers—modern-day according to Paul and Timothy—were doing exactly the same thing to the truth that Jannes and Jambres were doing in Egypt before Moses and Aaron.

How could the false teachers in Paul and Timothy’s day be compared to the magicians and sorcerers in Egypt during the time of Moses and Aaron? After all, thousands of years had intervened. Moreover, the false teachers in 2 Timothy chapter 3 did not claim to be magicians or sorcerers. How can there be a comparison?

The Apostle Paul gives us some general categories in which all false teachers fall. It does not matter whether we are talking about Jannes and Jambres in the days of Moses and Aaron, false teachers in the days of Paul and Timothy, or false teachers in our day. Paul says that there are general areas in which all false teachers will ultimately fall. Let us begin with verses 2 through 4. Paul tells us that all false teachers are idolatrous. In verse 2 he says, “For men shall be

lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, traitors, heady, highminded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God."

Characteristics of False Teachers

Here they are: they are idolatrous. They are worshipping and serving the creature— themselves—more than the Creator. Their emphasis is upon their wants, wishes, desires, and will, rather than God's will and God's desires. These are men who live simply for their own benefit and their own pleasures.

They are a law unto themselves. They do what they please. Philippians 3:19 describes these men very aptly, speaking of being idolatrous and worshiping and serving the creature more than the Creator: "Whose end is destruction, whose God is their belly, whose glory is in their shame, who mind earthly things." Whose God is their belly. What is he saying?

He is not just talking about food, but about anyone who simply lives for his own pleasure. So here Paul begins by saying that all false teachers are idolatrous. It does not matter whether we are talking about Jannes and Jambres, the false teachers in his day, or the false teachers in our day. In our day, they are all idolatrous. That is the truth.

Secondly, in verse 5, he points out that they are all idiocrats. He says, "Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away." Not only are they idolaters; they are, secondly, idiocrats. I will explain that. That is, they have a form of godliness. If you look up the word "idiocracy," you will find that it means peculiar to oneself, that which belongs to oneself, or that which is peculiar to a person. How can they be called that? He says they have a form of godliness, but deny the power thereof.

Here is what false teachers do: they make up their rules as they go along. They make up their structure and their religion as they go along. Do you realize that you can be as godly as you want to be as long as you can make up the rules yourself? It is like the many games

I have never played. I do not care what game you give me and want to play with me; I can always win if you let me make up the rules as I go along.

That is exactly what these people were doing. They were idiocrats. They made up their rules. They had their own form and their own structure of religiosity, but there was no power—that is, no Holy Ghost power, no power of God—in their lives. They were empty. Jude 12 and 13 describes them further.

Jude 1:12 describes these false teachers and false believers: "These are spots in your feasts of charity, when they feast with you, feeding themselves without fear: clouds they are without water, carried about of winds; trees whose fruit withereth, without fruit, twice dead, plucked up by the roots; raging waves of the sea, foaming out their own shame; wandering stars, to whom is reserved the blackness of darkness for ever."

Consider a wave of the sea. When it hits the land, it spews forth all the filth and every vileness that is in it. Consider a tree whose fruit is withered and that has been plucked up by the roots. It is dead. It is barren. It never produces anything. Clouds without water: that is how he describes these people. They are idolatrous. They are idiocrats. They have a form of religion, but they are absolutely, totally powerless.

There is no power of God in their lives and no holiness according to Bible holiness. They have their own structure, but it is not a godly structure. So he says they are idolatrous, and he also says that they are idiocrats. They are also immoral: "for of this sort"—

He is still talking about these false teachers: "which creep into houses, and lead captive silly women laden with sins, led away with divers lusts." How could it be otherwise? If you have no law but your own law, and acknowledge no God but yourself, will you not naturally fulfill your own lusts? Of course; that is exactly what you do.

Although they are immoral, they are not openly immoral. What they do, they do secretively: "for of this sort are they which creep into houses." That is, they insinuate themselves into these houses and then capture, or make captive, silly women. He describes these

women as “laden with sins, led away with divers lusts.” In other words, they live by their feelings, follow their lusts and desires, and have no objective standard. They do not adhere to the principle of the Word of God.

If you do not have an objective standard, the only standard you could possibly have is subjective. You do as you please; you do whatever you want to do. So they are called silly women, and they have been led away captive. When you do not live by principle, you are easily captured and led away.

What about these false teachers? They are idolaters, idiocrats, and immoral, but that is not all. They are also intellectual: “ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth.” Humanly speaking, these false teachers are not dummies. They have a great deal of knowledge, intellect, and smarts. In all probability, that is what attracts many people to false teachers. They are impressed with intellect and degrees: “I’m Dr. So-and-so.”

But look carefully at what the Bible says: “ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth.” It does not matter how intellectual, brilliant, or learned they are. The truth is, they are never, ever able to come to a precise knowledge of the truth.

There are two Greek words for knowledge. One of them is the word “gnosis,” and that is where we get the word “Gnostic.” Gnosticism was a heresy in New Testament times, and that heresy still exists today, just under a different name. The Greek word “gnosis” simply means knowledge, but the word “epignosis” means a full knowledge or a precise knowledge.

Look at verse 7. These false teachers are “ever learning, and never able to come to the precise knowledge of the truth.” Let me spell it out like this: They know a lot about the Bible, but they do not know the Bible. They know a lot about Christ, but they do not know Christ. You can have a head full of facts and a head full of knowledge and never, ever be genuinely converted.

James chapter 3 and verse 15 speaks of that kind of knowledge: “This wisdom descendeth not from above, but is earthly, sensual, devilish.” And in 1 Corinthians 8, the Bible says that kind of

knowledge simply puffs up. That is, it makes men arrogant and proud.

Let me ask you a question. Do you think the precise knowledge of Jesus Christ that the Apostle Paul found on the Damascus Road made him proud, arrogant, and haughty? No. It humbled him. It brought him down to his knees, acknowledging that he was nothing and that Jesus Christ was everything.

So here these men are; they are intellectual. Now, here is what the Apostle Paul is saying: All false teachers of every age are going to be idolatrous. Whether we are talking about Jannes and Jambres, the false teachers in Paul's day, or the false teachers in our day, they are always going to be idolatrous. They are always going to be idiocrats. They are always going to be immoral. And they are always, always going to be intellectual, because that is their draw. Although they have knowledge, they do not have a precise knowledge of Jesus Christ.

The Last Days Context

Go back to verse 1: “This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come.” Paul is writing to Timothy and telling him that in the last days perilous times are going to come. He then describes those perilous times through these false teachers. In verse 8 he says, “Now as Jannes and Jambres withstood Moses,” and then, “So do these also.”

Paul is writing to Timothy and saying, just as Jannes and Jambres withstood Moses, “so do these also.” But what was the warning he gave in verse one? “This know that”—when?—“in the last days perilous times shall come.” Then he said, “so do these also.” In other words, according to Paul’s own teaching, Paul and Timothy were living in the last days when 2 Timothy was written.

Now let me show you how easily this is explained. Turn in your Bibles to Hebrews chapter one. I want you to see when the last days began. Hebrews chapter one, beginning with verse one, says: “God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he

made the worlds." So when did the last days begin? In the first coming of Christ. We have been in the last days ever since Christ came.

God used to speak in old times by the prophets and in different manners. But verse two says, "hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son." That is why Paul told Timothy, "You're in the last days, and you have false teachers there just like those men who withstood Moses, by the name of Jannes and Jambres."

How did Jannes and Jambres withstand the truth? How did these false teachers withstand the truth? Let us ask an even more general question: How does anyone withstand or resist the truth? We are not speaking only about false prophets and false teachers. We are talking about our next-door neighbor, the man down the street, and the person listening to my voice.

Resisting the Messengers of Truth

How do you fight against the truth? How do you resist it? Basically, there are two ways that you can resist the truth. I am only going to cover one of them today. The first way is by resisting the messengers of the truth. Look in verse eight: "Now as Jannes and Jambres withstood" whom? Moses. And as they withstood Moses, they also withstood Aaron, who was his prophet and his mouthpiece.

What did Pharaoh and the Egyptians do? They withstood or resisted the messengers of truth. Moses and Aaron were not greeted amicably or received with open, loving, kind, and gracious arms. They were not received as the special messengers sent by Jehovah. When they approached Pharaoh and his court, they approached a hostile audience. Neither Pharaoh nor his Egyptians desired to hear what Moses and Aaron had to say.

Their divine mission was denied, and their source of authority was denied by Pharaoh and his court. After Moses and Aaron told Pharaoh, "Thus saith the Lord God of Israel, Let my people go, that they may hold a feast unto me in the wilderness," notice the words, "Thus saith the Lord God of Israel." Moses and Aaron were saying, God sent us; here is what God said. Pharaoh responded, "Who is the

Lord, that I should obey his voice to let Israel go? I know not the Lord, neither will I let Israel go."

Method 1: Imitation

What did he just say? "I don't recognize your God. I don't recognize your source of authority. Therefore, I don't even recognize you as being sent of God. I don't recognize your divine mission. You're nobody. I don't have to listen to you."

Pharaoh and his court resisted the messengers of God in three ways, which we will consider one at a time. The first way was imitation. How did Pharaoh and his court resist the messengers of God? The miracles Moses and Aaron performed were intended to authenticate both their ministry and their mission. These miracles demonstrated beyond a shadow of a doubt that they were indeed sent of God. If Pharaoh's magicians could imitate these miracles, it would discredit Moses and Aaron. How could they claim to be the special messengers of God if Pharaoh's own magicians could do the exact same thing Moses and Aaron could do?

I hope you are very familiar with the book of Exodus. Do you realize there were only three areas in which the magicians could imitate what Moses and Aaron did? Only three. First, they imitated the turning of the rod into serpents, as recorded in Exodus 7:11. You remember that Aaron threw down his rod, and it became a serpent. Then the magicians threw down their rods, and they became serpents as well.

There is a practical explanation for how they did it, perhaps through the Egyptians, especially these magicians. But notice what happened: when they threw down their rods and they became serpents, the rod of Moses devoured their rods and their serpents and swallowed them down. They were able to imitate that through sorcery and trickery. The second thing they were able to imitate was turning water into blood, in Exodus 7:22. The third was calling the frogs up out of the river, in Exodus 8:7.

The turning of the rod into a serpent can be easily explained. Making water turn red could be easily explained. Calling up frogs might also be easily explained. But when you get to the fourth

miracle, when Moses turns the dust into lice, they cannot do that. Why? Because all Satan and his emissaries can do is imitate; they cannot create. Only God can give life.

Listen to me very carefully: imitation is not creation. The magicians were able to bring forth death, but they were not able to bring forth life. Go back and read it in Exodus 7, 8, and 9. All the Egyptian magicians were able to do was add to the misery that had already been sent upon the Egyptians by God. They could not stop the judgment. They could not thwart it, hinder it, or turn it around. All they could do was add to the misery. They could add bloody water and call more frogs up, but that was it. They could not do anything else. They could not create life. The only thing they produced was death.

Now look in your Bibles to 2 Corinthians chapter 11. Let us begin reading with verse 1. Watch carefully. Look what the Apostle Paul writes: "Would to God ye could bear with me a little in my folly: and indeed bear with me."

Then he tells them, "For I am jealous over you with godly jealousy: for I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ." Then he says in verse 3, "But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtilty, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ."

"For if he that cometh preacheth another Jesus, whom we have not preached, or if ye receive another spirit, which ye have not received, or another gospel, which ye have not accepted"—what is he saying? All Satan can do and all the false teachers can do is present another Jesus, another spirit, another gospel. It is imitation. It is counterfeit. It is fake.

It is not the real thing. Paul says, "For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ. And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light. Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness; whose end shall be according to their works."

All of the cults, all the isms, all the schisms that you can find today are imitations and counterfeits of the true gospel and of the true Christ. They are not the real thing. Thus, it is through imitation that false teachers deceive.

One of the ways they deceive is through their fair speeches—that is, once again, by using their intellect. Paul says, "Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them. For they that are such serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly; and by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple."

So what does the Apostle Paul say? When someone tries to draw you away from the doctrine of the Word of God, from the doctrine of Christ, and from the truth of Scripture, you had better mark them and have nothing to do with them, because by their fair speeches and fair words they are trying to deceive you, beguile you, and draw you away. Thus, they use their intellect while they are serving themselves.

Each one of us has our own sphere of understanding and sphere of reference. I could pronounce a word, and some of you may think of three or four different things. I could even use the word "hunting." Dr. Holmes is going to think of either deer or turkey. Some of the women are going to think about hunting for an item they want to buy. Some of us older folks are going to think about where we left our teeth or our keys. The word "hunting" means different things to different people. Do you understand that? The same thing is true when it comes to theology.

I can point out false teachers who are on the radio and television today, talking about Jesus Christ being the Son of God. When we hear "Jesus Christ the Son of God," what do we immediately think of? We think of the unique virgin-born Son of God, perfect God and perfect man, God incarnate, the only begotten of God. But that is not what the false teacher means. When he says that he believes Jesus Christ is a son of God, he means that Jesus Christ is a son of God in the same way that you and I are sons of God. In other words, he is merely a good man, no better and no more than we are. Notice what he is doing.

He is using the same terminology but giving it a totally different meaning. That is what Paul is talking about with their fair speeches. Words are important, and definitions are important. You must know what someone means by the words he uses.

One way to resist the truth, then, is by imitation. All of these cults and isms are resisting the truth through their own imitation. That is why they need books over and above the Word of God. That is why they write their own version of the Bible and explain their own works, making everybody read those works rather than the Word of God.

Like Jannes and Jambres, the only thing a false teacher can bring forth is death; he cannot produce life. Do you remember what our Lord said in Proverbs 8:36? "But he that sinneth against me wrongeth his own soul: all they that hate me love death." One way to resist the messengers of God is by imitation. Another way is by insinuation.

Method 2: Insinuation

Other words could be used for insinuation, such as defamation or vilification. When one does not like the message, the normal response is to discredit the messenger by vilifying and defaming him. One of the easiest ways to do that is by insinuation. When you insinuate something, you do not necessarily have to attack someone openly.

Let me ask you a question. Do you happen to know how old Moses and Aaron were when they confronted Pharaoh? I want you to stop and think. If you do not know, I will tell you. You will find it in Exodus 7:7: Moses was 80 years old, and Aaron was 83 years old. That is kind of like someone threatening to whip me and sending a 90-year-old man to do it.

What am I going to do? I am going to laugh. I am going to say, "You think that 90-year-old man is going to whip me? You are mistaken." Can you not imagine what Pharaoh and his court did when they saw these two old men? Can you not hear them mocking them? "Surely, if your God is going to send somebody, surely He would have sent a younger, stronger man, someone who could have

faced us and dealt with us. Surely. You are too old to be used of God. You cannot do anything. What do you hope to accomplish while you can?" Can you imagine the ridicule?

I want you to understand something because this is vitally important: insinuation has been used throughout history to attack and destroy the character of godly men. One of my favorite stories concerns a fellow who worked very hard at carpentry. He went downtown to do some work and parked his truck in front of the liquor store. The church gossip saw it there and started spreading the word that he was hitting the bottle and evidently was a drunkard, because his truck was parked in front of the liquor store. When he heard it, he took his truck that night, parked it in front of her house, and left.

You see what I am saying? That is insinuation. Did you know our Lord Himself was the recipient of vile insinuations? Let me show you two of them. Look in your Bibles to Matthew 11. You remember John the Baptist was different from our Lord. John did not drink wine and ate locusts and honey. That was it. Look at what our Lord said in Matthew 11:18: "For John came neither eating nor drinking, and they say, He hath a devil."

Something's wrong with that man. He doesn't eat or drink. All he does is drink some wine and eats nothing but honey and locusts. Then in verse 19, "The Son of man came eating and drinking, and they say, Behold a man gluttonous, and a winebibber." So what did they accuse Christ of? Of being a glutton and a winebibber. Well, that's not all. In fact, that's pretty nice compared to John 8.

Our Lord was in a confrontation with these Pharisees. He told them, "Ye do the deeds of your father." In other words, they were of the devil and doing the deeds of their father. Notice what they said in John 8:41: "Then said they to him, We be not born of fornication; we have one Father, even God." What were they insinuating? They were insinuating that the virgin-born, sinless Son of God was a bastard.

That's what they were saying. Can you imagine the blasphemy? "We be not born of fornication. We know who our parents are." This was insinuation. Do you realize the Apostle Paul himself had to face that? The whole passage in 2 Corinthians 10 deals with Paul basically

defending himself because of the insinuation of the Judaizers. Look what they said concerning the Apostle Paul: "For his letters, say they, are weighty and powerful; but his bodily presence is weak, and his speech contemptible."

"Who does he think he is? He writes strong, but look at him. That sickly, emaciated little punk. Who does he think he is?" That's what they were doing. They so tried to discredit the Apostle Paul by insinuation that they even cast doubts into the minds of these believers that Christ could speak through Paul. Therefore he tells them, "Since ye seek a proof of Christ speaking in me, which to you-ward is not weak, but is mighty in you." Insinuation.

Judaizers are not the only ones who use that tactic. Turn to Ephesians chapter 4 and look at verse 31. God tells us there are certain things that have been put away, put off; they are not to be in our lives: “Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice.”

Notice “evil speaking.” I could say, “That Ed Wolfe, let me tell you some things about that rascal,” and lower the boom on him. That is evil speaking. Whether or not some things are true is immaterial. Even some things that are true do not need to be repeated. Just because something truly happened does not mean that you have to go up and down as a tattletale, or, as Scripture says, as a talebearer among your people.

I do not have to sit here and say, “Let me tell you something about Ed Wolfe,” and lower the boom. Doc could come to me and say, “You know, I really like Ed Wolfe.” I could look at him and say, “You would not say that if you knew what I knew.” Have I said anything bad about him? Have I repeated anything? No. But what have I done? I have insinuated that I know something he does not know, and that if he knew what I knew, he would not like Ed Wolfe, be his friend, or have anything to do with him. When God says to put away all evil speaking, it includes insinuation.

Method 3: Intimidation

How do you resist the messengers of God? Imitation, insinuation, and one more: intimidation.

Look in your Bibles to Exodus chapter 10. You remember how Moses and Aaron had not only bested the sorcerers and magicians of Egypt; they had also bested Pharaoh. In Exodus 10:28, Pharaoh was fed up with it: “And Pharaoh said unto him, Get thee from me, take heed to thyself, see my face no more; for in that day thou seest my face thou shalt die.” And Moses said, “Thou hast spoken well, I will see thy face again no more.”

What was Moses doing? He was saying, “Pharaoh, you think you have threatened me. You think you have intimidated me. But you have spoken your own death sentence.”

When Pharaoh told Moses, “Get thee hence, take heed to thyself, see my face no more; for in that day thou seest my face thou shalt surely die.” Can a threat get any plainer? Think about it. Pharaoh was an absolute ruler. He believed that he held life and death in his hand, and he said to Moses, “When you come back to see me, I’ll have you executed. That’s it.” Intimidation.

It is amazing, as you read through Scripture, how intimidation is used. Do you remember when Elijah killed the 450 prophets of Baal on Mount Carmel? But when you get to 1 Kings 19 and verse 2, Queen Jezebel sent a messenger to Elijah and said, “So let the gods do to me, and more also, if I make not thy life as the life of one of them by to morrow about this time.” She was saying, “Elijah, I’m going to cut your head off just the way you cut off the heads of my prophets. So let the gods do to me, and more also, if by this time tomorrow you are not dead just like them.” Ahab and Jezebel were wicked, cruel tyrants. That is when Elijah said, “I think it’s time for me to leave town.” He went to the mountain, and God met him. Amos was threatened the same way. In Amos 7 and verses 12 and 13, Amos went to the palace to preach against Jeroboam II.

Jeroboam II had a statist priest, Amaziah, and here is what Amaziah said to Amos: “Amos, O thou seer”—that is, O thou prophet—“go, flee thee away into the land of Judah, and there eat bread, and prophesy there: but prophesy not again any more at Bethel: for it is the king's chapel, and it is the king's court.”

In other words, you live in Judah. You do not live in northern Israel; you are part of the southern kingdom, not the northern

kingdom. Go back home, and there eat bread—if you want to eat bread. If you stay up here, we are going to kill you. This is the king's chapel and the king's court. Intimidation? Oh, yes.

You say, “But Brother Weaver, God's preachers today—most of them are threatened with the loss of their life.” I know that. Some are. I have friends who have been threatened, and I have been threatened. But you can intimidate a man in more ways than one. The average pastor is so intimidated by the Board of Deacons, or by the rich man or rich woman in the church, that he is afraid to preach the whole counsel of God. “Preacher, if you preach something we do not like, we will get mad. We will just leave.” That is intimidation. That is manipulation—an attempt to control an individual.

When you intimidate, or try to intimidate in any way whatsoever, the messenger of the truth, you are resisting and withstanding the truth. In essence, you are saying, “I do not want to hear it. I will have nothing to do with it.”

Consequences of Resisting Messengers

Look in your Bibles to 2 Chronicles 36:15: “And the Lord God of their fathers sent to them”—that is, to His people—“by his messengers”—His prophets, His preachers—“rising up betimes, and sending.” Why did God send the preachers? “Because he had compassion on his people, and on his dwelling place.” What did the people do to the preachers? “But they mocked the messengers of God.”

That is, they intimidated them, made fun of them, and belittled them. “And despised his”—that is God’s—“words, and misused his”—that is God’s—“prophets, until the wrath of the Lord arose against his people, till there was no remedy.” What is God saying? You cannot have one attitude toward Me and another toward My messengers. If you resist the messenger of truth, you are at the same time resisting the One who sent him. Our Lord said in Matthew 10:40, “He that receiveth you receiveth me, and he that receiveth me receiveth him that sent me.”

When we receive Christ, we receive the Father who sent Him. When we receive Christ’s servants, we receive Christ. The opposite is

also true: when we resist Christ's servants, we are resisting Christ Himself; and when we resist Christ, we are resisting the Father who sent Him.

Application and Prayer

There are a multitude of reasons why God's preachers are despised, hated, and rejected. But one of the main reasons is that people hate truth. One way to fight against the truth is to fight against the man who brings it. When you do so, you are doing exactly what Jannes and Jambres did to Moses and Aaron, what the false teachers did in the days of Paul and Timothy, and what false teachers are doing today. You are doing what all wicked men do: fighting and resisting the truth.

I sure do not want to be aligned with Jannes and Jambres or grouped with the false teachers. I want to receive the messengers of God so I can make sure that I receive the message of God. Let's pray.

Father, we ask in the name of Jesus Christ that You would help us today. Lord, help us see how important it is to resist the truth, not to fight against the Word of God, but to bow to it. We may not always understand it, but we must believe it. We may not always grasp it, but we must bow to it. We may not be the greatest intellects in the world, but it is Your Word, and You alone can open our understanding and enable us to grasp and understand Thy truth. May we always be willing to bow, worship, and receive whatever Thou hast for us. In the name of Jesus Christ we ask and pray. Amen.

CHAPTER 2

Resisting the Truth

Part Two

SCRIPTURE READING - 2 Timothy 3:1-9 (KJV)

Review of Part 1

Paul writes:

"This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, traitors, heady, high-minded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God, having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away.

"For of this sort are they which creep into houses, and lead captive silly women laden with sins, led away with divers lusts, ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth. Now as Jannes and Jambres withstood Moses, so do these also resist the truth: men of corrupt minds, reprobate

> concerning the faith. But they shall proceed no further: for their folly shall be manifest unto all men, as theirs also was."
>
> It seems absolutely unreal to entertain the idea that there are some people who do not wish to know the truth. However, Scripture tells us very plainly in verse 8 that there are some who resist the truth and fight against the truth. Verse 8 specifically names Jannes and Jambres, who withstood the truth as Moses was teaching and preaching to them. Then he says, "even so do these."
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> In other words, he is talking about the false prophets and false teachers who were alive during Paul and Timothy's days. But the same fact applies also to false teachers in our day. These men resist the truth. The plain fact is that many individuals who are not necessarily false teachers or false prophets resist the truth. So I begin to ask, What does it mean to resist the truth?

Last week I discussed briefly a theory known as cognitive dissonance. Cognitive dissonance means that many times there is disagreement between what we think, believe, see, observe, or hear. There is always a fight in our minds to reconcile what we have been taught and what we believe with what we see and hear, especially when what we see and hear differs from the way we have been taught. Regardless of whether the theory of cognitive dissonance is true, it is true that we always fight against the truth, especially when that truth is contrary to what we have been taught or believed all our lives.

It is one thing to laugh at error, mock heresy, and snicker at things that we know are untrue. But when we perceive that something may possibly be true, and it is absolutely contrary to what we have believed and been taught, there is always a resistance to that truth.

That is simply human nature. But when you get to verse 8 in 2 Timothy chapter 3, Paul is comparing the two magician sorcerers, Jannes and Jambres, to the false teachers who existed in his day. Likewise, we can compare them to the false teachers who exist in our day and throughout history. There are several categories into which

all false teachers fall. First, in verses 2 through 4, Paul points out that all false teachers are idolatrous.

In verse 4 he says, "traitors, heady, high-minded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God." They put themselves and their desires ahead of God and everything else. In Philippians 3:19, the Apostle Paul described them as those "whose God is their belly." That is, they live basically for themselves. In verse 5, I pointed out that they were idiocrats, "having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof."

The word idiocracy, if you look it up, means peculiar to oneself, or particular to oneself. These false teachers make up the rules as they go along. They have their own form and their own little outline of things, and if it does not fit, they make up something different. In other words, their belief system is peculiar to themselves.

God says they are idolaters, they are idiocrats, and then, in verse six, they are immoral: “For of this sort are they which creep into houses, and lead captive silly women laden with sins, led away with divers lusts.” As I pointed out last week, this is usually the secretive side of life. They creep into houses, but inevitably they are idolatrous, idiocrats, and immoral.

Finally, in verse seven, they are intellectual: “Ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth.” Their intellectuality is basically thoughts. They are constantly and continually learning, but never able to come to the truth. There is a difference in the Bible between the Greek words gnosis and epignosis. Gnosis is where we get the English word Gnostics, who believed in salvation through knowledge. Gnosis speaks of general knowledge, but epignosis means full or precise knowledge. The Bible says plainly that they are never able to come to a full or precise knowledge. They may know a lot about the Bible, but they do not know the Bible. They may know a lot about Christ, but they do not know Christ. They do not have precise knowledge; therefore, God says their intellectuality is false.

In answering the question of how Jannes and Jambres and all false teachers resisted the truth, I gave you one main point last week: the first way of resisting the truth is by resisting the messengers of

the truth. Do you remember in Exodus chapter five, without turning there, when Moses and Aaron went to Pharaoh and said, “Thus saith the Lord, Let my people go”? Pharaoh replied, “I know not the Lord, neither will I let Israel go.” What was he saying?

Resisting the Message of the Truth

I don't recognize your God. Consequently, I don't recognize His authority. And if I don't recognize His authority, I don't recognize your authority. I gave you three ways that Moses and Aaron were withstood: imitation, insinuation, and intimidation. Pharaoh called his magician sorcerers to imitate what Moses and Aaron did. They could imitate only in three particular areas. When it came to the fourth, the bringing forth of life, they could not do that. The only thing those three magician sorcerers did was bring forth death and add to the misery of the Egyptians. They could not produce life. Then there was insinuation, by which individuals can be destroyed, and intimidation, when Pharaoh very clearly said to Moses, "If you see my face anymore, you'll die."

"I'll get you get out of here." I also pointed out how many of God's people today supposedly intimidate pastors so that the pastors will not preach or teach the whole Word of God.

The second way of resisting the truth is not simply by resisting the messengers of the truth, but by resisting the message of the truth. Have you ever wondered how men resist the message of the truth?

Introduction to Resisting the Message of the Truth

I am sure there are numerous ways that truth could be resisted, but I want to give you what I will call an irreducible minimum: three ways, which are the most prominent way that people resist the truth. The first way is denial. An outright denial of the truth really and truly needs no explanation, because all someone has to do is say, "I don't believe that. That's not true."

Denial

However, you must understand that there is a difference between an intellectual denial of the truth and a practical denial of the truth.

There are intellectual atheists, and then there are practical atheists. Likewise, there are intellectual deniers and practical deniers. I noticed it was either on the Drudge Report or World Net Daily that Richard Dawkins of England—who is pretty well famous and is an atheist—had produced television shows to be shown in England, and he likens Moses to Hitler.

He says teaching Christianity to children is child abuse. He is blatantly expressing atheism. Here is a very brilliant man, what you and I would call an intellectual atheist. He would say outright, "There is no God. The Bible is not true. Don't bring me that superstition. I don't want to hear it."

Note that an intellectual atheist always believes himself—or, if there is more than one, themselves—to be intellectually superior to everyone else. Anyone who believes the Bible is considered dumb, ignorant, and superstitious. So, you have an intellectual atheist, which everyone can understand, or an intellectual denier. But what most people do not understand is that there is a practical atheist and a practical way to deny the truth.

This is where most professing Christians fall. It is absolutely possible for someone to acknowledge God, confess the deity of the Lord Jesus Christ, and say openly that the Bible is indeed the inerrant, inspired Word of God. They confess and acknowledge all these truths, but with their lives they practically deny everything they confess.

How can that be true? Titus 1:16 gives us a way of practically denying the truth: "They profess that they know God, but in works they deny him; being abominable and disobedient, and unto every good work reprobate."

This is precisely where modern-day Christendom falls. Polls show that a high percentage of people in this country believe in God, Christ, and the Bible. However, a very small percentage of that high percentage actually apply the Bible to their lives. It is one thing to confess and acknowledge truth; it is quite another to apply and live that truth in everyday life. Thus the Apostle Paul says they profess to know God, but in their works—that is, in their daily lives—they deny Him, being abominable and disobedient, and unto every good work

reprobate. Christians all over this country will be in church today, worshiping what they call the one true and living God and acknowledging that the Bible is the Word of God.

Then they walk out the doors and forget about him totally and completely. They forget all the principles and truths of the Word of God, and live and act six days during the week as if God had no authority, had never spoken, and not one thing that He has said is binding upon them. In other words, they do their own thing. They live as they please. They do not live as God pleases.

Now ask yourself this question: How can professing Christians live such unbiblical, unholy, and ungodly lives? There are only two answers. The first is that they are not genuinely converted to begin with. They are just not saved. That is all there is to it. Or, secondly, some who are genuinely converted have never understood and never learned to apply the principles of the Word of God to their everyday lives.

It is important that you and I stop and think, "Lord, what would you have me to do? What does your Word declare about this situation? How am I to respond? How am I to live? What am I to do in light of your teaching and in light of your word?" If you do not start doing that and make it a habit, then you will turn out to be nothing more than a practical atheist or a practical denier of the truth.

You will confess it with your mouth, but you will deny it with your lives. So one way to resist the truth is by denial, and it does not have to be an outright intellectual denial. It can be a very practical denial: you confess it with your mouth, but live as if it had no binding influence upon your life.

Denigration

Now, there is a second way to resist the message of the truth, and that is by denigration. Acts chapter 17 gives us a practical illustration. The Apostle Paul is on Mars Hill, preaching the resurrection from the dead. In verse 32, the Bible says, "And when they heard of the resurrection of the dead, some mocked: and others

said, We will hear thee again of this matter." The Athenians were mocking the doctrine of the resurrection from the dead.

They were denigrating the message. What do I mean? They were saying either that the message was not true—some said, "We'll hear thee again concerning this matter"—or that there was no urgency about it, no importance to it. It was really not worth thinking about right now. The Greek word for mock means to mock, to deride, to jeer, to make fun of. You know what the Bible says in Proverbs 14:9? "Fools make a mock at sin." They jeer it; they laugh about it. But fools not only make a mock at sin; they mock anything and everything that is holy, right, just, and good.

There is another passage of Scripture that teaches a practical denigration of the message. The word denigrate actually means to blacken, to smear, to mock. When you denigrate something, you are blackening its truth or its name, smearing it, and mocking it. Listen to Luke 14:16: "Then said he unto him, A certain man made a great supper, and bade many: And sent his servant at supper time to say to them that were bidden, Come; for all things are now ready. And they all with one consent began to make excuse. The first said unto him, I have bought a piece of ground, and I must needs go and see it: I pray thee have me excused. And another said, I have bought five yoke of oxen, and I go to prove them: I pray thee have me excused. And another said, I have married a wife, and therefore I cannot come."

Is there anything unbiblical about buying a piece of ground? No. Is there anything unbiblical about buying oxen? No. Is there anything unbiblical about being married? Thank God, no. What is the problem here? First, he said, "I bought a piece of ground and I need to go and see it." If anybody in this room will buy land sight unseen, you are not a very good businessman. The next one said, "I bought five yoke of oxen. I need to go prove them." If you buy oxen without their being proven or tested to you, you are not a very good businessman either. The third one had the best excuse: "I married a wife." My can't, it's she won't let me.

Luke 14 is telling us that it is not unbiblical to buy land, to buy oxen, or to be married. But these people were putting everything ahead of, before, and in front of the gospel and the truth of God.

They were letting everything practical come in the way of serving God.

For instance, someone says, “I missed you at church last Sunday.” “I just didn’t feel like coming.” “Were you sick?” “No, I just didn’t feel like coming.” “But did you feel like doing anything else?” “Oh, yes, we went out to the lake.” Or, “Preacher, I would do this, but I’m doing this extra work over here.” What are we doing?

We are taking legitimate things and prioritizing them ahead of God, ahead of Christ, and ahead of the truth. By doing that, we are denigrating God, Christ, and the truth. We are saying that our practical, everyday living is more important than God, Christ, and the Bible. We are smearing and blackening the name of God and His truth. Look at how the Word of God is ignored even in most Christian homes. What does that mean? We are practically saying it is not important. There is really no value to it in our lives; we do not need it. We can live our lives without God and without truth. We are resisting the truth.

You can resist the truth not just by denial, but by denigration. Look in your Bibles to Jeremiah chapter 2. To me, this is one of the saddest verses in the entire Bible. Look at the complaint that God utters. Jeremiah 2:32: “Can a maid forget her ornaments, or a bride her attire?” Can a bride forget her wedding attire? No. “Yet my people have forgotten me days without number.”

Isn’t that a sad thing? God says, “Yet my people,” not His enemies, but “my people have forgotten me days without number.” How? By denigration—putting everything else ahead of and before Him, and saying, “There are other things more important than truth. Other things more important than Christ.”

So how do men resist the truth? The first way is by denial. The second way is by denigration. The third way is by compromise.

Compromise

I sought another word beginning with D to keep my alliterations going: denial, denigration, and so forth. The word I really needed was compromise. I took my thesaurus and looked for a synonym beginning with D, and the only one I found was diplomacy. Isn't that

interesting? Diplomacy is a synonym for compromise. When our politicians are having diplomatic talks, they are selling us down the drain. They are compromising. Nevertheless, I kept the word compromise.

I want you to see why we resist the truth. Look in your Bibles at Exodus chapter 8. Pharaoh suggested the compromise. Moses and Aaron had said, “Thus saith the Lord God, let my people go that they may serve me in the wilderness.” After some of the plagues, Pharaoh thought, “Maybe I have been a little too hard. Maybe I can bend a little bit.” Look at Exodus 8:25. Here is the first compromise: “And Pharaoh called for Moses and Aaron, and said, Go ye, sacrifice to your God in the land.” In other words, “If you want to worship God, that is fine. The whole land is right here; go ahead and worship Him. Worship Him in Egypt. You do not leave the land.”

What was he saying? “We can all just get along. We all want to serve a god. You can serve your God in the land, the way we serve our gods in the land.” Moses said, “No, sir, that will not work. Our God is totally separate from your false gods. We will have nothing to do with the land of Egypt. Egypt is full of idolatry and wickedness. We will not worship our God in your land. God has commanded us to leave.”

Do you realize how this compromise has affected so many churches? Live like the world, act like the world, dress like the world, look like the world, and do what the world would have you do. In other words, let there be no difference between Christianity and the world. Look at the average church: the teenagers look like worldly teenagers and listen to the same ungodly rock music as the worldly crowd. There is no difference. Look at the parents. There is no difference.

You cannot single one out and say that one is a Christian. They all look alike. They all dress like and act like the world and think like the world. All Pharaoh was saying, "Let's compromise. You worship your God and they'll let you be like us." No. Moses said, "We're not going to do that. God has called us to be different. We're to be a peculiar people, zealous of good works."

"And Pharaoh's servants said unto him, How long shall this man be a snare unto us? let the men go, that they may serve the Lord their God: knowest thou not yet that Egypt is destroyed? And Moses and Aaron were brought again unto Pharaoh: and he said unto them, Go, serve the Lord your God: but who are they that shall go? And Moses said, We will go with our young and with our old, with our sons and with our daughters, with our flocks and with our herds will we go; for we must hold a feast unto the Lord. And he said unto them, Let the Lord be so with you, as I will let you go, and your little ones: look to it; for evil is before you. Not so: go now ye that are men, and serve the Lord; for that ye did desire. And they were driven out from Pharaoh's presence."

Pharaoh said, "You want to go out of the land? Fine. But only the men go. The women and children stay here." How many men that you know are willing just to forsake their wives and their children? The average man is not willing to do that. What did Pharaoh know? Pharaoh knew that if the men left their wives and their children, the men were ultimately coming back.

Everything would be the same. So Pharaoh said, “Here’s what you do. You that are men go and serve him. We’ll keep the women and the children.” There are many homes like that, where one parent is godly, while the other is ungodly and the children are ungodly.

But that was not all. In Exodus 10:21, the Lord said unto Moses, “Stretch out thine hand toward heaven, that there may be darkness over the land of Egypt, even darkness which may be felt.” Moses stretched forth his hand toward heaven, and there was a thick darkness in all the land of Egypt three days. They saw not one another, neither rose any from his place for three days, but all the children of Israel had light in their dwellings.

Pharaoh called unto Moses and said, “Go ye, serve the Lord; only let your flocks and your herds be stayed.” He added, “Let your little ones go with you also.” Pharaoh was saying, “You want the wives and children to go? Go ahead and go. But your flocks and your herds are going to stay here.”

Moses answered, “That’s not going to work. Thou must give us also sacrifices and burnt offerings, that we may sacrifice unto the

Lord our God." Pharaoh was saying, "All right, I'll let the women and children go, but all your possessions are going to stay here." Ultimately, they would have had to come back, because all their wealth, everything they possessed, would have remained there.

The first compromise would have involved the Israelites worshiping along with the Egyptians and saying, basically, "Our God is just like your gods, on the same level, on the same bar." That would have been a horrible compromise. The next two compromises would have involved either the loss of the women and children or the loss of their possessions.

The truth is, when we compromise the Word of God, we usually will either lose our children or our possessions. That's a fact. Why is the real message of the gospel so compromised today? Why can you go into the average Bible-believing church and not hear the whole counsel of God?

The Consequence of Compromise in the Church

Stop and think about that. There are plenty of churches in this land that profess to believe the Bible, to confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, and that He is indeed God in the flesh. Yet you go to those churches and can hear basically the same message over and over and over. Why is it that the Word of God is so compromised in the average Bible-believing church?

One of the main answers is church debt—D-E-B-T, debt. I have preached a whole series on Christian debt, and I am not going to re-preach that series. But it is exceedingly unbiblical for a church to be in debt. Someone says, "We are going to have to have faith that we are going to build this million-dollar building and that God will supply the need so that we can pay it off." Why not have faith that God will give you the million dollars before you build it, so you can pay cash for it?

The reason the whole Word of God cannot be preached in the average church is that the average church is in debt up to its eyeballs. It cannot afford to lose any member, because every member is needed to help pay the sinking-fund payments. Therefore, nothing divisive, offensive, or controversial will be preached or taught. They

will not risk making anybody mad or upset, because they need those shekels coming in every week to make that sinking-fund payment. It is just that simple. They cannot afford to be like our Lord.

Preach the hard doctrines, and just let the chips fall where they may. You say, "What are you talking about?" Let me show you. Look in your Bibles to Matthew 15. Here is a good illustration. Beginning with verse 10:

"And he called the multitude, and said unto them, Hear, and understand: Not that which goeth into the mouth defileth a man; but that which cometh out of the mouth, this defileth a man."

Biblical Examples of Uncompromising Truth

In other words, this teaching is directly contrary to the teaching of the Pharisees. Watch verse 12:

"Then came his disciples, and said unto him, Knowest thou that the Pharisees were offended, after they heard this saying? But he answered and said, Every plant, which my heavenly Father hath not planted, shall be rooted up. Let them alone: they be blind leaders of the blind. And if the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch."

What did our Lord say when His disciples said, "Know you not that you've upset the Pharisees?" Our Lord said, "There's no skin off My nose. Let them alone. Every plant which My heavenly Father hath not planted shall be rooted up. They're going to be gone anyhow. They're blind, and if the blind lead the blind, they're both going to fall into the ditch. They're going to be perishing." That's all there is to it.

But that's not all. Look in John, chapter 6. Jesus Christ is teaching that He is indeed the bread of life. Notice verse 48: "I am that bread of life."

SCRIPTURE READING - John 6:49-68 (KJV)

"Your fathers did eat manna in the wilderness, and are dead. This is the bread which cometh down from heaven, that a man may eat thereof, and not die. I am the living bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live for

ever: and the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world."

"The Jews therefore strove among themselves, saying, How can this man give us his flesh to eat? Then Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you. Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day. For my flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed. He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me, and I in him. As the living Father hath sent me, and I live by the Father: so he that eateth me, even he shall live by me.

"This is that bread which came down from heaven: not as your fathers did eat manna, and are dead: he that eateth of this bread shall live for ever. These things said he in the synagogue, as he taught in Capernaum."

"Many therefore of his disciples, when they had heard this, said, This is an hard saying; who can hear it?" We cannot take this straight, hard preaching. "When Jesus knew in himself that his disciples murmured at it, he said unto them, Doth this offend you?"

"What and if ye shall see the Son of man ascend up where he was before? It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life. But there are some of you that believe not. For Jesus knew from the beginning who they were that believed not, and who should betray him. And he said, Therefore said I unto you, that no man can come unto me, except it were given unto him of my Father."

"From that time many of his disciples went back, and walked no more with him." They were saying, "We can't take this. We don't understand this. This straight hard preaching, he's claiming to be everything that he is, we can't handle this." Let me show you how impressed our Lord was with their fickleness and their faithlessness. "From that time many of his disciples

went back, and walked no more with him. Then said Jesus unto the twelve."

"Will ye also go away?" Everybody else is leaving me. "Will you go away also?" If you preach the truth of God, inevitably, there is going to be a separation of the wheat from the chaff. You cannot help but, as you preach, some will be made mad and some will be made glad. Many times there must indeed be a back door revival before there can ever be a front door revival in the church. Let's be honest.

If our Lord, who was and is the perfect teacher, with perfect understanding and perfect communication skills, had people leave Him, how much more will people leave us, who are imperfect teachers with imperfect knowledge and imperfect skills? If you preach and teach the whole counsel of God, inevitably, some are going to leave you. Some are going to fall by the wayside.

The Hardest Lessons in Preaching

I have preached for over forty years, and the two hardest lessons that I have ever learned in preaching can be summed up in two sentences. The first most difficult lesson that I ever learned was this: You can't help everyone. You can't. Some people are just going to get mad and leave. Some people will not listen. Some people will not receive counsel. You can't help everyone. That is a difficult lesson to learn, especially when you are a young preacher, because you think then that you are going to be able to convert the world.

The second lesson I learned is even more difficult than the first one. The first one was, you can't help everyone. The second and even greater, more difficult truth is this: Sometimes those you can't help are your own family and friends. That is deeply painful when you know you have the truth, and your own family and your own friends will not listen, nor receive it, nor apply it.

That is why our Lord looked at the twelve, His family, and said to them, "Will you go away also? Will you leave me because I'm teaching and preaching the truth?" These are the two most difficult lessons: You cannot help everybody, and sometimes those you cannot help are your own family and friends.

Those who resist the truth, those who deny and denigrate the truth, or those who want to hold and follow a compromise message must be allowed to go their own way. It is sad when you cannot have fellowship with your own family. It is sad sometimes when you cannot have fellowship with your so-called friends.

The Fate of Those Who Resist the Truth

When someone either denies, denigrates, or wants to compromise the Word of God, there is absolutely no help for them except through a supernatural work of God. How can I say that? Look at 2 Thessalonians 2, beginning with verse 10: “And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: That they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness.”

When you refuse the truth, the only thing open to you is a lie. Humanly speaking, there is no hope for anyone who will not bow to the truth of God’s Word. You cannot help someone who will not listen. Those who deny, denigrate, or compromise the truth of God do not and cannot have the truth of God.

Do you remember Pilate in John chapter 18? Jesus Christ was standing right in front of him, and Pilate had the audacity to ask, “What is truth?” Truth was standing right in front of him, and he never even saw it.

Let us answer the question, What is truth? First of all, in John 14:6, Jesus Christ said, "I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me." So Jesus Christ is truth. In John 14:17, the Holy Spirit is called the Spirit of Truth. In 2 Corinthians 6:7, the Scriptures are called the Scriptures of Truth. In Deuteronomy 32:4, God is called the God of Truth.

When anyone denies and denigrates the truth, he is denying and denigrating God the Father, God the Son, God the Spirit, and the Holy Scriptures. Jesus Christ is truth, the Holy Spirit is truth, the Scriptures are truth, and God the Father is truth.

Applications and Conclusion

Let us make some applications. We have been talking about resisting the truth. Consider the confrontation Moses and Aaron had with Jannes and Jambres. Aaron threw down his rod, and it became a serpent. The magicians threw down their rod or rods, and their rods became serpents too. But do you remember what Aaron's rod did? It swallowed up the magicians' rods. There was only one rod left. Likewise, God's Word will ultimately swallow up all error and heresy, and His Word alone will remain as the absolute truth. Do you realize what Psalm 119:89 says? "For ever, O Lord, thy word is settled in heaven." Do you know what the Bible says in Psalm 138:2? "thou hast magnified thy word above all thy name."

If the Word of God ever fails, then God is not God. God has magnified His Word above all His name. He has said, "My word is truth." Just as surely as God is God, so surely shall His truth prevail. He said, "My word shall not return unto me void. It shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it."

Ultimately, God's Word will destroy all error and all heresy. We need to make sure that we are not practical deniers of the Word of God or compromisers of the truth. What does that mean? All of God's Word is truth. We have to embrace it, believe it, and apply it. You may ask, "Brother Weaver, how do I apply this message?" I am trying to show you right now. Leave this building, go home, and say, "Lord, your word must have priority in my life. You must have priority in my life. And I will regulate my life according to your truth."

We must not denigrate God or His Word by denying their priority in our lives. To denigrate means to blacken, smear, or cheapen. Our Lord said, “He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me: and he that loveth son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me. And he that taketh not his cross, and followeth after me, is not worthy of me.”

What is our Lord saying? He comes first in our lives. When we allow our husbands, wives, children, or anyone else to take priority and permit them to do what we know is wrong, we are denying and

denigrating Him, saying, “You just really don’t matter. My child or my spouse matters more than You.” Think of the Christians that denigrate the truth.

Those who refuse, resist, and hate the truth can only believe a lie and a delusion. They resist to their own destruction. In resisting the truth, they are trading the truth for a lie.

Who would want to believe a lie? All those who hate the truth want to believe a lie. If you hate the truth, you want to believe a lie, and that lie will ultimately destroy you. God the Father is truth. God the Son is truth. God the Spirit is truth. The Scriptures are truth. If we do not want to believe a lie, we must believe them.

Father, we do ask in the name of Jesus Christ for Your grace and for Your mercy in our lives. Lord, teach us to make application of Thy truth. Teach us, Lord, to live holy, godly, obedient lives and bring our lives in conformity to Your Word. May we, Father, give the honor and praise of Christ’s holy and blessed name. Amen.

Source Notes

Chapter 1: Resisting the Truth - Part 1
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Chapter 2: Resisting the Truth - Part 2
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Topical Index

Chapter titles and section headings are listed with the pages on which they begin.

A

Application and Prayer p. 22

Applications and Conclusion p. 38

B

Biblical Examples of Uncompromising Truth p. 34

C

Characteristics of False Teachers p. 9

Compromise p. 30

Consequences of Resisting Messengers p. 21

D

Denial p. 26

Denigration p. 28

I

Introduction to 2 Timothy 3:1-9 p. 5

Introduction to Resisting the Message of the Truth p. 26

M

Method 1: Imitation p. 14

Method 2: Insinuation p. 17

Method 3: Intimidation p. 19

R

Resisting the Message of the Truth p. 26

Resisting the Messengers of Truth p. 13

Resisting the Truth p. 5

Resisting the Truth - Part 1 p. 5

Resisting the Truth - Part 2 p. 23

Resisting the Truth, Part Two p. 23

Review of Part 1 p. 23

T

The Consequence of Compromise in the Church p. 33
The Fate of Those Who Resist the Truth p. 37
The Hardest Lessons in Preaching p. 36
The Last Days Context p. 12
The Nature of Resisting Truth p. 6

Scripture Index

Scripture references identified in chapter readings, headings, and manuscript text are listed with their page locations.

Exodus

Exodus 7 p. 15

Exodus 7:11 p. 14

Exodus 7:22 p. 14

Exodus 7:7 p. 17

Exodus 8:25 p. 31

Exodus 8:7 p. 14

Exodus 10:21 p. 32

Exodus 10:28 p. 20

Deuteronomy

Deuteronomy 32:4 p. 37

1 Kings

1 Kings 19 p. 20

2 Chronicles

2 Chronicles 36:15 p. 21

Psalm

Psalm 119:89 p. 38

Psalm 138:2 p. 38

Proverbs

Proverbs 8:36 p. 17

Proverbs 14:9 p. 29

Jeremiah

Jeremiah 2:32 p. 30

Amos

Amos 7 p. 20

Matthew

Matthew 10:40 p. 21

Matthew 11 p. 18
Matthew 11:18 p. 18
Matthew 15 p. 34

Luke

Luke 14 p. 29, p. 30
Luke 14:16 p. 29

John

John 6:49-68 p. 34
John 8 p. 18
John 8:41 p. 18
John 14:17 p. 37
John 14:6 p. 37

1 Corinthians

1 Corinthians 8 p. 11, p. 12

2 Corinthians

2 Corinthians 6:7 p. 37
2 Corinthians 10 p. 18, p. 19

Philippians

Philippians 3:19 p. 9, p. 25

2 Thessalonians

2 Thessalonians 2 p. 7, p. 37

2 Timothy

2 Timothy 3:1-9 p. 5, p. 23

Titus

Titus 1:16 p. 27

Jude

Jude 1:12 p. 10
Jude 12 p. 10

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