

PASTORAL GLEANINGS ON GUARDING OUR HEARTS

VI. Avoiding Those Captured By Satan

(2 Timothy 3:1-9)

I. Introduction

- A. When Paul wrote about Satan in relation to the local church six times in the pastorals, he added the 2 Timothy 3:1-9 prediction about troublesome people who would be taken captive by Satan to do his will in the last days!
- B. We live in the latter days of Church History, so 2 Timothy 3:1-9 applies to us, and we view this passage for our insight, application and edification (as follows):

II. Avoiding Those Captured By Satan, 2 Timothy 3:1-9.

- A. In 2 Timothy 2:24-26, Paul revealed that Satan can take even some believers captive to do his will.
- B. It is unfortunate that a chapter break occurs after 2 Timothy 2:26, for those who Paul mentioned in 2 Timothy 3:1-9 are the same kinds of people who are captured by Satan in 2 Timothy 2:24-26 (as follows):
 - 1. We know the people in 2 Timothy 3:1-9 are captured by Satan due to the smooth transition from verse 26 of 2 Timothy 2 to verse 1 of 2 Timothy 3 and Paul's use of "perilous" in 2 Timothy 3:1 KJV: It renders the Greek word *chalepos*, "outrageous; harsh" (U. B. S. Grk. N. T., 1966, p. 735; Moulton & Milligan, The Voc. of the Grk. N. T., 1972, p. 682), a word used elsewhere in the New Testament **only** at Matthew 8:28 of the "fierce" Gadarene demoniac (Arndt & Gingrich, A Grk.-Eng. Lex. of the N. T., 1967, p. 882)!
 - 2. Satan cannot possess believers (1 John 5:18), but since he tempts them through worldly lusts (Genesis 3:1-6; 1 John 2:15-16), Satan can take even carnal believers captive by their lusts to do his will. This explains how life in the latter era of Church History will be so difficult as predicted by Paul in 2 Timothy 3:1!
- C. Paul then described such people that we might be able to identify them in 2 Timothy 3:2-5a, 6-9 (as follows):
 - 1. Such people will be lovers of themselves, v. 2a NIV, ESV.
 - 2. They will be lovers of money, v. 2b NIV, ESV.
 - 3. Such people will be boastful (v. 2c NIV) or proud (v. 2c ESV).
 - 4. They will be abusive (v. 2d NIV, ESV).
 - 5. Such people will be disobedient to their parents (v. 2e NIV, ESV).
 - 6. They will be ungrateful (v. 2f NIV, ESV).
 - 7. Such people will be unholy (v. 2g NIV, ESV).
 - 8. They will be heartless (v. 3a ESV), without love (v. 3a NIV).
 - 9. Such people will be unappeasable (v. 3b ESV), unforgiving (v. 3b NIV).
 - 10. They will be slanderous (v. 3c NIV, ESV).
 - 11. Such people will be without self-control (v. 3d NIV, ESV).
 - 12. They will be brutal (v. 3e NIV, ESV).
 - 13. Such people will not be lovers of what is good (v. 3f NIV, ESV).
 - 14. They will be treacherous (v. 4a NIV, ESV).
 - 15. Such people will be reckless (v. 4b ESV), rash (v. 4b NIV).
 - 16. They will be swollen with conceit (v. 4c NIV, ESV).
 - 17. Such people will be lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God (v. 4d NIV, ESV).
 - 18. They will have the appearance of godliness but deny its power (v. 5a NIV, ESV).
 - 19. Such people will be controlling of others (v. 6 NIV, ESV).
 - 20. They will try to undermine the credibility of God's messengers like Pharaoh's magicians tried to do to Moses (v. 8 NIV, ESV with Ex. 7:11, 22; Ryrie Study Bible, KJV, 1978, ftn. to 2 Timothy 3:8).
- D. Paul directed how we believers should respond to such people in 2 Timothy 3:5b, 9 (as follows):
 - 1. First, in 2 Timothy 3:5b, Paul directed believers to "turn away from, avoid" such people (*apotrepou*, middle imperative of *apotrepo*, Arndt & Gingrich, A Grk.-Eng. Lex. of the N. T., 1967, p. 101). If such people are those with whom we are required of Scripture to be around, may we closely follow God's lead.
 - 2. Second, 2 Timothy 3:9 promises that the folly of such people will eventually become evident to all, both vindicating those who have been negatively impacted by them and defusing their bad influence.

Lesson: People taken captive by Satan to do his bidding will create hard times for believers in the Church's last days, and God calls us to withdraw from such folk as taught in 2 Timothy 3:1-9 and let them discredit themselves.

Application: May we obey 2 Timothy 3:1-9 and avoid those captured by Satan to guard our inner man from harm.