

## Keep Christianity True

2 Timothy 3:1-9

### Introduction:

- A. The Christian movement has always been a mixture of true Christianity and false Christianity.
1. Timothy had the task of exposing false teachers and teachings in the churches of Ephesus.
    - a. His standard was the teaching of Jesus as passed on by His apostles.
      - 1) There were only twelve apostles that formed the foundation of the church (Eph 2:20; Rev 21:14)
      - 2) Peter was the twelfth apostle and was affirmed by the eleven apostles (Acts 9:26-28; I Cor 15:9).
    - b. Paul had warned the Ephesian church years earlier that false teachers would come into the church and even arise from within to try to draw true disciples away.
  2. There were other “Christian” writings besides the New Testament.
    - a. The Gnostics were trying to establish their ideas verbally about 50 years after Christ’s death but were condemned by the apostles Paul and John (I Jn 1:19; the book of Colossians).
    - b. The first Gnostic writings appeared around 150 A.D. and were condemned as false Christianity by the early church fathers because they contradicted the writings of the apostles (circulated prior to 70 A.D. except John’s writings – prior to 100 A.D. – see Gal 1:8)
- B. In the last days
1. The last days began when the Holy Spirit came to the Jewish believers (Acts 2:17).
  2. Timothy was already experiencing false Christianity among the churches and Paul was just reminding him that this would continue.
- C. We must all work to keep Christianity true. Paul gives direction on what to look for.

### Watch out for....

- A. Self-lovers (but Jesus said in Lk 9:23 that to be true followers, it requires that we deny ourselves and make life revolve around Him)
- B. Money-lovers (Jesus warned about serving two masters in Matt 6:24; money is not to drive our decisions but Jesus is).

- C. The b\_\_\_\_\_ and arrogant – we are to only boast in the L\_\_\_\_\_ (Jer 9:24; 1Cor 1:31)
- D. B\_\_\_\_\_ (some translate as rude or revilers or scoffing at God) – the Greek word is literally blasphemy which means to speak evil of. In this context it is speaking evil of God.
- E. Disobedient to p\_\_\_\_\_ - this is advocating children to bypass parental a\_\_\_\_\_ (but see Eph 6:1-3).
- F. P\_\_\_\_\_ - lovers rather than G\_\_\_\_\_ -lovers
- G. Holding to an o\_\_\_\_\_ form of godliness (see Matt 23:27) – Christianity is not adhering to a bunch of rules, or being moral. It is a personal r\_\_\_\_\_ with Jesus.

**Avoid False Christians**

- A. We are not to avoid those who know that they are not believers in Christ. We are to be w\_\_\_\_\_ to them.
- B. We are to avoid those who claim to be Christian but try to introduce “other” teachings to draw people into a “different” Christianity than that of the apostles.
  - 1. In Timothy’s day, some men were going into Christian households while the men were working in order to prey upon the sinful weaknesses of w\_\_\_\_\_.
  - 2. The illustration of Jannes and Jambres who opposed M\_\_\_\_\_ (see Ex 7 and 8).
    - a. Tried to duplicate the m\_\_\_\_\_ (turning a staff into a serpent, water into blood, frogs on the land)
    - b. Their efforts were exposed to all and so defying God was obviously f\_\_\_\_\_ (Ex 8:19).
    - c. Likewise, the teachings and actions of false Christians become obvious when measured by God’s w\_\_\_\_\_
  - 3. We are to avoid fellowshipping with them as believers. They cannot be part of the church.

**Conclusion:**

- A. The ultimate standard and judge of Christianity is God’s word as preserved for us by His holy p\_\_\_\_\_ (the Old Testament) and His holy a\_\_\_\_\_ (the New Testament), Jesus Christ being the c\_\_\_\_\_ stone (Eph 2:20).
- B. Will you keep Christianity true?