

**"Living with Evil in the Last Days"**

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2 Timothy 3:1-13

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Last Sunday evening, another act of horrific evil ended with the murder of 58 people in Las Vegas. Concentrated evil like this seems absurd and inexplicable. But humanity has been plagued by the painful consequences of evil since the fall. From his own prison cell, Paul warns of these terrifying and violent times in which we live. So how should we live with evil in these last days?

1. Evil pervades the last days (3:1)

"But understand this, that ***in the last days*** there will come times of ***difficulty***."

"Times of *difficulty*" = *distressing, terrifying, violent, perilous, fierce*

2. Evil reveals itself in many ways (3:2-5)

"For people will be . . .

1. lovers of self,
2. lovers of money,
3. proud,
4. arrogant,
5. abusive,
6. disobedient to their parents,
7. ungrateful,
8. unholy,
9. heartless,
10. unappeasable,
11. slanderous,
12. without self-control,
13. brutal,
14. not loving good,
15. treacherous,
16. reckless,
17. swollen with conceit,
18. lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God,
19. having the appearance of godliness, but denying its power.

Avoid such people."

3. Evil preys on the weak (3:6-7)

"For among them are those who creep into households and capture weak women, burdened with sins and led astray by various passions,
7 always learning and never able to arrive at a knowledge of the truth."

4. Evil has its limits (3:8-9)

"Just as Jannes and Jambres opposed Moses, so these men also oppose the truth, men corrupted in mind and disqualified regarding the faith.
9 But they will not get very far, for their folly will be plain to all, as was that of those two men."

5. Evil is defeated by Jesus (3:10-13)

"You, however, have followed my teaching, my conduct, my aim in life, my faith, my patience, my love, my steadfastness,¹¹ my persecutions and sufferings that happened to me at Antioch, at Iconium, and at Lystra—which persecutions I endured; yet from them all the Lord rescued me.

¹² Indeed, all who desire to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted,¹³ while evil people and impostors will go on from bad to worse, deceiving and being deceived."



Redemption from sin is greater than relief from affliction.

God's Love in Redemption Defeats Evil

God's ultimate response to suffering isn't an *explanation*; it's the *incarnation*. Suffering brings personal pain that is difficult to bear. But God isn't some distant, detached, and disinterested deity; he entered our world and personally experienced our pain to provide redemption.

Jesus is there in your most painful moments. *Are you broken?* He was broken on a cross for you. *Has someone betrayed you?* He was betrayed. *Are your dearest relationships fractured?* He loved but was rejected. *Do you feel like you can't take any more?* He was a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. *Do you feel abandoned?* They hid their faces from him as if he were a leper. From the depths of a Nazi death camp, Corrie ten Boom wrote these words: "No matter how deep our darkness, he is deeper still." Every tear we shed becomes his tear.