

"The Last Days are Upon Us, but God is in Control!"

In case you haven't notice, over the past few decades there has been growing opposition to those who profess to believe in, to know, and to serve, Jesus Christ.

This really should not catch us by surprise, as Jesus told us the world would hate us because it hates Him.

2Timothy 3 is happening today (see 1-5, 12-13).

First, let me take you back about 60 years, to a time when you can clearly see the rise of godlessness that lead to a post-Christian America: In 1955 The first lesbian-rights organization in the U.S. was established, yep, you guessed it, in San Francisco. In 1960 the U.S. Food and Drug Administration approved the sale of oral contraceptives, and within five years, one out of every four married women in America, under the age of 45, had used the pill. In 1962 prayer was banned from public schools, and Illinois became the first state in the U.S. to decriminalize homosexual acts. In 1973 the American Psychiatric Association removed homosexuality from its official list of mental disorders; also, the Supreme Court through Roe vs. Wade, stated it was the Constitutional right for women to have an abortion, and since then 50 million babies have been murdered. In 1982 Wisconsin became the first state to outlaw discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation. In 1993 the "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" policy was instituted in the U.S. military, permitting gays to openly serve in the military. In 2000 Vermont became the first state in the U.S. to legalize civil unions between gay or lesbian couples.

In 2003 the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that engaging in sodomy was constitutionally protected. In 2004 same-sex marriages become legal in the first U.S. state, Massachusetts, and by 2013 there were 16 states that had legalized same sex marriage.

As you can see, America has set itself on a steep and slippery slope away from the teachings of God's Word. The line in the sand is becoming more and more defined, as those who live for Christ begin to realize that they are a definite minority; but fear not, one lone candle in a lightless room will push back the darkness.

Speaking of Jesus (John 1:3-5) says, "Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made. In him was life, and that life was the light of men. The light shines in the darkness, but the darkness has not understood it." Jesus said (John 8:12), "I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life."

Matthew 5:16, "let your light shine before men, that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven."

John 3:19-21, "This is the verdict: Light has come into the world, but men loved darkness instead of light because their deeds were evil. Everyone who does evil hates the light, and will not come into the light for fear that his deeds will be exposed. But whoever lives by the truth comes into the light, so that it may be seen plainly that what he has done has been done through God."

Our God is an awesome God, a Loving and Merciful God, a Righteous God who will bring all sin and rebellion to judgement. We can trust our Lord to protect us and to provide for us, for He has promised to do so.

In 2Peter 1:3-4, God promises that we have been given everything we need for this life and the next. In Hebrews 13:5-6, God says that He will never leave us or forsake us; we can confidently proclaim "the Lord is my helper, I will not be afraid, what can man do to me?"

Romans 8:31, "What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who is against us?" 37-39, "But in all these things we are conquerors through Him who loved us. For I am convinced that neither death nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor any other created thing, will be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."

The Bible says that we must accept by faith the fact that God exists (Hebrews 11:6), Jesus said (John 20:29), "Because you have seen me, you have believed; blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed."

The Bible states (Psalm 19:1-4), "The heavens declare the glory of God; the skies proclaim the work of His hands. Day after day they pour forth speech; night after night they display knowledge. There is no speech or language where their voice is not heard. Their voice goes out into all the earth, their words to the ends of the world."

Looking at the stars and the vastness of the universe, observing the wonders of nature, seeing the beauty of a sunset—all of these point to a Creator God. And if these were not enough, (Ecclesiastes 3:11), "...He has also set eternity in the hearts of men."

Deep within us is the knowledge that there is something beyond this life and someone beyond this world. We can deny this knowledge intellectually, but God's presence in us and all around us is clearly obvious. Even so, many will deny God's existence (Psalm 14:1), "The fool says in his heart, 'There is no God,'"

The universe displays such amazing design, there must have been a divine Designer and Creator, e.g., if the Earth were significantly closer or farther away from the sun, it would not be capable of supporting life. If our atmosphere were changed in even a small way, nearly every living thing on earth would die.

Every culture throughout history has had some form of moral law. Everyone has a sense of right and wrong; and we all know that murder, lying, stealing, and immorality are wrong; this is almost universally accepted. Where did this sense of right and wrong come from if not from a holy God? But then, we were made in the image of God!

What has happened to cause the majority of the inhabitants who have lived, are living, and will yet live upon this earth to reject the clear and undeniable existence of God, and to instead, believe a lie?

Romans 1:25, "They exchanged the truth of God for a lie, and worshiped and served created things rather than the Creator—who is forever praised. Amen."

There is no excuse for not believing in God.

Romans 1:20, "For since the creation of the world God's invisible qualities—His eternal power and divine nature—have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that men are without excuse."

The true reason why people reject God is that once they admit that there is a God, they become accountable to God, subject to His holiness, and so, they are in need of His forgiveness (**Romans 3:23, 6:23; 5:8; 8:1**).

If God exists, we are accountable to Him for our actions. If God does not exist, we can do whatever we want without having to worry about the judgement yet to come, and that is why so many deny God's existence.

But why do those who reject God's existence, let alone His authority, work so hard to disprove that He exists? Why would it matter? Why not leave us simpleminded and foolish Christians alone to believe in our God, to love our neighbors as ourselves, to care for the environment as stewards of that which belongs to God?

I believe the vehement, aggressive, hateful, and relentless attacks on our freedoms as Christians, is in itself a strong argument for God's existence.

As Christians, believers and followers of Jesus Christ, children of God, we know God exists because we speak with Him every day. We may not audibly hear His voice, but we sense His presence, His power, and His pleasure in our lives. We trust in His leading, we experience His love, we are humbled and blessed by His grace.

Things occur in our lives that have no possible explanation other than God. God has so mercifully saved us and miraculously changed our lives that we cannot help but proclaim His existence, seeking to bring honor and praise to His name, telling others about Him, so that they too might know Him and be saved.

There are no arguments by which a person can be intellectually coerced, compelled, or persuaded to acknowledge God's existence, believe in Him for the forgiveness of sins and to trust Him for eternal life.

God's existence is so obvious; but in the end, He must be accepted and believed in by faith (Hebrews 11:6), "Without faith it is impossible to please God, for he who comes to God must believe that He exists and that He rewards those who seek Him."

Faith in God is not a blind leap off a cliff in the dark; faith in God is the first step in a marvelous journey that begins on earth and moves to heaven for eternity.

Yes, we are in the Last Days, and just as Jesus told us through His Word, when He walked in the flesh, all His true followers, those born of the Spirit of God, will continue to be mocked, despised, minimized, and persecuted in greater degree as it gets closer to His return. Christianity is the most discriminated against religion in the world today, and Christians are the most reviled people group. Who would have ever thought that would be so? And yet, here we are. So, what do we do Galatians 6:9, "Let us not become weary in doing good..."

2Timothy 3:14-17 encourages us to continue in the things we have learned and become convinced of, ...which are able to give us the wisdom that leads to salvation through faith which is in Jesus Christ, for all Scripture is inspired of God and is profitable for teaching, rebuking, correcting, and training in righteousness, so that we may be thoroughly equipped for every good work of God.