

## #25 THE DOCTRINE OF DEVILS

30 PRACTICAL DOCTRINES YOU NEED TO KNOW | DR. RANDY WHITE

### THE COMING APOSTASY

- 1 Timothy 4:1-6 (along with other passages), speaks of a day when the **doctrines of devils** (v. 2) would be more acceptable than the **good doctrine** (v. 6) which Paul had given to Timothy.
- The departure from the faith would be characterized by-
  - **Seducing spirits** –
    - πλάνος [planos] is *wandering*, and is the word from which we get *planets* because they are “wandering stars.”
    - The last days society will be one in which there is a *spiritual seduction* that causes many to wander from one idea or concept to another, with no bedrock.
  - Lies, hypocrisy, lack of conscience, irrational legalisms, and much more.
- Our focus will be on the **doctrines of devils**.
  - Doctrine is διδασκω [didasko] (from which we get *didactic*), and is a particular teaching or concept which governs thought.
  - Devils is from the root word δαίμων [daimon] from which we get *demon*.

### PAUL UNDERSTOOD DEMONIC ACTIVITY

- 2 Corinthians 12:6-7 Paul speaks of his infamous **thorn in the flesh**.
- This thorn was given to Paul for the sake of humility, and was somehow demonic in nature.
  - The **messenger of Satan** can be taken literally, but we (for some reason) rarely do so.
  - The Greek word translated **messenger** is the word ἄγγελος [angelos], thus the phrase literally says *an angel of Satan*.
- Satan likely was himself deceived, thinking this messenger would have caused Paul to quit, when it actually caused him to remain humble.

### WHAT DO WE KNOW ABOUT DEMONIC ACTIVITY?

- Rare in history –
  - There are no accounts of demon possession in the Old Testament, with the possible exception of Saul (1 Sam. 16:14-15).
  - There are no accounts of demon possession after the Day of Pentecost, with the possible exception of Acts 16:16 (in which the **spirit of divination** is a reference to Greek mythology).
  - In the time of the ministry of Jesus alone **they cast out many devils** (Mark 16:13).
    - This time-period seems to be a unique exception of demonic possession.

- It is almost universally accepted today that demonic possession takes place. However, the burden of proof is to prove why such possession takes place now and yet did not take place any time other than the time of Jesus.

- Overwhelming in every manifestation –
  - Unlike many of the accounts today, demon possession in the Bible was *physically* overwhelming to the possessed.
  - We do not have a single occurrence of a demon possessed individual seeking help, because they were unable (spiritually and physically) to do so.
  - This quote from *GotQuestions* shows the typical evangelical (rather than Biblical) view of demon possession: “*Thus, there is a wide variety of possible symptoms of demon possession, such as a physical impairment that cannot be attributed to an actual physiological problem, a personality change such as depression or aggression, supernatural strength, immodesty, antisocial behavior, and perhaps the ability to share information that one has no natural way of knowing. It is important to note that nearly all, if not all, of these characteristics may have other explanations, so it is important not to label every depressed person or epileptic individual as demon-possessed. On the other hand, Western cultures probably do not take satanic involvement in people’s lives seriously enough.*”

### HOW THE DOCTRINE OF DEVILS WILL MANIFEST ITSELF | 1 TIMOTHY 4:1-6

- Utterly irrational behavior – **speaking lies in hypocrisy**
  - Hypocrisy is *do what I say not what I do*.
  - When hypocrisy becomes common-place, the **doctrine of devils** is at work.
  - Hypocrisy in politics is so common that it has become the norm for political parties. Such irrationality will spread to other areas of life as the **doctrine of devils** takes root.
- Utterly amoral worldview – **having their conscience seared**
  - Postmodernism is the rejection of absolute truth.
  - When absolute truth is rejected, there is no morality except that which is *for the moment*.
  - Our society is quickly becoming one in which a lack of conscience is evident (and someone always dies in this scenario).
- Utterly controlled behavior – **forbidding to marry...**
  - When the first two aspects of the **doctrine of devils** take hold of a society, soon that society becomes controlled from the top-down (whether pseudo-spiritual or political control).
  - A society that is *losing freedom* is one that is in the grip of the **doctrine of devils**.
- The way to combat the **doctrine of devils** is with **good doctrine** (v. 6).