

How Are Things Going?

Text: 2 Tim 3:1

RSV - "times of stress"

had to do with, had to
bear

Orthos: One of the interesting things ^{been} _(Vine) about 2 Tim. is the way ^{7.171} Paul has woven his references ^{II} to time and eternity into the epistle. These, as everything else in the epistle, are to help to stabilize Timothy in what seems to have been a most severe time of testing.

"The last days" in our text bring this idea forcibly to our attention.

Previously we have noted in 1:12, 18 Paul's reference to "that day". And before he finishes he speaks of it again (4:8).

In ch. 4 we also find him speaking of:

- (1) "the time will come" (4:3), and
- (2) "this present world", or age, a word which has to do with time (4:10).
- (3) Also, "for ever and ever", or lit., unto the ages of the ages. (4:18).

The earliest time he mentions is "before the world began" (1:9)

There are other related statements

*Evidently Timothy
was encouraged
because of the
reverence he had
for the Lord was
of the suffering*

which we may also consider, but why is there this emphasis?

Remember Paul is encouraging Timothy, and much of his encouragement is indicated by the statement in 3:1 - "This know also..."

Timothy must know what influence the gospel is to have upon the world, the character of the world, conditions in the world. This is the point at which Paul has arrived. Song: "If to Christ our only King
Men redeemed we strive to bring.
Let us look at these statements in chronological order.

Lit. before eternal time.

I. "Before the world began" (1:9).
Cf. Tit. 1:2; Rom. 16:25. It is that which existed before time, that which is without beginning. In Rev. 14:6, the gospel is called "the everlasting gospel."

Cf. also Eph. 1:4.

II. The present time.

A. The most condemning statement is made in 4:10 regarding Demas. (WORLD = AGE here)

What is an age in scripture?
It is $\alphaἰών$, a period of time viewed in its entirety. Thayer: "the complete period" (p. 20). French: "... signifies

time, long or short, in its
unbroken duration ... all which
exists in the world under
conditions of time" (pp. 216, 217).

Note some of the key passages:

- (1) 2 Cor. 4:4.
- (2) Gal. 1:4; ~~1 Tim. 2:12~~.
- (3) Rom. 12:2. Tit. 2:12.
- (4) 1 Tim. 6:17

The world as it is is what
Satan loves - a violation of the
Word of God.

Will it improve?

B. Our text - "the last days" of
this age. Cf. 2 Tim 3:1 ff.; also
4:3. See also 3:13. Along with
these is 3:12.

More conditions will not
improve. Knowledge will become
more and more corrupt.

C. The need is described in vv.
22-26 of ch. 2. They are:

- (1) Holiness
- (2) Meekness
- (3) Witness

Our job is not to change the world
but to see men change who are
enslaved by the devil (3:26) for
his (the devil's - accuser) will.
one who maligns, slanders

III. What is our hope for the future then?

Here we note the expression "in that day" - a future time.

Cf. 4:6-8.

Note how Paul lived according to 1 Thess. 2:11-13a... He ~~sadly~~ looked for the Lord's return each day.

Note also 1:12, 18. And 4:18.

Concl: "Fulfil your ministry" - "make full proof" - complete it (4:5).

One of the most amazing things in the world today is that believers are still looking for Jesus Christ to return.

We may live to see that day!
Maybe not! In the meantime
our purpose in life is to fulfil
the ministry He has given us,
not to prepare the world for
righteousness, but to prepare
~~the~~ men for heaven.

The only hope for the world is
in the coming of Christ.