

Series: Sound Doctrine

ITCHING EARS

2 TIMOTHY 4

Text: 2 Timothy 4:3

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³ For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears;

Introduction:

Paul foretells of a day when Christians will deliberately turn their backs on sound doctrine, embracing error because it makes them comfortable and because the error is convenient.

“The time is coming when people will not endure sound teaching, but having itching ears they will accumulate for themselves teachers to suit their own passions, and will turn away from listening to the truth and wander off into myths.”

These are perilous times for Christians.

Defection from the Faith is more widespread and more commonplace than we might ever imagine, for God has clearly warned that error will be introduced within the congregations of the Lord and even tolerated as the

people of God grow quiescent and become spiritually senescent.

There is a similar description of the condition of God's people when they insist on hearing what was pleasant that what was needful in Isaiah.

Note:

Isaiah 30:9-11

⁹ That this is a rebellious people, lying children, children that will not hear the law of the LORD: ¹⁰ Which say to the seers, See not; and to the prophets, Prophecy not unto us right things, speak unto us smooth things, prophecy deceits: ¹¹ Get you out of the way, turn aside out of the path, cause the Holy One of Israel to cease from before us.

Understand there are consequences to such choices as Isaiah makes clear in the verses that follow.

Isaiah 30:12-14

¹² Wherefore thus saith the Holy One of Israel, Because ye despise this word, and trust in oppression and perverseness, and stay thereon: ¹³ Therefore this iniquity shall be to you as a breach ready to fall, swelling out in a high wall, whose breaking cometh suddenly at an instant. ¹⁴ And he shall break it as the breaking of the potters' vessel that is broken in pieces; he shall not spare: so that there shall not be found in

the bursting of it a sherd to take fire from the hearth, or to take water withal out of the pit.

Notice as we look closer at our passage this evening:

Sermon Content:

1. AN ATTITUDE (VS. 3)

2 Timothy 4:3

³ For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears;

In this verse we see an attitude revealed that is often seen is this day.

A rejection of sound doctrine.

The attitude of the church has swung from God-centered to self-centered and has brought resulted in a weakness.

Often when the preacher or teacher begins to speak something that we don't want to hear we just tune them out.

Some even tell themselves there's nothing in the Bible that says I can't just not too much.

When people look for loopholes they are looking through the lens of self-worship, self-importance, self-indulgence.

In this passage this morning we can see an attitude of rejection that Paul is warning Timothy about... rejection of the truth! And it is sad to say but in the church today, that attitude is alive and well.

That leads us consider secondly:

2. AN ACTION (VS. 3)

2 Timothy 4:3

³ For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they **heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears;**

Instead of hearing and heeding the truth it often causes individuals to take action to silence sound doctrine and heap to themselves teachers having itching ears.

The natural progression is a wrong attitude will lead to wrong actions.

When people say they are uncomfortable or do not want to hear something... and the same message is continually being fed to them... they are going to have a desire to change the messenger!

There are churches today who refused the truth and moved to remove the messenger.

Note an illustration of this in the book of Jeremiah:

Jeremiah 2:7-8

⁷ And I brought you into a plentiful country, to eat the fruit thereof and the goodness thereof; but when ye entered, ye defiled my land, and made mine heritage an abomination. ⁸ The priests said not, Where is the LORD? and they that handle the law knew me not: the pastors also transgressed against me, and the prophets prophesied by Baal, and walked after things that do not profit.

Understand:

When we have the attitude of NOT wanting to hear or heed sound doctrine that leads us to the action of separating ourselves from the truth and when we separate from the truth then there will always be:

3. AN ADVERSE ACCOMPLISHMENT (VS. 4)

2 Timothy 4:4

⁴ And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables.

Illustration:

Back in 1970's there was a man that had been ordained a Disciples of Christ minister who wanted to reach out to the less fortunate of society with the gospel.

He founded a mission for all the outcast of society and before he knew it he had over 900 members.

The moved from Indiana to San Francisco and the people of the church thought their leader was super.

This assembly and their leader leased some property in Guyana and established a community where they raised fruit to sale and animals to eat.

This leader began to abuse prescription drugs and became increasingly paranoid.

Rumors of abuses circulated.

This led to a congressman visiting this community for a personal inspection, but the world would be shocked in how this visit turned out.

The day of his visit the cameraman who was filming this visit was shot along with this Congressman. In addition to these two being shot there was 9 others shot.

This leader whose name was Jim Jones allowed himself to believe that the Truth was in him and not in Christ

and he led himself and over 900 people to mass suicide.

Now you may be thinking I would never be fooled like those people were.

You may understand that cults are spreading and think that it will never affect you.

May we be reminded today that the world is filled with professing Christians that just like you thought they were on the right track, but ended up being deceived because they had rejected the truth.

They were not willing to hear the truth so they set out to find someone who said what they WANTED to hear!

Peter warns us about this:

1 Peter 5:8

⁸ Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour:

Satan is trying to get believers to abandon the certainty and Truth of God's word by casting some doubt about one or 2 things they may disagree or take issue with...

Close:

When we abandon the Truth of the Gospel... the true message of God we are going to fall and fall very hard!
And what I see in the church today...

Today many are bowing and worshiping at the altar of self-worship, self-importance, and self-indulgence.

Many today simply try to put God's name of their own desires.

God wants us to remain faithful to the truth of God's word.