

Fierce Times Are Coming 4399

Proclamation: Titus 2:11–14

I. “Perilous” = “Fierce” (2 Tim. 3:1–5; compare Matt. 8:28)

- A. Absolutely certain to come
- B. Three main factors:
 - 1. Basic cause: degeneration of human character—any attempted solution that bypasses this is ineffective
 - 2. Corruption is irreversible—both physical and spiritual, therefore:
 - a. A *new* creation (2 Cor. 5:17)
 - b. A *new* heaven and a new earth (2 Pet. 3:13)
 - c. “I make all things *new*” (Rev. 21:5)
 - d. Present social order doomed to perish under God’s judgment
 - 3. The root: Love of *self*
Not resolved by “a form of godliness”
- C. Statistics about one day in America (*U.S. News & World Report*)
- D. But God . . .
 - 1. The Holy Spirit raises a *standard* (Is. 59:19[b])
 - 2. Worldwide outpouring of Holy Spirit—emphasis on *youth* (Acts 2:16–18)

II. How Should We Conduct Ourselves?

- A. Recognize that all these things confirm the reliability of Scripture
- B. Personally deal with the root of *self-love*
 - 1. This is “the power of godliness” (2 Tim. 3:5)
 - 2. Deny self—lose our “soul” life (Matt. 16:24–25)
 - 3. Not loving our lives to the death (Rev. 12:11)
- C. Man’s extremity = God’s opportunity
 - 1. Tribulation pressures can turn many to God (Rev. 7:9–10, 13–14)
 - 2. Men’s hearts failing them . . . (Luke 21:26)
 - 3. All things shaken—but our kingdom cannot be shaken (Heb. 12:25–28)—but we must be delivered from self-love
 - 4. Ready to lose our life (Matt. 16:24–25)
 - 5. End time pressures—but Gospel to all nations (Matt. 24:8–14)
- D. Limitless opportunity to *do good*
 - 1. . . . See your *good works*—God’s concern for the *fatherless* (Matt. 5:16); e.g. by 2000 AD 10 million AIDS orphans in Africa
 - 2. Pure religion: care for orphans and widows (James 1:27)
 - a. Carried over from Old Testament
 - b. If every Christian family would adopt one parentless child . . . Don’t pour out on a pet love that should go to a child
 - c. But two idols: Comfort and convenience
“Do something somebody!”
 - 3. Are you willing to lose your life?
- E. God’s ultimate purpose
 - 1. His own *special people* (Tit. 2:11–14)

2. The Lord is willing to wait (2 Pet. 3:9)
3. *Find* and *do* God's will (1 John 2:17)

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