

Devotional Thoughts :: FACING DIFFICULT DAYS by Gary Wilkerson

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Understand this, that in the last days there will come times of difficulty. For people will be lovers of self, lovers of money, proud, arrogant, abusive, disobedient to their parents, ungrateful, unholy, heartless . . . lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God, having the appearance of godliness, but denying its power. Avoid such people (2 Timothy 3:1-5, ESV).

Paul is speaking here of dedicated churchgoers but describes them as having only a form of godliness. Paul said these Christians were always learning and never able to arrive at a knowledge of the truth (3:7). In other words, they listened to all gospel teachings but never took them to heart. That made them powerless, Paul said, because they opposed the truth (3:8).

We may never face the same trials that the New Testament believers did, but God still gives us New Testament power. We will surely face trials of our own because we are not immune to what is coming on the world. But those hardships can produce in us a power like we have never seen before.

That is why we cannot afford to be normal in our faith any longer. Think about the fast-growing number of nonbelievers in our world. Each one represents a soul headed to hell, someone for whom Jesus died. Those numbers alone call us to rise above normal Christianity, to proclaim Christ's gospel without fear or hindrance. That requires His power, which cannot be achieved or obtained on our own merits—it is received only through His grace.

I have paraphrased Leonard Ravenhill many times but this comment of his bears repeating: Christianity today is so subnormal that if any Christian began to act like a normal New Testament Christian, he would be considered abnormal.

Tell me, are you not only hearing God's Word but doing it? Or is there a disparity between Christ's power and your life? Pray with me: Lord, I'm tired of settling for normal Christianity. Merge my life with Your heavenly power. I am an empty vessel—fill me with Your power! Whatever it costs, Lord, lead me where You want me to go. Pray this and you will see His power released in your life!