

Strange Times

Welcome to Harvest Community Church

Series: Discernment for the Last Days

Text: 1 Timothy 4:1-2, Isaiah 60:1-2

We are living at the end of the age, because of that we are going to see and experience things that no other generation has witnessed. Some of the things that we are seeing and that we are going to be witnesses too will be so irrational, far-fetched and bizarre because as rational, spiritual and thinking people we will find those things incomprehensible.

It is evident that our immoral, spiritually delinquent culture has thrown common sense to the wind. The Bible foretold that these days would be strange and even downright weird. The challenge for us will be to keep this lunacy outside of our families and our churches. We must refuse to allow our thinking to be muddled by the spirit of this age. **2 Timothy 3:1-9, Luke 21:25-36, 2 Thessalonians 2:11** As Christians navigating this time we must dig deep and hold on tight to the established truths of scripture. We must determine to keep our hearts pure and our heads on straight in a world that has gone crazy.

It is important to know the times that we live in were prophesied of in scripture.

1 Timothy 4:1 We were warned that there would be an invasion of seducing spirits that would lead society off track and away from God. We were told that it would lead to unprecedented levels of delusion on a scale and scope that we would find unthinkable. Understand it is a seduction. An enticing that appeals to the flesh. Like bait used on a fish that causes people to consume Satan's lies in such quantity that it alters the very environment they are drawn into. People won't put up with crazy unless it feels good and looks good. **James 1:14-15, Proverbs 5:3-12 (NLT)** Notice it is always seducing spirits that present the doctrine of devils.

The Bible has forewarned us that a worldwide mutiny against God would eventually come. As we observe the cultural changes that are all around us, we can see that we are already in the middle of this rebellion that is slowly spreading. Already we have evidence that this delusion is quickly becoming entrenched in our time.

For society the Word of God has been an anchor. Anytime a ship loses its anchor it drifts at sea until it becomes lost. The more a ship drifts the more it gets off course. The church needs to help apply the anchor if we ever desire to see people stop being lost. We are the hope for those who are morally and spiritually adrift. We are living in a time where we are experiencing depths of depravity and degeneracy that has not been seen since the days when paganism ruled the earth. We are in fact witnessing a level of reprobate thinking on a level that no generation has ever experienced in all of history. **Romans 1:28**

There are two world views that we must understand.

- ❖ Biblical world view – This world view is based on the infallible Word of God. If you are committed to that view you will agree with this teaching. Those with this view base their life on it because it is the foundation of all that they live.

When our faith is deeply rooted in scripture our opinions and positions will not change because the Word of God does not change. Christians hold firm to the same beliefs for a lifetime over decades. The truth is the beliefs, morals and convictions of Christians do not change from generation to generation over centuries because they are standing on the same truth of God's word. (This is why we are known as a Holy generation.)

- ❖ A non- Biblical world view – This view is fashioned and informed by the fields of science, medicine, education and societal norms. This world view is always shifting and changing because its belief is shaped by ever changing trends, knowledge and the most recently accepted norms. Those with a Biblical world view already have certain things settled and answered and are not intimidated by “new” information, science or discoveries. Those who hold to a non-scriptural world view will find those of us that do as being intolerant, inflexible, narrow-minded and obstinate because we are fixed not fixated on unchanging Biblical truth.

Those with a non-Biblical world view are constantly changing their minds and their positions because what they “believe” is constantly changing. Because they always move with society's trends and currents, they are unstable in all of their ways. They drift because they shift. This is what Paul means when he speaks of the course of this world.

Ephesians 2:1-2

These two world views rarely come together, especially on issues of doctrine and morality. Where we disagree, we should do so respectfully and with civility. The purpose of this teaching is to help those who hold to a Biblical world view to understand how to stay true to God's Word in the current madness of this world.

Throughout history there have been certain times when we have seen what is possible when demons are given the room to influence mankind, to do unimaginable evil and commit atrocities that are almost too hard to comprehend. One example would be the German people during World War II. A fully sanctioned and duly elected government moved with such demonic deception that the entire world was affected and the Jewish people faced another Holocaust. It is important to know that we are living in a society that has been groomed and is being groomed, for a significant amount of time for a similar type of deception.

One thing that we must not lose sight of is that God has established the church on this earth with the intention that evil would never be left unchecked. We have been given weapons of warfare that are mighty for pulling down strongholds and everything that exalts itself above the name of Christ. We have the name of Jesus, the blood of Jesus and the Word of God which is the Sword of the Spirit. We are able to pray and we are filled with the Person and Power of the Holy Spirit.

The horrors of World War II happened in large part because the church was silent. Evil prevails and people suffer when evil is left unchecked because a large portion of the church ignores its spiritual and civic responsibility. **Matthew 26:41** We are to watch and pray.

We must remember that there is nothing new under the sun. What goes around comes around again. Satan is playing from the same handbook he just changes things up a little so they look different. The saying is true that ‘those who do not learn from history are doomed to repeat it’. If it is not restrained, evil will become more bold, brazen and aggressive. What is tolerated in one generation will become celebrated by the next. We need to understand that it is much easier to keep the enemy out than it is to remove him once he gains entrance.

What happened in the 1930’s and 1940’s started with Darwinism, this led to the belief of Eugenics. This is the belief in a stronger and more perfect race. This led to euthanasia of the weak, sick, poor and old. This led to the “extermination” of the so-called “inferior”. It all started with one little deception called evolution that removed God from the equation of creation. This false narrative infected the realms of medicine, politics, education and science. This is how significant one lie can affect and manipulate a society. When the fundamental belief that mankind is created in the image of God is replaced with the idea that man is only a part of the evolutionary process, the dignity that God gave man is compromised.

Today’s sex change operations and so-called “gender reassignment” surgeries had their start in Hitler’s concentration camps as medical experiments. These were widely and universally condemned as human atrocities. What was once viewed as sickening and repulsive is now being heralded by so-called progressive and “free thinkers” as a great scientific breakthrough. This procedure is being allowed on children who are entirely too young to understand the choices being made for them or on people that just years ago would have been committed to a mental institution. Society has veered so far from Biblical truth that what was once deemed delusional thinking is being embraced. Instead of understanding that gender is determined at birth by the creator, it is now believed that it can be electively changed and selected by surgery. This goes against both Biblical belief and scientific understanding.

None of this happens overnight. Sin and deception follow progressive steps.

James 1:14-15 As we study this downward spiral into deception within modern society, we must keep in mind our role as the church. It is our responsibility to take an uncompromising stand for God’s Word and to serve as a restraining force that impedes deceptions forward progress so that it does not become entrenched in people’s minds that this is just the way that things are.

If we fail to do our part, people will accept the lie and keep making poor choices until the lie becomes the paradigm or mindset of the world. This demonic mindset then becomes a stronghold that is hard to break through.

The way deception takes hold is when a lie is repeated often enough and long enough that it becomes accepted as the norm. The intention is to wear people down until the shock factor wears off and they begin to adjust to the ideas or philosophies that once seemed utterly unbelievable or outlandish. **1 Timothy 4:1**

The Spirit expressly says that people will depart from the faith and give heed to “seducing” spirits. That word in the Greek describes a deception, a moral wondering, or a person or nation that has veered morally from a solid path and is now adrift.

A better translation of that word would be delusions. So, 1 Timothy 1:4 could read – “Now the Spirit expressly says, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to spirits of delusion”. This is an important verse. The Holy Spirit prophecies that at the very end of the age, spirits of delusion would methodically, stealthily and seductively entice people away from established truths into delusional and demonic doctrines, ideas and concepts.

Did you ever think that you would see the day when people would be confused by the idea of what a man or woman is? When people can tell you that there are literally dozens of genders and believe it is indicative of a delusional state. Only seducing spirits could convince otherwise intelligent people of such absurdity. Things have become so bizarre that some people actually think that it is inappropriate to list a child’s gender on their birth certificate.

This “progressive” delusional thinking is all based on feelings. Parents, educators, and thinkers who base everything on feeling instead of facts are setting people up for confusion. Why? Feelings change.

In medical books the most recently given definition of a delusional person is as follows:

- A delusional person has a belief or feeling that is based on an incorrect interpretation of reality.
- A delusional person clings to a false belief even if they are confronted with evidence, facts or proof that refutes their false belief.
- A delusional person is difficult to help because they rarely admit that they are delusional. They refuse psychiatric treatment and instead look for ways to affirm, support, and sustain their delusion. A good example is a perfectly healthy person with two arms saying they feel like a one-armed person and would like to have one of their good arms amputated.

Until recently people with “gender- confusion” would have been diagnosed with a mental disorder. This confusion has become so pervasive that people claim that they are neither male nor female. They claim that they are bigender, polygender, pangender and even gender fluid. They believe that they can switch back and forth depending on how they feel in the moment. It is ok for us to recognize that this is last-days nonsense. We are standing on the unchanging authority of the Word of God. Not only that, but we are also standing on the long proven and uncompromising reality of scientific data.

It is clear that the enemy is targeting our children. He is doing this through the mediums that are currently being accessed by our children, namely the media and education. In the western world the devil’s strategy has been very successful. Educators and entertainers are indoctrinating our children. They are writing curriculum and screen plays that undermine all Biblical authority. This humanistic teaching blurs the lines of truth, incites confusion, obliterates common sense, and punishes independent thinking.

It is important that we know what we believe and resist those who seek to move us and the ones we love into their madness. Doing so means that we have not become numb and desensitized to the changes that are meant to gradually change us.

Besides the gender confusion there are other things that we are being forced to see as acceptable and normal. We are being told that not only is abortion legal, we are being asked to accept that it is ok and moral to have late term abortions even right up until the moment of delivery. Some are even advocating that it is ok to terminate a baby after birth if an abortion in the womb didn't work or if it is discovered that the child has a deformity or defect. The Bible has a definition of this - murder.

We have also been asked to accept the redefinition of marriage. We are told that our Supreme Court believes the Constitution sanctions the legalization of gay marriage. That marriage can be between two consenting adults of any gender. We are now being told that marriage does not have to be exclusively between two people but even more.

We must understand that it is not only ok to recognize that such deceived ways of thinking are wrong, it is our responsibility as the Church of Jesus Christ to come out from among them and be separate. **2 Corinthians 6:17** We are to be separate and we are to come out from being intimidated and stand as lighthouses of God's truth in a world of darkness. We are to stand in the way so that we can show them the way.

It is vital that we have compassion for those who are struggling. This is true especially when we know that people have taken actions that are not in their own best interests. People need answers from the Word of God and they need the Holy Spirit to heal their soul. They need non-condemning believers who have been forgiven and delivered themselves. Those who know the power of the cross to restore, redeem and set free.

In the future we are going to have to address things that are going to stretch us spiritually. With the advent of AI (Artificial Intelligence) things that were once the realm of science fiction are becoming a reality. We will need to stand firm as a restraining force to slow down the advance of the devil's agenda; to boldly declare God's Word, Ways and standard and to help bring in the great end-time harvest.

It is important to remember that there was another time in history that dealt with an influx of seducing spirits. **Genesis 6:1-5** At that time in history, man was so seduced by evil that every imagination of the thoughts of their heart were on evil continually. Society was trapped and yielded to the enemy's plan to rebel against God.

Noah and his family were the only ones that were not infected with the sin. Notice how few were not corrupted. **Genesis 6:8-9 (AMP)** What Satan did at the begging of time he is attempting to do in the current era. This current rebellion against God will be met with the eventual judgement of God.

Part of Satan's strategy is to change the things that are generally held as true, right, and normal. **Daniel 7:25 (AMP)** We are being conditioned to accept a new "normal". Satan knows that he will have to change laws, seasons (Holidays, sacred feasts and widely held traditions.) One noted politician said – "We are going to have to make sacrifices, we are going to have to change our convictions. We are going to have to change our traditions and our history. We are going to have to move into a different place as a nation".

It is no mistake the reason that our terminology for things is being changed. It is no mistake that our **history** is being rewritten; statues that help us to remember are being torn down and even schools and military bases renamed. It is no mistake that our holidays that celebrated Christ are now being renamed to honor nature. Christmas is now winter break; Resurrection day was renamed Easter after the goddess Ishtar and is now renamed “spring break”.

Satan knows that his time is short and one of his strategies is to disfigure and redefine the very people who were created in His image. The ultimate insult to God is to mar and **disfigure** His prized creation and to tear down every institution that He created including the institution of marriage.

Because we live at the end of the age, we must understand that the bizarre will become common place. It will seem that all restraint will be cast aside. The closer that we get to the end the more society will sink into **depravity**. **Isaiah 5:20** We must realize that that day is here. It is not coming, it is here. The last days assault has begun. The evil seeds that have been planted are ripening. As Christ's Ambassadors on earth, we have a responsibility to raise the standard of His truth in every situation. We must stand against every **law** that violates scripture. We must dig in our heels and refuse to bend with the times.

Society is changing. The moral climate is devolving. We must project **hope**, we must also encourage one another to stay on track spiritually. **Hebrews 10:25**

We are going to have the opportunity to minister to people who are confused, who struggle with depression, addiction, thoughts of suicide and other destructive behaviors. People will need healing and **deliverance**, remember, we are dealing with demons and the doctrines of demons. Jesus said that we would cast out demons in His name.

We must seek the face of God to know how to respond to this delusion and confusion. Only God can bring peace, healing and restoration. Those who have already deformed their bodies or made modifications do not need our rejection, they need **redirected** to Jesus. They need to know His forgiveness, deliverance and freedom.

The early church had to seek God to know how to confront their culture and the moral dilemmas that they faced. So do we. The Holy Spirit gave them wisdom and He will do the same for us.

Every person needs the message of Jesus. They need the hope of salvation. They need the transforming power of the Holy Spirit. Remember, Jesus gave His life for everyone, even the deceived. **Ephesians 2:1-6**

- We must make sure that our **thinking** is not muddled by the spirit of the age.
- Society is in need of a course correction. We must ask what is our part.
- It is evident that Satan is using his strategy to groom society over time with his lies. We need to make sure that we are aware of what he is doing. We must not live in ignorance. Ignorance is not bliss. It is dangerous.
- We must remember that it is easier to keep the enemy out than to try and get him out. We must make sure that he doesn't get a foot hold that he can make a stronghold.