

# RADICAL DEVOTION

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STRENGTH IN THE  
LAST DAYS



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*I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship.[b] Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.*

Romans 12:1-2

Second Timothy 3 describes the environment of the last days. Paul used the phrase “perilous times” to describe the environment just before Jesus returns. The word perilous means hard to bear, troublesome, or dangerous.

Paul went on to detail people’s attitudes and lifestyles that would mark the time. He stated that people will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, unloving, unforgiving, slanderers, without self-control, brutal, despisers of good, traitors, headstrong, haughty, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God (II Timothy 3:2–4).

- These are the days we live in today. By simply viewing recent news stories and cultural trends, it is easy to see all these attitudes and lifestyles present in our current society.
- We must be aware of our times, and we must be equipped for the challenges ahead.

*And the Pharisees and Sadducees came, and to test him they asked him to show them a sign from heaven. 2 He answered them,[a] “When it is evening, you say, ‘It will be fair weather, for the sky is red.’ 3 And in the morning, ‘It will be stormy today, for the sky is red and threatening.’ You know how to interpret the appearance of the sky, but you cannot interpret the signs of the times. 4 An evil and adulterous generation seeks for a sign, but no sign will be given to it except the sign of Jonah.” So he left them and departed.*

Matthew 16:1-4



## The Sign of the Times

Jesus offered a strong rebuke to the religious leaders for not understanding the times in which they lived. The responsibility to recognize the times and respond appropriately rests on us individually and as the body of Christ.

Alongside the evil environment of the last days stands a promise for an end-time revival. God will pour out His Spirit and empower His people to do great exploits. As time marches forward and sin abounds more and more, we are promised to experience greater grace and a greater outpouring.

Daniel wrote the Book of Daniel during the Jewish exile in Babylon. It begins with captivating stories of how certain exiled Jews navigated treacherous situations in Babylon. The second half of the book expounds in great detail concerning prophecies, some of which have already transpired exactly as predicted.

- As we read each passage in Daniel, we are reminded of God's ultimate control and plan for this world.
- A day is coming when the kingdoms of this world will fade away and the one true God will establish His own everlasting kingdom.
- The Book of Daniel teaches how a godly person can live in an ungodly world.
- The stories and characters serve as an example of how we can keep ourselves from becoming contaminated in a wicked environment.



A physician named Luke wrote the Book of Acts. He was also one of the disciples who walked with Jesus. The Book of Acts provides the story of the last days of Jesus on earth and the first days of the church.

- Through Luke's account, we learn of the supernatural birth and explosive growth of the church.
- As Acts 1:8 describes, what started in Jerusalem with a few rapidly grew to many in Judea, Samaria, and the uttermost parts of the world. The Great Commission that the characters in Acts fulfilled is still propelling God's kingdom forward today.
- Acts teaches us how to establish and advance God's kingdom on earth. With the fulfillment of God's promise and a commitment to a higher calling, the disciples demonstrated how we can overcome obstacles and be part of establishing God's kingdom in our time.

## Our Response

Both of these books of the Bible provide profound and powerful blueprints for how we should respond in critical moments. The characters' lives and circumstances happened hundreds of years apart, but the characters' unique responses to events demonstrate principles we should apply today.

- Their responses to their circumstances were radical. They chose to defy customs, commands, and threats. They rejected fear and became a part of the supernatural workings of God. They refused to bow and were labeled as radicals.
- What will be our response to our current times?



Devotion is defined as love, loyalty, or commitment to something or someone. We define our devotion to God through our personal commitment to Him. Romans 12:1–2 encourages us to devote ourselves to God wholly—body, mind, and soul.

- Devotion is revealed in our passions. It is easy to determine a person’s favorite sports team by evaluating the person’s clothing, conversation, and investment. In the same way, our true devotion is revealed by our outward and inward pursuits. Devotion is manifested through passion.
- Devotion is established by our disciplines. Paul admonished us, “Present your bodies a living sacrifice, . . . be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind.” His admonition is to discipline our actions and thoughts in order to walk in God’s will. Spiritual disciplines are the foundation for devotion.
- Devotion is cultivated by time. Time is a precious commodity given to us by God. Ultimately, how we spend it or waste time will determine where we spend eternity, the place without time. When we devote our time to prayer, studying the Bible, and faithful participation in a local church, we are cultivating a relationship with the Lord.
- Our personal relationship with the Lord is only as strong as the amount of time we devote to Him.

*He shall seduce with flattery those who violate the covenant, but the people who know their God shall stand firm and take action.*

Daniel 11:32



## Our Destiny

This verse is the destiny of God's people in these last days. We have a promise, a destiny for great exploits. God will do something radical through this generation.

It is important to note that the exploits promised to us can only come to those who know their God.

### *A Story from The Greatest Firefighter Stories Never Told*

Lt. Charles Kamin slammed the 26-foot ladder against the wall by the second-floor window, scurried up the rungs and looked in on a horrifying sight. About 20 students were jammed against the window... Then Kamin noticed something that made his blood run cold. The students' white shirts were changing color, going from white to tan, then growing darker like marshmallows over a campfire. The blistering heat was starting to burn their clothing. Seconds, I have just seconds, Kamin thought. The burning clothes told him that in no time the room was going to reach a flash point in which everything— furniture, books, papers and children— would go up in one great white flame. In desperation, he did something that would have seemed unthinkable just minutes earlier... He kept seizing children and flinging them out the window. In Kamin's mind, at least they had a chance of surviving a 25-foot plunge; they had no chance of surviving in the burning classroom.

Radical exploits will happen through those with radical devotion to their craft and lifestyle. If we are trained and totally committed to our lifestyle of pulling people out of the fires of damnation, then how could we ever be committed enough to put our lives on the line when it really comes down to it?

Who do you know that personifies the radical lifestyle?

