



# **OFF-BRAND**

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# **JESUS**

**September 08, 2024**

**Sermon Study Guide – Lead Pastor Brian Bales**

***Off-Brand Jesus: Appearances***

*But understand this, that in the last days there will come times of difficulty. <sup>2</sup> For people will be lovers of self, lovers of money, proud, arrogant, abusive, disobedient to their parents, ungrateful, unholy,<sup>3</sup> heartless, unappeasable, slanderous, without self-control, brutal, not loving good, <sup>4</sup> treacherous, reckless, swollen with conceit, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God, <sup>5</sup> having the appearance of godliness, but denying its power. Avoid such people. 2 Timothy 3:1-5(ESV)*

1. Another word for off-brand would be generic. When you think of the word what comes to mind?
  - Appearances can certainly be deceiving right? Think of actors who have doubles on the set that stand in for them as they film some scenes. Or stunt doubles that we think are the actor doing something crazy but really cool like riding a motorcycle off a cliff. But how do you feel about that actor when you find out it wasn't really him or her in the scene?
  
  - Do you feel disillusioned or distrustful and if yes, why?

2. If we look around us, listen to a daily news report, read a headline or consider the current political landscape we might think we are living in the *last days*. Life looks and feels difficult in many parts of the world, maybe even in your world. But consider when Paul was writing to Timothy and what he wanted Timothy to be aware of then. Timothy was serving in full-time ministry; he had been taught by both his mother and grandmother and trained by the Apostle Paul. Timothy had traveled with Paul who had mentored him and he had been equipped by the power of the Holy Spirit to go out and serve in Ephesus.
  - Paul knew that serving in full-time ministry was hard and so he was writing to warn Timothy of what was happening around him that could derail his ministry and therefore steer the members of the churches away from God's truth and teaching. But that was then, and this is now, 2024. Why should we listen to the Apostle Paul who was writing to a full-time ministry leader in the Early Church?
  
3. There are people that we know we should avoid because they are likely to harm us spiritually. But what about the people who look *godly*? How do we know the difference?
  - Consider someone that you thought had your best interest at heart only to discover that they had planned to steal from you. Perhaps they planned to cheat you out of money set aside for retirement or steal your job. How did you miss the warning signs and what were those warning signs that might read like the list that Paul provides for Timothy?

4. Now consider the character of someone that you would trust with your both your physical safety and your spiritual safety. List the character qualities in that person.

5. In both Paul's day and ours we will be challenged to remain spiritually vigilant. There is power provided through the Holy Spirit that cannot be equaled by any other power source. If we are filled with the Holy Spirit, He will speak to us and reminds us of Biblical truth the way Paul reminded Timothy. But we must remain in scripture and remain in the community of other Christ Followers who are willing to keep us on the right path.

- So, who are your people that will do for you what Paul did for Timothy?

Matthew 24:36 reminds us of this: *But concerning that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, nor the Son, but the Father only.*

- Consider your next steps following this teaching today. How is your life reflecting that you follow the One True Jesus who will return at a time that only God knows?

## **MAKING IT REAL**

- This week ask the Holy Spirt for guidance and direction as you choose to follow the Real Jesus.