

# Timothy, II #1 Ch. 1-2

by Chuck Missler

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*Chuck Missler's sermon on 2 Timothy emphasizes the themes of loyalty, suffering, and the urgent need for the church to remain steadfast in faith amidst challenges.*

**Duration:** 1:16:46

**Scripture:** John 10:28

**Topics:** "Timothy"

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## Description

In this sermon on discipline, the preacher emphasizes the importance of being bold but not brash in our faith. He encourages believers to not be ashamed of the testimony of the Lord and to be willing to partake in the afflictions of the gospel. The sermon highlights the misconception that life should be easy and breezy, and instead emphasizes the commitment to personal lifestyles and the willingness to endure suffering. The preacher also urges listeners to engage in in-depth, verse-by-verse study of the Bible and to avoid being entangled with the affairs of this world in order to please God as soldiers in His kingdom.

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## Transcript

Before we start, I'd like to ask this question. How many of you in the room are in the full-time ministry? Oh, good for you. How many of you are saved? Okay, now I'll ask the question again.

How many of you are in the full-time ministry? Praise God. See, if you're saved, whether you're... We don't think of that. You know, we think, gee, pastors.

You know, I'm not a member of the clergy. I'm not... No, that's not... That's a man's convenience. That's a cultural thing.

That's not necessarily biblical. We're all in full-time ministry. He's called to all of us.

Now, 2 Timothy... If we were doing this chronologically, we probably would have taken 1 Timothy and then Titus because they're written about the same time. 2 Timothy is written quite a bit later, probably at least five, six years later, whatever. To get a little chronology, it was about 58 A.D. when Paul was arrested in Jerusalem and he spent about three years in prisons going from one Roman trial to another over different rulers and things.

But then about somewhere between 61 and 63 A.D. was his first imprisonment in Rome. But that was under house arrest. He was free to receive visitors.

He could preach and teach. That's all in Acts 28. It's about where Acts breaks off, incidentally.

About 64, maybe to 67, somewhere in that range, he was released from prison. And during this period, he covered a lot of territory. In fact, it was at this time that he wrote the first letter in Timothy.

He wrote from Macedonia. Timothy was at Ephesus having troubles, and we went through that epistles where he sort of... And also Titus. He wrote that epistle also.

Titus, I believe, was Crete. But anyway, he was writing these to encourage his protégés to hang in there and so forth. It was about 67 A.D. when Paul was arrested again.

And this time he was in chains, languishing actually in a real prison, not house arrest this time in Rome. It was treated as a criminal. He had little light to read by, no sanitation, facing death.

Paul knew that his end was near. And it's interesting what he does. Yeah, well, a couple of other things.

He was deserted by all his associates. He's going to go through some of those. All his associates in Asia Minor.

And it's interesting, he freely forgave the defectors. If that ever happened to me, I hope I have the grace to do that. But he said, may it not be counted against them.

You'll see that in chapter 4 of this epistle. Whenever you're confronted with cowardly ingratitude, it has to bring pain and discouragement. So on the one hand, Paul forgave them.

We count that and respect that. And yet, you have to believe that it hurt. And we're going to discover, I think, that as we go through this epistle, there's one word that sort of lurks behind all the ideas, and that's loyalty.

It doesn't necessarily come out quite openly that way, but loyalty and suffering is the first chapter's focus. Loyalty and service, the second chapter. But chapter 3 and following is loyalty and apostasy.

And I think it's going to be, this epistle, it turns out we're doing it because it fits our program to cover these things. And yet, it's interesting, as I got into it, to realize how it fits our day-to-day. Especially the stuff we'll take next time.

And then, of course, the last part of the epistle will be the Lord's loyalty to his servants when they're being deserted and so forth. Now, this is perhaps... Maybe I'm especially sensitive to this because we're going through a period now where an awful lot of people are taking cheap shots at us. It's disturbing to... You expect attacks from outside the body of Christ, but it's disturbing to find people who apparently would be in the body of Christ that are from public platforms, without checking with us first, misquoting us, demeaning us, ridiculing some of our positions.

And there are issues that... The differences of view are understandable, but to attack character and integrity and motives is quite something else. So, this is perhaps why I'm particularly sensitized to this and appreciate your prayers in this regard. But anyway, you get to about 68 A.D., and that's when Paul was beheaded in Rome.

And it was just before his death that Paul wrote this letter to encourage Timothy. I want you to get the picture here. Paul's in prison, bad circumstance, under sentence of death, and he chooses to write

Timothy a letter to encourage Timothy.

Do you see the inversion there? What's wrong with this picture? But deathbed statements tend to have an importance that are not attached to other comments. And this epistle was Paul's final communication. But it has an overtone of triumph, and it's Paul's letter, as I say, to encourage Timothy.

So, he's passing his mantle, in a sense, to his son in the faith and urging him to persevere in strength and so forth. It's a message for all of us, for our own road ahead, for reasons that will become obvious as we get into it. You will discover this epistle gets very, very personal.

It contains about 25 references to specific individuals. But as we get into this a little further, it's interesting. We just spoke recently at the Christian Workers' Conference, and I was sitting there in one of the comfortable places, and someone came up to me and said, Are these seats saved? I couldn't resist.

I said, They're not even under conviction. And we had just done a series on Barabbas, the Gospel according to Barabbas. And I think the short version of it is Barabbas, of course, knew that he was guilty.

Barabbas knew that Christ was innocent. Barabbas knew that he'd done nothing to merit the substitution. And for him, this innocent person was a perfect substitute.

And Barabbas and Christ changed places. All the guilt, all the sin, all the punishment, all that that was due to Barabbas was on Christ. And the innocence, the perfection, the freedom, all that transfers to Barabbas.

Very interesting switch. And that's a very interesting thing to study in depth, because we're in Barabbas' shoes. The same thing is true of us.

We're guilty. Christ is innocent. And we both know that.

We know we've done nothing to merit what he did for us. And yet, we trade places. We trade places, in effect.

And it's interesting that man cannot be saved by perfect obedience. Why? Well, because he can't render it. We can't be perfect.

Neither can we be saved by imperfect obedience, because God can't accept it. So that's the dilemma. And, of course, that dilemma is fulfilled by our Lord Jesus Christ.

And it's interesting. We discover, of course, that the more popular view is not to focus on that. There are a number of different views.

Popular psychology is how to overcome this, how to think creatively, how to think affirmatively or positively. You all have seen the books. That we're on our way upward and onward forever.

All you have to do is pick up a paper and see where we stand. All you have to do is witness the last few decades and just witness the decline and decay in our society. It pretty well nullifies that whole view.

In exploring this a little bit, another avenue that man has tried is the social gospel. And J. Vernon McGee loves to call it. He calls this, it's a sermonette preached by a preacherette to Christianettes.

And good is better than evil, because it's nicer and gets you into less trouble. That's sort of the way you hear it from many pulpits. And the way McGee describes it, he summarizes, a church made up of a

mild-mannered man standing before a group of mild-mannered people, urging them to be more mild-mannered.

You read all that, and no wonder what Christ said to the church at Laodicea. I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot. I would work that thou art cold or hot.

So then because you are lukewarm and neither cold nor hot, I will spew thee out of my mouth. You know, there's something about a milk toast, you know, a vapid thing that, you just want them to take a position and not be flaccid. And the reason I get into that, that sort of describes the church in America.

It's a good lead-in to 2 Timothy, but it's also a church in America. What does Jesus go on to say about Laodicea? Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing, and knowest not, thou art wretched and miserable, poor and blind and naked. You know, it's interesting, Jesus wrote seven letters, how many epistles in the New Testament? Well, there's 21.

No, no, there's 28. We always forget the seven that were written by the Lord Jesus Christ in Revelation 2 and 3. Seven churches. And when you look at those seven churches, you know them because they're so familiar in the book of Revelation, but they're not the most important churches of that time.

Church of Jerusalem is not mentioned. Church of Rome, not mentioned. Church of Antioch, which was the headquarters in those days for the evangelism.

And you can make a list of dozens of churches in the book of Acts that are not the seven the Lord picked. Why did He pick those seven? Because they're representative for His purposes. And they have a number of different levels of application.

They obviously are, from Sir William Ramsey and other archaeological studies, we know that they were literal churches at that time having problems that relate to those seven letters. So that all fits locally, directly. But they also, and each one has a message.

He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches, plural. In other words, we need to apply all of those churches. It's admonitory to all churches.

All churches have elements of all seven. As you study the seven churches, you discover some interesting things. Each one is very different.

Each church has a report card in that letter. I know thy works, you've done this good, that bad, and exhorts them. The report card for seven churches.

Every church was surprised. Remember that, when you go through the seven churches. Each one of those churches learned something new.

Some that thought they were doing great were doing lousy. This is an example. Others that thought they were really terrible.

Smyrna. Great. Nothing evil said of it.

It's interesting that so often we look at the early church for guidance. We should realize that at 96 AD, when Revelation was written, the church was already in trouble. All seven letters were critiques by the Lord Jesus Christ of where the church had gotten off track.

So we should remember that. Now, the Book of Acts covers the first 30 years of church history. The seven letters cover the next 2,000.

Because there's another interesting thing about the seven letters, seven churches. And that is, in the order they're laid out, they laid out church history. If they were in any other order, it wouldn't fit.

But if you lay them out, it does lay out church history. Very interesting study. The letters are also very personal.

How many of you have an earlobe? Can I see a show of hands? Okay, that's most of you. Good, okay. The Spirit says in each letter, He that hath an ear, let him hear.

That's each of us. Each of us need to listen to those letters, because the letters are also personal. And we all have elements of all seven in each of us.

But in a prophetic sense, or in a historical overlay sense, we're in the Laodicea. And because thou sayest, this sounds like the church today. You know, when you talk in the big cathedrals or whatever.

Because thou sayest, I am rich and increased with goods, and have need of nothing. And Jesus says, And knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked. What's his advice? I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire.

Not gold coins from your friendly coin dealer. No, no, no, no. That's a whole different issue.

No, Jesus is speaking thematically. I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire. Purified.

How do you purify something? By testing. And the church very well may be heading for testing. It says, That thou mayest be rich in white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear.

And anoint thine eyes with eye salve, that thou mayest see. As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten. Be zealous therefore, and repent.

Does the Lord love his church? Well, it says here that, As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten. See, I have a fear, if I can use that term rhetorically, a suspicion may be a more proper term, that we may be heading into a time where the church is going to be increasingly politically incorrect all through the world. In 50 countries, you're a Christian at penalty of death.

But in the United States, the way we have failed to preserve our constitutional protections for freedom of religion, it could get very, very difficult. But I think that will be spiritually fruitful. Be zealous therefore, and repent.

And then Jesus says, Behold, I stand at the door and knock, and if any man hear my voice and open the door, I will come in to him and sup with him, and he with me. We've all heard that verse, verse 20. Behold, I stand at the door and knock, and if any man hear my voice and open the door, I will come in to him and sup with him, and he with me.

Used at altar calls all over the world. And it's fine, except if you realize where it is, as part of this letter, it implies that Jesus is outside, knocking to get in to the church of Laodicea. Where it's placed in the context, it's a final indictment of this church.

But the modern church, of course, McGee makes another interesting remark, I think I brought this up, he actually makes it in regards to 1 Timothy, but basically he makes a remark that when the church does go apostate, or I'll put it another way, when the church is persecuted, the denominational churches will hardly notice it, because they're already so compromised that they won't even, they'll go along with whatever is the deal. And this is not, you know, cynical Chuck Mr. talking, this is J. Vernon McGee, one of the respected guys on the horizon. He passed away a few years ago, but he's still on the radio, thanks to the trust and all that.

So anyway, getting back to us as individuals, as we sort of warm up to this thing, God creates out of nothing, right? How many knew that? Good for you. Until man is nothing, God can make nothing out of him. Who said that? Martin Luther.

I thought that's great. One of his better things, actually. I won't get into some of the other things he said, but anyway.

Okay, so the pastoral epistles are written to each one of us, and there is a cloud on our horizon, coming apostasy. We see it already in America, and I think it's going to get more and more. And what is that? What do you mean by apostasy? The scripture says it's total destruction of the principles of faith.

Apostasy is not due to ignorance. Apostasy is deliberate error and heresy. It's intentional.

The apostate knows the truths of the gospel and the doctrines of faith and has repudiated them. And that's what is already happening in many of the ecclesiastical councils in America. And it's interesting, in Luke 18.8, there's a strange verse in the scripture.

Luke 18.8, the Lord says, When the Son of Man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth? And by the way, the Greek grammar there demands a negative answer. It's a rhetorical question. With an implied no.

You follow me? Now, there's going to be two departures. There are two departures prophetically described. The one that we sang about just a little while ago is the Harpazzo, or in the Latin it's called the rapture, in 1 Thessalonians 4. And I think we know all about that.

There may be some of you in the audience that don't hold to a pre-trib rapture, and that's not a problem. We'll explain it to you on the way up. It's not an issue tonight.

But the other departure, apostasia, which can mean rapture, but also is used to refer to departure of the faith. And the Harpazzo is actually a snatching out, forcibly removing. And that's the way Paul describes our being gathered to the Lord.

But there's also an apostasia, a departure from the faith. Now, this classical biblical view is not very popular today. There are those around, and maybe the denominational church, is that the goal of the church is to transform the world by tinkering with its social, political, and economic systems.

These vain optimists don't have much use for 2 Timothy. But the modern church is very popular to assume that the goal of the church is to somehow straighten out man for a better world kind of approach. And that sounds good to the world, but that isn't the gospel picture.

And 2 Timothy will not ring comfortable to people who hold that view. And present times we live in should underscore the accuracy of Paul. Okay, let's just keep moving here.

Let's just jump in. It's about time we did. 2 Timothy chapter 1. First verse.

Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, according to the promise of life which is in Christ Jesus. Again, one of these Pauline openings. Apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God.

Now, the will of God is a whole theological study, but it can be viewed in four ways. There is God's sovereign will, also called in the scripture the mystery of His will, implying that there's parts of His will that are not revealed. The second category is His revealed will.

Of God's total will, a portion of that's revealed, part of it's still a mystery. The revealed will, what's the synonym for the revealed will of God? The word of God. That's His revealed will.

Okay. There's a third, that's His will for mankind. What's God's will for mankind? Salvation.

He's not willing that any perish, but that all come to salvation. And He can't force it, because we have our own free will, but His desire, His preference would be for mankind to be saved. Then He has a will for the believer.

His specific will for your life. And that generally goes into the category of sanctification. Sanctification.

And I won't get into this whole thing, but if you want, my wife is just completing a book on understanding God's will. The title of the book is Faith in the Night Seasons, Understanding God's Will. You need to understand God's will if you're going to be prepared for the dark times.

The dark times in your personal life, and also the dark times on the horizon which might be there for the real church, the invisible, the mystical church. And so, it's a timely book, Faith in the Night Seasons. It's the third of the series, The Way of Agape, was understanding God's love, be transformed, understanding God's truth.

And then, of course, Faith in the Night Seasons, understanding God's will. Verse 2, To Timothy, my dearly beloved son, grace, mercy, and peace to God the Father and Christ Jesus our Lord. Now, Paul is speaking not of his literal son, his spiritual son.

He's treating Timothy as his spiritual son, his protege, if you will. Okay? But you know something different here? You know, we always hear, Paul always says, Grace and peace to you all, right? That's why many people think he's a Southerner, right? Grace and peace to you all, right? And I usually point out that we know he's a Southerner for that, but we know he's not a Texan. Because in a Philippian letter he says, I learned in whatever state I find myself therein to be content.

So we know he's not a Texan. But there's something here that you might find interesting. He says, grace and mercy and peace.

You notice, Paul doesn't normally do that, but he threw mercy in here. Did you notice that? Grace, mercy, and peace. Does that sound strange to you? See, we're so used to grace and peace.

But this is grace, mercy, and peace. When Paul, get this, careful, when Paul writes to pastors, he asks for mercy. Pastors, he understood pastors.

Pastors have earned the need for mercy. You see? And that's a little subtle humor that I guess went by you. Okay.

But it's true. It's true. Okay.

Verse 3. I thank God, whom I serve from my forefathers with pure conscience, that without ceasing I have remembrance of thee in my prayers night and day. You know, it's interesting. Paul's prayers were not routine.

Paul's prayers were done with passion and concern. Those of us that have a prayer life, boy, how important it is not to let it become by rote or mechanical, but to really pray seriously with passion and concern. He says, I have remembrance of thee in my prayers night and day.

How many of you have a prayer list? Think about it. Do you really maintain a prayer list? People that you bring to the throne of God on a regular basis. You have a 24-hour hotline to the throne room of the entire universe.

Anytime you like. Pick up the phone and check in. But do it seriously.

Do it with passion. Do it with concern. And if you have this prayer list, is your pastor on that list? Boy, it better be.

He needs it. He needs it. Some of you are saying, boy, does he need it.

Well, I don't mean that. I just mean he needs it. And I hope it would be my desire for you to put Koinonia House on that list, too.

Because it is a warfare. And that's the most powerful thing you can do for us is to put us on your prayer list. And how about your elected representatives? I hope you have representatives that you think worthy of getting behind.

But either way, however you feel, are they on your prayer list? Leadership. And so that all begs the question of how serious are you? Paul, who should be our example here, was very serious. And we should keep that in mind.

Anyway, let's move on. Verse 4. Greatly desiring to see thee, being mindful of thy tears, that I may be filled with joy, when I call to remembrance the unfeigned faith that is in thee, which dwelt first in thy grandmother Lois and thy mother Eunice, and I am persuaded that in thee also. Lois, of course, was Timothy's grandmother.

And she probably was the first one in the family to be one to Christ. Then his mother Eunice, and she apparently was Jewish. But Timothy's father was Greek.

We learn from Acts 16, verse 1. So Eunice had probably not practiced the Orthodox Jewish faith because her husband was Greek. However, they had seen, both his mother and his grandmother had seen to it that he learned the Scriptures. And that, of course, prepared him for the hearing of the Gospel.

That's essential background. Now, when Paul came to Lystra on his first missionary journey, that was probably the occasion, we're conjecturing here, probably the occasion that Timothy came to the Lord Jesus Christ. He had the background from the Scriptures.

Paul brought him to the Lord. It was on his second journey when he returned to Lystra that he probably recruited Timothy to join him in full-time service. Verse 6. Wherefore, I put thee in remembrance that thou

stir up the gift of God which is in thee by the putting on of my hands.

Laying on of hands was a way, a ritual of bringing him in as a partner. And this partnership, that not only brought Timothy gifted by the Holy Spirit into the ministry, but it also, in effect, gave him an accountability to Paul. And one of the tragic absences in our current style of organizations is an absence of real accountability in the clergy, as we would call it.

And that reaps its problems across the land. Many people are in the ministry because they see it as a path of work that eludes accountability. Then we get to verse 7. Boy, this is a very, very key verse.

You hear this a lot. 2 Timothy 1.7 For God hath not given us a spirit of fear, but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind. How many have heard that before? A couple of these words, though, are misunderstood.

Many have misinterpreted this thing, and I'm guilty of this, too, in the past. The word fear is a delia. It's only here in the Bible it actually means cowardice.

It's timidity, or fearfulness, or cowardice. So this is when he says he's not given us a spirit of cowardice. This is a call to boldness in the faith is what it really is calling for.

A power and of love. And the word sound mind actually is an admonishing or calling to soundness of mind or moderation or self-control. It really is a word that means discipline.

Discipline. So this verse really means God has not given us a spirit of cowardice, but of power and of love and of discipline. That's what he's calling us to here.

And in other words, he wants us to be bold but not brash. That's what really the summary of it is. Verse 8, Be not thou therefore ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me as prisoner, but be thou partaker of the afflictions of the gospel according to the power of God.

This whole chapter could be called the afflictions of the gospel. There are many people that sort of feel the Christian life is a path that should be easy, bright, and breezy. And it does include our commitment to our personal lifestyles.

Well, none of us, of course, enjoy suffering. And even the Lord prayed in Gethsemane, Lord, if thou be willing, remove this cup from me. Remember in Gethsemane, he prayed that three times.

None of us choose suffering. It's kind of interesting. I read here that a lawyer reported this found in a will.

To my son I leave the pleasure of earning a living. For 25 years he thought the pleasure was all mine. He was mistaken.

I like that. See, a great many Christians sort of expect their heavenly father to make life easy for them. That's not what he promised.

In fact, if he really loves, he trains and grooms and chastens. And Jesus made it quite clear. John 16.33 says, In that world ye shall have tribulation or trouble.

But be of good cheer, I have overcome the world. That's the good news. He's overcome the world.

And just because Christians will go, well, we believe, we can show from the Scripture, Christians will not go through that specific period of time that Jesus labeled the great tribulation. But you and I are certainly

going to go through our little troubles of various kinds. And most of us who have been spoiled, having lived in the most unique republic in the history of man, which was built on the whole concept of the sinfulness of man and built into our structure through prayer and intent and genius, checks and balances, division of power, separation of powers, due process, all these things that have given us the world that you and I have grown up in, are being shredded today.

There's no regard for them. Most people don't even know what they are or care. There may be some very, very unpleasant shocks ahead, and that's why we really want to do some homework in this area.

But I came across another quote from Samuel Rutherford. If you were not strangers here, the hounds of the world would not be barking at you. That says it all.

Jesus said more to the point, if the world hate you, you know that it hated me before it hated you, John 15, 18. Anyway, moving on to verse 9. Who hath saved us and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began. This is one of those verses that you just can't possibly grasp, no matter how hard you try.

The sweep of this verse is breathtaking. Who hath saved us and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, and I might insert a voluntary adjective there, puny, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, okay so far, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began. That's reminiscent of Ephesians 1.4, right? Let's turn to Ephesians 1.4. That is, until you read it, you just can't believe it.

It's incredible. Ephesians 1.4, you'll remember it more if you look it up. Paul says to the Ephesians church, According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love.

When did God first start working with you? We all have different stories. Everyone in this room that's saved is a result of a miracle. Some of them very dramatic.

Some of them may be quite straightforward. But everyone a miracle for the work of our Lord. But when was that determined? When were we chosen in him? According to Ephesians 1.4, before the foundation of the world.

We have no ability to grasp that until we really understand that God is outside time. He alone knows the end from the beginning. See, all along, even before Adam was created, God had a plan for you and me.

There's no way we can get our minds around that. That's what it says. Verse 10, But is now made manifest by the appearing of our Savior Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel.

It's interesting, if we live in the days of Moses or Isaiah or Malachi or whoever, all these incredible truths were still ahead. And if they're unfathomable now, having seen them, how much more difficult it must have been for the prophets to see them, but by the Holy Spirit. And we are in a position of being able to look back and seeing that it really happened.

The Redeemer that was promised to Adam and Eve showed up on schedule. And he presented himself on the exact day that the angel told five centuries earlier. And so we have the benefit of all of that.

We just take it for granted. Now it says here that he abolished death. What it really says, he is made of none effect death.

That's what it really says. And bear in mind, Paul was writing this whole letter from prison where the sentence of death was upon him, so he knew what he talked about. And again, I'm reminded of this interesting quote, Man cannot be saved by perfect obedience because he's incapable of rendering.

He cannot be saved by imperfect obedience because God is incapable of accepting it. And of course, the only solution is what? The paradox. We can't behave perfectly.

He can't accept us imperfectly. The answer is John 14, 6. Jesus, I am the way, the truth, and the life. No man cometh to the Father but by me, by having imputed unto us the perfection of our Lord.

Verse 11, Whereunto I am appointed a preacher, Paul says, and an apostle, and a teacher to the Gentiles. For the witch cause I also suffer these things. Nevertheless, I am not ashamed, for I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day.

Boy, that's another one of these key verses. You know, this chapter's got several that you really want to fill out a memory card. This one, there's a couple coming too.

This echoes somewhat Romans 1, 16. You know, if you have memory cards, I'm sure you probably made this one of them. For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God unto salvation, to everyone that believeth, to the Jew first, and also the Greek.

Very, very similar verse. But this one includes some other things. Here's verse 12.

I think anyone that has a personal computer doubts the idea that once saved, always saved. Are you with me? Okay. I can tell who has a personal computer.

Oh, that pretty ... that bad? Sorry, Rod. I just thought I'd slip that by you there. Okay.

But notice what Paul says here in verse 12. For the witch cause I also suffer these things. Nevertheless, Paul says, I am not ashamed, for I know whom, not what, whom I believe.

And I'm persuaded that He is able to keep that which I have committed unto Him against that day. Boy, I love that verse. Now, I know this is controversial and many of you may not agree, but I'm grateful that it's His faithfulness, not mine, that keeps me saved.

You follow me? And I know this leads into some other issues, but I really love this. And it's not what you believe, it's whom you believe. And this becomes very, very important.

We've been doing a little reading by Richard Wurmbrand and some of the information about the persecuted church. Unless you're prepared for persecution, you won't survive it. Your faith won't survive it.

Your faith gets tested. And it's not how many Bible verses you've memorized before going to prison and that sort of thing. That won't do it either.

You sort of think, gee, well, I'll prepare by just memorizing a lot of verses, so when they steal my Bible, I can recall it. So that's all worth doing probably, but that isn't going to save you. That sounds like heresy.

Well, wait, the Word of God? No, no, wait, wait, wait, wait. The only thing that will get you through is your personal relationship with a person. Jesus Christ.

That's what's going to hold you through, nothing else. And I hope you don't believe that. I hope you check it out.

What I mean by that is test it in Scripture and test it by those that have faced it. Wurmbrand spent 14 years in prison, Romanian prison. And he knows where he speaks.

He's the head of the ministry called Voice of the Martyrs. That's a ministry that we should all get acquainted with personally for several reasons. First of all, it's an incredible ministry to get ourselves to pray for our brothers in chains throughout the world.

We tend not to think about it. That's something that every once in a while, a few times a year, we have Mission Sunday or something in church, and we have a missionary come and tell how it's going, and we put our mind on it for a little bit. But no, day and night, our brothers in Christ are being crucified, literally, on crosses in Sudan, are sold into slavery, women into prostitution, in 50 different countries in the world.

Voice of the Martyrs. A great ministry to be aware of. There's another reason to do your homework on that, and that is to understand what's involved in the event that we're going to be facing some change of circumstance here in this country.

And the other word here, to which I have committed, the word is actually deposited. See, you and I are, in effect, debtors here. And the verses that amplify this for me is John chapter 10.

There's a wonderful, wonderful passage in John chapter 10 that we can't overlook when we're talking about verse 12 there. In John chapter 10, verse 28 and 29, Jesus says in John 10, 28, And I give unto them, He's speaking of His sheep. The earlier verse says, My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me.

Verse 28, And I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of My hand. Well, that's great, because I'm a man, and I can't pluck Me out of His hand. That's the way I read that.

Verse 29, He goes on, My Father, who gave them to Me, is greater than all, and no man is able to pluck them out of My Father's hand. Okay? You know what's neat about that that nobody notices? There are two hands. See, I cut My two hands.

You've got His hand and the Father's hand. You can't pluck them out of either one. So I can't visualize that any other way than having them... You can't get out of there, guy.

You know? Anyway, back to 2 Timothy. Verse 13, Hold fast the form of sound words, which thou hast heard of Me in faith and love, which is in Christ Jesus. And this, of course, gives us a good excuse to divert to the whole plenary inspiration of the Scripture that God, the Holy Spirit, gave us the Scripture in its original, precisely, completely, full of sound words.

But let's just move on. It's also, he says, Hold fast the form of sound words, which thou hast heard of Me in faith and love. One of the things that disturbs me are the self-appointed witch hunters that darken the landscape, self-appointed experts that make their living by hurting people.

It's so easy to become pugnacious in the defense of the faith. A witch hunter who creates more problems than he solves. They don't do it in love.

It's amazing how many people write books about people without talking to them first to clarify, rather than promote misunderstandings for profit. But let's move on. Verse 14, That good thing which was committed unto thee keep by the Holy Ghost which dwelleth in us.

And, you know, it's interesting when a church or a Christian organization goes liberal, it always starts by the leader's convictions, or I should say a weakening of the leader's convictions about the Word of God. Organizations that go liberal have at their, usually at their source, a leader that has lost confidence in the plenary inspiration of the Scripture. And the other aspect of this verse, by the way, I think it's pretty obvious to most of you here, the good thing which that was committed unto thee keep by the Holy Ghost, by the Holy Spirit.

The Christian life can only be lived by the power of the Holy Spirit. Chuck Smith was fond of telling a story that should really work well here in Idaho, especially during the summer here, about a local hardware store that was having a sale on chainsaws. And a skeptical guy went in there and wasn't sure, and he said, Oh, you've got to do your work with a chainsaw.

You get about, you know, five or ten times as much work in a day with a chainsaw than trying to do it by hand for everything. So the guy added up the money for the chainsaw and took it home and came back the next day kind of tired. He says, I worked really hard and I got probably about the same, maybe one and a half times what I normally get, but no better than that.

And the guy was surprised. He said, Are you sure? And he talked about it. He said, Go try it again.

We'll be glad to give your money back. Let's go try it again. So the guy went away.

He came back in a couple of days. He says, I tried it and tried it and tried it, and at most I could do maybe one and a half, two times what I normally do. And he goes, I don't understand this.

Let's see what the problem is. So they took it and went out back behind the hardware store and the hardware store manager took the chainsaw and pulled the thing and pulled it to start it. And the guy says, What's that noise? That's a silly story, but it gets crazy.

The chainsaw is no use to you if you don't understand its source of power, how to use it. And your source of power in your life is not your strength or your commitment or your resolve. It's the Holy Spirit.

Anyway, verse 15. This thou knowest, that all they which are in Asia be turned away from me, of whom are Phagellus and Hermogenes. Now the province of Asia included the Roman districts of Lydia, Messia, Caria, and Phrygia.

Now it's interesting, Paul was forbidden to minister in this area on his second missionary journey. That's in Acts 16. But on his third journey he stayed nearly three years in Ephesus.

And he evangelized. And Ephesus was at that time the capital of the province of Asia. And we're not talking Asia here like we talk about it.

We think of Asia as the Far East. The term here is used in the term as a Roman province of the Middle East. It's all in the area that we know today as Turkey, roughly.

So it's a Roman province of Asia. Don't confuse it. It's not Asia like Chinese or Japanese.

It's a different term. Anyway, essentially, during his three years out of Ephesus, Paul evangelized the entire area. And you'll find that in Acts 19 and 20, essentially.

The seven churches that we mentioned earlier were all in this region also, by the way. Ephesus, Myrna, Pergamos, Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia, and Laodicea are the seven. Not exactly a ring, but they're in a loop.

You can make a loop if you want to do that. The one that's really worth seeing is the one that's easiest to get to. That's Ephesus.

The ruins there are incredible. But let's keep moving. It's interesting.

Paul actually mentions in this letter the actual names of those that had been unfaithful to him, that had been disloyal, that deserted him. And I thought I would start by No, I'm kidding. Verse 16.

The Lord gave mercy unto the house of Anesiphorus, for he oft refreshed me and was not ashamed of my chain. But when he was in Rome he sought me out very diligently and found me. Now there are some students that believe Anesiphorus, or however you pronounce it, was also arrested and persecuted because in chapter 4 he's going to address some remarks to the household of Anesiphorus.

Which implies he may have died or may have been persecuted. There are a lot of conjectures here. I won't get into those controversies because they're not material anyway and there's not a lot of support either way.

There's just people that have different conjectures about it. Verse 17. But when he was in Rome he sought me out very diligently and found me.

He apparently worked hard. He may have been in Rome for other reasons and just took the time to search out Paul or possibly went to Rome and took some research to find out where Paul was. In any case he found him and ministered to him.

Verse 18. The Lord grant unto him that he may find mercy of the Lord in that day. And how many things he ministered unto me at Ephesus thou knowest very well.

Again you see this whole idea of loyalty underlying the epistle. Let's keep moving. We can get another chapter in under a belt here.

Chapter 2 of 2 Timothy indulges in 7 figures of speech. I might mention by the way there are figures of speech in the scripture. You want to make a guess at how many different kinds of rhetorical devices or figures of speech are used in the bible.

There are metaphors, similes, analogies. You mentioned a few so you figure out how many you think there are. Anyone want to make a guess? 200.

I'm sorry it wasn't 7. I shouldn't do that to you actually. 7 is usually a good guess. But in our we did a book on the information the implications of information sciences on the bible.

We call it Cosmic Codes. Hidden Messages from the Edge of Eternity. And it doesn't deal just with the equidistant letter sequences that are creating all the interest and controversy lately.

Only 3 of 25 chapters deal with those. There are microcodes, macrocodes, and metacodes. There are different categories.

We actually sought out the different rhetorical devices, figures of speech that are used in the bible. We have over 200 different kinds each with examples verses where they're used. You need to understand the elegance of rhetorical structure of the scripture is very manifold.

Very, very, very elegant. And that's why it's so silly when you take the bible really seriously your adversaries are trying to get you to say you take it literally. Why? Because they want to pounce on some of these figures of speech.

Oh, you take the bible literally? Then you think God has feathers. What? Sure. Psalm 91, under his wings thou shalt trust.

Come on guys! See, on the one hand. On the other hand, once you open the door to allegories or symbolic use of things, if you don't have some discipline about that you can make it say anything you want. And that's of course what the liberals do.

And so that's the trick. So that's why I don't say anymore I take the bible literally. I do.

But they want to misconstrue that to try to penetrate figures of speech. Well, I usually say I take the bible seriously. They don't know how to deal with that.

Because they don't want to admit they take it less seriously. But they obviously do if they treat everything you know, ephemerally, symbolically, what have you. So, but be that as it may, let's go on.

2 Timothy, well, 1 Timothy 2 will have 7 figures of speech that he uses. Let's go, verse 1. Thou therefore my son, again he's speaking to Timothy as a spiritual father, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus. Be strong.

That's a command. That's an imperative mood. That's a command.

Not a suggestion. It's a command. How do you be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus? How do you be strong in something you're given? Grace you're given, right? You don't have grace, you're given.

How do you be strong? Oh, I got you. I got some blank... I love it when I get blank stares. That means you got some homework to do.

Good. The answer, I'll tell you where to find it but you're going to have to go dig it out. Ephesians 6, verses 10 through 18.

We won't do it tonight because I want to keep us moving here unless we have some time at the end. Ephesians 6, 10 through 18. Where Paul says, be strong in the power of the Lord.

Not in your power, in the power of the Lord. This is probably important. Let's just quickly, we won't get bogged down here but let's go ahead and look in Ephesians chapter 6. I find myself drawing many people to this these days because it's one of the most essential practical spiritual tools, armor, whatever you want

to call it.

And we don't emphasize it enough. Starting in verse 10, Paul says, Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might. Again, it's the imperative mood.

Not optional. It actually is in the present tense, meaning be continually strong. Something you continue.

You don't do this once. You don't come down the sawdust trail and get your armor. It's something you do every morning or every night.

Verse 11, put on the whole armor of God. Not your favorite pieces, the whole armor of God. It consists of seven parts.

And you need all seven. And most people can't even list them. Let alone really apply them to themselves.

Put on the whole armor of God that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. And they'll say in verse 13, it says, Wherefore take unto you the whole armor of God. It says a second time that be ye able to withstand in the evil day and having done all to stand.

And the reason is because of your intelligence report in verse 12. It tells you what you're really up against. For we wrestle not against the flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.

He's talking about angels. He's not talking about politics or rulers in the administrative or magistrate sense. He's talking about spiritual forces.

That's what you're up against. Not against flesh and blood. Verse 14, he starts listening.

Stand therefore having your loins girded about with truth and having on the breastplate of righteousness. You need to understand truth. That's a study in its own right.

And the breastplate of righteousness. What do you mean breastplate? What does the breastplate guard? Your vitals. Your heart.

What protects you? Righteousness. Not yours. His.

And your feet. 15's got a strange one. Your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace.

Preparation. Preparation. Unless you're prepared, hey, you're in trouble.

Preparation. Of what? The gospel of peace. Have you really studied? Do you understand? The gospel.

Enough to present it to somebody else. Above all, taking the shield of faith. Boy, that's an interesting phrase.

The shield of faith. With which you shall be able to quench all the fiery darts that are working. The shield was the mobile part of your armor.

If it had holes in it, you had to fix it before the engagement. Are there holes in your shield? If there are, fix them. Repair them.

Now. Not during the battle. Now.

Is there an area of faith that bothers you? Your faith is not believing in spite of evidence. Your faith should be rational. Build on the evidence.

Remember, faith is not believing in spite of the evidence. It's obeying in spite of the consequences. But do that.

You should have your faith. If I can use the expression, bulletproof. There's a hole in your faith.

Deal with it now. There's another aspect of faith, and that's a collective thing. You have a shield.

You have a shield. Our shields together are more powerful than individually. The Roman soldiers, if they had 31 in a cohort, what they would do is they would get a command to form tortoise formation.

They would have three rows of guys. The front row would interlock their shields. The sides would interlock their shields.

The back would interlock their shields. The ones in the middle would put them on the top. This thing was then all interlocked.

It was like a walking tank. You couldn't get through it. Here it comes! Because all the shields protected it.

It was like a turtle or a tortoise. And the way they tested when they were training, if they did it right, is they drive chariots over them. I'm always intrigued by that, because it may be pressing Paul's idiom a little too far, but I think that's true.

That's why we should not forsake the assembly. Because the holes one has, somebody else can fill. In other words, some of us in this body are good and apologetic.

We all have different strengths and weaknesses, even just within the realm of our faith. And we should pool that in strength. That's really what publishing ministries are all about, partly.

To share, to try to glean and share and so forth. Anyway, let's move on. Shield of Faith, verse 17.

Take the helmet of salvation. The helmet of salvation? What is that? It protects the head. Yeah, but how? Well, we just went through that a little bit in terms of security and whatever.

And the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God. Now that's a very guess. Of all these, that's probably the one I'm most familiar with.

Boy, I brought my sword, meaning our Bible, right? Have you been trained to use it? Or you just swing it over your head wildly as you go into the melee, hoping you might hit something. Big difference if you're trained properly to use it. I won't start on that.

There's a whole study behind that. And then, everybody stops at verse 17. They missed the seventh most powerful element of your armor.

That's prayer. Action at a distance. Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit.

Watching there with all perseverance and supplication for all things. Now, we did a briefing on this. If you haven't gotten it, we have a briefing called Armor in the Age of Deceit.

Boy, you and I live in an age where this is essential. And you should put on your armor every morning, every night. And you need to do that.

You need to know what they are. So I encourage you to do a serious study of Ephesians 6, 10 through 18. Well, we're going to move on tonight.

That's how you be strong anyway. Essential study for the Christian. Verse 2. And the things that thou hast heard of me, Paul says among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men who shall be able to teach others also.

Boy, there's nothing that excites me during the break here. I had several people come up to me. Excited about our commentaries.

Excited about our tapes. That always pleases you. But saying something even more important, that they're starting studies with them.

Lending them out here, or starting a home Bible study there, or getting people, not just to listen, but to start studies around them. And that's exciting. Same thing with my wife's book.

Many people across the country have studies. That's why we have workbooks and things to go with that for her studies. Because just by word of mouth, this thing has gotten just wild.

It's the third, fourth, printing, whatever, of those materials. Studies. Home studies.

A lot of people like to have a home study, but they don't necessarily feel they have a teaching gift. So what they'll do very simply, they'll take a tape, get together some evening during the week. Once a week, they get together with a group, five, ten, whatever, and listen to the tape and discuss it.

They know the pattern. They know what chapter comes next week. They can read the chapter in advance.

Get together and listen to the tape. Argue about it. Oh, gee, Chuck's all screwed up here.

Fine. But, you know, at least discuss it and whatever. But use it as a springboard to expositional verse-by-verse study.

And one of the commitments you should make in your life is to commit yourself to expositionally study in depth. Not thorough, but in depth. Every verse-by-verse, from one of the Bible, you don't have to take them in order, but commit yourself so that you go through every... to have been, not just read, but have studied, at least at some level, every bit of the Bible.

Take a year, two, or three, whatever. It depends what pace you go. But, man, what equipment for whatever's coming.

Anyway, let's move on. See, we're supposed to be the sons of God, so we should be also concerned about our Father's business, right? But anyway, verse three. Thou therefore endure hardness, or more, we would say hardships, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ.

Now, see, now he's using the idiom of a soldier here. Um... So, again, we could depart from here and talk about the seven pieces of battle armor and so forth. We've just done that.

So, verse four. No man that warreth... If you're going to wars, you don't entangle yourself with the affairs of this life. So why? So that you may please him who hath chosen him to be a soldier.

In other words, if you're going to be a soldier, if you're going to Special Ops, boy, you get rid of your baggage. You get lean, mean, and tough. You don't drag along anything that isn't aimed just at winning.

That's the picture. You are in Special Ops, you are engaged in warfare, and you are on enemy turf. So you can't afford excess baggage or entanglements that would encumber you.

That's if you're really serious. The Christian life is a battleground, not a playground. Verse five.

And if a man also strived for the masteries... Now he's shifting to an athletic model here. Shifting the masteries. Yet he is not crowned, except he strive lawfully.

The word strive here is a Greek term referring to contending in the game, committed to winning. And winning by the rules, by the way. He strived lawfully.

Paul often used, in many of his letters, athletic idioms to get his point across. Bear in mind, he had familiarity with the Olympic Games, and also the Isthmus. The Isthmus of Corinth was where they had the big games.

And so he was familiar with all of that. And we find those idioms in Philippians 3, and 1 Corinthians 9, and elsewhere. But one cynic, I couldn't resist sharing this with you, he says the only exercise some Christians get is jumping to conclusions, running down their friends, sidestepping responsibility, and pushing their luck.

Anyway, verse 6. The husbandman that laboreth must be first partaker of the fruits. Now again, here he's shifting to a figure of speech as a farmer. He's using these as figures of speech, obviously.

And a farmer has to work, and if a field, because if you leave a field alone, you can get mostly weeds. Solomon had this in mind too, in Proverbs 24. And of course, I think there are a lot of verses that indicate a pastor deserves to be supported by his ministry.

Verse 7. Consider what I say, Paul says. And the Lord give thee understanding in all things. Remember Jesus Christ of the seed of David was raised from the dead according to my gospel.

The that in your English happens to be a supplied word, by the way, but that's not material here. Verse 9. Wherein I suffer trouble as an evildoer, even unto bonds, but the word of God is not bound. In other words, Paul is in prison, as if he was an evildoer.

He's in chains. But the word of God is not bound. Therefore I endure all things for the elect's sakes, that they may also obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory.

Paul had his priorities right. You know, it's amazing how all of us, even as Christians, even as being in Bible studies, how easy it is to get distracted with, let's secondary priorities take over. Our side interests can get us, encumber us from keeping our eye on the real mark.

It's true of all of us. Paul says, I endure all things for the elect's sake, that they may also obtain salvation. That was Paul's passion.

Verse 11. It is a faithful saying, for if we be dead with him, we shall also live with him. Interesting contradiction, isn't it? A paradox is perhaps a right term.

This faithful saying, by the way, he does that in several places throughout the pastoral epistles. And of course, his faith in Jesus Christ that gives the victory is, I think, pretty obvious. Let's keep moving.

If we suffer, we shall also reign with him. If we deny him, he will deny us. There is a subtlety in this verse, and I'm not prepared to defend the view, but I'll share something that startled me.

J. Vernon McGee makes the point, in his mind at least, that not all believers are going to reign with Christ. I can argue that, but I'm not sure I'm right. But J. Vernon McGee makes the point, what this says is, on the basis of this verse, it appears those that reign with him are those that have suffered for him.

Well, that's an interesting insight. If we suffer, we shall also reign with him. If we deny him, he will also deny us.

And I'm not sure I'm willing to carry that verse as far in denotation, if you will, that J. Vernon McGee does, but I share it with you because if nothing else, you can let it bother you a little bit, do a little prayer, and come to your own conclusions. I think there's other verses that you'd have to compare Scripture with Scripture to really develop a doctrine on that. But J. Vernon McGee is a non-trivial Bible teacher, one that we all, I think, respect very highly.

But this is one place where his view is rather provocative. Now, I might mention, as far as suffering is concerned, in the Roman world of Paul's day, and also in our own, by the way, there are many people being martyred. According to Fox and Fox's Books of Martyrs, there were 5 million of them in the Roman period that were martyred because they refused to deny Jesus Christ.

And it would not surprise me at all if some of us in this room may have that opportunity over the next few years to, in some fairly dramatic way, to stand up for Jesus Christ. And so this whole verse really says, faith without works is dead. You're not saved by your works, but if you have faith that saves you, they will be manifested by your works.

And you can study the whole epistle of James deals with it. There is no contradiction between James and Paul. Many people think so because they've missed the point of both.

Do your homework in the epistle of James. We just did that recently, so I'll keep moving. Verse 13.

If we believe not, yet he abideth faithful, he cannot deny himself. God cannot deny himself. And he cannot accept as true one who is false.

That's why he gave such a scathing denunciation of the religious leaders of his day. And he called them hypocrites because they were pretending to be something they were not. And Paul is saying to Timothy, we need to be genuine too.

Verse 14. Of these things put them in remembrance, charging them before the Lord that they strive not about words of no profit, but to the subverting of the hearers. The striving about words is what we would say disputing, disputes of words.

Paul is really saying major on the essentials, don't major on the minors, if you will. Words to no profit always undermines God's work and we'll talk more about that. We did some in 1 Timothy 6, we'll talk some

more about that when we get to Titus.

But here's another key verse. In fact it's one that often people ask me for an autograph on a book or something, I'll often use this verse. 2 Timothy 2.15 Study to show thyself approved unto God a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.

Study to show thyself. Now the word study here by the way is not a word that relates to books. It sounds that way to us when we think of study, we think of late nights and a book and paper.

No, actually the verb in the Greek implies to be diligent or to be zealous is what it really means. Study to show thyself. Be diligent to.

The word workman here relates to a treasure that a steward must guard and invest. Like a soldier's sword or the farmer's seed is the thought here. And of course one of the, but the other thing that this is often quoted, he says, interesting.

He says, study to show thyself approved unto God a workman that needeth not to be ashamed. Doing what? Rightly dividing the word of truth. Now, it's interesting one of the most profound influences in my life when I was very very young when I was a teenager, getting my hands on a Schofield Bible.

Now there are many other good ones I'm not here to push that particular one, but in those days that was outstanding because it does an unusual job. There are a lot of other good study Bibles Thomson, Chain and others but the Schofield had the ability to lay it all out as an integral whole. That's where I first began to get respect for the total package that we're dealing with.

Of course it was from that that I discovered Harry Ironside M. R. D. Hahn, Lewis Perry Chafer and others. And of course the quaint charts back in 1919 of Clarence Larkin. If you haven't seen the Larkin charts you've got to dig this out sometime.

They're really interesting. But there are two often misunderstood words in the English translation that's caused all kinds of problems. One of them is aeon in the Greek.

It actually it's translated, it really means age. But 31 times in the New Testament it's translated world and leads to misunderstandings. It's not world like physical world like we think of the world.

It's an era or an aeon or an age to the end of the age. Not the end of the world, the world's like the end of the age. The word actually in the Greek means a block a period of time.

And the entire revelation in the scripture of successive ages in which God is dealing with mankind is quickly lost to view because of that mistranslation. And confusion can only be a result from not understanding the difference between the world and the ages. And so I won't go through all the references in the interest of time.

The other word is the word oikonomia which means, the word should be translated dispensation or stewardship. And the word in the Greek really means the management of a household or household affairs or the management oversight or administration of property, somebody else's property typically, office of a manager or overseer. So it really means stewardship administration or dispensation.

In the biblical sense it's a divine economy. It's a commitment from God to man of a responsibility to discharge what God had appointed him to do. The commitment that God expected of Noah has some

differences from what he expected of Moses, which has some differences from what he expected of Paul or whatever, you with me? So this is a controversial area.

But one of the obvious ones more subtly, is the difference between law and grace. The period of the law, which was given to Moses, went till John the Baptist, Luke 16, 16. The law and the prophets went until John.

It was a definitive period of time as opposed to grace. And the area you want to put in your notes to read is the chapter 3 of Ephesians, where Paul reveals this period of grace, but also makes an emphasis that it previously had been hidden. So what he's revealing to you is that which other people didn't know.

Now, there is a very broadly held theology typically called covenant theology goes by many other names too, I guess which is very uncomfortable with the idea that there's different distinct dispensations of periods even though the scripture talks about it. And when Paul talks about a new manifestation of divine grace, which he talks about in Ephesians 3 that's very uncomfortable to the covenant theologians. I won't start on that whole controversy, but the first 10 verses of Ephesians 3 is where you may want to take a look at it.

Now, here's where people who make too much of this get off track. They speak of dispensationalists and that can mean a lot of different things to different people. The basis for salvation didn't change during those dispensations.

Many people make little charts that speak of seven dispensations. The age of innocence in Eden, the age of conscience, the age of human government, the age of the patriarchs, Abraham the law from Moses on, the age of grace from Acts 2 through, you know, whatever. And when you go through all the little charts, you have the seventh one is the millennium.

It all looks pretty neat. And without getting into that one or the other, the state don't just be, but they usually call the age that follows the age of the law the age of grace. Perhaps it's better to call it the church age.

Because grace has been the basis all the way through. To call this period the age of grace is misleading in the sense that it implies that it wasn't grace before, it was grace all the way through. And that's really the point.

That's why even after the millennium, after perfect rule for a thousand years man still rebels. And it's an ultimate statement of our value. But Abel in the Garden of Eden and Abraham as well as those under the laws of Moses offered a lamb to sacrifice to the Lord.

I don't think any of us took lambs to church last Sunday. Doesn't take a lot of insight to understand the basis of what they did back then was different than it is today. Okay? To the believer.

And so obviously the things of the past pointed to the consummate Lamb of God, as John introduces him publicly in John 1. And that's what we celebrate looking back of course. Verse 16, But shun profane and vain babblings, for they will increase unto more ungodliness. Pretty straightforward.

And their word will eat as doth a canker. Actually the word is like gangrene of whom is hymenaeus and philetus. Gangrene spreads and infects.

False doctrine is what he's really talking about of course. Is dangerous. It's dangerous.

Verse 18, Who concerning the truth have erred, saying that the resurrection is past already, and overthrow the faith of some. You know in that day apparently there were people already teaching that the resurrection had already taken place. Strangely.

And people still living and somehow missed the big event. And of course this was so prevalent that was what gave rise to Paul's second letter to the Thessalonians. After only three weeks of training he reminded them in his first letter about the rapture and all of that.

We learn a lot from the first letter. But then apparently some were selling the idea. In fact even circulating a letter that was a forgery.

A letter as if from us Paul calls it. Getting them all stirred up. And so Paul writes the second letter to the Thessalonians.

Which is probably one of the most important prophetic documents in the New Testament. But it's got to be looked at very very carefully. Especially chapter 2. Many people are not careful in the way what that Greek really says.

But the point is you won't understand the letter until you understand why they're upset. They're upset because they thought they missed the rapture. Well that means that Paul taught them that.

So they either figured they missed the rapture or Paul had mistaught them. That's the whole issue that 2 Thessalonians deals with. And so again it's a similar issue here.

I'll leave that 2 Thessalonians encourage you if you haven't studied to get the notes and what have you and dig into that. It's a very very pivotal chapter or book in the New Testament. Verse 19.

Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure having this seal. The Lord knoweth them that are his and let everyone that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity. This seal the word seal is a mark of authentication or security or ownership.

No one would dare break a Roman seal. A seal was a seal. That's what it meant.

Now it's interesting that the Israelite was to use his front door as a billboard for his belief. In the Deuteronomy 6 it talks about the Shema. What do you do with it? You put it on your forehead before your eyes and you put it on your door post and all that.

Their foreheads and their wrists were like billboards declaring their faith. Now the question is what about a believer today? What does he use to advertise his faith? He says it right here. Let everyone that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity.

How do you tell a Christian? By his walk. Doesn't mean he's perfect but he doesn't indulge in sin. Let everyone that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity.

You find that same idea in Psalm 6, 8 Proverbs 16, 6, Matthew 7, 23, Luke 13, 27. It's all through the scripture. But our badge of being saved should be a reflection in our walk, in our way of life.

Depart from iniquity. Verse 20. But in a great house there are not only vessels of gold and silver but also wood and earth and some to honor and some to dishonor.

If a man purge himself from these, he shall be a vessel unto honor, sanctified, and meet for his master's use, and prepared unto every good work. See, what he's saying a vessel to be useful has to be clean. And how do you clean? Remember the Christian's bar of soap.

How do we clean ourselves so that we can be decent vessels for the Lord's use? Your bar of soap is 1 John 1, 9. If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. Should be something we claim every day. And the vessel should also be empty and available.

So we can make a whole study on that, but let's move on. Now, by the way, what Paul is really telling him, in effect, you see, you have to understand what the word Timothy means. His name, Timothy, comes from two Greek words which together mean God-honoring.

And so Paul is, in a sense, encouraging Timothy to live up to his name. And verse 22. Flee also youthful lusts, but follow righteousness, faith, love, or charity, peace, and them that call on the Lord out of a pure heart.

But foolish and unlearned questions avoid, knowing that they do of gender strifes. The servant of the Lord must not strive, but be gentle to all men, apt to teach, patient, and on he goes. Now, the servant there is the word *doulos*.

And the word actually means bond-servant. I think most of you may know the story. If you had debts to pay, you could indenture yourself into service for so many years and serve your time to pay your debts.

But at the end of that time, you had a choice. Many slaves chose, willingly, to attach themselves to that house, that household. And they chose to be a *doulos*, a bond-slave.

And the way they memorialized that is they would take him, the servant, to the doorpost of the house, and they'd pierce his ear with an awl, you know, like an ice pick, a shoemaker's awl. And then he would wear a ring, and that was a badge of honor, because among the slaves of the household, he was served by choice. Once you made that choice, it was for the rest of your life.

When you've served your time, you could go, that's fine, or you could stay. But if you stayed, you stayed forever. You became a *doulos*.

That term is what Paul in his epistles, and also John in the book of Revelation elsewhere, uses of himself. I'm a bond-slave of Jesus Christ. Now, it's interesting, when we were in the earthquake of California and looking for a wonder where the Lord was leading us to move.

We knew He wanted us to move. We didn't know where. We had a number of offers that didn't seem what we really felt was appropriate.

But we'd come through. We had prayed intensely that we happened to have a speaking commitment in Salt Lake City and the west, and the people promoting that had arranged for an RV. We'd rent it in Southern California, leave early, spend a little time, and stay late.

But you'd make a vacation as well as a series of speaking commitments throughout Utah. And so, when the earthquake hit and wiped us out, we were at the epicenter of a 6.8 earthquake, among a lot of other things. We decided, it happened to be, just following it was a scheduled trip.

We decided just to leave it all, take the trip anyway, rather than cancel, take the trip, just as a way to get away for a couple weeks. We felt God was moving us, because the earthquake didn't stop. There were tremors every day that drove me crazy.

I put my books back on the shelf, I think, three times in three days. But we decided that the Lord was telling us to move. Where? We don't know.

We prayed intensely that the Lord would at least be clear, because other families were involved with our little ministry at the time. So, we took this tour, speaking commitments and so forth, and one of our friends was in Pocatello, Lou Phelps, she stopped by and saw him and said, Hey, you can't be on Idaho without visiting Coeur d'Alene. Okay, well, we changed our plans, we came up through Coeur d'Alene.

Anyway, we did this nice trip, went down the coast, back home, but I was going back, we drove back to Big Bear, dropped off all our stuff, and I was running down the hill, down the mountain, to return the RV to where it had been rented for us. And I was praying on the way down. I was a little frustrated because we had a wonderful trip, met a lot of nice people, but we still didn't have clarity.

The one thing I prayed for, I don't care where the Lord moves us, but at least make it clear, because there's so many other people involved. It was almost like a voice said to me, as I was driving, Remember your business cards. And it was a strange thought, because 20 years earlier, I was still an executive, but I was doing a lot of Christian speaking, so I had some business cards printed up, so in a Christian context, I wouldn't give them Chairman of the Board of Western Digital, that didn't make sense, I was there as a Christian speaker.

I just had some cards with my home address, and I had on the card, I thought it was cute, I was in Revelation at the time, Chuck Missler, or Charles, yeah, Chuck Missler, Bond Slave of Jesus Christ. I thought, that's kind of a good label for my title, see? I had them printed up, I had them in my wallet. Well, I found I didn't actually use them, because I realized it actually is a little pretentious.

So I didn't really use them, I just had some printed up, and I had a few, but I never used the things. As a result, I forgot about the things. And so, that's why, coming down the hill, almost like a voice said, Remember your business cards.

What? The Bond Slave, and I recall this whole, do a low spot, I was into that, I was teaching Revelation at the time, and do a low spot. And I remembered while we were up here in Coeur d'Alene, we found out what Coeur d'Alene meant. It was the name of the Indian, the French Canadian trappers gave that label to the Indians, because they were sharp traders.

They called them the Coeur d'Alene, because they were sharp traders. It's French for Heart of the All. The word all appears only twice in the scripture, it has to do with the Bond Slave.

See, a Heart of the All is a Heart of the Bond Slave, as far as, if one applies a biblical perspective to that label. And so I was driving down the hill, I thought, Whoa! You know, so we, when I landed down there, got my car, you know, turned the thing, got in the car, went back, and said, Hey, we got to go back to Coeur d'Alene, look at it more seriously, because I think that's where the Lord's leading us. That wasn't the only

reason, but that was what caused us to consider Coeur d'Alene as a location.

Our ministry could be any place. There's a post office and an airport. Why here? I don't know why He moved us here, but I'm glad He did.

It's a wonderful place. And, but anyway, we flew, we then got airline tickets, we came up here and met some people and it was clear the Lord led us to move the ministry to Coeur d'Alene. But that's why, whenever I see Bond Slave, I'm reminded of that whole incident, why we're here.

But anyway, verse 25, In meekness instructing those who oppose themselves, if God, peradventure, will give them repentance, to the acknowledgement of the truth. A servant's purpose is to win souls, not win arguments. That's really what he's trying to say.

Verse 26, They that recover themselves out of the snare of the devil, who are taken captive by him at his will. Well, anyway, as we review these seven aspects, we've actually, I haven't counted, we've gone through seven idioms, you know, from the soldier, the farmer, etc. Seven aspects of the ministry.

We do recognize that there's no place for a loafer. In Sunday school, a little boy was asked which of the stories in the Bible he liked best. And he said, the one where everybody loafs and fishes.

He said. Well, anyway, that's chapter two. What we're going to do next time, we'll take two chapters, we'll finish the 2nd Timothy, but it's going to focus right in on what do we do when it all ends? What do we do when the church really goes apostate? What do we do when we discover that we are really politically incorrect? That's what he's going to deal with.

It's going to be called about traitors in the last days. So that will be 2nd Timothy. Let's stand for a closing word of prayer.

And let's bow our hearts. Father, oh, there's so much we could thank you for. We thank you, Father, for your word.

We pray, Father, that you would indeed draw us deeper, to study and rightly divide your word of truth. We thank you, Father, for the Holy Spirit. We pray, Father, that you would increase in each of us a hunger and a passion for your word as we recognize that when the dark times come, it's the word that will sustain us.

And even more than that, the person with whom we have to do. Indeed, Father, we thank you for the redemption that we have in Jesus Christ. We thank you, Father, for this time together that you've ordained that we might know him more thoroughly.

We pray, Father, that indeed you would help each of us to have discernment in the issues that confront us. That you would give us the courage and the resolve to acquit ourselves honorably in your service, not by power nor by might, but by your spirit. We pray, Father, that you would indeed equip us for the times ahead, that we might be fruitful servants as we commit ourselves into your hands this night in the name of Yeshua, our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

Amen.

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