

# The Last Words of a Martyr

by Dean Stump

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*The sermon emphasizes the importance of living a life of faithfulness and obedience to God, as exemplified by the father who wrote a letter to his children before his death.*

**Duration:** 1:14:08

**Scripture:** Matthew 6:33, John 5:39, Romans 12:1, Colossians 3:16, Hebrews 4:12

**Topics:** "Martyrdom"

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## Description

In this sermon, the speaker asks the audience to imagine themselves in the shoes of a man who is about to be executed for his faith. He encourages fathers to consider what they would say to their loved ones in their final moments. The speaker then references a letter written by a man facing death, in which he explains his commitment to Jesus and the reasons for his execution. The man's last words to his children are based on the Bible verse 1 Thessalonians 4:11-12, which instructs believers to be quiet, mind their own business, work with their hands, and live honestly. The speaker emphasizes the difficult circumstances of the time and the temptation to steal, urging the audience to follow the example of the persecuted brethren.

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## Transcript

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A special thank you to all who support this ministry. Thank you for those songs and poems this morning. I like poetry.

I'll read you one here from the songbook. Awake, my soul, stretch every nerve, and press with vigor on. A heavenly race demands thy zeal and an immortal crown.

A cloud of witnesses around hold thee in full survey. Forget the steps already trod, and onward urge thy way. That prize with peerless glories bright, which shall new luster boast, when victors' wreaths and monarchs' gems shall blend in common dust.

Blessed Savior, introduced by Thee, have I my race begun, and crowned with victory at Thy feet, I'll lay my honors down. We thought it interesting there in Genesis where the people were being fed out of Joseph's storehouses during the famine when they had no more money to pay and they had no more land to give. They came to Joseph and they said, you have saved our life.

We will gladly give ourselves to you and just be your servants for the rest of our life. We're yours. We're just going to offer ourselves to you.

We're going to be your servants because you saved our life. And that's the attitude that we need to have in serving Jesus. That's truly a true picture of our Lord Jesus.

We should feel honored to serve Jesus. Because He has saved us from death, from doom. Well, let's rise for prayer here this morning.

Oh God, our help in ages past, our hope for years to come. We bow our heart before you this morning. We worship and adore you.

We offer ourselves in everything that we are, willingly, gladly. And know that your commandments are not grievous because you have saved us. You have redeemed our souls from destruction.

And we have that confidence that when the monarch's gems have gone to dust, our hope will only shine brighter. And our faith will be lost in sight, in wonder, love and praise, as we gaze on our dear Savior's face. Thank you, Jesus.

We love you today and want to serve you. I pray that you would take my little offering here this morning and feed your people. Lord, it's not what these hands have done, but thy grace alone, O Lamb of God, be merciful to us today, Lord.

I pray that Jesus would become more precious to us. I pray that your Word would become more alive to us. I pray that the fear of God would become more of a reality to us.

Yes, reality in religion. I ask it in the name of Jesus. Amen.

Okay, you may be seated. Well, I would like for you all to go back in time. I think it's 439 years.

The date is December 2, 1572. And in this case, it was a father. But I think any one of you can try to put yourself in this man's shoes and know, you know, that December 4 is just two days away when you're going to have a ball stuck in your mouth so you can't speak and you're going to be burned alive.

And I'd like you to try to become that person this morning, sitting in that cell. And I'd like you to consider what you would have to say to your loved ones. Fathers, what would you have to say to your children? And whoever you are here this morning.

If you knew that the death sentence was passed, as it was in this case, and you just had a few short moments to live, what message would you like your loved ones to hear? What would you like your last message to be? I was inspired by this man's letter to his three children. And after giving them some very,

very clear explanation of why he had to die for his faith in Christ and his commitment to put Jesus before even his wife and children and that it was for no ungodliness on his part, no crime that he had committed that he was giving his life. After he had fully explained why he had to die, he went on to instruct them and gave them his last words.

And I would like to make that my message this morning. And I trust that as you try to put yourself in that man's shoes here this morning, that you will be able to relate to this man and I would hope that you could amen this as we go down through here. I also would like to ask you for some Scripture references as we go through this.

I would like for you to try and see what Scriptures comes to your mind in reference to these points that he gives to his children. And some of them are a bit repetitive, but I just give them here as he gave them, as he wrote them to his children. The first admonishment he gave them was, keep yourself from the evil works of this world.

Now, what Scripture comes to your mind this morning? Or can we say here that his admonishments were unscriptural? As we go through this, maybe we'll find a point that's unscriptural. So, I want you to be Bereans this morning and tell me, is it scriptural or unscriptural? And if it's scriptural, where is the Scripture? Keep yourself from the evil works of this world. Do we have Scripture for that kind of an admonishment? Any Scripture reference come to your mind? Romans 12, verse 1, Be not conformed to this world.

Don't let the world press you into its mold, but come out from among them, it says in 1 Corinthians, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and I will be a father unto you. This man apparently knew his Bible, and he knew what was going to save his children. Keep yourself from the evil works of this world.

The second one, strive. Maybe I should let you all, is there another verse that's pressing on your mind here this morning about that one? Don? Okay, love not the world. Neither the things that are in the world.

If any man loved the world, the love of the Father is not in him. The lust of the eyes, the lust of the flesh, the pride of life, it's not of the world. It's not of the Father, but it's of the world.

And we're not supposed to love the world. Keep yourself from the evil works of this world. Brother Luke, okay.

Keep yourselves from idols. So, we can see that he was very scriptural in his admonition here to his young children. Strive from your youth.

This is the second one. Strive from your youth for that which is best. What comes to your mind? Strive from your youth for that which is best.

Strive from your youth for that which is best. Nathan? Okay. Remember thy Creator in the days of thy youth.

Strive from your youth for that which is best. David? Okay. I don't have the scripture reference to that, but that's... And while you're looking that up, Philippians 1, 9-11 says, And this I pray, that your love may abound yet more and more in knowledge and in all judgment, that ye may approve things that are excellent.

And that's what I thought of when I read that. Strive from your youth for that which is best. That ye may approve things that are excellent.

And that ye may be filled with the fruits of righteousness, which are by Jesus Christ, under the glory and praise of God. Don? Yeah, and that was his fourth point here. He mentions that one.

Flee all youthful lusts. Did you have that scripture? Okay. Titus 2, verse 6. He admonishes his children.

Strive from your youth for that which is best. And here in Titus 2, verse 6, he says, Young men, likewise, exhort to be sober-minded, in all things showing thyself a pattern of good works, in doctrine showing uncorruptness, gravity, sincerity, in doctrine showing uncorruptness, gravity, sincerity, sound speech that cannot be condemned. Amen.

Was there any others on that? Dave? Okay. Yes. Let no man despise your youth, but rather strive from your youth for that which is best.

Amen. Okay. Here's one that I didn't even get a scripture written to it.

He says, Submit your shoulders to the truth. Submit your shoulders to the truth. Any scriptures come to your mind? Submit your shoulders to the truth.

Thinking about bearing the yoke in your youth? Yes. 1 Corinthians 13.58. I should probably just read that for the sake of the microphone here. Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord.

For as much as you know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord. Submit your shoulders to the truth. There's a scripture that says, I'm getting two of them mixed up here, but we're encouraged to be like the Bereans who searched the scriptures daily to see if the things that the Apostle Paul said was truth.

So, we're encouraged there to buckle down and become lovers of the truth and hold on to the truth. There's another scripture that's there about in my mind and I can't quite get it. Brother Dan.

Amen. Romans 12, 1 and 2. We're talking about submitting our shoulders to the truth and here we're encouraged to make ourselves a living sacrifice to God and not be conformed to the world that we may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God. Amen.

Any other word on that, Brother Mike? 1 Peter 1.22. Oh, it's verse 23 there. Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible by the Word of God. Oh, and obeying the truth.

Okay, seeing you have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren. See that you love one another with a pure heart fervently. We have our souls purified by obeying the truth.

That's a good verse. Thank you for that, Mike. That's the one we're looking for.

Submitting your shoulders to the truth. It has a purifying effect on your life. Brother Luke, laboring together with us for the truth.

In the truth. Okay. Okay, we already mentioned fleeing youthful lust.

Does anyone have any other thoughts, any other Scriptures on that? Fleeing youthful lust. That's a clear command from the Scriptures to flee youthful lust. In 2 Timothy 2.22 there.

Let's see. The fifth admonishment I have here is, take up the yoke of the Lord. Namely, the doctrine of Jesus Christ.

Make the Lord Jesus Christ the center of your life, he's telling them. Well, we know that's got to be true. What Scripture comes to your mind? Brother Nathan.

Okay. I'll read 28 through 30. Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.

Take my yoke upon you and learn of me, for I am meek and lowly in heart, and you shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light. So, take up the yoke of the Lord.

Namely, the doctrine of Jesus Christ. And I see what he's saying there is, make Jesus your personal Savior. Make Him your life.

Make Him the center of your life. Make Him your gospel. Any other Scriptures? That's certainly the perfect one.

Or a perfect one. Okay. We have here another admonishment.

Diligently search the Holy Scriptures and let the Word of Christ be planted in you that it may dwell in you richly in all wisdom, so that your senses will be exercised to discern good and evil. Do we know that having the Scriptures planted and dwelling in us richly will give us senses to exercise good and evil? What's the Scriptures? Brother Mark. The end of Hebrews 5. What, the last verse? Hebrews 5.14 But strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil.

And notice the verse before that. That for everyone that useth milk is unskillful in the word of righteousness. So, he is talking about having God's Word dwell in us richly that we can have our senses exercised to discern both good and evil.

And other Scriptures? Luke. Okay. Colossians 3.16 He basically quotes Colossians 3.16 there.

Let's just read that. Let the Word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord. Let the Word of Christ dwell in you richly.

Diligently search the Holy Scriptures and let the Word of Christ be planted in you, he says. Any other Scriptures that come to your mind? Nathan? John 5.39? Let's look at John 5.39. Search the Scriptures, for in them you think you have eternal life, and they are they which testify of Me. What a blessing to search the Old Testament Scriptures and to see Jesus in there.

So many types and shadows there as we diligently search the Holy Scriptures. Others? Dave? Is that 3.16? 1 Timothy 3.16? 2 Timothy 3.16. Okay. 2 Timothy 3.16. Let me just read that.

All Scripture is given by inspiration of God. And if all Scripture is given by inspiration of God, shouldn't we let it be planted in us and dwell in us richly? All Scripture is given by inspiration of God and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be perfect,

thoroughly furnished unto all good works. Beautiful.

And the verse before that says that thou from a child thou hast known the Holy Scriptures which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. I think, Brother Luke, did you have your hand up? Okay. Being planted in the likeness of death.

Romans 6.5. Okay. Next admonishment. Next admonishment.

Shun the cause which leads to death. Shun the cause which leads to death which is sin. Do we have a Scripture for that? That sin leads us to death? Shun the cause which leads to death.

In other words, again, he's saying in another way to run from sin. Okay. James 1 says in verse 15, Then when lust has conceived, it bringeth forth sin.

And we've already been admonished to flee youthful lust. And sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death. Romans 6.23 says that your pay for sin is death.

The wages of sin is death. But the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord. Any other verses, Brother Don? Romans 6.1-2 What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound? God forbid! How shall we that are dead to sin live any longer therein? Okay.

Brother David, did you have a verse there? Romans 8.13-14 says, For if you live after the flesh, you shall die. But if you through the Spirit do mortify or put to death the deeds of the body, you shall live. For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God.

Brother Dave? 1 Timothy 6.20-21 says, O Timothy, keep that which is committed to thy trust, avoiding profane and vain babblings and oppositions of science, falsely so called, which some professing have erred concerning the faith. Grace be with thee. Amen.

Brother Luke, did you have one there? Proverbs 2. Proverbs 2.18 says, For her house inclineth unto death, and her paths unto the dead. Okay. Shun the cause which leads to death.

Any other Scriptures? Brother Alvin. 2 Peter 1.16 For we have not followed cunningly devised fables when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eyewitnesses of His majesty. Is that the one you wanted? Did I read the right one? Okay.

The cunningly devised fables. We have not followed cunningly devised fables. Brother David.

Romans 6.12-14 No, I didn't. Yeah, I read 23. That's the one I was focused on there.

Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body that ye should obey it in the lust thereof. Neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin, but yield yourselves unto God as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God. For sin shall not have dominion over you, for ye are not under the law, but under grace.

What then? Shall we sin because we are not under the law, but under grace? God forbid. Really, the whole chapter of Romans 6 could be read in light of this. Shun the cause which leads to death.

Okay, the next admonishment here is keep your souls with the greatest diligence so that you also speak no iniquity with your mouth, and beware of lying. So, He's admonishing His children to take great care in

how they use their tongue. Speak no iniquity with your mouth, and beware of lying, which would be a form of speaking iniquity with your mouth.

Keep your souls with the greatest diligence so that you also speak no iniquity with your mouth, and beware of lying. Any Scriptures there? Brother Mike? Okay, Proverbs 4.23 says, Keep thy heart with all diligence, for out of it are the issues of life. Out of it come the iniquities of your mouth, and the lying.

And put away from thee a froward mouth, verse 24, and perverse lips put far from thee. Yes, very good. Keep your souls with the greatest diligence so that you speak no iniquity with your mouth, and beware of lying.

Brother Nathan? Psalm 34. 13 and 14. Keep thy tongue from evil, and thy lips from speaking guile.

Depart from evil and do good. Seek peace and pursue it. Very good.

Very good. Brother Dave, read that whole chapter. In James 3, for in many things we offend all.

If any man offend not in word, the same is a perfect man and able also to bridle the whole body. Behold, we put bits in the horses' mouths that they may obey us, and we turn about their whole body. Behold also the ships, which though they be so great and are driven of fierce winds, yet are they turned about with a very small helm, withersoever the governor listeth.

Even so the tongue is a little member and boasteth great things. Behold, how great a matter a little fire kindleth, and the tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity. So is the tongue among our members that it defileth the whole body and setteth on fire the course of nature, and it is set on fire of hell.

And it says, verse 8, the tongue can no man tame. It is an unruly evil full of deadly poison. And the rest of the chapter speaks to the issue of the tongue there.

Keep your souls with the greatest diligence, James is saying here. Any others? And beware of lying. Do you have any good ones on lying? I have Ephesians 4.25. Wherefore, putting away lying, speak every man truth with his neighbor, for we are members one of another.

You're hurting yourself when you lie. Brother Luke. Colossians 3.9 Lie not one to another, seeing that ye have put off the old man with his deeds.

Lying is something that's a part of the old man, not the new man. Keep your souls with the greatest diligence, with your tongue. Brother Don.

Ephesians 4.25, I just read that. Putting away lying, speak every man truth with his neighbor. Okay.

The next one is, be faithful wherever you live, or wherever you are. Be good and faithful to all men, and beware of stealing. Beware of stealing.

Be faithful wherever you live, or wherever you are. Be good and faithful to all men, and beware of stealing. Brother Don.

Ephesians 4.28 speaks of not stealing and working that which is good. Let him that stole steal no more, but rather let him labor, working with his hands the thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth. So he not only is faithful in providing for himself, but also to give to others.

Wherever you are, be good and faithful unto all men. Brother Luke. Genesis 39.4 says, Joseph found grace in his sight, and served him, and he made him overseer over his house, and all that he had he put into his hand.

Joseph is the perfect example in the Scriptures, or one of the perfect examples, of faithfulness to all men. Wherever he ended up, he was faithful. Brother David.

Okay. One more on line. Proverbs 26.18-19 As a mad man who casteth firebrands, arrows and death, so is the man that deceiveth his neighbor and saith, Am not I in sport? I was just... I didn't really mean it.

He's saying. Yeah, it wasn't the truth, but it was just a joke. Is that right? Brother Don.

1 Thessalonians 4.11-12 And that ye study to be quiet, to do your own business, and to work with your own hands, as we commanded you, that ye may walk honestly toward them that are without, that ye may have lack of nothing. You don't have to steal. And you have to keep in mind too, remember, you're supposed to be back in the year 1572 here in your minds.

And life wasn't as good for them as we have it now, and especially for the persecuted brethren. And I'm sure the temptation of stealing was much greater than what we face today. Did someone else have their hand up? Brother Dan.

Titus 2 verse 7 In all things showing thyself a pattern of good works, in doctrine showing uncorruptness, gravity, sincerity, sound speech that cannot be condemned, that he that is of the contrary part may be ashamed having no evil thing to say of you. Exhort servants to be obedient unto their own masters and to please them well in all things, not answering again, not purloining, but showing all good fidelity that they may adorn the doctrine of God our Savior in all things. For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men.

Any others? Does anyone know where the Scripture is that says it's required of a steward that he be faithful in all things? Jesus spoke that I believe. 1 Corinthians 4. 1 Corinthians 4 verse 2 says, moreover, it is required in stewards that a man be found faithful. Amen.

You men that have businesses, when you're looking for someone to help you run your business, you look for a faithful man, don't you? You look for a man that has a track record of faithfulness, not someone who is otherwise. Brother David? Okay, Proverbs 16.11. It says, A just weight and balance are the Lord's. All the weights of the bag are His work.

A just weight and balance are the Lord's. All the weights of the bag are His work. Jesus admonished in the one parable where the men agreed to work for so much.

Some for a full day, some a half day, some just an hour or so. It was just required of them to be faithful to what they had agreed to. Okay, He next says, Conduct yourselves honestly toward everyone.

And this may be a bit along the lines of this last one, being faithful to all men. Conduct yourselves honestly toward everyone. And I think that also may carry with it the idea of not being a respecter of persons.

Conduct yourselves honestly toward everyone. Or maybe just the temptation to be dishonest when it's going to get me in trouble. Conduct yourselves honestly toward everyone.

Do we have Scripture for that? Anything come to your mind? Brother Nathan? Romans 12.17 Recompense to no man evil for evil. Provide things honest in the sight of all men. Good.

Brother Kent. Yes, let's read that there in James 2. It says, If there come unto your assembly a man with a gold ring and goodly apparel, and there come in also a poor man in vile raiment, and you have respect to him that weareth the gay clothing, and say unto him, Sit thou here in a good place, and say to the poor, Stand thou there or sit here under my footstool. Are you not then partial in yourselves and are become judges of evil thoughts? Hearken, my beloved brethren.

Hath not God chosen the poor of this world rich in faith? Conduct yourselves honestly toward everyone. Treat everyone as a real human being. Brother Philip.

1 Peter 2.11-12 Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims. Abstain from fleshly lusts which war against the soul. Having your conversation honest among the Gentiles.

That's your life. Everything about your life. Be honest toward everyone.

Having your conversation honest among the Gentiles, that whereas they speak against you as evildoers, they may by your good works which they shall behold, glorify God in the day of visitation. Brother Mike. The sight of all men.

Provide things honest in the sight of all men. Yeah, I think you're right on that. I don't have the scripture reference there either.

That is 12.17. Okay, I think I'd read that. Okay, whatever you hear in the house should be kept secret. Now, you have to keep in mind that this is also again 15.72. In a day of persecution.

Whatever you hear in the house should be kept secret. Do not proclaim in the streets or to everyone from house to house, but observe secrecy and attend to your work and be not negligent through idleness. Now, we know he's not saying to be dishonest.

He just admonished them to conduct themselves honestly toward everyone. But I think he is telling them, admonishing them to use prudence. And this sort of goes along with the one here about being faithful to all men.

And some of those scriptures that we read, I think go along with that. And working with your hands and not being idle. Ephesians 4.28, I think we had read.

I think it applies there real well. And the ones there in 1 Thessalonians. But what other scriptures would you think of there? Do not proclaim in the streets or to everyone from house to house, but observe secrecy and attend to your work and be not negligent through idleness.

Let him that stole steal no more, but rather let him labor, working with his hands, the thing which is good that he may have to give to him that needeth. Anyone think of any other scriptures there? Proverbs says we're not to be tail bearers. Yeah, I think that has a lot to do with what he's saying here.

And that he's admonishing them that if you attend to your work, you're not going to have the temptation to just be in your neighbor's house all the time and talking about things that could give away someone that they become arrested. And I think the law that comes into effect here is the law of love. We want to love our brethren with a pure heart, fervently, and we don't want to be giving them over to the authorities here

in this situation.

Brother Nathan, 1 Thessalonians 4.11 And that you study to be quiet and to do your own business and to work with your own hands as we commanded you. Good, that's good scripture for that. Brother David, Titus 3.14 And let ours also learn to maintain good works for necessary uses, that they be not unfruitful.

Good. Any others? Okay. Conduct yourselves well with those with whom you are and obey them and be not stubborn and obstinate, but obey them willingly from the heart and treat them and all men courteously and kindly.

They're taken from their father. Their father's not going to be their authority, but he's admonishing them to obey them with whom they are and be not stubborn and obstinate, but obey them willingly from the heart and treat them and all men courteously and kindly. Any scriptures come to mind there? The example of Naaman's little servant girl.

She was taken from her parents and she was very faithful in submitting to her slave owners really and she treated them courteously and kindly. She wasn't wishing ill on them even though you could think that she would have had some justification to do so. Ephesians 4.32 says, Be ye kind one to another, tender hearted.

That sounds like being courteous and kind. Forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake has forgiven you. And any others? Brother Neil.

Titus 3.1 Put them in mind to be subject to principalities and powers, to obey magistrates, to be ready to every good work, to speak evil of no man, to be no brawlers, but gentle, showing all meekness unto all men. See that? Good. Treat them and all men courteously and kindly.

We're running out of time here. It says, Beware of backbiting, for this too is a great sin. Any Scriptures come to mind on backbiting? Beware of backbiting, for this too is a great sin.

And 1 Peter 3 says in v. 10-12, For he that will love life and see good days, let him refrain his tongue from evil and his lips that they speak no guile. Let him eschew evil and do good. Let him seek peace and ensue it.

For the eyes of the Lord are over the righteous and his ears are open to their prayers, but the face of the Lord is against them that do evil. Brother Paul. Galatians 5.15 But if you bite and devour one another, take heed that you be not consumed one of another.

He's saying this is not the law of love. Beware of backbiting, for this too is a great sin. Any other Scriptures on backbiting? Brother David.

1 Timothy 3, v. 8 Likewise must the deacons be grave, not double-tongued, not given to much wine, not greedy of filthy lucre. Double-tongued. Mark.

Is that not the one we just read? That was... v. 15, yeah, I think that's the one we just read. Oh, I'm in Ephesians. Yeah, Galatians 5.15 I think it's the one that Brother Paul just said, yeah.

Brother Luke. James 4.11 Beware of backbiting, for this too is a great sin. It says in James 4.11, Speak not evil one of another brethren.

He that speaketh evil of his brother and judgeth his brother speaketh evil of the law and judgeth the law. But if thou judge the law, thou art not a doer of the law, but a judge. Okay.

Speaking evil one of another. Speak not evil one of another brethren. Don't do it.

Okay, the last admonishment here. And maybe you have to go back to 1572 here again. Keep constantly in the house and do not go in the street much.

When you have nothing to do there. For there one learns nothing but roguery as fighting, playing, gambling, cursing, swearing, and to speak many unprofitable words. But when you do not have to work, take a testament in your hand and read it.

That's the last admonishment that we have here. He admonishes them to stay in the house. Don't go play with your neighbor children is basically what he's saying here.

And learning all the evils of the world. But rather if you don't have any work to do, take your Bible and read it. Is that scriptural? What scriptures come to your mind? Brother Don.

Romans 12.2 again. Be not conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God. Brother Kent.

1 Corinthians 15.33 Be not deceived. Evil communications corrupt good manners. That's the scriptures that I was thinking of.

Nathan. Yes, there's a lot in Proverbs. Proverbs 4.14 and 15.

Proverbs 4.14 and 15. Enter not into the path. Don't go into the street of the wicked and go not in the way of evil men.

Avoid it. Pass not by it. Turn from it.

Pass away. For they sleep not, verse 16, except they have done mischief and their sleep is taken away unless they cause some to fall. So, they're trying to make you fall.

Any more? Brother Dave. 2 Timothy. And we're also admonished to stay simple concerning evil.

I don't have that scripture, but I believe that's a scripture. Okay. Well, to wrap this up, to bring this to a close, I guess my challenge is in the way that I have been challenged so often by these men, that we would have the Word of God dwelling in us so richly that when it comes our time to give an admonishment to our children or to whoever, it's clearly Christ.

It's clearly the Word of Christ coming out. And not just some concoction of our own. And not just where it says there in Hebrews that it is about being unskillful in the Word of God.

The one verse we didn't quote here this morning which would have been very applicable is Hebrews 4 verse 12 where it says, "...the Word of God is quick and powerful and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing and dividing asunder between soul and spirit, and as a discerner of the thoughts and the intents of the heart." I would to God that we all would be diligent Bereans who search the Scriptures, who make the Scriptures our life, and as Psalms 1 says, to meditate in it day and night. Don't weary of filling your mind with the Word of God. Don't grow weary in well-doing on this point of filling your mind with God's

Word.

It will make you wise unto salvation and it can make your children wise unto salvation. I would that each one of us would be able to admonish our children without a Bible in front of us, that the Bible just flows out of us because it's hidden in us. It's my challenge to you all this morning.

Read it more, not less. Meditate on it. Give yourself wholly to it.

As Paul said also, meditate upon these things. Give yourself wholly to it. Thank you all for coming this morning.

It's a blessing to my heart to see the visitors here. Brother Philip, it's a blessing to see you here this morning. Brothers from Harmony and Joy, God be with each one of you and you brothers and sisters here at Ephrata.

It's a joy to see you here today too. And I think I just recognized Betty, one of my classmates in school. God bless you, sister.

Thank you, Brother Dean, for that refreshing discourse through the Scriptures. I appreciated the format this morning, just the openness and looking at different Scriptures. I did remember Joshua.

One of the things God told Joshua about the Word of God is He said, these words shall not depart out of your mouth, but you shall meditate on them day and night. First Psalm 1 also, the very first Psalm says that the man who prospereth in all that he doeth meditates in His law, delighteth in His law day and night. In His law doth he meditate day and night.

Amen.

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