

2 Timothy - Part 12

by John Hunter

The sermon emphasizes the importance of dealing with error and false teaching, and the need to present oneself as a skilled workman of the word.

Duration: 22:42

Scripture: 1 Timothy 1:4, 2 Timothy 2:22, 2 Timothy 3:1, 2 Timothy 3:16

Topics: "Righteous Living", "Godly Leadership"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker focuses on the behavior of a servant and the importance of living a righteous life. He emphasizes the need to avoid youthful lusts and instead follow righteousness, faith, love, and peace. The speaker also encourages Timothy to present himself as an unashamed skilled workman who correctly interprets and teaches the word of God. The sermon touches on the topic of the last days and the qualities of godlessness that mark the present time. The speaker concludes by highlighting the importance of a straightforward handling of the word of God and the need for a man of God to present himself to God and to others.

Transcript

For the week we shall be dealing with 2nd Timothy chapter 2 from verse 14 right to the end of the epistle. And of course there are many interesting subjects shall come before us. For instance, if you drop your eye to verse 1 of chapter 3, it talks about the last days, times of terror shall come.

And I would hope to deal with that possibly on Wednesday evening when I shall bring before you the 19 qualities of godlessness that mark the present time and days that lie immediately ahead. If you drop your eye please, still in chapter 3 to verse 16. All scripture is given by inspiration of god.

Or to put it literally, all scripture is god breathed. Now what would that mean? So if the lord will, on Thursday evening I shall speak to you on the authority and inspiration of holy scripture. A subject that I feel needs from time to time to be brought before us.

The authority and inspiration of holy scripture. Now back please to verse 14 of 2nd Timothy. You have here a long section to verse 26 which I would call the servant of god and doctrinal error.

He's dealing with error and those who teach it. Now verses 14 to 16 that we'll read. He is exhorting Timothy.

Verse 14, he exhorts him to charge others of these things, put them in remembrance, charging them before the lord that they strive not about works to no profit but to the subverting of the hearers. Verse 15, he exhorts him, Timothy, to present himself to god as an unashamed skilled workman who expounds the word of truth. So he says, study or give diligence to show or present thyself approved unto god.

A workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth. There you have before you the expositor and teacher of holy scripture. A man who presents himself first to god with his ministry to come under divine scrutiny.

Here what he has to say is scrutinized by saints. It's a big business then, big business. Verse 16, he now exhorts Timothy to shun certain things but shun profane and vain babblings for they will increase, that is those who speak them, they will increase unto more ungodliness.

Now verse 16 is what we would call a bridge verse, that is it terminates the previous section but opens the section to follow. You can see that, shun profane and vain babblings, they will increase unto more ungodliness, their word will eat as doth a canker. So verses 16 to 21, he's dealing with separation from false teachers under teaching.

Some have discussed this quite a bit as to who it is that they have to purge themselves from in verse 21. Some say is it things or men? Is it the teaching or the teachers? But brethren, there would be no false teaching if there were no false teachers. It's not possible to separate yourself from teaching and not separate yourself from the false teachers.

So it's separation from false teachers. Verses 16 to 18, the error exposed, the exposure of the error, shun profane and vain babblings, they will increase unto more ungodliness, their word will eat as doth gangrene, of whom is Hymenos and Philetas, who concerning the truth have erred, saying that the resurrection is past already, and overthrow the faith of some. And when we come to that passage, we'll notice that he names the teachers, he names the teaching, and he gives the result of the teaching.

That's a good sound handling of the business. Verses 19 to 21, he is encouraging the saints. Having exposed the error, he will encourage the saints.

Verse 19, he'll give an assurance. Verse 20, he'll give an illustration of a great house. Verse 21, he'll give the application.

My, he's a sound expositor that he was talking about, isn't he? He is a man and he is exhibiting what he's been calling for in others. That would be right, wouldn't it? Wrong for any of us on a platform like this to call upon you to do things that we don't do ourselves. And so if time and again I've called upon you young men to get down to your Bible, to prepare yourself and equip yourself for preaching and teaching, and by that I don't mean that you're going out full time necessarily, but in order to do so, to equip yourself to be such a man as is before us.

For Vancouver and British Columbia, Western Canada is crying out for men of God, men of the book, who will preach and teach and declare God's truth and God's word. So, verse 19, while it may seem the doctrine at the close of verse 18 to overthrow the faith of son, nevertheless, the firm foundation of God standeth, having this seal, which is twofold, divine and human. The first side, divine, the Lord knoweth them that are his.

The second side of the seal, on the human side, let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity or unrighteousness. The illustration, but in a great house, there are not only vessels of gold and of silver, but also of wood and of earth, some to honor and some to dishonor. If a man therefore purge himself from these, he shall be a vessel unto honor, sanctified and meet or fit for the master's use and prepared unto every good work.

Wonderful, isn't it? Now, in the closing verses, 22 to 26, he brings before us the behavior of the servant, behavior of public men. For after all, why shouldn't the searchlight of the word of God fall upon the man on the platform as well as those on the pews and the seats? He's not beyond being instructed. Verse 22, flee also youthful lusts and follow righteousness, faith, love, peace, with all that call on the Lord out of a pure heart.

So we belong to the fellowship of the pure. Is that right? With others, we call on the Lord out of a pure heart, the fellowship of the pure. What foolish and unlearned questions avoid, knowing that they do gender strikes.

The servant of the Lord must not strike, but be gentle unto all, apt to teach, patient in meekness, instructing those that oppose themselves. If God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth, that they may recover themselves out of the snare of the devil who are taken captive by him at his will. Now back again to verse 14.

Exhorting Timothy, he first of all exhorts him to charge others. Now you'll notice what he says. He says of these things, put them in remembrance, charging them before the Lord, that they strive not about works and so on.

Now he's going to talk to them about error, false teaching. Now, brethren and sisters, since the very beginning, the church at large has been plagued by error. The first great administrative conference that took place in Jerusalem in Acts 15 was called to consider doctrinal error in relation to the gospel.

There were those Jews who were teaching that no man could be saved except he be circumcised after the manner of Moses. So Acts 15 is quite unique. A conference called between the apostles and the elders of the Jerusalem church to deal with a doctrinal matter in relation to the gospel.

When you come to Acts 20, Paul addressing the Ephesian elders says, after my departing shall grievous wolves come in. Then he turned to these elders and he says of your own selves shall men arise speaking perverse things, drawing away disciples after themselves. Out from among the elderhood it came.

You see, brethren and sisters, all down through the ages, Christ has been betrayed by professed friends. You're on your guard when the thing comes from the outside. You're not so much in your guard when the error starts to come from the inside.

You could be taken aback. Because you and I will need to remember this, please. That a great deal of our trouble today is coming not only from what is known as worldly believers, carnal believers.

A lot of our trouble is coming from the fact that there are a great number of people amongst us who are not converted. A very, very surface glance at the seven chapters of Revelation 2 and 3 will teach you that. Now don't you go and blame the elders for they're not omniscient.

They can only hear what you say. If you've been reared in a Christian home you know the language and how to put it. And all around in Christendom we see it.

Paul talks about men in Philippians 3, they're the enemies of the cross of Christ, whose end is destruction, whose God is their belly, whose glory is in their shame, who mind earthly things. So always there must be those who will stand to defend the truth, to set it forth, to combat the error that's all around. And as I've been telling you throughout these weeks, man's an extremist.

Great dangers today of people going overboard to one extreme or the other. Man's like that, will press things beyond what the scriptures would do. So you see it's a great thing to come to the word of God, to have it expounded to us, so that we might grasp its truth and save ourselves from the error that's all around.

Now, Timothy, sorry, yes, Paul here is chanting Timothy, sorry, exhorting Timothy to charge others not to strive about words. Battles, word battles. Now, I don't know whether you've noticed this or not.

Now, nobody's claiming originality, but I've never ever heard it pointed out. Tell me, you good folks that read your Bible, have you ever noticed the recurrence four times in the pastoral epistles of one word? The word is the word questions. Now, would you just take a moment with me, go back to first Timothy chapter one at verse four.

Paul says, neither give heed to fables and endless genealogies which minister questions, rather than godly edifying which is in faith. Now, I want you to pick up that word questions. It means speculative discussion.

Speculative discussion. It has in view the things of God being thrown into the arena of debate. You know, I have a feeling we've let our younger generation down.

As parents, as elders, as teachers, when our young folks go to colleges and universities, we fail to inform them that there they will meet intelligent, brilliant lecturers who will go out of their way to undermine their faith in the word of God, who will call them to come and debate the things of God. The precious things of God are thrown into the arena of debate, and these brilliant men undermine the faith of young converts who are immature and maybe a little unstable. We should have taught them, taught them well.

First Corinthians two verse fourteen, the natural man receiveth not the things of the spirit of God, they are foolishness unto him, neither can he know them because they are spiritually discerned or discerned by those who have the spirit of God. It matters not how brilliant a man is, how clever, how articulate, how penetrating his reasoning and criticism. If he's unconverted and hasn't the spirit of God, he doesn't know the first thing.

He's in the dark. We should have taught them that to turn away from these men. I say to you young folks, don't get engaged in speculative discussion, unprofitable debates that are only calculated to undermine your faith.

Turn to first Timothy six verse four, the second occurrence. Notice the background. There's three, if anyone teach otherwise and consent not to wholesome words, even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ and to the doctrine which is according to godliness, he is proud, knowing nothing.

Got that? Ignorant, proud and ignoramus. Doting or sick about questions, speculative discussion. Now watch, strives of words, whereof cometh envy, strife, railings, evil surmisings, perverse disputings of men of corrupt minds, destitute of the truth, supposing that godliness is a way of pain.

See how it's all word battles, endless, profitless discussions about the sacred things of God and nothing put in its place. Second Timothy chapter two, verse twenty-three, that foolish and unlearned questions, speculative discussion, avoid, knowing that they do gender strife. See the whole background of the thing, strife, envy, corrupt minds, etc.

Finally, Titus chapter three, verse nine, but avoid foolish questions, speculative discussion and genealogies and contentions and strivings about the law, for they are unprofitable in vain. See it? That word has occurred four times. It's on Paul's mind, the unprofitability of the whole business.

So he says here, charge them before the Lord. Now the honor of the Lord's at stake. It's quite serious.

Paul as an apostle could charge Timothy and others. For instance, in first Timothy five, verse twenty-one, I charge thee before God and the Lord Jesus Christ and the elect angels that thou observe these things without preferring one before another, doing nothing by partiality. When you come to second Timothy four, verse one, he says, I charge thee before God and the Lord Jesus Christ.

See the solemnity of the charge that is given to Timothy. Brethren, these are holy, sacred things, and we do well to listen to the inspired apostle. Charge them before the Lord that they strive not about words to no profit, but to the subverting of the hearers.

That is, it will turn the hearers upside down. All this unprofitable discussion is calculated to be catastrophic. It will subvert, undermine the hearers.

So he says, he draws our attention. Let me warn you today, please, because there are any amount of men going about, clever men, and they are always propounding heresies, asking unanswerable questions, all calculated to undermine faith. Beware of clever, subtle, destructive, intellectually reckless discussion that is calculated to demolish your faith and put nothing in its place.

Company with God's people. Stay away from all this reckless discussion. There are very few able to stand up to these things in an ungodly atmosphere.

So it is that he calls upon them, and then in verse 15, we'll need to leave it to tomorrow night, in contrast to these kind of people, Timothy, give diligence to present yourself before God, an unashamed workman, rightly dividing the word of truth. Now, there's no doubt about this type. JN Darby has the correct and proper translation right on the nail.

Cutting in a straight line the word of truth. Rightly dividing just means to cut straight. Draws attention to a straightforward handling of the word of God.

A plain, unvarnished, straightforward interpretation of truth. Brethren, I'm always suspicious of a long, tortuous explanation of any passage. There I'll need to leave it.

And tomorrow evening, we'll just start there, and I'll talk to you about this man who with the book, presents himself to God and to men and to saints, as he cuts in a straight line the word of God. So may the Lord bless his work.

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