

2 Timothy - Part 13

by John Hunter

The sermon focuses on the importance of sound doctrine, the diligent study of scripture, and the necessity of separating from false teachings to be effective servants of God.

Duration: 1:02:30

Scripture: 2 Timothy 2:14-16, 2 Timothy 2:19, 2 Timothy 2:23-26, 2 Timothy 3:16

Topics: "Biblical Authority", "Spiritual Discipline"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the importance of understanding and presenting the word of God clearly. He shares his personal experience of being criticized for focusing on presentation as much as truth. The speaker encourages young men to diligently study the Bible, as the future lies with them. He then discusses the qualities of godlessness in the last days and highlights the authority and inspiration of holy scripture. The central message is for believers to be diligent workmen who rightly divide the word of truth.

Transcript

2 Timothy chapter 2, reading and exposition begins at verse 14. Now, those of you who were present last evening will just bear with me a little, won't you? For I want to do the same tonight as I did last night, that is, as we read together, I shall break up the passage for you. And then, we shall begin to expound.

Last night we did that, but with Mr. Wach being here, his last night, we hadn't as much time as we've got tonight. I had only time to give, read the passage, explain it, and deal with one verse, verse 14. I might say that tomorrow evening, if the Lord will, I hope to deal with the opening verses of chapter 3. You'll notice it says, Perilous times in the last days.

I want to deal with the 19 qualities of godlessness that mark the last days. Then, you will notice in verse 16, All scripture is given by inspiration of God, or God breathed. On Thursday evening, I hope to speak on the authority and inspiration of holy scripture.

Now, let's begin now, please. Verse 14. The first section, verses 14 to 16, Paul is exhorting Timothy.

In verse 14, he exhorts him to charge others. So he says, 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 Timothy to present himself before the Lord as an unashamed workman. So he says, Study or be diligent to show, to present thyself approved unto God. A workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.

Verse 16. He exhorts him to shun certain things, But shun profane and vain babblings, For they will increase unto more ungodliness. Paul exhorting Timothy.

Then, from verses 17 to 21, You have brought before you separation from false teachers and teaching. Verses 17 and 18, the exposure of error. The error exposed.

Reads like this, And their word will eat as doth a canker or gangrene, Of whom is Hymenas and Philetus, Who concerning the truth have erred, Saying that the resurrection is past already, And overthrow the faith of some. The exposure of the error. Verses 19 to 21.

The saints encouraged. For the encouragement of the saints. Verse 19.

The assurance given. Nevertheless, the foundation of God standeth sure. Having this seal, the Lord knoweth them that are his, And let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity.

Verse 20. The illustration. But in a great house there are not only vessels of gold and silver, But also of wood and of earth, Some to honor and some to dishonor.

Verse 21. The application. If a man therefore purge himself from these, He shall be a vessel unto honor, Sanctified and meet for the master's use, And prepared unto every good work.

The assurance given. Verse 19. The illustration.

Verse 20. The application. Verse 21.

Now please, verses 22 to 26. The behavior of the servant of God. Verse 22.

His character. Flee also youthful lusts. And follow righteousness, faith, love, peace.

With them that call on the Lord out of a pure heart. His character. Verses 23 to 26.

His work. Verse 23. And the opening of 24.

23 and 24a. What he must not do. But foolish and unlearned questions avoid.

Knowing that they do gender stripes. And the servant of the Lord must not strive. What he must not do.

Verse 24b and 25a. The close of 24. The opening of 25.

What he must do. But be gentle unto all. Apt to teach.

Patient. In meekness instructing those that oppose themselves. 25b.

The rest of the verse. What God does. If God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth.

So you have 23, 24a. What the servant must not do. 24b, 25a.

What he must do. 25b. What God will do.

And finally in verse 26. The result of the divine action. That they may recover themselves out of the snare of the devil.

Who are taken captive by him at his will. That will suffice for the reading. Now, as we opened up last night.

We drew attention to the fact. That all down through the ages. There has been severe opposition to the work of God.

And all down through the ages. There has been constantly false teaching. Have come in in order to corrupt the word of God.

The tragedy has been that a great many of these men were on the inside to begin with. Whenever I have occasion to speak to you of apostates. I am not talking about backsliders.

An apostate was a person. Who professed faith in Christ. Got baptized.

And was received into the assembly. But in the passage of time. Proved themselves by their teaching and beliefs to be utterly false.

They are men who turn deliberately away from the gospel and its truth. For them there is absolutely no hope of any kind. It is a deliberate willful action of the apostate.

Down through the ages Christ has been betrayed by professed friends. Great tragedy. Has done untold harm to the people of God.

That is why it is essential that as assemblies. We should constantly pray. That God will raise up men who can expound the truth.

And expose error. We'll be reading tonight. And speaking of such men.

Most vital and essential for the assemblies of the Lord's people. And like last night I'll be appealing. To younger men.

Especially. To give themselves to the study of the word of God. You know I was appalled when I first came to Canada.

On the east. To find myself on visits like this. Constantly coming against young people.

Who never. Especially young men. Who never ever thought.

Of giving two nights a week to the study of their bible. Never seemed to strike them. Plenty of time for skiing.

Some of them were quite. Hot on hockey. But to give yourself to your bible no.

That was left to the preachers. Oh the tragedy of a system like that isn't it. So that.

We'll be talking about these things. Now. Last night we dealt with verse 14.

In which he charged. He told Timothy to charge them. Not to get engaged in word battles.

Arguing and disputing and debating about Christianity. There are people like that that you meet. They want to argue about Christianity.

And I went out of my way. To try and instruct the young people present. When they go to colleges and universities.

To pay no attention to brilliant ungodly men. Who don't know the first thing about Christianity. Far better to stay away from.

Altogether. The debating group. Something the matter brother? What's wrong? It's alright.

No. Listen. Brother.

It was full when I started. I couldn't have said it was or not. You were too busy doing your job to notice.

You'll learn that they do their best not to have dry speakers in West Richmond. Now. Drop your eye to verse 15 now.

And he says now. Instead of going in for that sort of thing. Listen Timothy.

Be diligent to present thyself for divine approval. But present yourself as an unashamed workman. Who rightly divides the word of truth.

And here's the call to Timothy and to you and I. Notice central to the passage please. Is a workman. Now that means that the servant of the Lord works hard at his job.

He toils laboriously at it. He's constantly there. I said before.

The preacher's not on the platform five minutes to you know whether he's done his homework or not. Isn't that right? You know immediately whether he knows his stuff or not. So it is that he is a workman.

You don't go into the business to get an easy time or to get away from the monotony of secular work. You come into this business to do a job for God. And that the idea of a workman is a laborer.

Who works hard at his job. Whatever it may be that God has called him to. And he's an unashamed workman.

Because it says this. Be diligent to present thyself. Approved of God.

An unashamed workman. That means this. That the true servant has presented himself to God with his work.

And his work has come under divine scrutiny. The scrutiny of God. Before it comes under the scrutiny of the people of God.

That means this. That before ever I came to you tonight I've been to God. I'll be honest with you.

I have gone over the message with God. And when the meeting's over and I go back home. Tonight I'll go back over it with God again.

Now. He says he's an unashamed workman. Because he's done his job well.

He hasn't, he hasn't spent his time socializing. Or lying about idle. He's been on the job.

Now that's good. He'll study text and context. He'll explain words and phrases and sentences and verses and passages.

He'll put out time and effort. In order to bring the word of God in all its fullness and richness to the people of God. And what he does is this.

It says here he rightly divides the word of truth. I said last night as I closed. That Darby has the right idea.

Basically the word means to cut straight. Darby in his translation says. This unashamed workman.

He cuts straight the word of God. Now the idea is this. That he lays it out clearly and plainly and simply.

In a way that all may take it in. No long tortuous explanations. Now listen please.

If you do any preaching at all. Listen to me. A thing is only is a thing.

Whatever it may be. Whatever truth it is. Even in the gospel.

Whatever you're setting out is only as clear to the audience as it is to you. Got that now? So you've got to see that you understand it before you give it out. More than that.

They used to. I was going to say twit me a bit. Do you understand? They used to bait me a bit in the old country.

They would say you know. Jack's one of these fellas that spends as much time on presentation as in truth. What they meant was this.

That I do spend a lot of time after I have gathered my material. How to put it out so that you'll take it in easily. I believe that presentation is a great thing.

Very essential to the art of teaching. And here is this servant and he cuts in a straight line. Darby says the word of truth.

So that he'll take it. He'll open it up. He'll explain it to you and he'll bring it to you.

Now I want to say to you young men. Get down to your book. The future lies with you.

The men that you're depending on may not always be here. I say to you. Get the tools for the job.

If need be. Get down before God. Read your Bible.

Get to know God's truth for yourself. And don't depend on other people to spoon feed you. What you get for yourself you'll never forget.

That goes of too of course for young women. While they don't speak publicly in the assemblies. I was saying on Saturday night.

Down at. What do you call it? Victoria Drive. That's right.

I was telling them on Saturday night. That many assembly. Owes an incalculable debt.

To a backbone of godly women. Who not only know their place but know their book. Great to meet you young women.

Who are interested in the word of God. Verse 16. But Timothy while you do that.

Shun profane and vain babblings. For they. That is the people who babble.

Who talk. They will increase. Advance unto more ungodliness.

Now in the scriptures. In the scriptures false teaching. Is always associated.

With ungodliness. And that word. Advance.

Increase. Is cutting down the undergrowth. Is progress in reverse.

They'll progress. Unto more ungodliness. That's true.

Many cults are ungodly. Now. Come now please.

And we'll have a look at these teachers. And their teaching. In this section 17 to 21.

Paul is calling for separation from false teachers. And false teaching. You see.

If there were no false teachers. There'd be no false teaching. So that you can't separate from the teaching.

And not separate from the men that teach it. And Paul is calling for a purity of relationship. That you will.

You will separate. And purge yourself out from. Those who teach false doctrine.

There are no areas of gray brethren. When it comes to doctrine. The things either right or it's wrong.

Now watch. In verses 17 and 18. He exposes the error.

Now watch how he does it. The close of verse 17. He names the teachers.

The opening of verse 18. He names the teaching. And the opening of verse 17.

And the close of verse 18. He shows the result of the teaching. Got that? The teachers.

The teaching. And the result of the teaching. Now notice please.

The close of verse 17. He names the teachers. He says.

Of whom is Hymenas and Philetus. So he names the men. That Timothy might understand his enemies.

In 1 Timothy 1 verse 20. There is a Hymenas mentioned. Who was disciplined.

Whether this is the same man I wouldn't know. Could be. Obviously there the discipline didn't do any good.

And the man has ultimately proved himself to be a false teacher. Have you good brethren and sisters noted. In reading the pastoral epistles.

1 Timothy 2 Timothy and Titus. That Paul names men. He's constantly warning Timothy.

And mentioning names. That Timothy. Forewarned.

Is forearmed. Now look at the teaching. Verse 18.

These men concerning the truth of earth. Saying that the resurrection is past already. That means this.

That they didn't believe in a future resurrection. They were no doubt saying. To put it the way they would put it today.

They would say. Now the only resurrection we have is the resurrection. Associated with Christ in Ephesians 2. We have been quickened with Christ.

Raised up and seated together with Christ. And the only spiritual resurrection. The only resurrection is a spiritual resurrection.

In association with Christ. And there is no such thing as a future bodily resurrection. Now that was the doctrine.

That was the error. And that was the error that assailed Corinth. Only in Corinth.

When Paul taught in 1 Corinthians 15. As I pointed out. At the Bible readings at the conference.

When Paul dealt with it. He didn't call for excommunication. For he wasn't dealing with the teachers.

He was teaching those who had been infected by the error. And Paul felt that the true teaching would recover such people. You must always make a difference.

Between the people who are committed to error to teach it. And those who are only infected by it. And Paul indicated in 1 Corinthians 15.

That the resurrection of Christ was vital and essential. If there is no future bodily resurrection for the saints. Then there was no resurrection for Christ.

You cannot say that Christ is raised and deny resurrection to the saints. Now you might say to me. Quite right too.

You might say to me. Now tell me. Why should there be a future bodily resurrection? When you read your New Testament.

Why do inspired writers insist on the resurrection of the body? Why can't we go to heaven the way we are? And be perfectly happy. The same as the saints are now without a body. Why do inspired writers say that the body must be raised? Now the reason for that is this.

That when sin entered the world it penetrated the whole personality. Sin affected a man's spirit, soul and body. Which means this.

That for redemption to be seen. To be complete. The whole personality must be brought together again.

Body, soul and spirit. For instance. Supposing that when Christ died upon the cross and they buried him.

He never rose again. You know what they say. His soul went marching on.

But his body lay in the tomb. Don't you see? That would only be a two-thirds victory. His soul was free.

His spirit was free. But his body was held captive in the tomb. So that.

So that Christ rose in his body. And the 40 days in which Christ lived on the resurrection ground. Is the prototype of a resurrection body.

If you want to know. What is the nature and function of the resurrection body in heaven. And in the eternal state.

Then you study. The 40 days in which Christ was on earth. In his resurrection body.

That's the prototype. For that's the body in which he came out of the tomb. And went to heaven.

Got that? So that. We not only believe in the forgiveness of sins. And in the life everlasting.

We believe in the resurrection of the body. And that Christ will ultimately. And finally.

Destroy the power of death. And while he will raise all. It is the assured hope of the believer.

That there is such a thing as the resurrection of the body. These people were denying. That which is fundamental to gospel preaching.

Now come again. Notice the result. Verse 17.

Their word will eat as doth canker gangrene cancer. The close of verse 18. They will overthrow the faith of some.

So he says that this teaching will eat. Into the body of believers like a cancer. It will rapidly diffuse and spread quickly.

Well that's right. Just the same as a lie will travel quicker on feet than truth. So error will diffuse much more quickly.

And it says it will overthrow the faith of some. There will always be those. Who will succumb to error.

Now look now at verse 19. As he encourages the saints nevertheless yet. Is it possible.

That it will overthrow completely. The faith and those who believe it. Oh no.

Oh no. It may affect a few. But the firm foundation of God will stand.

Having this seal. So he's indicating this. That what God builds.

Will never be totally corrupted. And what God is truly building. Will remain inviolate and pure and uncorrupted.

Against the assault of false teachers and teaching. The firm foundation of God stands sure. Having this seal.

Now the seal is twofold. Look at it. Verse 19.

One. The Lord knoweth them that are his. Two.

Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity. Twofold mark. Of what's of God.

One. Divine. The Lord knoweth them that are his.

Second. Human. Let every one that names the name of Christ.

That's you and I. Depart from iniquity. Unrighteousness. Come again.

The Lord knoweth them that are his. That's dated in eternity. It's near as tense.

Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity. That's dated in time. That's what you do now.

Come again. The Lord knoweth them that are his. That's what we must believe.

Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity. That's what we must do. Come again.

The Lord knoweth them that are his. That's the omniscience of the Lord. Let every one that names the name of Christ depart from iniquity.

That's the responsibility of the Christian. Come again. The Lord knoweth them that are his.

That's security. Let every one that names the name of Christ depart from iniquity. That's purity.

Come again. The Lord knoweth them that are his. That's ownership.

Let every one that names the name of Christ depart from iniquity. That's separation. Come again.

The Lord knoweth them that are his. That's the knowledge of the Lord. That everyone that names the name of Christ apart from iniquity, that's the righteousness of the saints.

Here's the twofold seal that stands in relation to the Lord and in relation to us. In other words, everyone that's true and real that the Lord knows, they are the people who naming the name of Christ apart from iniquity and unrighteousness. Got that? Now, we'll see that later at the close of verse 22 when he talks about the fellowship of the pure.

With others we call upon the name of the Lord out of a pure heart. Now, you will notice now please that he gives an illustration in verse 20 of a great house. And he mentions in it that there are vessels of gold and silver and of wood and earth.

Then he gives the application and he says now if a man will purge himself out then he will become a vessel unto honour fit for the master's use. And it's quite clear that the illustration is brought in to draw attention to vessels unto honour. Now, of course, there's been a lot of debate about these.

I'll just tell you what I believe. Now, it might be as well to tell you what I don't believe. I don't believe that the great house is the church.

And I don't believe that the great house is christened on religious profession either. It's in any or any big house. It's only an illustration of any large house in Ephesus that would have vessels of gold and silver and of wood and of earth.

You wouldn't find it in a poor man's house. Now, let me for a moment please, if you keep your eye on the text you'll follow me much more easily. Now, supposing for the moment that we leave out verse 20, the illustration.

And you come from verse 19 and previous to verse 22. He says at the close of 19, let everyone that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity, verse 21, if a man purge himself from these. Now, if you leave out the illustration for the moment, these, you would connect first of all with iniquity, verse 19, error, verse 18, cankerous words, verse 17, profane and vain babblings, verse 16.

Is that correct? Now, come again, but you'll notice right in the middle that Hymenus and Philetus are those who are babbling. It's their word that's eating like a tick, a cancer, because they are teaching error. And the iniquity would be the things that they would be teaching in its context, while it could be wider as to unrighteousness.

Now, what I think that the writer has in view is this. When he comes to the illustration, he talks of vessels of gold and silver, vessels of wood and soot. Some of these vessels are for honorable use.

Some are for use that do not give them so much honor. Some of these vessels are distinguished because they are upon the master's table. Others of these vessels are not so distinguished, not used for the same honorable purpose, because they are used in the kitchen.

So he says now in verse 20, if a man will purge himself from these, that is, these false teachers and all this false teaching, he will be a vessel unto honor, distinguished, fit for the master's use. Now, notice the expression, the master's use. He has brought in the illustration to show that there are vessels in a household that the master uses, and they are distinguished because they are on the table of the master.

Other vessels will never see the master's table, and the master will use them. And the illustration is only an appeal to you and I to keep ourselves clean and pure from every form of false teaching, so that, he says, in purifying ourselves, coming out from, having nothing to do with, then we shall be a vessel unto honor, sanctified or set apart, fit for the master to use, and ready for every good work. Now, you might think, well now, broadly speaking, I can see the force of the ministry, but after all, you know, in Vancouver at the moment and in West Richmond, we are not worried too much with these things.

No, that's good. That's good. That doesn't mean to say that someday there might not be a penetration of some things.

So let's always be on our guard, and remember this, your salvation lies in men who know the truth and can teach it, and who will hold the assembly together in its purity. Now this is a great thing. No iniquity, no impurity of doctrine, everything held in violet.

You see, there is a going around the idea today that it doesn't matter what you hold as long as you hold it sincerely, that won't do at all. And let me say this, over yonder, before I came here, I was in the Midlands of England, and into where I was staying, there came a young woman. She attended the same college as the young man of the house.

They had been talking about spiritual things, and she was curious to hear about this Scots preacher and thought she would like to talk to him. So in she came. While she was sitting there, she said, after ten minutes or so, she says, you know, I don't think it matters really where you go, as long as you're sincere and as long as you're growing in your faith.

I don't think it matters who you gather with, she says, or what the order that obtains is in your church, as long as you're growing in your faith. Well I said to her, that's a strange bit of doctrine. Well she says, what would be strange in it? Well I said, there are quite a number of strange things, but I'll tell you about one or two of them.

I said, for instance now, according to what you're saying means this, that a company of Christians gather together, and they decide to form a meeting. They're not too worried about whether it conforms to the New Testament or not, but they have a number of ideas, and they think it would be good to have a meeting, and they'll practice these ideas. Whether it conforms to the New Testament doesn't matter very much, and they finish up by calling it a church.

That's right, she said. Well I says, you've a cheek. And she sat up, I don't suppose she was used being talked to like that.

I said, you know, you're arrogant, and your friends are just every bit as arrogant. I said, what right have you to form an association, a religious association, establish an order that suits you, but doesn't conform to the New Testament, and of the cheek to call it a church? I said, God has laid down in the New Testament what a church is, and he chose the word church or assembly to describe it, and you've no right to set up a religious organisation that suits you and your friends, and call it a church, call it what you like, but don't you dare to use the name that God puts in the right thing. You would agree with that, wouldn't you? But that's what's going on all around.

Up goes the name church as if that covered everything, and it's no more like God's thing. What it conforms to is just their own opinions. Now you see, brethren and sisters, the necessity that we hold, that we be a, a Scots word, we be a stickler for these things, would you understand that? Now, come quickly now please, will you, and we'll look at a servant and his behaviour, his character.

Here's what it says. Timothy, flee the desires of youth, follow righteousness, faith, love, peace, with them that call on the Lord out of a pure heart. Now, if you have a withdrawal from iniquity in the previous section, will you notice please, flee the lusts, the desires of youth.

You're calling on the Lord out of a pure heart. Now I want you to note now carefully please, that you've been introduced to the fellowship of the pure. Now, that word lust can mean desires, it can mean sexual passion, but it can also mean ambition, but an ambition that doesn't take God and Christ into the business.

The danger of setting yourself on a course without fellowship with God and Christ, but flee the lusts of youth. Now, now please, a little delicate, I won't violate your sensibilities, but let me say this, that there is always a very real danger when two persons of the opposite sex get friendly and the friendship develops into love. Now, always a danger that there shall arise within you that which is impure, that which is unclean, and just a temptation to do things in secret that you shouldn't do, feeling that only the two of you know, forgetting that the eye of God is upon you.

Now, there will be occasions when passions can rise and become strong, and there you are at the crisis. If you're a wise young man or woman, you will step back immediately and break the embrace. Failure to do that may lead you to do things that you have a conscience about to begin with, but can carry on when your conscience no longer smites you the same as at the beginning.

Is that clear? To do that will save you from bringing shame on your family, bringing shame on the assembly, and above all, bringing shame on Christ. Or they'll just turn round and say the Christians are no better than the world. It's the fellowship of the pure.

May I say this, I may say it again, I've said it a few times since I came to Vancouver, that we have really forgotten, and we have stopped preaching amongst us, that Christianity is sustained by people who do not sin. Christianity is lived out by people who do not sin. Now, please, I'm not saying you're sinless, for you're not.

But you do not go out to sin. In other words, the whole tenor of your life is to live a life that is pure and holy. Whosoever is born of God doth not commit, doth not practice sin.

And for a long time, brethren, longer than I care to think, we've dropped this teaching. I'll leave it there. You can make the examination of your own life and your own relationship with your friend.

Flee the lusts of youth, that's what he's saying. Just as Joseph fled, left his garment, but maintained his character. Now, come again.

When he says you'll follow righteousness, that means you're straight up and down. There's nothing bent or crooked. You're known as a man or a woman, even in business circles, that's righteous.

You'll do the right thing always. That's very difficult, very, very difficult. And the higher you go, it may become more difficult, just to bend the rules.

Follow righteousness. Follow faith. That devotion and loyalty to God and to Christ, so essential, if your life is to be lived for Him.

You'll follow love. Now, this is not, please, the cheap, sentimental thing. It means that, as a Christian, you are a person who cares.

You love God. And you love Christ. And you love the Christians.

And you love sinners. It's a love that is pure. And it's a love that triumphs.

You say, what do you mean by that? Well, agape love was originally God's love for sinners. Do you remember when you were in your sins? You may have denied the existence of God. You could possibly blasphemed His name and all the rest of it.

God just went on loving you. Didn't matter what you said about Him. It didn't matter how you acted toward Him.

He just went on loving you. Is that right? Now, listen carefully, please. Take it kindly.

I'm not talking. I'm not expounding brethrenism. I'm teaching the Scriptures.

It means this. That no matter what the Christians say about you. And no matter what they do to you.

You just go on loving them. We've got our own little sections today. And we just love the folks that agree with us.

And the little clique. And the rest. Well, we don't even try to love them.

That's brethernism. Now, this is a big thing. For it means that.

It means that. With each other. We never refuse to forgive.

We never try to get our own back. We never set ourselves out for revenge. We never criticize them behind their back.

And we object when the friends of our circle do it. Because we are determined to love each other as God loves each of us. And as Christ loved.

Is that alien? If a local church should be anything. It should be a place where we love and care for each other. If you can't love your brother whom you do see.

How can you say that you love God whom you've never seen? That's what John says. Tell me please. It's not too big, is it? It's not too spiritual, is it? You see, it's so easy to go on with a thing so long that you're not aware that you're doing it.

Until somebody draws you up. A preacher once arrived at a home to take meetings. At the supper table, sitting with the husband and wife and family.

Suddenly the family began to criticize a certain other preacher. As they went at it. The servant rose and he said, you'll excuse me.

I'll just retire. Oh, but he said, Mr. So-and-so. You haven't had your supper.

That's the last meal of the day, you know, not your supper, you know. After the meeting. And he said to them.

That's right. But he says, I have made it my habit in life. At any time, in any home.

When the family began to criticize other Christians and other preachers. That I just excuse myself, for I have no wish to take part in it. And he left them and went upstairs.

When he arrived down the next morning, his hostess broke down. Deeply upset. And made her confession.

That before the family they had talked unwisely. About Christians, preachers. And the family had got to despise men like that.

Now please, please. I'm not saying that all preachers are blameless. And I'm certainly not saying that all preachers are the same.

I know there are differences among us. I know that. But that's not the point.

To poison the family's mind. Can you wonder why? They turn away. Follow after love.

Follow after peace. That is, as much as in you is. You'll live peaceably.

Basically, you're out for peace. And if in West Richmond. I only use West Richmond because I'm here.

If in West Richmond you have men and women of peace. Not peace at any price. But men and women who are out.

To save the assembly from internal division. Who are out to maintain the unity. And to maintain peaceful relations.

Then you thank God for them tonight. They're invaluable. The servant of the Lord.

Follows peace. Now please. Come quickly.

Verses 23 to 26. Foolish and unlearned questions avoid. Do you remember last night.

Those of you who were present. That I drew attention to the four occasions in these epistles. When the word questions arrived.

This word questions comes up. It's speculative discussion. Foolish and unlearned.

Speculation discussion avoid. It only genders strife. And the servant of the Lord must not strive.

That is. He doesn't take part in war battles. In wrangles.

In disputes. In debates. The servant of the Lord must not strive.

But be gentle unto all. That's interesting. He's a gentleman.

He's like the servant of Jehovah Christ in Isaiah 42. Do you remember what it says? Listen to this. The true servant.

He shall not cry nor lift up nor cause his voice to be heard in the street. A bruised reed shall he not break. A smoking flax will he not quench.

Now there's the reed. It's bruised. Quite easy to break it and throw it away.

There's the smoking. Quite easy to quench it and put it out. But the servant of the Lord doesn't do that sort of thing.

He never damages anyone. He never throws them aside as worthless. He's gentle.

He's tender. He'll never damage anyone. What he'll do will be for their good and encouragement and benefit.

The servant of the Lord must be gentle. Look again. Verse 24.

Apt to teach. That is, he has the spirit of a teacher. The disposition of a teacher.

He's constantly teaching. It might be publicly like this. It might be when you talk at the door.

It might be in your home. But he's always available to teach. Especially those who are infected with error.

Apt to teach. Read on. Patient.

Why? Well, you see, of course, I don't know whether you have much to do with these kind of people. But you see, when they come to your door, or you meet them at any time, and as they talk to you, you begin to teach them. You sometimes begin to find that they become hostile.

And they become aggressive. And they become abusive. I remember, we were friends in this night, and the doorbell rang.

And I went out. There was a man standing with an open Bible. And he says to me, Do you see this verse here? Now, I don't know why he opened the conversation like this.

But I have an idea. That he possibly was two or three doors up. And when he went with the Bible, he said, Oh, listen, we're not interested in that.

But I tell you, go to number 23. There's a man there who'll talk to you. See? So he came with the open Bible.

And he says, You'll be interested, he says, Look at this verse. And he read it, and he says, That means this. So I looked at him, and I said, It doesn't mean that.

It means this. Oh, he says, now, right. He said, over here now, see this verse.

And he read it, he says, That means this. I said, the verse doesn't mean that. It means this.

Right, he says. Over I go, and he read again. He says, that verse means this.

Oh, I says, no, it doesn't mean that. No, I says, just a minute, friend. Every time that I tell you different, you say right.

And you go to another verse, Say, the thing's not right. It's wrong what you're saying. And everything erased, just quietly, I spoke to him.

And then, he turned to me, and he says, You're only here for an argument. Met your kind before, he said. And he started to tell me what he thought about me.

I said, just a minute. Just a minute. I said, tell me, Who came to the door with an open Bible? Oh, he says, I did.

I says, who read a passage and said what it meant? He says, I did. And I said, when I contradicted you and told you what it meant, Who read another passage in? He says, I did. I said, after about five or ten minutes, Who lost their temper and began to abuse? He shut the Bible and walked away.

Never came back. Now, these friends, I expect them at the door down, you know. They do that sort of thing.

They have a paper, they mark it all down. Now, you see. You see.

That's all that you can do. You can only instruct. Watch what he says.

In meekness, instructing those that oppose. Now, that's remarkable. Christ said, I am meek.

And you're not only, you're not only gentle. You're not only apt to teach. You're not only patient when they abuse you.

But, in meekness, quietly, meekly, you instruct those that oppose. Now, that word instruct is child training. It's discipline.

That's what it means. Now, what it means is this. That quietly you bring the truth to them.

You instruct them. You educate them. That is, you teach the truth to them.

You inform the uninformed. You educate the uneducated. You correct the error.

You discipline them by teaching them. Until you find that as narrowed down, they'll either begin to listen without speaking, or they'll start, turn against you and abuse you. In meekness, you instruct those that oppose.

You don't hammer your viewpoint. Try to bludgeon them down. You just, you see, the spirit of Christ.

I remember a young fellow infected with Pentecostalism. We're still in the meeting. And he came up and he started to talk to me.

I spoke to him. I answered him. When it was all over, he pulled a booklet out of his pocket and he said, would you read that and give me it back? I said, sure, I'll give you it back tomorrow.

So I read the booklet. And it was a critique of another booklet. And I met him the next day at the meeting and I handed him it back.

He says, what do you think of it? Well, I said, if what this man says is true about what the other man said, then the other man's right. And his jaw literally dropped open. He thought this book would convince me.

And then he began to become quite abusive. And I said, just a minute. I said, you're only a young man.

You don't know very much. But I said, you know, you're claiming to have something I haven't got. But I said, the spirit that you're showing toward me proves that what you've got has never altered you.

You see, brethren and sisters, if you've got the right thing, it should produce the right attitude and the right spirit. And so you quietly teach the word of God. In meekness you instruct.

That's all you can do. Look at the close of verse 25. What God does.

If God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth. You must leave that with God. Got that? You only teach the truth, correct the error, and leave God to bring them to repentance.

You see, the trouble with most of them is this, that they have so opposed and so constantly opposed the truth of God that it's very difficult for them to listen to the truth. It is. And it's very difficult for them because they have so closed their ears.

It's well nigh sometimes impossible to get through. But you do that. If God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth.

Verse 26. For God to work in their souls and then they'll take the steps in answering to the truth to recover themselves out of the snare of the devil. Do you know what that word recover means? That word recover means to be sobered from a state of intoxication.

That's the word. A man's intoxicated, now he's sobered. You see, these people are duped and drunk by error.

That's right. Their minds are numb and the will's paralyzed by error. And you look to God that he'll bring them to repentance to acknowledge the truth and then they will recover themselves out of the snare of the devil.

The close now. Verse 27. Who are taken captive by him at his will.

It's always been... Well, you know, all these scholars find difficulties moving when you and I wouldn't. If you had a revised version you would find that the revised version after the devil says who are taken captive by the Lord's servant unto his will. Now, when they take the little word him they're referring it back to the beginning of verse 24.

They're going back for a connection for him to the servant of the Lord. Now I would reckon, brethren, not only is the connection too far back but I would reckon that that is interpretation and not translation. Now again, there are others and they say this.

That they may recover themselves out of the snare of the devil who are taken captive by him unto the will of God. That they may recover themselves unto God's will who are taken captive. And while that might seem a wee bit difficult for you there's a lot to be said for it in this.

That the whole idea in these verses is recovering people. That they may recover themselves to God's will who are taken captive by the devil. But the authorized version takes it all to refer to the devil.

That these people might be recovered. That's good. But these people were taken captive by the devil at his will.

I think there's a lot to be said for that and I'll give you my reasons. You see, recovered out of the snare of the devil who are taken captive by him now the nearest antecedent noun to him is the devil. Is that right? Who are taken captive by him at his will.

And the nearest antecedent pronoun to his is him. And would take you back to the devil. So possibly your authorized version is quite right in that way.

They are recovered. But they are recovered out of the snare of the devil who had taken them captive. Now I want you to notice and I'm finished now I'm five minutes over my time I intend to finish at about ten past nine.

Now watch. Can you see what true conversion is? Watch now. To give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth.

True repentance is from ignorance to truth. Verse 26. That they may recover themselves out of the snare of the devil.

So there it is from intoxication to soberness. They've been intoxicated by the error. Could see nothing else till the truth was brought before them.

Who are taken captive by him at his will. True conversion is from slavery to freedom. That's right.

True conversion is from ignorance to truth. Am I right? You were ignorant of God's ways till the truth was set before you. It is from intoxication to soberness.

Intoxicated and drugged by error until soberly they came to the knowledge of the truth. True conversion is from slavery to freedom. You have been taken out from under the snare and domination of the devil.

Oh brethren. Brethren when you realize what conversion is the dawning of truth on a person's soul. The coming out of a stupor where they've been drugged to see the truth soberly.

Being brought out from a condition of slavery into the glorious freedom and liberty of the sons of God. That's true conversion. Now we'll need to leave it there.

Tomorrow night if the good Lord will. We'll start in chapter 3 and deal with times of terror. Times of terror.

Audio: <https://sermonindex1.b-cdn.net/19/SID19119.mp3>

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/john-hunter/2-timothy-part-13/>

Grow in Your Walk with Christ

Listen and read messages that will stir your heart for Christ and point you to deeper repentance and devotion.

- 50,000+ Sermons from speakers past and present
- 3,900+ Classic Christian Books freely readable online
- 1,200+ Bible Translations and Commentaries
- Over 450k forum posts — Join our vibrant online Christian forum

www.sermonindex.net