

The Search for Certainty

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Date: 04 January 2015

[0:00] 1 Timothy 1 verse 12 I'm talking tonight about the search for certainty.

The search for certainty. In the context of Christian endurance and of being a partaker of the afflictions of the gospel, Paul is saying here that he is sure of something.

He is certain of something. He's persuaded of something. He has a spiritual certainty here, a confidence here that comes from God. Paul writes elsewhere of a trumpet call in a time of war, a time of battle where there is need for a clear and certain sound.

A clear and certain sound of the sound of a trumpet, a rallying call. I suppose in those days the shofar, as the sound would go forth and people would know it was the time of battle.

And he writes of the danger also of an uncertain sound. An uncertain sound. Now imagine if you were out in the battle front and you couldn't be sure whether it was the wake up call or the gathering call or the attack call or the retreat call or whatever it be.

[1:42] Now the different sounds of the trumpet, the different sounds of the call. And the uncertain sound is dangerous in a time of war. And we're looking here, there's some certainties here and there's a few uncertainties.

There are few certainties in the world today. And there is much uncertainty. Much uncertainty. Think of the world we're living in today.

There's much uncertainty about the economy. What's going to happen next? You know, the dollar's crashing, the rubles crashing, the economies are crashing. There's much uncertainty about world peace.

Wars here, rumours of war. There's much uncertainty about jobs, about income, about health, about welfare, about the future. Who knows what's around the corner? Life is uncertain.

Uncertain. James 4 verse 14. James writes, Whereas ye know not what shall be on the morrow. For what is your life? It is even a vapour.

[2:49] That appeareth for a little time and then vanisheth away. Friends, all of us have just got a vapour, as it were, of time that we can use. A lifetime that could just vanish away.

Just as a vapour. Just as a puff of smoke. Just as some fog that would be dispelled by the wind. And people are searching for certainties today.

They're longing and hungering for something they can hang on to. Something they can believe in. Something that they can know for sure is true. That they can rest on. They can be assured of.

There is a source of certainty in uncertain times. There is a source of certainty in uncertain times.

There are promises from God for you, for me, that we can rely upon.

Promises. Sure and certain promises. Paul says assuredly, For I know whom I have believed. He could say that as a matter of faith, of confident faith.

[3:51] For I know whom I have believed. There is a sure knowledge, firstly, the certainty of divine revelation. The certainty of divine revelation.

What did our Lord Jesus say when he was encountering the enemy of men's souls in the wilderness? He said, It is written. It is written.

The Bible is under attack today. Scholars and sceptics desperately fight against God's truth. Men are groping around in the dark with their eyes tightly shut.

Lest that gleam of light should strike their darkness and their darkened minds and their darkened souls. Their eyes tightly shut, all the while shunning the gleaming light that shows the clear pathway.

Preferring rather to stumble around wildly in the dark. In their darkness despair and doubt. And the writer of Proverbs speaks in a stark contrast of the certainty of the words.

[5:02] The certainty of the words. In Proverbs 22 verse 21. In part, the writer of Proverbs says, Proverbs 22 verse 21. That I might make known, that I might make thee know the certainty of the words of truth.

That I might make thee know the certainty of the words of truth. The certainty of the words of truth. There's a certainty for us here in God's word.

In the divine revelation. We're not building on the shifting sands of men's opinions. But upon the sure rock of the words of God's truth.

That familiar parable our Lord taught. That's a Turin song. You know, the rains came down and the floods came up. And the house on the rocks stood firm.

The house on the rocks stood firm. But the house on the sand went splat. And, you know, Matthew 7 it says, Therefore, whosoever heareth these sayings of mine and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man which built his house upon a rock.

[6:16] And the rains descended. And the floods came. And the winds blew. And the winds blew. And beat upon that house. And it fell not. For it was founded upon a rock.

And everyone that heareth these sayings of mine and doeth them not shall be like a nuts of a foolish man. Which built his house upon the sand.

And the rains descended. And the floods came. And the winds blew. And beat upon that house. And it fell. And great was the fall of it. It matters what our foundation is.

What is our foundation? We believe that the Bible that we have today is the inspired Word of God. And that it is the final authority for our Christian faith and conduct.

You can be certain. Certain of all the promises of God. In 2 Corinthians 1 verse 20 it says, For all the promises of God in him are yea and in him amen.

[7:21] Unto the glory of God by us. All the promises of God in him are yea and amen. Yes and for sure.

Absolutely. Crystal clear. True. Rock solid. Yea and amen. We hold in our hands a supernatural text. We do not stand upon the infallibility of a church or a pope or of traditions.

Our authority does not lie in man but in God. In God's truth. And we stand on the authority. The authority of God's sure and certain holy word.

And we believe in the final authority of God's word. The sufficiency of the scriptures. So that we don't need some extra biblical revelations so called.

But we need the sufficiency of the scriptures. That in the scriptures we have all that we need for our faith and conduct. To know what to do and where to go and what to live.

[8:28] We trust in the power of God's saving truth. Paul declared in Romans 1. For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ. For it is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth.

To the Jew first and also to the Greek. That means everybody. To whosoever believeth. The Bible is absolute truth.

The Bible does not speak a language of doubt or speculation or conjecture or opinion. But it speaks in a language of certainty. Certainty.

You can trust God's truth. You can trust His word. You can take Him at His word. And we know the reality of truth on fire.

That is what we need brothers and sisters.

[9:37] That is what we need in uncertain times. And in Acts 4.31 it says. We believe this word.

And we preach it like we believe it. That is how God wants it. Delivered. We resolutely hold it fast. This certainty. The certainty of divine revelation.

For I know whom I have believed. The certainty of divine revelation. Secondly there is also the certainty of Christian assurance.

Of Christian assurance. Doubt and uncertainty abounds and prevails. Many hear little or no gospel at all in some churches. They scarcely have knowledge of biblical salvation and what it really means.

Men and women have nothing to hang on to. Death is certain. Judgment is certain. We face the wrath of the Lamb.

[10:45] If we are outside of God tonight. The judgment of God is sure. It is declared. And it is coming. Yet in all of this for the saved.

For the saved. There is the certain assurance of salvation. Our Lord says. Verily. Verily. This is certain. This is for sure. This is true. John 5.24. He says. Verily. Verily. I say unto you. He that heareth my word.

And believeth on him that sent me. Hath everlasting life. And shall not come into condemnation. But. Is passed from death.

Unto life. Did you catch that? Amen. If you are saved here tonight. The Bible says. You have passed from death. Unto.

[11:41] What? Life. Life. Amen. You have passed from death. Unto. Life. Okay. Once you are saved. Your destiny is forever changed.

Amen. We have transferred from death. Unto. Life. Life. We have become present tense possessors. Of. Eternal. Life. And in his first letter.

John repeats it. And underlines it. So. 1 John 3.14. Says. We know that we have passed from death. Unto. Life. Life. Because we love the brethren.

He that loveth not his brother. Abideth in death. John says. We know that. We have passed from death. Unto. Life.

We know that. There is a certainty there. There is an assurance there. This is God's truth. God has given us a blessed assurance. A blessed assurance.

[12:38] And for some this concept of salvation. Salvation for some is a flimsy thing. A flimsy thing. As if it hangs on what we do.

As if it rests upon you. For some salvation is dependent upon man. And resting on his own works. There is no certainty there.

There is no certainty there. They worship a fickle God. In other words. Fickle meaning. One who changes his mind. And kind of. Is undecided.

There is no assurance there. There is no assurance there. When we rest on the works of men. Rather than on the finished work of Calvary. It is not.

A sure salvation. We must not rest on the works of men. On our own works. On our own doings. But trust in the blood. Of Jesus Christ.

[13:37] What does the blood of Jesus Christ do? Cleanses us from. All sin. Cleanses us from. All sin. If you believe.

That your salvation is a flimsy thing. That it hangs on what you do. It's as if. Jesus blood. Hasn't covered. All your sin. Hasn't cleansed you.

From all your sin. It's not. Not the way. God wants us to believe. He wants us to have an assurance. An assurance of salvation. And. He wants us to believe.

The record. Believe the record. In 1 John 5.11. It says. And this is the record. This is the record. That God hath given to us.

Eternal life. And this life. Is in his son. This is the record. God's recorded it. He's put it in black and white. In front of your face here.

[14:33] 1 John 5.11. And this is the record. That God hath given. Hath given. Hath given. Unto us. Eternal. Life. He's given it to you.

If you've trusted him. So I urge you tonight. To get a hold of this truth. To not rely on man's faulty works. But in the unfailing grace of God.

The unfailing grace of God. By faith we can know. His saving grace. In Romans 8.38-39. It says. For I am persuaded. That neither death. Nor life. Nor angels.

Nor principalities. Nor powers. Nor things present. Nor things to come. Nor height. Nor depth. Nor any other creature. Shall be able to separate us. From the love of God. Which is in Christ Jesus.

Our Lord. Nothing can separate us. God's love is relentless. By faith. We can rest confidently. In the palm of his hand.

[15:29] And know for assurity. His keeping power. I just love the sure confidence. That I can have. In the finished work of Christ. The finished work of the cross.

Philippians 1 verse 6. Paul says. Being confident. Confident. Of this very thing. Which he. That hath begun. A good work in you. Will perform it. Until the day of Jesus Christ.

He that has begun. A good work in you. Will perform it. Will perform it. Until the day. Of Jesus Christ. That's Christian assurance. God has begun.

A work. And he will complete it. The Bible talks about. The full assurance. The full assurance. Of understanding. Colossians 2 verse 2. The full assurance. Of hope.

Hebrews 6 verse 11. The full assurance. Of faith. Hebrews 10 verse 22. So we can know. The certainty. Of divine revelation. God says it.

[16:26] That's it. The certainty. Of Christian assurance. Your salvation. Has passed you. From death to life. For I know whom. I have believed.

There's also the certainty. Of God's ability. Paul says. For the which cause. I also suffer these things. Nevertheless. I am not ashamed. For I know. Whom.

I have believed. And I am persuaded. That he is able. To keep that which I. Have committed unto him. Against that day. God is able. He is able. He is able to keep.

God is not weak. Our God is powerful. He is the great. Awesome power of the universe. The great. Awesome creator. Of heaven and earth.

Of the universe. God is not weak. God is able. God is able. I am not able. But God is able. God is able.

[17:21] He is able. To make grace abound towards you. 2 Corinthians 9 verse 8. And God is able. To make all grace. Abound toward you. That ye always having. All sufficiency. In all things.

May abound. To every good work. God is able. To do. In your life. What you are not able to do. He is able to do. Exceeding abundantly. Above all. That we ask or think.

According to the power. That worketh in us. Ephesians 3 verse 20. And he is able to hear. And answer your prayers. Isn't that fantastic? That he is able.

Not only to hear them. But to answer them. And this is the confidence. 1 John 5. 14 to 15. And this is the confidence. That we have. In him. That.

If we ask anything. According to his will. He heareth us. And if we know. That he hear us. Whatsoever we ask. We know. That we have the petitions. That we desire of him.

[18:16] This is the confidence. That we have in him. When you pray. This is the confidence. That we have. When you ask. He will hear you. And he will. Answer your prayer.

There is a certainty there. A certainty there. In uncertain times. We have the certainty. Of divine revelation. We have the certainty.

Of Christian assurance. The certainty. Of God's ability. And another one. Is the certainty. Of sound doctrine.

For I know. Whom I believe. There is the certainty. Of sound doctrine. Our belief. Our faith. Is founded upon. What God says. And who he is. In Ephesians 4.

14. Paul exhorts. The Ephesians. He says. That we henceforth. Be no more children. Tossed to and from. And carried about. With every wind of doctrine.

[19:14] By the slight of men. And cunning craftiness. Whereby they lie in wait. To deceive. But speaking the truth. In love. May grow up. Into him. In all things.

Which is the head. Even Christ. That we be. No. No more children. Tossed to and from. Who's seen children. Oh. They can't make up their minds. They don't know what they want.

People. Here. There. And everywhere. Floating around. With the wind. Whatever the latest fad. Or fashion is. Jumping on the bandwagon.

Here or there. And just following. The latest craze. Many are like that. With doctrine. Unstable. In doctrine. They're not grounded. Not grounded.

Christians everywhere. Are flaky. And floundering. Wavering. Confused. Why? 2 Timothy 4.3.

[20:09] It says. For the time will come. When. They will not endure. Sound doctrine. But after their own lust. They'll heap to themselves. Teachers. Having itching ears. There's plenty of teachers.

You can tune into. There's a crying need. For good. Solid. Teaching. Now the Christian bookstore. Shelves of today.

I've been blessed. To collect. Some. Old time. Solid. Gospel preaching. Materials. In my lifetime. I've got some good books. I go down to the Christian bookstore. And it's just. Pails. Into. Just. It's just weak and trashy. Flaky writers. And teachings. And. Much to be desired.

On the Christian bookstore. Shelves of today. And. And. On the airways. The TV preachers. Popular TV preachers. Are largely. Off beam.

[21:04] And we've got charismatic confusion. Filling the airways. Taking over. Christian music. Holus. Holus. It's all just. Blah. Blah. Blah. You know. There's no.

No doctrine to it anymore. And we see. A crying need. For teaching. A lack of teaching. A lack of discernment.

We need. A renewed. Biblical conviction. The certainty. Of sound doctrine. And we're getting there. Just to. We've. Just to recap. Thus far.

The certainty. Of divine revelation. God says it. The certainty. Of Christian assurance. You can know. That you're saved. The certainty. Of God's ability.

He's able. To do. The certainty. Of sound doctrine. For I know. Whom. I have believed. There's also. The certainty. Of Christ's coming. I know.

[21:57] Whom. I have believed. I'm persuaded. He's able. To keep that. Which I've commended. Unto him. Against that day. That day. That day. This day. Of his coming. The day of his returning. There's a day coming.

There's a day coming. In which everything. Will be exposed. There's a day coming. When everything. Will be revealed. Nothing. Will be hidden. From his sight. Everything. Will come to light. That day. Will be the day. Of his appearing. The day of his returning. And on this day. Of this day. We have a certain hope. There's a certain hope. For you. That trust him.

Titus 2. It says. Looking for that. Blessed hope. And the glorious appearing. Of the great God. And our saviour. Jesus Christ. For us that believe. There is a blessed hope.

And this word hope. It carries the sense. Of a confident expectation. That is the sense. As it was understood. When this was penned. Of the word hope. Is of confident expectation.

[22:54] The assurance that we have. Is that Christ will come. And we confidently expect his coming. In glorious power. He will come back. And take charge. He will take his rightful place.

As the authority. And for every time. The Bible mentions. The first coming of Christ. It mentions his second coming. Eight times. That's amazing. Isn't it? Mentions his coming.

Calvary. Calvary is coming. In the flesh. But it mentions his second coming. Eight times. In comparison to those times. Those references. And we can find a certainty.

In uncertain times. A biblical conviction. That holds us steady. Like an anchor. Sure, steady, certain, steadfast. Which hope we have. As an anchor of the soul.

Hebrews 6 verse 19. Let us be a God fearing people. That preaches the word of God. And believes it. In the light of the second coming. Friends.

[23:50] It's 2015. Who never thought we'd say 2015. You know. It makes you. Bob was the line. Doesn't it? That we're already in 2015.

Could it be this year. That our Lord returns. It could be. It could be. Friends. We don't know how long we have. In the light of the second coming. Let us be ready.

Let us be a prepared people. Wakeful. Watching. Working. Therefore, my beloved brethren. Be ye steadfast. Unmovable. Always abounding.

In the work of the Lord. For you know. As much as you know. That your labour. Is not in vain. In the Lord. In uncertain times. Uncertain times.

In this time. Of spiritual uncertainty. And spiritual confusion. And conflict. We need something rock solid. That we can stand on. We need that.

[24:44] That trumpet call. That is resounding. And clear. And has a certain sound. A certain sound. Not an uncertain sound. So let us resolutely.

Hold fast to these. Spiritual certainties. The certainty. Of divine revelation. Get this book. And believe it. Plant your faith. In God's truth.

