

Endure: II Timothy 3:1-9 – Predictions of Faithlessness

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[0 : 00] If you have a copy of the Scriptures, go ahead and turn it open to 2 Timothy 3. We're going to be looking at verses 1 through 9 this morning. A little bit of a heavy section is Doug just read for us.

So let's ask the Lord to use it, but to encourage us in the midst of some difficult words. So let me pray for our time and then we will dive into our study as we work through 2 Timothy together. So let's pray. Father, it is so good to be here to begin our week seeking your face, seeking to be of encouragement to your people.

Lord, thank you for the gospel. Thank you Lord Jesus that you delighted to die for sinners. Lord, that we might be forgiven of much, that we might be clean before a holy God, that we might be brought back into relationship as it was in the garden.

And so Lord, we celebrate the fact that we are yours this morning. If there are some here that have never professed Jesus, they've never bowed their knee and asked you Jesus to forgive them of their sins and to be their Savior.

[1 : 24] I pray that today would be the day of their salvation. But Lord, as we come to some difficult words, I pray that you would gladden our hearts, that you would be gracious to us.

And Lord, that we, as George Mueller would say, we would be happy in the Word. We would get happy in the Word this morning.

Lord, we would bathe our minds, our hearts in that which you have said is true. And Lord, I pray that as difficult as the words are, I pray Lord that we would leave here hopeful and encouraged.

Because we have heard from you, you tell us the truth and there are good days ahead. Jesus, would you accomplish in us whatever we have need of this morning?

If it's encouragement, if it's a reminder that you have not forsaken us. Lord, whatever it is by the power of your Word, your Spirit, I ask that you would accomplish only that which you can do.

[2 : 28] We pray this in Jesus' name. And all that people said. Amen. Amen. So this morning I've entitled the message, I didn't even look in the insert, but Godless Days, or we could say Godless People.

So it tells you kind of all you need to know in terms of the cheeriness of this section. As we come to this section, we think about the Apostle Paul.

He is at the end of his life when he writes this letter to Timothy. Currently he's in prison in Rome. A tradition tells us that he was there in the Mamertine prison, which has also been called the House of Darkness.

Historians record that this was a place of darkness, of neglect, of stench. And originally this prison was a cistern that was turned into a dungeon-like prison.

And those that were sent to this prison typically were sent as they awaited their execution. And so there's really a heaviness to this letter, oftentimes, that we miss.

[3 : 45] This is the setting that Paul finds himself in as he then puts pen to thoughts and writes these words to his young protege to endure.

He's encouraging Timothy. Challenges lie ahead. Difficulty related to Gospel ministry and Timothy endure. Courage, Timothy.

As you pastor there in Ephesus, we know that he's been left there in 1 Timothy 1.3. We're told that he has been put at the post there, pastoring that church, that important church right there at the crossroads of the Mediterranean, right in the heart of the Roman Empire.

And Paul's encouraging him. Courage, Timothy. Endure, Timothy. Share in the suffering for the Gospel, Timothy.

Share in the suffering as a good soldier of Christ Jesus. Timothy, we're at war and we labor for the souls of men. And if possible, as Jude says in Jude 1.23, we want to snatch them even out of the fires of hell itself.

[5 : 00] And so Paul here at the end of his life, he has spent his life laboring for the Gospel. And now Timothy, now it is your turn. And so let's pick up this exhortation to endure that Paul has here in chapter 3.

And perhaps as we read this, there will be some help for us as we think about enduring as well in the days that the Lord has called us to represent him. So let's begin here in verse 1 together.

Paul writes, but understand this, that in the last days there will come times of difficulty. Now this is almost unnecessary for Paul to say as we sort of, we have the optics of Paul here sitting in prison because he's aligned himself with Jesus.

In fact, it's said in chapter 2, verse 9, Jesus has preached in my Gospel for which I am bound with chains as a criminal.

So we know that Gospel ministry is hard. In fact, Paul is here in prison writing these words to Timothy. I'm in prison, Timothy, because I chose to tell other people about the kind shepherd that we know.

[6 : 24] That there's a Savior that desperately wants to forgive the sins of those that he created in his image. And he starts here in this section by first saying to Timothy, but understand this.

But, so Paul begins this section with a conjunction to say conversely or in contrast, that's what it's but for, like, stew is good for dinner, but pizza would be better, right?

You can get a degree from Wazoo, but it's not worth a whole lot. And we could go on and on.

Suffice to say, Paul here is contrasting something for Timothy. And what is he contrasting? Well, let's go back to chapter 2, the last two verses, verses 25 and 26.

This is this, correcting his opponents with gentleness, God may perhaps grant them repentance leading to a knowledge of the truth. And they may come to their senses and escape from the snare of the devil after being captured by him to do his will.

[7 : 35] So Paul here is saying, yes, some opponents, some critics, some who were hostile towards Jesus, they will repent. But, Timothy, that said, in the last days, there will come times of difficulty.

Now, why is Paul taking the time to tell Timothy this? And I would say he's trying to calibrate his expectations for that which lies ahead.

He's preparing Timothy for the challenge of representing Jesus in his day. So that when things get difficult, Timothy's not derailed.

I had a little project at home last week where we moved a fire pit from one place, the backyard, to another place. And I needed some serious helpers, so I got the twins and I'm like, guys, we're going to take all these bricks.

We're going to put them here in the bucket and we're going to move them over to this section of the yard. I want you guys to know this is going to be hard work. We've got to put on some gloves. We're going to get a little sweaty.

[8 : 44] It's going to hurt a little bit, but we're going to do it. Are you guys ready to do this? Yeah! And you know what? They did a great job. But I was preparing them because I knew halfway through this project if I didn't prepare them, that was hot.

I'm thirsty. Oh, dad, can we go play basketball? So I was preparing them. It's why here at 4th we do a lot of premarital counseling.

We want to prepare one sinner to move into, in with another sinner, and it not just blow apart. And when that marital bliss has sort of worn off a little bit, we want them to know, hey, there's going to be some challenging days.

We're preparing them to be able to do that thing well. Well, ministry in a fallen world is going to be hard when?

Well, Paul tells us it's going to be hard in the last days. When are those? Well, the last days, it's this period of time between Christ's first advent and His return.

[9 : 54] And we know that because Scripture tells us in a few different places. Let me just highlight a couple here. In Hebrews 1, 2 it says, but in these last days, He spoke to us by His Son.

So we already know that on when Jesus, His first advent, He's present and they are referred to as now the last days. We recall from our study in the book of Acts, Acts 2, that in the last days as it shall be, God declares, that I will pour out my spear on all flesh.

So we know that when Jesus was around last days, now the church age, the last days. And so we are living in those last days right now.

The thing that I want to just mention, the closer that we get to Christ's return, the more distressing the days will become.

We know this because the disciples ask Jesus a question, what will be the sign of Your coming? And He told them in Matthew 24, 10 to 12, He said, and then many will fall away and betray one another and hate one another.

[11 : 05] And many false prophets will arise and lead many astray, catch this, and because lawlessness will be increased, the love of many will grow cold.

So Jesus is saying as we near His return, as we near the second coming of Christ, you're going to see apostasy in those that profess Christ, and you're going to see an increase in lawlessness.

Things are only going to get worse. Now, it says there will be times of difficulty. This word difficulty, it's used in the New Testament only one other time, and that's in Matthew 8.

And in Matthew 8 it's describing two demoniacs. And it says of these two individuals in Matthew 8, 28, that these two are so fierce, which is this word difficulty, that no one could pass their way.

So that's the word that's being used here. In the last days, there's going to be times of difficulty. In classical Greek, this word difficulty was used to describe wild animals or raging waters at sea.

[12 : 23] So savagery and violence in these days is going to be typical. Now, perhaps this isn't a constant rhythm, and yet there will be times of difficulty. And so think of it as seasons of evil or cycles of evil.

They will be constant, maybe not uniformly, always as bad as it could be, but there will be cycles, a rhythm of evil. We know what Peter says in 2 Peter 3.3, he said that in the last days, scoffers will increase.

Paul said in 1 Timothy 4.1 that in these days, some will even depart the faith and worship demons. It was like last weekend in Boston, and we had this convention, right? Not for comic books or superheroes or video games, but for Satan.

And it was like Satan con. If you read the news and about a thousand attending that, and the way they commenced that gathering was, let's rip up a Bible.

And as they interviewed individuals attending, there was this sense of, oh, well, we don't believe in a real Satan. Just sort of a metaphor. It's kind of a philosophy on life.

[13 : 46] And they don't realize many of the folks I believe that are participating have no clue what they have signed up for. Suffice to say, Timothy, recalibrate your expectations.

Fourth, let us recalibrate our expectations as we minister in these last days. Why are these days so bad? Why are they so violent? Why is there such savagery on planet Earth?

What is producing these seasons of difficulty? Well, Paul tells us here in verses 2 through 4. He says, for people, let's just stop for a moment.

We have our answer. Okay? There's the problem. The destruction on planet Earth, the destruction of society, it has nothing to do with the planet rebelling against its inhabitants.

It has nothing to do with the fact that people are sucking milkshakes through plastic straws. That's not the issue here. The issue here are the inhabitants, are the people on the planet.

[15 : 05] What produces these seasons of difficulty? Paul tells us, people. And then Paul gives us a list of 18 characteristics of the people in the last days.

And if you want to just jot and kind of compare notes, he says a very similar list in Romans at the end of Romans 1 verses 29 to 31. And this is a depressing list. This is what he says.

For people will be lovers of self, lovers of money, proud, arrogant, abusive, disobedient to their parents, ungrateful, unholy, heartless, unappeasable, slanderous, without self-control, brutal, not loving good, treacherous, reckless, swollen with conceit, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God.

Man, as you read this list, I don't know if it sort of hits you, but this counters that notion that the Bible is somehow dated and not relevant.

Because as you read this list, it just roars, this is as relevant as it gets. Like it nails our world in precision. This is the day in which we live.

[16:42] Now, there's a lot on the list. And I'm not going to go through the entire list. Let me just sort of highlight a few of these and I think we'll get the flavor.

This is what's true of the world. And I think as we read this church, I think what's helpful for us is to not go, oh, this is them. I think we always have to be introspective and go, is this us as well?

So let's read that in that sobering spirit. But a few on the list, I find this one interesting on the list, disobedient to parents. I find it interesting that made the list. And what you have here on this list is you see like there's this aversion in the world to authority, never been dealt with.

Then it's amplified into all of life as boys become men and girls become women. And you see here this disobedient to parents. It's just this description highlights the disintegration of the nuclear family.

That's what will be true in the last days. Any culture that becomes hostile towards the bedrock of that society is destined to ruin.

[18:00] And we see it before our eyes. We see it before our eyes. In fact, we're in a nation that has become hostile towards parents and many friends.

Another characteristic true in these last days, men will be unappeasable. I will not forgive you. You are not forgivable.

In fact, I'm not even going to listen to you. And in fact, I think this word unappeasable, we live in a time where there's no place for the exchange of ideas.

Civil discourse is gone. Rage defines truth. Sound familiar?

These are difficult days because truth has vaporized. It's striking to me that 100 years ago, G.K. Chesterton wrote this.

[19:04] 100 years ago, predicting. He says, we shall soon be in a world in which a man may be howled down for saying that two and two make four.

In which furious party cries will be raised against anybody who says that cows have horns. In which people will persecute the heresy of calling a triangle a three-sided figure and hang a man for maddening the mob with the news that grass is green.

We sort of chuckle, but this is the age in which we live. Marriage, that's not marriage. That's not a girl. That's not a boy. And the list goes on.

It's a day in which men will be slanderous. This word slanderous, diaboloi, backbiter's, gossips. People will be devils in their speech about others. They think social media has sort of allowed the parade of the flesh to show itself in this regard.

[20:17] Slanderous. May it not be said of us. May we not look at another church and somehow think we are somehow better and speak ill or down because of something that they lack or something that we possess.

Without self-control, people will be ungovernable, live without restraint. Brutal, heartless. Are these brutal days, church?

Turn on the news. Some bystander being sucker punched, children beating up on other children, teens bullied, lives taken.

There's just this lack of empathy in our age. Amen? People are reckless. People live without the thought of consequence.

Swollen with conceit. A puffed up society. Man, it's so good to be part of the selfie generation. Look at us.

[21:35] No, really, look at us. It's about my brand. And it's a complete orientation of one's life around self.

And those are just some of the highlights. But if we were to really sort of examine this list that Paul gives us, the devices can be condensed down to the bookends of the list because Paul begins and ends with really the central issue, the central problem.

Because he says at the very front end of this that men will be lovers of self, lovers of money, lovers of stuff, materialism.

They will be lovers of pleasure rather than, at the end, lovers of God. The list is simply the fruit of a life that has rejected one's maker.

It's an amplification of rebellion against one's maker. I love my needs. I love my wants.

[22:41] I love my ideas. I love my version of reality. So God and those that somehow think they speak for Him, get out of my face.

Get out of my life. In fact, I think our world would be better without you, judgy Christians in it.

Church, nothing has changed. We live in the last days. So did Timothy and so did Paul. Because as I recall, it was the first century where Paul is imprisoned because what?

The Christians were somehow responsible for the fact that Rome was burning. Well, isn't that the problem today? All the evils in society, Christians are to blame.

You know what's ironic about this list that Paul gives us? Our society, it says man's problem is what? That he doesn't love who enough himself.

[23 : 51] So we sort of spoon fed one another for decades. This self-esteem language. I mean, how is that working out for us? Not well.

The planet is in a mess. And from God's perspective, man loves himself too much. All the while rejecting his maker.

And we are now reaping the harvest as a result. So Timothy, these last days, they're going to be difficult.

Expect it. Expect things to be hard. Jesus told us that, right? In John 16:33. Hey, guess what? In the world, you're going to have what? Green pastures? No, you're going to have tribulations. Now, this list that Paul gives us is depressing.

[24 : 53] But this is Paul's chief concern actually in this passage. We can look at the world around us and we can quickly observe that man's living in rebellion, that there's decadence everywhere.

Paul's fear for Timothy is not the world necessarily behaving badly. Rather, it's the carnal man pretending to be something that he's not within the confines of the church body.

And so verse 5 is actually quite shocking after this list of heinous characteristics that we just got done looking at. Because Paul goes on to tell Timothy in verse 5, having the appearance of godliness but denying its power.

Avoid such people. So think about this list of 18 vices and now he's saying that there may be some among you within the church pretending to be something other than what they really are.

That there might be wolves in sheep's clothing. The same thing to Titus in Titus 1:16, he says, they profess to know God but they deny Him by their works.

[26 : 07] This is Paul's chief concern in this passage. Pretenders, charlatans, those who secretly live for self all the while projecting a sincerity of faith.

Timothy, be aware. There may be folks in your church gathering that raise their hands. They sing the songs. They behave well when gathered.

All the while they are someone very different when away from God's people. There was a group in Jesus' day, you recall them? The Pharisees, right?

Can I just mention something quickly? Paul is not speaking to the Christian who is freaked out that they're not really saved because they sinned yesterday.

So if that's you going, oh no, I don't love the Lord. Paul's not speaking to you. If there's concern over your sin, that's a good thing.

[27 : 14] That's evidence of faith being present. The list we're talking about are those that know that they're about themselves but yet they are pretending.

And for believers to thrive and endure in these godless days, Paul in this entire section has only one single exhortation.

And it's here in verse 5. This is the single exhortation in this passage. And it's this, hey, Timothy, avoid such people.

That's it. You want to endure in these godless days? Then don't track with those that are pretending.

Because if you do, they'll shipwreck your faith. And there's a truth. We become so much like those that we spend time with.

[28 : 13] I had the opportunity to have a conversation Friday night with one of the coordinators from this local ministry, Maddie's Place. This ministry that works with children born to moms addicted to drugs, alcohol, substance abuse.

And as I was talking with this gal, asking questions, understanding kind of what they do in terms of helping these infants, I was curious and I said, hey, the moms that deliver these children, have you seen any of them come to sobriety, clean up and be able to engage with their children?

And I was encouraged because she said, actually, yeah, we have. We've seen four moms who were just addicted to fentanyl and, I mean, the list.

And they have cleaned up their lives. And they're able to now be moms to their children. And I was like, that's incredible. It's incredible. I'm like, and how?

And she says, well, simple, because of Jesus and the community that we put them in. And it was like, yes, yes.

[29 : 36] And it's just it echoes the truth that Paul has for Timothy here. Man, be careful who you are walking with, who you are doing life with, because they will affect you, they will influence you.

And potentially, if you're hanging out with the wrong folks, they will shipwreck your faith. Now, what Paul is not telling Timothy here, he's not telling Timothy, hey, Timothy, avoid the world.

He's not doing that. In fact, we're going to see that, I don't know if it's next week or the week after, but in 2 Timothy 4, verse 5, Paul tells Timothy, hey, Timothy, do the work of an evangelist and fulfill your ministry.

So you have to be walking in the world. But who is it that you're fellowshiping with? And recall Paul's words even to the Corinthians in 1 Corinthians 5, 9, where he writes this.

He says, hey, I wrote to you in my letter not to associate with sexually immoral people, not at all meaning the sexually immoral of the world, or the greedy and swindlers or idolaters, since then you would need to go out of the world.

[30 : 47] So Paul is saying, avoid the world. But this is what he is saying, verse 11, but now I am writing to you not to associate with anyone who bears the name of brother, Christian, if he is guilty of sexual immorality or greed or as an idolater, reviler, drunker, swindler, or even to eat with such a one.

So Paul's concern here, his chief concern is for the purity of the church, for the sanctification, for the youthfulness of God's people. You want to endure in these godless days?

Then love the church and make sure those that you are fellowshiping with, that you are spending time with, are calling you towards a greater holiness, a greater commitment to the Lord.

Amen? I think a couple of very simple questions that we can ask ourselves related to the health of our faith in these godless days. First is this, do I, fellowship, make close friends with those individuals that call me to greater holiness or greater compromise?

The recipe is pretty simple. Here's a second question. Do I influence others towards greater commitment to the Lord?

[32 : 19] You know, Hebrews 10.24 says, let us consider how to stir one another on to love and good works.

Here's the question for Jay. You can take it if you want to, or if the Holy Spirit takes it and forces it upon you, I'm not. This is just me sharing the question that I have for myself.

As a father, am I pointing my family towards Jesus and serving Him? Or am I simply showing them how to be successful in the world and how to have a good time?

How to have fun? That's the question I ask myself on occasion.

A little too convicting, why don't we move on? Let's look at verses 6 and 7 here. For among them are those who creep into households and capture weak women, burden with sins and let astray by various passions, always learning and never able to arrive at a knowledge of the truth.

[33 : 31] So Paul goes on to describe some of the treacherous behavior of these spiritual pretenders. Here they appear to be actually in leadership.

They have some level of influence, but instead of using this influence to serve, they're using it in order to feed their flesh, to feed their appetites on those that they have been entrusted to shepherd and to care for.

And the example here is weak women, gullible women who are living in guilt of sinful choices, wanting to belong, wanting to be affirmed, and these charlatans are taking advantage.

I've had a number of uber conversations with young women wanting to be loved, and thereby sleeping with those they go out on dates with too many.

And it's sad and it's heart wrenching. And I would just say this, evil will always look to exploit the weak. And Jesus yet models something very different because recall, Jesus met in John 4 with a woman at the well, a woman who had been laid down with many sins, but He didn't objectify her.

[35 : 03] He sought to serve her, to forgive her, and to give her dignity. And He sets a great example for us there.

Paul told Timothy in 1 Timothy 5, too, hey, as you think about older women, you see them as mothers. You think about younger women in the church, you think of them as sisters and treat them

accordingly.

I think that's a good exhortation for us. Let me camp on this phrase for a moment, though, because it describes these women as always learning and never able to arrive at a knowledge of the truth. So describing these vulnerable women, sort of embodying the spirit of actually the age in which we live, right? I've got to watch another talk show, I've got to read another blog to figure out what I really think about everything.

And that's the spirit of the age in which we live. That has become the spirit, unfortunately, in many a church. This is the new spirituality. We just keep learning, learning, learning, but we don't really know anything.

[36 : 12] There's no conviction of spirit in that list that Eric gave us last week. There's nothing to die for.

It's in fashion, and it's in fashion today among spiritual pretenders. You know why? Because if they come to a knowledge of God's truth, they now have nothing innovative to say.

It's no longer them being clever about a new idea. See, the new spirituality today is all about not knowing anything for certain.

Which is why in the exhortation last week, know the Word. Be a good workman. Be approved.

Know God's Word. It's a lamp, it's a light.

Don't know anything. I don't know if some of you were familiar with the ministry of Joshua Harris. He wrote the book, I Kissed 80 Goodbye, and used to pastor Sovereign Grace, the church with C.J. Mahaney, influential individual, subsequently, recent years, divorces his wife, left his family with a new gal, and he's rejected his faith altogether.

[37 : 35] And he so embodies. Yes, I'm name in a name. But he embodies this spirit, always learning, never able to come to a knowledge of the truth.

His Instagram profile, this is how he describes himself. I used to have, he was a pastor, a preacher of the gospel.

I used to have all the answers, chapter and verse. Now I'm happily uncertain, unlearning and letting the story unfold.

Wow, so intellectually honest. No. No, it's cowardice. And it's really just simply licensed to live a life without restraint.

That's what it is. And because you stand for nothing, everybody just applauds you. And you can be loved by all. And it's garbage. It's garbage.

[38 : 38] This depressing section, you're welcome. Actually, thank you, Scott, for directing this my way.

We get a promise at the end. So let's turn the corner. Yes, verses 8 and 9. Paul writes, just as Janus and Jamborees opposed Moses, so these men also opposed the truth, men corrupted in mind, disqualified in regards to faith, but they will not get very far, for their folly will be plain to all, as was that of those two men.

So interesting that Paul, at the end of his life, he names names. I'm in good company.

And if you recall, in chapter 1, he names a couple individuals. Chapter 2, he does the same. And then here again in chapter 3. And he's basically saying, hey, don't be like these men, these fools, Janus and Jamborees, although not named an exodus, these two individuals, Jewish history records, these two men are the magicians that opposed Moses, right?

At first, they were able to replicate through demonic powers, the miracles, lost steam. So three miracles into the ten, they were not able to replicate and make gnats.

[40 : 11] So they kind of, it was revealed, this is who they actually are. And Paul's point here in naming these individuals is saying, hey, they look like the genuine article for a while, but eventually their true colors showed.

They showed. It's interesting, there was a church on the west side when I was pastoring, that man, they were just, they were so into culture and they were just the cool, they were one of the cool churches at the time.

And then one afternoon, it was a Seahaw game and they said, hey, let's bring kegs in for the entire congregation and basically through a church keger. And it was like, man, they're so relevant. And I had students as a youth pastor that then made their church home as adults and it shipwrecked a number of their face.

The pastor, however, you see who he is because today he doesn't pastor. Today you can pay him big money for him to lead you through psychedelic experiences by taking mushrooms and other drugs and, you know, drugs to kind of create, he's a shaman.

He used to claim to be a pastor that represented Jesus. But time has shown, this is who this individual is. And that's what Paul is telling to Timothy. You know what? They may start, they may start strong, they may look like the general article, but in time you're going to see who they are.

[41 : 41] They're true colors. They're going to show those playing games with God. And ultimately, they're going to be forgotten church. They're going to be forgotten.

They're going to be destined to an eternity in regret. Unbearable regret. And as depressing as this passage is, because yes, we continue to live in the last days, let me just give us a snapshot of what lies ahead because we have this incredible picture of not dark days, but very light, beautiful days as we think about Christ's return.

And from Isaiah chapter 60, verses two and three, we have an image really, I think of the millennial kingdom, the millennial reign of Christ, but Isaiah writes this, And what's beautiful church is that's not just for the future.

That's also for today, because in the Gospel of Matthew, in the Sermon of the Mount, what did Jesus say? He says, fourth, you're the light of the world.

You're a city on a hill that cannot be hidden. You're the light of the world. But, Jay, it's getting hard. Yeah, but you're the light of the world.

[43 : 23] But folks aren't going to like me. Yeah, but you're the light of the world. But I might lose my place of influence. I might even lose my job, but you're the light of the world.

To Jay, it's hard as promised, as promised. And yet, you're the light of the world. So church's darkness continues to be present.

There's plenty of work for us to do, amen? Father, thank you that we know that ultimately Jesus, you reign. And every knee will bow, and every tongue will confess that you are Lord.

Thank you for the ministry that you've called us to. Thank you that you would forgive sinners that we might be able to offer life and light to those without. Lord, we know that we live in a dark city.

We see brokenness in homes. We see it on the streets. We see it in the schools. Lord, would you stir in us a desire to endure, to proclaim?

[44 : 32] Lord, might we cherish these gatherings where we're with other believers? And might we have an aim to strengthen one another when we are gathered? Not simply to talk about the events of the week or the weekend or the hobbies, but Lord, find ways to exhort, to pray over because we are at war.

And you have called us in these last days, Jesus, this final chapter before you return for your bride that we would represent you, and we would call men and women unto repentance.

Lord, thank you that there are some lost and dark as today in the city that you aim to rescue. Might you use us and the other churches in this city? Lord, we want to be useful in your hands.

And so Father, if there's sin in our life, if there's somehow darkness present that we need to repent of, we want to do that. We want to just be in that posture of surrender.

Would you give us the capacity to say yes, Lord, and to obey? And if we are somehow continuing to struggle, might we have the courage to call upon another and maybe another to be that community around us to encourage us?

[45 : 48] Because we know how influential those are that we walk with, as Paul has told to Timothy. Lord, thank you that you have called us each to ministry and you have told us you're the light of the world.

Help us endure Jesus. In your name we pray. Amen.