

# Hold Fast to the Faith

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[ 0:00 ] Hey, good morning. I want to invite you to turn with me, if you would, in your Bibles to 1 Timothy chapter 1.

! 1 Timothy chapter 1 in our continuing series in this letter.! If you're using the Pew Bible in front of you, it's on page 991. The last song just kind of set the tone for the passage for today, where we're called to listen to the call from Christ the Captain, and we're reminded about the call to war that we have been given as God's church, both of which will be themes of this morning's message.

A call to war and following after the message and the marching orders of our Captain Jesus Christ. But how much do we see the Christian life as a battle?

How much awareness is there in our life about the enemy that we fight and the battle that rages around us? That song also helped to allude to the fact that there is a battle that happens, and in order to be prepared for that battle, there's weaponry that we're given.

There's armor that the Christian has given to help engage this battle in a way that will help to protect him, help to safeguard him. Ephesians chapter 6 verse 10.

[ 1:33 ] Be strong in the Lord and the strength of his might. Put on the whole armor of God that you may be able to stand against the wiles or the schemes of the devil.

We have an enemy that is ferocious. We have an enemy that is out to destroy your faith. We have an enemy that is interested in dismantling truth so he can disassemble and deconstruct your confidence in God and in his word and help you or cause you to abandon the faith that you have.

We live in a time and an age where the word deconstruction perhaps has become more and more familiar. You become more and more aware of deconstruction that's happening all around us.

So that prominent leaders and pastors, maybe the most prominent that you would know is Joshua Harris, who because of deconstruction has essentially abandoned the faith and has postured himself against the gospel.

A book that's been written recently, it's called The Deconstruction of Christianity. It's by Alyssa Childers and Tim Barnett. I would recommend that book to you.

[ 2:47 ] It helps to provide some understanding related to this topic. They describe the deconstruction movement this way. They say faith deconstruction is a postmodern process of, excuse me, rethinking your faith without regarding Scripture as a standard.

The desire is for you to evaluate those things, those tenets of truth, and reevaluate them in light of the culture and then push them away because of the arguments that they will give to try to undermine those truths.

One of the first and prominent leaders of this, his name is Blake Chastain. They say that he grew up in an evangelical church and began to deconstruct during college.

Although he attends a mainline church, he articulates that he is, to some degree, an agnostic. In 2016, he birthed the hashtag, and for those of you who are aware of hashtags, those of us in my generation, maybe not so much, but a hashtag movement called Exvangelical.

Not evangelical, but Exvangelical, which has since grown into a movement with multiple millions of views on TikTok and over 100,000 impressions on Twitter every day.

[ 4:16 ] 100,000 impressions on Twitter with the hashtag, Exvangelical. Blake Chastain has penned a blog post in which he has fleshed out what it means to use this hashtag, Exvangelical.

He referred to it as a working definition and acknowledged that there is more work to do. But the number one tenant of those who would follow after the Exvangelical hashtag is they push against a literal reading of the Scripture.

They don't want a literal reading of the Scripture. They don't want a standard of truth that is over us and provides a measure of accountability. They want to undermine the faith by disarming and discrediting the truth.

It's the age-old problem that goes all the way back to creation. It's the same thing that the enemy did in the garden when instructions were given to Adam and Eve about how to live.

What were they told? Don't eat of the tree in the midst of the garden because you eat of the tree that's in the midst of the garden, you will surely die. And what does Satan do? Satan does what every deconstructionist does, and that is to call the truth claims, the commands of God into question.

[ 5:39 ] He says, Did God really say? And that becomes the hallmark of the deconstruction movement, to call into question the truth claims of God.

And then to turn and twist those truth claims and to present them as not true. And Satan then will say, in response to Eve, he will say, You will not surely die.

This is the age in which we live. This age of deconstruction, of calling into question the truth claims of Scripture and to discredit them and dismantle them, not just to try to deconstruct the truth for you, but especially to deconstruct your faith so that you will totally abandon God.

Here's the deconstruction project. It works in three stages. Stage one, identify a problem in society. Step two, show how the church has actively endorsed or passively allowed injustice in that area.

And then step three, conclude that because the church was passive in this seeming area of injustice, then it just helps to underscore the fact that they don't really embrace the truths that are in the word of God at all.

[ 7:00 ] And so, you need to abandon the church altogether. Of course, we understand, as Paul will say in this letter to Timothy, that the church is the pillar and the buttress of the truth.

And so, if we as God's people are going to preserve and protect ourselves and to safeguard ourselves from the error of deconstruction, we need to follow the instructions that were given by the Apostle Paul in this letter to help safeguard our hearts to maintain this consistent appeal and love for the truth.

Forever to remain in the truth and to stand strong in the face of opposition and uncertainty, we need to heed the warning and the instructions the Apostle Paul will give to us in our passage this morning.

So, if you're not already there, please turn with me to 1 Timothy 1. We're going to begin in verse 12, kind of pick it up in the midway and carry it through the end.

We're going to begin to recognize that one of the first safeguards for us in helping to preserve our hearts and our minds and to preserve them in the truth, we need to celebrate God's work in our life.

[ 8:19 ] We must celebrate God's work in our life. Notice verse 12. I thank Him who has given me strength, Christ Jesus our Lord, because He has judged me faithful, appointing me to His service.

Though formerly I was a blasphemer, a persecutor, and an insolent opponent, I received mercy because I acted ignorantly in unbelief. And the grace of our Lord overflowed for me with the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus.

Then He concludes this section in verse 17 with this. To the King of Ages, immortal, invisible, the only God, be honor and glory forever and ever.

Amen. Safeguard your heart by celebrating the work of God in your life. You see, it's hard to be critical when you're thankful.

It's hard to have the posture of one who is skeptical when your heart is moving towards worship, is moving in the direction of praise. And so the Apostle Paul throughout the course of his life is always seeming to amplify his heart in his life in celebrating the work of God in his life.

[ 9:36 ] It becomes and has become for him a bastion, a stronghold for him to safeguard his own heart in the face of deconstruction. This section is punctuated by praise to God from the beginning to end.

Paul is blown away by God's gracious work in his life. This opening phrase, thanks, is emphatic, meaning thanks is put at the very beginning so literally it should read, thanks I have to God.

This word thanks is the word kindness, grace, gift, and thanks. And Paul's begins with this thanks to God because he understands that it's God who has strengthened Paul for ministry.

That everything that the Apostle Paul has to be grateful for, everything that has been good in his life is due to the work of God. He's been strengthened by God.

So it leads his heart to thanksgiving. Paul is thankful for two significant reasons in our passage. He's first rejoicing in the strengthening power of Christ and second we're going to see in this little piece that he's thankful for God in appointing him to ministry.

[ 10:54 ] Everything that Paul has, everything that Paul has cherished, everything that Paul has accomplished in life is due to the work of Christ.

First, thankful for strength. This word for strength is the word cause to be able to give strength or to strengthen. It's in the passive voice which means that the Apostle Paul is a recipient of this strengthening power.

It's not a power that he brought to the table. It's not a strength that he put into practice. It was a work of God in strengthening him for a task. This word is used seven times in the New Testament but three times we find it here within 1 Timothy.

We see it in Acts 9 verse 22 where Paul's describing this work. I don't have this slide for you but listen. It says, but Paul increased all the more in strength and confounded the Jews who lived in Damascus by proving that Jesus was the Christ.

This strengthening work of God in Paul's life to help him to work out ministry. In Ephesians chapter 6 verse 10 the verse that we have quoted at the beginning of this time together.

[12:14] Finally be strong in the Lord in the strength of his might. That same strength that was available to the Apostle Paul is available to every believer in Christ. in 2 Timothy chapter 4 verse 17 but the Lord stood with me and strengthened me so that through me the message might be fully proclaimed and all the Gentiles might hear it so I was rescued from the lion's mouth.

Strengthening power of God to Paul to help him carry out the work of ministry that God had entrusted him to carry out. This testimony of Paul's life is that every good work in and through Paul is because of Christ's empowering work through him.

Second he judged him faithful notice appointing him to service. This word for judge is the word to consider the word to be of an opinion or to think or regard.

God regarded or considered that Paul was faithful. So when did God consider that Paul was faithful and then appointed him to ministry? Well on the surface perhaps it doesn't seem so surprising but when you know the life of the apostle Paul and when you come to understand when this appointment took place it will take your breath away to recognize that God's call for ministry coincided with God choosing the apostle Paul and setting apart for salvation.

You remember those of you who've read through the book of Acts in Acts chapter 9 you'll remember the story that Saul we don't need this slide quite yet but the apostle Saul who was Saul and then the apostle Paul he was given orders and letters to go to Damascus and the reason why he was going to Damascus is for the express purpose of rounding up the Christians both men and women and hauling them off to jail but just outside of Damascus what happens a light shines on Saul the apostle Paul shines on him and a voice comes from heaven and says Saul Saul why are you persecuting me?

[14:30] Jesus then instructs Paul to go into Damascus and wait for him there wait for further instructions those instructions would be that a man by the name of Ananias would come lay his hands on Paul and Paul would receive his sight meanwhile God shows up to Ananias in the city of Damascus Ananias has heard what Paul is going to do and in Acts chapter 9 verses 15 and 16 these are the instructions that now God will give to Ananias the Lord said go for he is a chosen instrument instrument of mine to carry my name before the Gentiles and kings and the children of Israel for I will show him how much he must suffer for the sake of my name a chosen instrument to carry my name before Gentiles how was he faithful well he was faithful on the basis of the faithfulness of God not on the basis of the faithfulness of Paul

Paul at this point hadn't become a Christian until a light shone on him on the road to Damascus he hadn't gone to seminary he hadn't been established in a church he hadn't proven himself as a faithful Christian for any length of time no God had set him apart God had appointed him for ministry at the moment of his conversion it was God's faithfulness that shines in the foreground of this passage this is how Paul describes it later in his letter to Galatians in Galatians chapter 1 verses 15 and 16 he says this but when he who had set me apart before I was born and who called me by his grace was pleased to reveal his son in me in order that I might preach him among the Gentiles God in his grace shone on the heart of the apostle Paul set him apart for salvation and simultaneously set him apart and appointed him for ministry this work of God was happening in and through the apostle Paul's life through no credit of Paul himself so that at this point

Paul is now emphasizing I thank him who has given me strength Christ Jesus because he judged me faithful appointing me to his service God's grace caused this ever abounding ever present thankfulness in Paul's heart which helped to strengthen him not only in the ministry but helped to preserve him in the face of the danger of deconstruction in verses 13 to 15 we find that God delivered Paul from sin God delivered Paul from sin notice though formerly!

though formerly I was a blasphemer a persecutor an insolent opponent I received mercy because I had acted ignorantly in unbelief and the grace of our Lord overflowed for me with the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus this saying is trustworthy and deserving of full acceptance that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners of whom I am the foremost the apostle Paul his posture of humility before the Lord not only in having a posture of thankfulness in understanding that God's mercy has caused him to be strengthened and set apart for ministry but here in verses 13 to 15 recognizing what he deserved who he really was and as one who is a recipient of the mercy and grace of God he stands as one who receives God's kindness he's not one who is in a place of passing judgment he's not one who's in a place of being a judge over God and over the truths that God has set before him he stands as one who is a humble recipient of those truths

Paul uses some strong language here to describe his condition we work through all of these these attitudes and characteristics that he that he spells out here a blasphemer a persecutor an insolent opponent foremost among sinners the worst of the worst I'm the chief of sinners it's especially interesting considering what Paul has just expounded on in verses 8 to 11 just back up with me for a moment I want to remind you of this because this is I think one of the big reasons why the apostle Paul takes this approach he says now we know this is verse 8 we know that the law is good if one uses it lawfully understanding this that the law is not laid down for the just but for the lawless and disobedient for the ungodly and sinner for the unholy and profane for those who strike their fathers and mothers and for murderers the sexually immoral men who practice homosexuality enslavers liars perjurers and whatever else is contrary to sound doctrine in accordance with the gospel of the glory of the blessed God with which

[19:52] I have been entrusted what is the apostle Paul doing here why does he spell out his sins why does he begin to compare himself with the sinners and insolent people the unholy and profane people of verses 8 to 11 Paul's personal testimony is by design Paul wants those in Ephesus and especially Timothy to recognize the posture of one who should be a true leader of God's church those who were in Ephesus who were teaching a different doctrine were not using the law in a correct way that's why the apostle Paul spells that out the law is good if one uses it lawfully and the implication then is that those who Timothy was to address were not using it in the right way they were teaching a different doctrine a doctrine that was totally unrelated to the doctrine and the gospel that the apostle Paul had originally provided a doctrine that is dependent upon depravity a doctrine that points to our unworthiness rather it's likely that those

Judaizers those teachers those leaders in Ephesus were seeking to draw attention to themselves hey look at us our ministry that's approved by the law look at our ministry that is validated by our morality look how godly we are how exemplary our lives look at the example that we set and the people we become Paul addresses this again in his second letter to Timothy in 2nd Timothy chapter 3 verses 1 to 5 he says understand this the law excuse me that in latter days there will be there will come times of difficulty people will be lovers of self lovers of money proud arrogant abusive disobedient to their parents ungrateful unholy having the appearance of godliness but denying the power avoid such people these teachers these leaders these spiritual authorities in the church of Ephesus were promoting their own goodness their own righteousness their own adherence to the law similar to what we find in other churches in the region and in the book of the letter to the Philippians in Philippians 3 4 to 8 the apostle Paul addresses a similar thing he says though I myself have reason for confidence in the flesh also if anyone thinks he has reason for confidence in the flesh

I more so let me just pause there for a moment basically those who are teaching those who are promoting themselves and looking at their credentials as it were of being the kinds of teachers that are exemplary and want you to have that same kind of life they want you to be validated by that same kind of posture apostle Paul says well if they think they have credentials then let me explain my credentials circumcised on the eighth day of the people of Israel of the tribe of Benjamin a Hebrew of the Hebrews as to the law of Pharisee as to zeal a persecutor of the church as to righteousness under the law blameless how about that for credentials but whatever gain I had I counted as loss for the sake of Christ indeed I count everything as loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord for his sake I have suffered the loss of all things and count them as rubbish in order that I might gain

Christ Christ is worthy and the power of the gospel is what my life demonstrates the fact that I am a blasphemer an insolent man that I am the chief of sinners that helps to prove that God's gospel the gospel of salvation has power it's not built on my merit it's not built on my ability to follow through in some way and so when we look at the law we understand the law is good if it helps to underscore the need that we have for God and the power of God to save God's power to save this was the way that the apostle Paul sought to encourage and address Timothy to help call attention to the work of God in his life verse 14 and 15 draws that out some more and the grace of our Lord overflowed for me with the faith and love that are in

Christ Jesus the gospel has power the grace of God overflows this word for grace that overflows is to be poured out abundantly in the Greek it is this emphatic word that the apostle Paul puts another emphatic term in front of it to help it mean it's overabundant it's a super charged kind of grace super abounding grace Paul's life is proof that the gospel has power Paul's life demonstrates his need and dependence on the savior Jesus as Paul will say in Ephesians 2 8 9 for by grace you've been saved through faith and that not of yourselves it is the gift of God not of works so that no one should boast that's what the law is meant to do for us that's what the gospel accomplishes for us and when we come to a place of recognizing where we really stand before God we recognize his place is a place of supremacy our place is a place of dependence that helps preserve and protect us from the deconstruction work of calling into question the truths that God has given to us and then in your note

[ 25 : 59 ] God uses Paul's life as an example Paul uses God uses Paul's life as an example 1 Timothy 1 16 and 17 says but I receive mercy for this reason that in me as the foremost Jesus Christ might display his perfect patience as an example to me to those who were to believe in him for eternal life to the king of ages immortal invisible the only God be honor and glory forever and ever amen in other words I received mercy so that Jesus Christ might display that he is everything it was meant to help me be an example for those who might wonder if God could possibly save them all who follow after Paul's example all who see his life might be able to say

God if God can save the apostle Paul then God can save me too Paul is meant to be a prototype a pattern for the grace of God in coming over in rescuing sinners this attitude that Paul demonstrates here will provide the stabilizing power for us because it removes a heart of entitlement it helps to erase the spirit of criticism it replaces that spirit with a spirit of worship in us and reinforces the wonder of God in salvation the apostle Paul is interested in helping to make sure that Timothy understands his responsibility to safeguard this church and it begins with a posture towards God in the gospel of recognizing that he strengthens us for ministry and he saves us according to his grace then the apostle Paul turns his attention his focus on Timothy now that he has spoken about the work of God in his life now he turns the page turns the focus and wants

Timothy to understand the responsibility that he has now over the church he is to wage war against false teaching wage war against false teaching there in verse 18 notice this charge I entrust to you Timothy my child in accordance with the prophecies previously made about you that by them you may wage the good warfare holding faith in a good conscience by rejecting this some have made shipwreck of their faith among whom are Hymenaeus and Alexander whom I've handed over to Satan that they may learn not to blaspheme Timothy was tasked with a responsibility a responsibility to as we see here at the end of verse 18 to wage the good warfare we are in a battle for truth the war for faith is fought on the battleground of truth you must know the truth or you will shipwreck your faith that's what

Paul is saying here and now this war that Paul had fought and had led now he is allowing Timothy and turning over the keys as it were this continuing charge to Timothy to take up this mantle and to carry it on the continuing charge to Timothy remember this word means command this word for charge is the word for command the first time we saw this word was in verse 3 where Paul urges Timothy to charge or command some that they teach no other doctrine Paul uses military language to enforce this statement to charge this urgent command that's handed down from a superior officer Paul has been issued a command from Christ we saw that at the very beginning of this chapter Paul himself had a command Paul himself was directed into ministry by the commandment of God we saw that in verse 1 Paul an apostle of Jesus Christ by the command of God our Savior and of Christ

Jesus and now because of this command we recognize in verse 12 that there's not just a command to engage but this appointment that is happening verse 12 I thank him who has given me strength Christ Jesus our Lord he judged me faithful appointing me to his service now this charge that Paul had received this command that Paul had been given by Christ now Paul will issue to Timothy to continue the ministry of serving Christ's church this charge to serve Christ to be strengthened by Christ to preserve the message of Christ to protect the church of Christ to carry out the responsibility to the Lord and the church Timothy had a command a command to obey to obey in 1st Timothy chapter 5 verse 21 we see this charge that Timothy that Paul will continue to give

[ 31 : 21 ] Timothy I charge you in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus it wasn't just a command without teeth it was a command that was issued by God himself in the presence of God accountability to him and then in 2nd Timothy chapter 4 verses 1 and 2 I charge you in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus preach the word be ready in season and out of season reprove rebuke exhort with complete patience and teaching the same charge now is entrusted to every spiritual leader every leader who's been entrusted with the leadership and teaching of Christ's church now has been given this same charge this same entrustment this word to entrust is to be responsible for Paul will use the same word in 2nd Timothy chapter 2 verses 1 and 2 you then my child be strengthened by the grace that is in Christ Jesus and what you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses entrust that's our word to faithful men who will be able to teach others also

Paul have been entrusted with the ministry of Christ strengthened by the power of Christ now Paul is issuing this charge to continue this succession of responsibility to Timothy who then in turn in the second letter is to entrust that same ministry to other faithful men be strengthened Timothy entrust this work to others Timothy God will strengthen you for this process God will help to direct you and guide you and help you to be bold in waging the good warfare Paul sets this military context because he recognizes how fierce the battle is and how aggressive the enemy is and the ways in which the enemy would seek to dismantle the leaders that God has placed over his people through discouragement through persecution and even through disqualification those of you who have been tuning in to any of the news from this weekend will understand that a very prominent pastor just this weekend had to step down from ministry because of being disqualified our enemy will seek to dismantle the church any way he can but especially through the perversion of truth the twisting of truth the corruption of truth he wants to rob you of the truth and thus rob you of faith and that's where

Paul turns next in verses 19 to 20 he wants you to understand what is at stake why is this warfare so important what is at stake in verse 19 holding faith and a good conscience by rejecting this some have made shipwreck of their faith among whom are Hymenaeus and Alexander whom I've handed over to Satan that they may learn not to blaspheme what is at stake is the very foundation of your faith you lose the truth you pervert the truth you lose your faith remember these are the elemental principles that Paul pointed to earlier in this letter in verse 5 he says the aim of our charge is love that issues from a pure heart and a good conscience and sincere faith the doctrines the good doctrines of God are meant to lead you to these things to a pure heart to a good conscience and sincere faith the sincere!

faith which is genuine without hypocrisy we find it throughout the New Testament five or six times we find it throughout the New Testament it is always connected either to love or to faith genuine love in Romans 12:9 we see genuine love again in 2nd Corinthians chapter 6 we see sincere faith in 2nd Timothy 1:5 we see a sincere love in 1st Peter chapter 1 verse 22 sincerity and without hypocrisy that are coupled with genuine character of faith and love this is what good doctrine is meant to produce in us and the foundation of faith is at stake and Paul will emphasize this point again in chapter 4 where he says in chapter 4 verses 11 to 13 and then verse 16 he says command and teach these things let no one despise you for your youth but set the example in speech in conduct in love in faith in purity until I come devote yourself to the public reading of scripture to exhortation to teaching and keep a close watch on yourself and on the teaching persistent this for by so doing you will save yourself in your ears the word of God the uncorrupted truth the doctrines that we get from the word of God that will help to save your soul any pollution any corruption any perversion to that truth any calling that truth into question you run the risk of being shipwreck like Hymenaeus and Alexander two men who seem to have some sort of teaching or leadership role in the church two men who had veered from sound doctrine two men who because of their doctrinal drift had shipwrecked their faith this word for shipwrecked is only used twice in the scripture one here speaking metaphorically of totally abandoning or deconstructing as it were their faith and the second is in 2nd Corinthians where Paul refers to an actual shipwreck where the ship was destroyed and he is stranded on the water we find more about these two in Paul's second letter

Paul speaks of Hymenaeus in 2nd Timothy chapter 2 verses 16 to 18 where he says avoid irreverent babble for it will lead people into more and more ungodliness and their talk will spread like gangrene among them are Hymenaeus and Philetus who have swerved from the truth saying that the resurrection has already happened they are upsetting the faith of some and that is the danger because in deconstruction and dismantling truth it never remains in one individual but there's always collateral damage these individuals who have deconstructed are now on an agenda to try to ruin your faith as well so take warning understand the danger the significance they want to destroy your faith by dismantling the truth in your mind and then in Alexander we find in 2 Timothy chapter 4 verses 14 and 15

[ 38:51 ] Alexander the coppersmith did me great harm the Lord will repay him according to his deeds beware of him yourself for he strongly opposed our message now I want to just draw that out just a bit more here is Timothy who has been given spiritual leadership of the church in Ephesus he brings this foundation of doctrine that he's received from the apostle Paul he's demonstrated some level of spiritual maturity and love for Christ and love for the church and here Paul is saying you know who Alexander is have nothing to do with him keep your distance don't listen to him don't get sucked in by him don't entertain his lies don't give him any hearing recognize that he is no longer a wanderer but now he has become a warrior and that's where we begin to understand what we need to be doing in terms of our response to those who once wandering and kind of unsure about what the truth is and at least at that point there is some level of teachability and they're asking good questions and they may be teaching wrong things but there's some level of receptivity but as soon as they turn into a warrior where they know the clear direction of their heart and now they're trying to take shots at God's people you know you need to have nothing to do with them have nothing to do with them whom

I have handed over to Satan as Paul will say delivered them to Satan turned them over so that Satan can have his way and it's always with the purpose of seeking God to do something in their life to bring them to a point of clarity as we saw with the prodigal son the prodigal wanders away he spends all of his resource and then it says that he finally came to his senses that's Paul's heart for these two that they would finally come to their senses this morning's passage gives us some pause it helps us to understand the significance of the battle that we're in and that all of us are called to wage the good warfare the apostle Paul will talk about this in 2nd Corinthians 10 verses 3-6 and just share this verse to close kind of brings all of this front and center before us for though we walk in the flesh we are not waging war according to the flesh for the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh but have divine power to destroy strongholds we destroy arguments in every lofty opinion raised against the knowledge of

God and take every thought captive to obey Christ being ready to punish every disobedience when your obedience is complete the war for your mind the war for your heart the war for truth is front and center these philosophies that are bombarding us day by day the enemy wants to use these philosophies to totally dismantle your faith but God has given us weapons of warfare not of the flesh but weapons of warfare that are of the spirit divine weapons divine power to destroy those strongholds and that only happens as you allow yourself to be under and humbly!

humbly submissive to the truth of God's word to govern your heart to know what does the Bible say how can the word of God help me to understand where these philosophies are coming from and how to understand them based upon the scripture and his truth perhaps there's someone that you know in your own family perhaps there's a loved one perhaps there's a neighbor that you're acquainted with!

maybe even in your own heart there's some spiritual drift that's taking place there is a call to confusion and maybe asking questions that are taking you along the road of deconstruction as it were can I encourage you to find someone to help order your thoughts to help you align your understanding of those philosophies and help guide and direct them into alignment with the scripture God has given us the weapons we need to remain strong in the Lord in the strength of his might but it only happens as we submit and surrender our hearts and our lives to the word of God and to his work in our lives oh may God help us to remain strong as the pillar and buttress for the truth what a joy that we have God has given us this great responsibility but incredible privilege to be the mouthpiece of truth to shine the light of God in the gospel into this world may God help us to be faithful with that significant responsibility let's pray oh Lord thank you for this passage this morning and for the reminder of our beginnings

[ 44 : 34 ] God we bring no strength to the table that any of the ministry any of the work that we might accomplish for you is ministry that is empowered by you we are so dependent on you to do your work and Lord thank you that even though our beginnings are ungodly and wicked although our lives deserve condemnation because all have sinned and come short of the glory of God thank you that because of your mercy you've called us to yourself thank you that because of your mercy and your grace you've allowed us to be forgiven you've allowed us to be cleansed you've robed us with the righteousness of Christ may we stand in strength with that truth and Lord may we like Timothy carry out the charge as it were in the areas of responsibility that you've given to us in our families in our relationships in our friendships

Lord help us to be faithful to wage the good warfare in our own hearts first but Lord also in the lives of those we love around us God I pray that you help us to be faithful to know the truth because the truth alone will set us free we praise you for this in Jesus name amen God bless you have a great week miracle Thank you.