

Encouragement and Exhortation

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[0 : 0 0] It is now turned to the New Testament scriptures. The New Testament and the second letter of Paul to Timothy and chapter 2.

Second epistle of Paul to Timothy and chapter 2. Reading at the beginning.

Thou therefore, my Son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus. And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men who shall be able to teach others also.

Thou therefore endure hardness as a good soldier of Jesus Christ. No man that woth entangleth himself with the affairs of this life, that he may please him who hath chosen him to be a soldier.

And if a man also strive for masteries, yet is he not crowned, except he strive lawfully. The husbandman that laboureth must be first partaker of the fruits.

[1 : 2 6] Consider what I say, and the Lord give thee understanding in all things. Remember that Jesus Christ of the seed of David was raised from the dead according to my gospel, wherein I suffer trouble, as an abledoer even unto bonds.

But the word of God is not bound. Therefore I endure all things for the elect's sakes, that they may also obtain the salvation that is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory.

It is a faithful saying, For if we be dead with him, we shall also live with him. If we suffer, we shall also reign with him.

If we deny him, he also will deny us. If we believe not, yet he abideth faithful, he cannot deny himself. Of these things put them in remembrance, charging them before the Lord, that they strive not about words to no profit, but to the subverting of the hearers.

Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth. But shun profane and vain babblings, for they will increase unto more ungodliness.

[2 : 4 6] And their word will eat as doth a canker, of whom is Hymenaeus and Philatons, who concerning the truth have erred, saying that the resurrection is past already, and overthrow the faith of some.

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.

But in a great house there are not only vessels of gold and of silver, but also of wood and of earth, and some to honour and some to dishonour. If a man therefore purge himself from these, he shall be a vessel unto honour, sanctified and meet for the master's use, and prepared unto every good work.

Flee also youthful lusts, but follow righteousness, faith, charity, peace, with them that call on the Lord out of a pure heart. But foolish and unlearned questions avoid, knowing that they do gender stripes.

And the servant of the Lord must not strive, but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient, in meekness instructing those that oppose themselves, if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth, and that they may recover themselves out of the snare of the devil, who are taken captive by him at his will.

[4 : 26] Amen. And may God bless to us that reading from his holy word. And to his name be all the praise. Let us again sing to his praise, this time in Psalm 97.

Psalm 97, verses 9 to 12.

For thou, O Lord, art high, above all things on earth that are, above all other gods thou art exalted very far. Hate ill all ye that love the Lord, his saints' souls keepeth he, and from the hands of wicked men he sets them safe and free.

For all those that be righteous, sown is a joyful light, and gladness sown is for all those that are in heart upright. Ye righteous, in the Lord rejoice, express your thankfulness, when ye into your memory do call his holiness.

These stanzas of Psalm 97, from verse 9 to the end. For thou, O Lord, art high. For thou, O Lord, art high, above all things on earth that are, above all other gods thou art, exalted very far.

[6 : 13] In the Lord, art high, in the Lord, art high, in the Lord, art high, in the Lord, art high, in the Lord, his saints' souls keepeth he, and from the hands of wicked men he sets them safe and free.

For all those that be righteous, sown is a joyful light, and gladness, and gladness, and gladness, for all those that have got in heart upright.

and gladness, and gladness, and to your men by the of his Holy Now as the Lord enables us, let us turn again to this portion of Scripture we've read.

In 2 Timothy and chapter 2. And particularly focusing on verse 19.

Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal. The Lord knoweth them that are his and let everyone that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity.

[8 : 42] Paul is writing this letter to Timothy from his prison cell. And Paul knows that his time of departure from this life is quite near.

He says that in chapter 4 and verse 6. I am now ready to be offered and the time of my departure is at hand. And he has the concern of the churches heavy upon his heart.

And he addresses Timothy, a young minister, in relation to the in relation to how he ought to live his own life personally as a Christian and also how he ought to live his life as an ambassador for Christ, as a preacher.

And you see from the very beginning of chapter 2 here that he encourages Timothy with these words, Thou therefore my son be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus.

And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses the same commit thou to faithful men who shall be able to teach others also. he needs the strength of the grace of God enabled to fulfil the ministry to which the Lord has called him.

[10 : 18] And I like to remember my own experience of this verse when I was applying for the ministry at Presbytery a long time ago having been interviewed by them at the end of the interview one of the older men he shook my hand and he used this particular verse in 2 Timothy chapter 2 be strong my son in the grace that is in Christ Jesus.

I never forgot that. I never forgot the man who told it to me. And we see that Paul is saying that to young Timothy because he knows that the work of the ministry is hard and there is opposition from various sides.

And just mention two or three things before I come to highlight three main points from the verse we're talking about. And he says in verse 3 here that endure hardness as a good soldier of Jesus Christ.

When we see soldiers in the army we expect them to be available to do what they are called to do that is engage in the work of protecting our people and opposing the enemy.

And every Christian is called upon to endure that kind of hard situation as good soldiers of Jesus Christ. And then he goes on in verse 4 It's not a part-time job being a Christian.

[12 : 13] It's a full-time commitment the same as the soldiers in the army. It's not a part-time employment. They are called to fulfil a particular task.

And Paul here says to Timothy this young minister don't entangle yourself with the things of this life because you must be full-time engaged in the work to which the Lord is calling you.

And then he goes on throughout the chapter and he comes to a point later on in the chapter when he highlights difficulties that are around because of people who talk about anything and everything apart from the scriptures.

Verse 16 And he warns Timothy shun profane and vain babblings they will increase unto more ungodliness and then he says their world will eat as doth a canker of whom is Hymenaeus and Philetus who concerning the truth have erred saying that the resurrection is past already and they have overthrown the faith of some.

There were people who were listening to Hymenaeus and Philetus and their particular point of view in relation to the resurrection which was a wrong point of view rather than listening to the word of God rather than listening to what God was saying they were listening to what opinions other people had and their faith it says here was overturned or overthrown.

[13 : 59] so when Paul is writing to Timothy he knows that Timothy as a preacher and as a Christian is going into a difficult and dangerous situation.

There are uncertainties on this hand there are trials and afflictions on the other hand there are enemies lurking here and there trying to subvert the work of the gospel and trying to undo the good work that Timothy as a preacher is going to be doing.

And against that background of seeming difficulty and uncertainty chapter 2 verse 19 now says nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure having this seal the Lord knoweth them that are his and let everyone that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity.

Just say a few words under three headings from this particular verse. First of all the apostle is talking about a sure foundation.

The foundation of God standeth sure. What does he mean by that? and secondly he's talking about a seal that this foundation stone has a seal upon it and the seal first of all is one of encouragement and the seal firstly says the Lord knoweth them that are his.

[15 : 49] That's the first thing. and the second word the seal bears is this let everyone that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity.

That is a seal of command. If you are a Christian depart from iniquity. That's what the seal of God the foundation of God says.

It's written upon it engraved upon it. Firstly it's an encouragement. The Lord knows those who are his but then secondly he commands those who know the Lord to depart from iniquity.

So these three points. First of all one or two words on the foundation of God that standeth sure. The foundation of God that standeth sure.

Where are we going to locate the meaning of what this verse is saying? Well in the Old Testament I'm just going to mention a couple of verses.

[17 : 04] In the Old Testament first of all we have a reference in Isaiah 28 at verse 16 that says therefore thus says the Lord God behold I lay in Zion a stone for a foundation a tried stone a precious cornerstone a sure foundation and whoever believes will not act hastily.

The Lord highlights that he himself has laid a foundation stone in Zion. What does he mean by that?

Well I believe he means what the Apostle Paul explains in 1 Corinthians 3 when he says no other foundation can anyone lay than that which is laid which is Jesus Christ.

He's talking about the provision of God in providing a saviour for sinful men in providing a foundation stone in the midst of a shifting changing uncertain world that the Lord is pointing us to some certainty and some foundational stone upon which we can build and to whom we can look for safety.

This is what Peter says in relation to Jesus Christ coming to him as to a living stone rejected indeed by men but chosen by God and precious.

[19 : 09] When Paul is writing to Timothy with all the uncertainties that are around him as a young preacher he invites and commands him to look to this sure foundation.

Can we say that the foundation is a person well I believe we can. When you look at Proverbs chapter 8 Jesus Christ I believe says of himself I have been established from everlasting from the beginning before there was ever the earth that from everlasting God has appointed the second person of the trinity as a mediator between God and man and in the eternal covenant of redemption before the world was God appointed the second person even the eternal son to be the mediator of God's people and he agreed to come into the world in the fullness of time taking unto himself a true body and a reasonable soul and he says look unto me and be saved all the ends of the earth for

I am God and there is none else the foundation of God standeth sure now people around us in our present day point us to various things various individuals and various veins of thought and they say that's the way to peace that's the way to security looking at this particular way of living will bring you peace and security but the Lord here says that only one foundational stone is able to give us stability and eternal blessedness looking unto Jesus who is the author and the finisher of our faith he who came into this world and he says come unto me all you who labor and are heavy laden and

I will give you rest that foundation of God in the person of Jesus Christ as the God man mediator is the only sure foundation upon which we are exhorted to build for time and for eternity no other foundation can stand everything else is sinking sand but Jesus Christ the only savior is able alone to save us from our sins so that's the first point the foundation of God that is Jesus Christ the mediator he stands sure he's reliable he's dependable and trusting in him by a living and saving faith will ensure our eternal blessedness without a doubt and secondly we see that this foundation stone has a seal as an engraving as it might be translated and the first engraving is the

Lord knoweth them that are his well I think this is a most encouraging seal it's a most encouraging engraving the Lord knows those who are his when did he first know them oh he knew them in eternity because he has loved them with an everlasting love he knew them as his elect in Christ he knew them long before they came to know him and he set his love upon them but particularly think of it from this point of view when we come under the sound of the gospel and the gospel is applied to the hearts of

[24 : 30] God's people in a day of his grace then he makes known to ourselves that he knows us he makes known by speaking words of life into our very soul just as he spoke words personalized to Lazarus as he lay on the tomb on the fourth day when his body began to stink Jesus said Lazarus come forth and with that almighty word of command he spoke into the heart and life of one who was dead in order to bring him alive and he brought him forth and the same is spiritually true in relation to everyone whom the

Lord effectually calls in God's time and at the time of God's choosing and in God's way he makes his word to become effectual to their regeneration they are brought alive spiritually because God has known them from everlasting and he knows them in such a way as to speak personally into their experience just as if he spoke their name the call is so personal you may remember being in a church surrounded by many people and the word of God became powerful and personal and saving to yourself and it's as if nobody else existed around you but you and the word that was dealing with you from the mouth of the pastor it's as if it was such a personal message to you and the

Lord here says I know them who are mine and I make myself personally known to them in a day of regeneration I call them out of the grave of a natural state and they are allowed and enabled to walk at liberty in a life of faith but then of course as we journey on in life as believers the Lord repeatedly makes known to us that he knows us he knows our dark days as well as our days of joy see what it says in the book in the prophecy of Hosea and chapter 13 longing longing for a spiritual drink and again and again it's as if it's a wilderness experience to you but that doesn't mean to say that the

Lord has forgotten you he's teaching you in that particular situation as he taught the children of Israel as it says in the book of Deuteronomy that he brought them into the wilderness to test them to prove them to show what was in their heart whether they would keep the commandments of God or not that they might know that man does not live by bread alone but by every word that proceedeth from the mouth of God shall man live but he doesn't forget you in the wilderness in the land of great drought and at length he will prove to you that he is your God and that he knows you see what it says in Isaiah 58 the Lord will guide you continually and satisfy your soul in drought and strengthen your bones you shall be like a watered garden and like a spring of water whose waters do not fail the foundation of

God stands sure having this seal the Lord knoweth them that are his in times of trial in times of difficulty think one more example of Jonah who was swallowed by the great fish by the whale and it says in Jonah chapter 2 out of the belly of hell or sheol as it says in the new translation I cried and you heard my voice the Lord knew him where he was in the belly of the whale however deep that whale went in the sea the Lord's knowledge of his servant remained and when he opened his mouth to call upon the Lord from these depths the Lord heard him I know those who are mine he knows you in your afflictions he knows you in your joys he knows you when the sun is shining and we mustn't forget him at these times

[30 : 40] Satan will try his utmost to turn your joy to sorrow by working some kind of temptation into your experience to try and bring you down but when Peter spoke about the joy of people of God he says whom having not seen you love and though now you do not see him yet believing you rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory he knows us in every situation of life he knows us in our temptations our temptations he knows very well he himself was tempted in all points like as we are yet without sin he knows when the devil dangles all kinds of things in front of us but the

Lord knows and his grace is sufficient for us and his strength is made perfect in our weakness the Lord knows them that are his well if he knows us before we're born if he loves us with an everlasting love and makes that love known to us when he effectively calls us when he knows us in our days of trial and affliction and in our days of joy he also knows us when we descend into the valley where death has to be negotiated he knows us then is he going to leave us then I will never leave you nor forsake you he says and to the extent that the man of

God said in Psalm 116 you have delivered my soul from death my eyes from tears my feet from falling and then he goes on to say precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints it's not a situation in our experience that God turns us back upon rather it is a situation that's precious in the sight of the Lord he knows us every step of the way and when at last death comes he commands that our soul be made perfect in holiness and immediately be transported to glory where we shall see the king in his beauty and the land that is very far off but then he goes on to see there's another aspect to this seal not only does he encourage us with these words the

Lord knoweth them that are his but then he says let everyone that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity that's another message on this seal first of all the comfort now the command everyone who names the name of Christ is to depart from iniquity who are those who name the name of Christ well we call on the Lord's name in prayer don't we and when we pray we look for an answer through the mediator who is Christ all blessings come through him and because of him that's why we say at the end of our prayers usually for Christ's sake we ask it amen because we are praying in his name and anything and everything we're looking for we look to come to us through him and for his sake and we name the name of

Christ in that way but also we who profess his name publicly we also name the name of Christ in that way when we make public profession of Christ at the table or as a Christian person having a Christian lifestyle we profess his name we tell people I love the Lord I want to serve the Lord and even if you don't have an opportunity to speak in these ways your lifestyle you want in your lifestyle to show forth the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light we call upon the name of the Lord in these ways but what does it say they who call upon the name of the

[36 : 22] Lord depart from iniquity depart from iniquity well in the context in this particular chapter there was iniquity abounding in there being a lot of bad doctrine doctrinal iniquity people were propounding views of the resurrection that were not true not according to the scriptures and in our day there are people propounding views of scripture that are not at all scriptural and we need to depart from these things keep close with the word of God sail as close to it as you can A.W.

Tozer has a book I think it's entitled sail close to the wind something like that and the whole thrust of the book is that we must keep close to the word of God in everything we think in everything we say in everything we do everywhere we go may we be as it were filled and surrounded by the word of truth and the truth of the word depart from doctrinal iniquity things in the hearts and lives of people that they give place to that they should not give place to at all when Peter is writing his epistle he's talking so clearly about the way people ought to live and the things they ought to lay aside 1 Peter chapter 2 at the beginning wherefore laying aside all malice and all guile and hypocrisies and envies and all evil speakings as newborn babes desire the sincere milk of the word that you may grow thereby there are these things that want to hold on to us and pull us down and you know the devil will try and say to you there's no harm in doing this or saying that or going there the thing is we have to bring every situation to the touchstone of the scriptures because that's expected of those who name the name of

Christ that they depart from iniquity when the apostle is writing to the Corinthians there was a particular problem among them some of them were associating with people whose lifestyle was not conducive to true holiness at all and he reminds them that your body he said as Christians is the temple of the Holy Spirit and you should treat it as such and your life is dedicated to God and made be godly ask for grace to depart from every iniquity that seeks to overwhelm you the iniquity of faithlessness the iniquity of being less than fully committed in your mind and heart and life to a

Christian lifestyle depart from iniquity Jesus Christ our Saviour gave his all and he demands our heart our life our all for him he came into the world and from the moment of his conception to the moment that he said it is finished he was totally dedicated to doing the father's will and at the end he said I have fulfilled the work that you gave me to do and there's a question here for us all listen there are we fulfilling what God asks us to do are we living the kind of life that he asks of us to live each one to grow in grace and in the knowledge of our

Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ bless us as we anticipate coming to gather together in the evening give us to know your spirits leading and enabling and forgive our sins we ask in Jesus name and for his sake Amen we will bring our service to our conclusion at this time singing from Psalm 19 verses 9 to 14 Psalm 19 and verse 9 unspotted is the fear of God and doth endure forever the judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether they more than gold ye much fine gold to be desired are and honey honey from the comb that droppeth sweeter far moreover they thy servant warned how he his life should frame a great reward provided is for them that keep the same who can his errors understand oh cleanse thou me within from secret faults thy servant keep from all presumptuous sin and do not suffer them to have dominion over me then righteous and innocent

[44 : 52] I from much sin shall be the words which from my mouth proceed the thoughts sent from my heart accept oh Lord for thou my strength and my redeemer art Psalm 19 verse 9 to the end and spotted is the fear of God and doth endure forever unspotted disappear upon and earth into our earth the jesimates of the Lord and good and righteous song and may of although i The night is happy from the home that brought the sweetened heart.

Born over there, thy sermon warned, the leaders lied to frame.

A great reward provided is for them that keep the same.

Who can, who's there, or shall just stand, or cleanse the way within?

From sacred thoughts, thy seven key, from all praise and just sin.

[46 : 55] And do not suffer them to have dominion over me.

Then rise, hills, and they do sin, I from much sin shall be.

The words which from my mouth proceed, the thoughts that from my heart.

Accept, O Lord, for thou my strength and my redeemed heart.

Now may the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God the Father, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, rest upon and abide with you all, now and forevermore.

[47 : 59] Amen.