

# Good and Profitable

*Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.*

Date: 03 December 2023

[ 0 : 00 ] Have you ever heard this expression before? It says that early is on time and on time is late. Any of y'all grow up with that principle or you're trying to have your children learn it now?

It was Mr. Gavin, the band teacher, when I was in middle school. That's what he told us all the time, that to be early is to be on time and to be on time is to be late. So when we were going to have our Christmas concert and this kid showed up at the last minute and he had his instrument, he had his tuba, but he didn't have his mouthpiece that was needed.

You don't have to know much about instruments to know that's an important part of an instrument. This young man, he had come and he was like real frantic and he needed his mouthpiece and he hadn't been in band very long. He was a new student.

And to be honest with you, he wasn't very good at the tuba. And that's one of those instruments that when it's not very good, everybody knows about it. And he couldn't hide it. And so I saw Mr. Gavin turn and he was about to go and go where he would get the extra parts and he was going to, I assumed he was going to go get a mouthpiece for the tuba player.

And then he decided, he said, you know what? Why don't you just take your tube out there and sit with everybody during the concert and just pretend that you're playing. And this is really out of character. I couldn't believe that he said it, but I think that he decided, well, here's my opportunity.

[ 1 : 21 ] I didn't want this kid playing and so he'll just go out there. And I remember during the concert when it was going on and I was a trombone player and that's another instrument that's not very easy to pretend when you don't know what's going on, right?

I was always just looking, I was always a few seconds behind the guy beside me to figure out what he was doing. And so when I looked over and I saw this kid, man, he just was going to town pretending like he was playing that tuba.

I mean, he didn't miss nothing. He was always real big cheeks, you know, and he was blowing. And I couldn't hardly not laugh at this idea of this kid just pretending to play the tuba. Nobody likes to be told they're going to have to sit it out.

Nobody likes to be told you're not going to be helpful, you're not going to be usable in this way. And so to accommodate, the band teacher said, why don't you just pretend? Because those thoughts are hard, a harsh reality to know that you are not prepared in a way to be helpful in the way that you want to do.

We've been in a small town in Kentucky for a moment. And Tinsley, my daughter says, I take you all to Kentucky every service, all right? I think you know that by now. But now I'm going to take you from Kentucky to another place before we get back on that island of Creed and look at that passage, to another place that I know those in the Connect class at Laodicea of the book of Revelation.

[ 2 : 41 ] Revelation chapter number 3, verse number 15. Passage you probably know, common passage. It says this in Revelation 3, 15. I know thy works, that they are neither cold nor hot.

And I would thou work cold or hot. See, the people, the Laodiceans, they understood this analogy very quickly. As you and I would understand lukewarmness, but from understanding, there's these aqueducts from a spring six miles away.

And so by the time that it arrived there in that city, the water was lukewarm. And then it goes on to say what was going on about their lukewarmness. It gives the reason for it in verses 16 and 17.

It says, so then, because thou art lukewarm, you're neither hot nor cold. And we make sure that's never the case in the auditorium here, right? All right? We know what all of you are in here.

All right? And it says, I am neither hot nor cold. I will spew thee out of my mouth. Because thou sayest, I am rich and increased with goods and have need of nothing. And knowest not that thou art wretched and miserable and poor and blind and naked.

[ 3 : 45 ] So an obvious question that you might ask yourself that I did, as I heard this described to me at different times, is why would Jesus want them rather to be cold towards him as opposed to being lukewarm?

Why would he be telling them, I'd rather you be cold towards me than moderately warm towards me, or red hot in your affections and concerns for me? See, I believe a better understanding is that we know that cold water had a purpose, and that hot water has a purpose.

But this lukewarm does not have the purpose that was needed for it. It's unusable. And so the same kind of thoughts that you'd have about lukewarmness in your Christian life would apply.

But the example here is, no, he doesn't want you cold towards him, but he wants you to be obedient. He wants you to be useful towards him. He wants you to be living in obedience to the Word. And so I'd rather you be hot or cold, because hot or cold is usable, but when you're lukewarm, you're living in a way, and here this lukewarmness comes, this unusability, because they thought, being in this industrial city, the center of banking, that they had great material wealth.

But he said, but you are not rich on the things of God. The Bible knowledge commentary, which I really enjoy. If you're looking at reading through your Bible next year, I'd encourage you to consider reading that alongside your Bible reading as a companion.

[ 5 : 06 ] It deals a lot with context. As I read that in this passage, it really gripped me, and it said this, the church at Laodicea is typical of a modern church, quite unconscious of its spiritual needs, and content with beautiful buildings and all the material things money can buy.

And God said, I would not have you to be like that, rich on the things of this world with no real heart to be used and to serve me. So the church at Crete, in Titus, it certainly needs this challenge.

Church at Ephesus, where Timothy would have been serving, it needs the challenge. The church in Revelation obviously didn't. But the church here in Alpharetta, we also need it as well. We need to be reminded that we are to live in a way that reflects our understanding of the gospel.

We not only need it, but here in Titus, it says we need a constant reaffirming of it. It says we must affirm constantly. That's verse number 8. This is a faithful saying, These things I will, thou thou affirm constantly.

They that which believe in God might be careful. Those of us that are believers in here, we should focus our attention, be intentional to maintain good works. These things are good and profitable unto me.

[ 6 : 18 ] We have everyday expressions that talk about the reliability of something. You may say, trust me. You may tell that to people a lot. Just trust me. Or you might be somebody that says, you'd say, just trust me.

Or you can say, you can be sure of this. You can mark this down. You can count on it. If I'm lying, I'm dying. Young people may say, no cap.

And that just simply means, I'm telling the truth. Or, as my brother-in-law, Mark Coffey, used to always like to say, it says, if I tell you that chickens can pluck cotton, you better get a bag.

Luke, you ever hear that one growing up? No, you didn't? All right. Maybe it wasn't Mark that told me that one. All right. That means you can just count on it. It's going to happen. And you can set your clock by it.

It is as given that it is going to happen. The way the Bible expresses it here is this is a faithful saying. It doesn't mean that the other things that are being said aren't faithful. It just means that this can or can't be relied upon.

[ 7 : 17 ] It means that this particular statement is so significant that they should make sure that they are certain of it. They should make sure. And that's that hundred-word statement, sentence that I gave you, that runs across four verses, that I tell you that in their time, they should be teaching their kids.

It was a creed. It should be a hymn. That it was about the gospel. Verse number four, it says, But after that, the kindness and the love of our God, our Savior, towards man appeared, not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us by the washing of regeneration, the renewing of the Holy Ghost, which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Savior.

Not being justified by his grace, we shall be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life. One sentence spread across four verses, Paul's giving a summary of salvation.

When were we saved? After our Savior appeared. How were we saved? By his mercy and grace. Who was saved? Those who are justified, which are those of us who believe in God, believing that he sent his son to die in our place.

Why were they saved? So we could be made fellow heirs. And what were we saved from? We were saved for a life of glorifying him through good works. And what were we saved from? A life of empty works of righteousness.

[ 8 : 34 ] righteousness. That's covered in those verses. And that truth, it should shape the other decisions in our lives. He insists upon this. He constantly affirms it. He affirms it because he says that it is profitable and useful to maintain good works, and that these things are good and profitable unto all men.

We should avoid confusion at all costs, but we should never avoid truth. As Stephen said, and I was just joking when I said I think he's heard enough of it, but it's so important that we understand the difference in our lives between justification and sanctification.

Later on in this chapter, in Titus, he is going to tell him, he says, Paul will tell Titus, be diligent, be diligent to come unto me in the Coppelis, which is where I'm going to winter.

I really like that expression. That's what some people do. They go in winter in Florida, or somewhere where it is warm. And so Paul said that. I am going there to winter. Another time he says, bring Zenith, the lawyer, and Apollos on their journey.

And he uses the word diligently. He uses that word diligently. Another way to say diligently is, give it your all. Strive to accomplish it. There's going to be challenges, but do what you can, but do all that you can, by God's grace.

[ 9 : 53 ] I hope you can join me come winter. I know there's going to be challenges. I don't know all that's going to happen. I know that we can't guarantee it's going to happen, but would you do your very best and strive to join me over here in the Coppelis this winter?

Zenith and Apollos, when they're traveling, could you just do all that you can? Could you just do your very best, by God's grace, to help them along the way? Like this quote by Dallas Willard that helps me think through this.

He says that grace is not opposed to effort, it is opposed to earning. Grace is not opposed to effort, it's opposed to earning. We will never earn our being justified and declared innocent before God.

There is no system in this world in which you can earn your salvation. But in being saved and receiving that gift, it creates in us a desire to express our gratitude that looks and feels like effort, as it is, as we're being intentional.

We're doing all that we can by God's grace. So as Christians, we're firmly grounded in truth that we're saved by grace alone. We often feel awed talking about good works. And this is a place where Satan would like to cause confusion.

[ 11 : 01 ] Here in Titus and Timothy, there's great encouragement on how we're to think about our new life. Charles Spurgeon, 19th century preacher, when preaching on this passage, articulates the distinction between the two ways of speaking.

To the sinner, that he may be saved, we say not a word concerning good works, except to remind him that he is none of them. The believer who is saved, we say 10,000 words concerning good works, beseeching him to bring forth fruit.

This is all the difference between the living and the dead. The living aroused the work, and the dead must first receive life. And so the theological terms that I've shared are justification.

It's where the act of God pronounces a sinner to be righteous because of the sinner's faith in Christ. He looked at us with mercy. He looked at us with pity. We are in our miserable state, and by grace, he has declared you and I righteous if we believe in him.

But sanctification is the effect of the obedience of God's word in our life. It's the effect of obedience of God's word in our lives.

[ 12 : 03 ] And what are we told to do? We're told to be diligent. We're told to do all that we can by his grace. These two truths are consistent one to another. Not only are they consistent, but they're connected.

And so a question gets into this, how do we live a life of good works that are profitable unto all men? Paul, through the New Testament, applies this gospel truth in so many different ways.

In Philippi, they were a church, and they had wrong attitudes towards one another. They weren't serving in unity. And I love the picture that Stephen drew today as we come together in unity and the good works that God takes our investment and does wonderful things and that we get to see a building and taking place over there in Ecuador and saying, God's used us in that manner.

But there's a church that was not unified. And so how does Paul call them back to unity? He says this, why don't we think about the incarnation? Why don't we consider how God left all the majesty and he came down the earth?

The incarnation was how he applied to them that they ought to take on the role of a servant, humble themselves. Another time when he wants to encourage generosity, he talks to them about Jesus' coming and he became poor for our sake.

[ 13 : 12 ] He talks about how Jesus became poor and he gave so that other people could have and that's how he motivated generosity, taking us back to that truth, that faithful saying of the gospel.

Or another time when he's confronting people about immorality, sexual immorality, and he reminds them, do you not remember that your body, it was bought with a price?

That price was Jesus putting his body upon a cross and dying for you. The answer to each of those problems always went back to this faithful saying. It always went back to this gospel that is there.

Here in this application, here in Titus and 2 Timothy, he's going to say, remember what I just taught you about the gospel and now apply it to the topics of your speech. Now apply it when you have conversations with other people.

Every situation, combating sin, exhorting godliness, encouraging good works, Paul goes back again and again to the gospel. And so no wonder he tells Titus, you have to insist on it.

[ 14 : 10 ] When addressing sin, an opportunity to do good as a believer, he doesn't just say, be diligent, but he tells him, look closer. Look closer at the gospel. Look at it once again.

I like to cook around the house and I'm not a chef. I can follow a recipe. I follow the recipe just like it says and then I add so many spices that my family doesn't want to eat it. Alright? That's my two-step process for cooking dinner.

And Stephanie's smiling, but she knows it's true. Alright? And so sometimes, and you've probably done this before, is I think I can remember the recipe, right? I look at it and if it comes on the back of the food that I'm cooking or whatever, I'm like, I know what I'm supposed to do and then I throw it away and about halfway through I'm like, I think I don't remember the recipe.

And so I have to dig through the trash and I got to find the recipe and I have to look at it. Anybody like that in here? Are you with me in here? Alright. And so you've got to go back and you have to look at the recipe. Paul is calling them, he says in life, go back to the recipe and look at it.

In these areas of your life, go back to this gospel message. We can't make too much of this. Go back into it. The way Martin Luther said it is, he says, beat it into their heads continually.

[ 15 : 20 ] Alright? Beat it into their heads continually. And by the grace of God, that's what I want to do. I want to continually call you to reaffirm how the gospel ought to be shaping your lives.

Now we get to this. Contrast between profitable and unprofitable in their lives. We've taken the scenic route, but it's always good to take the scenic route, which goes by justification and understanding the difference between that and sanctification.

Many of you are involved in industries where you would measure things in quarters. Was it a profitable quarter or was it an unprofitable quarter? I never considered that. I used to go to the Fry's and Alpharetta and every time I would go in there, talk to a manager, they'd say, we still haven't made a profit.

Well, they're not there anymore. Alright? You can only do that for so long, you have to eventually make a profit or you don't get to continue that. And Stephen gave us a strong challenge about wanting to live lives that are profitable to the Lord, that they're good and they're helpful.

That's what you want to do as a believer. Ecclesiastes tells us that eternity is hidden in our hearts. We have a desire to understand the big things of this world. We have a desire for our lives to make a difference.

[ 16 : 29 ] So it's a faithful saying these things, that these things are good and profitable. That's verse number 8. Contrast with verse number 9, for they are unprofitable and vain. People who want to live a good and profitable life, here in these passages, we have some very strong challenges to us.

Before we look again at Titus, let me take you to this great house in 2 Timothy. 2 Timothy chapter 2, verse 20. I've read it, but you can look at it again. Here in this great house, which in the verses before, it speaks of God's building, a solid foundation here.

Nevertheless, the foundation of God standeth sure. So Paul is thinking of a great house, but he's also, a great building, but he's also thinking about a variety of vessels in it. Bowls and plates and vases, vases and other things such as that.

We're not here seen as just like the servants, but we're seen as the plates and the bowls in which things are being served. So in this great house, there is gold, there is vessels of gold and of silver, and there's others that are wood and earth, pottery that are made.

Some are the honor, and some are the dishonor, and the ways that they're being used. And if a man will purge himself from these things, then he shall be a vessel unto honor, sanctified, and meet for the master's use, and prepared unto every good work.

[ 17 : 46 ] So the church of God is indeed this house of God. It's a great house because of who it belongs to. It's a great house of who the builder was and the architect of it was. It's a great house of the cost in which it took to build it.

There's no mansion in this world that compares to what God has built among his children. Lively stones, it's a great house of importance because it's at the center of God's plan for the ages and the business of the house is more important than any trivial matter that the world can be involved in.

It's a worthy place to spend your life and to use your talents. But in the home, there's a multitude of vessels, gold and silver and wood and clay. And so at this point, are you saying, you may be wondering, Trent, are you going to say that if I do or don't pursue holiness in my life, it affects my usability and to the service to our Lord?

And the answer to that is yes, I am saying that. And I'm saying that because the scripture teaches that. But I'm a person who's saying it and who finds it as sobering as you do.

Because none of us want to think that we're not ready and prepared to play in the Christmas concert, but we came unprepared to be serving in that way. But a good master says that there's vessels that are profitable and there's a way in which you are to live our lives.

[ 19 : 04 ] In Acts, they needed some tables. They needed some people to be cared for. And what did they look for? Not just talent and ability and resources, but they looked for godly lives among people that were going to serve the widows.

And if we're going to serve at the master's table, we need to be ready unto every good work. That's Titus 3.1. Or in 2 Timothy 2.21, we need to purge these things of ourselves so we can be vessels unto honor.

So those two verses we've looked at, we've seen here, one, there's an attitude towards God, a given authority that places us in a ready position to serve God through good works.

Here in Titus, it tells us how we're to honor authorities and in doing so, it makes you ready unto good works, which means not doing so makes you unprepared for that. Another one is we're told to command or to purge ourselves to be vessels of honor for the master's use.

We're told to be diligent. We're told to do all that we can by the grace of God. And if anyone cleanses himself, Paul spoke about a cleansing that isn't just something that God does for us as we sit passively.

[ 20 : 06 ] 1 John 1, 9 speaks about confessing our sins. He's faithful and just to forgive our sins and to cleanse us from all righteousness. And because of that, we are positionally sanctified. We are declared innocent.

But you may remember the story last week where I told you Jesus was washing the feet of the disciples and Peter says, Lord, if you're washing, wash all of me, my head and everything. And he says, you don't have need of that.

You're a cleanse. I need to clean. I need to wash your feet. But then he goes, he says, one of you are not clean. And he was speaking of Judas. And he was saying by the righteousness and by his death on the cross, he has made us clean.

He has made us righteous. But there's a needing as we walk through life and before we sit down at a table to wash our hands and to wash our feet. And that's what Jesus was showing there to Peter explaining to him this lack of understanding.

So, this can be seen in Judas where he, his hands, he may have washed his hands and he might have served the table but internally he wasn't clean. He wasn't forgiven.

[ 21 : 06 ] And Jesus said, you're not clean. And Jesus said, Peter, you're clean. You've been forgiven of sin but we need to wash your feet. You need to wash up before supper. This daily turning to God, this daily need of repentance and confession, confessing one to another, the going to God in our daily lives and say, Father, I want to serve you.

I want to be an honorable vessel. I want to serve you in a way that you are deserving of it. But there's people in our lives, one, the Satan, the accuser of the brother, who want to tell you at all times that you're not fit for the master's use.

As a teenager, I preached this passage at a youth rally and as I think back about what I learned from that time until now, I really worry and I'm concerned.

I shouldn't say I worry but I wonder, what did I tell those young people? Did they leave that day feeling that they had been damaged and unrepairable? Was there an arrogance as me as a teenager telling them that I wanted to be a vessel and I wasn't going to mess up and telling them if they don't mess up as well, then God would use them?

Which is a great message until you mess up, right? Then you need to hear that there's grace and forgiveness. A pastor in Texas, named Matt Chandler, he tells a story and I don't know if I've shared it before but I think about it quite often.

[ 22 : 21 ] He talks about how he was teaching at a conference and he took a rose and where he wasn't teaching, somebody else was teaching, there's thousands of singles and college age people at it and he took a rose and he handed it to one person and they passed it around through the congregation and the guy continued preaching and then at the end of it, the rose comes all the way to the back and he grabs the rose and he holds it up and it's kind of broken and the petals are falling off and he says, now tell me, who would want this rose?

It has been touched and it's been passed around and he wanted to bring guilt and shame to get young people to do what he believed was right and I don't know if Matt Chandler did or just said in his heart he wanted to stand up on his seat and say this, Jesus wants the rose.

You see, as a believer, Satan wants to accuse you and he wants to tell you that you should not be serving Jesus because you're guilty and you're dirty and you're shameful and you don't have a seat at the table where he is at and you shouldn't serve him but I want you to know that Jesus wants the rose that today that you can put your faith and trust in him and be thoroughly cleansed and as a believer you should daily come to him.

If you're a believer and Satan has you in a place where you know that you aren't serving the Lord allow Jesus to wash your feet today and come and serve at this master's table and then we have that in 2 Timothy where 2.21 it says, If any man therefore purge himself from these he shall be a vessel unto honor sanctified and meet for the master's use and prepared unto ever good work.

Believer in here you found yourself involved in sin you found yourself in these things that need to be purged and taken out of your life then flee also youthful lust but follow righteousness faith, charity, peace with them that call on the Lord out of a pure heart and if you will purge yourself you will confess your sins and receive the forgiveness of him then you should serve at the master's table but if you won't then you're not the vessel of honor that you should be in service to him.

[ 24 : 18 ] These are called youthful lusts not because they end in our youth but because they started in our youth. Some of you will be older adults in here and you're still battling with these youthful lusts.

You're still battling with the sins that started in your life maybe as a teenager and you need to flee. Maybe it's like Potiphar and Joseph and Potiphar's house where he literally took off running and there is a time in fleeing from sin where you need to literally take off running from him.

It's the best thing you can do. Give no occasion to them put yourself in a place don't put your place in a temptation but you should run. But here in this fleeing whatever you're fleeing from there's always the same direction where you're going to go.

It is to follow righteousness. Flee youthful lusts but to follow righteousness. Run from your sin run to your Savior. It's the defined direction. 1 Timothy 6-11 But thou, O man of God flee these things and follow after righteousness godliness, faith, love, patience, and meekness.

Let's not wait right now if you're in here and the accuser of the brother if you've been forgiven you're a believer you're one of those people that has believed and now you've been redeemed you've been made under good works but you're living in this constant struggle of sin right now in your seat.

[ 25 : 33 ] you ought to pray unto the Lord you ought to repent of those sins and you ought to say Father, search my heart O God and renew a right spirit within me lift your hands up to him and to tell him that you bring your guilt and your shame and you give it to him and you receive that forgiveness.

And in doing so now we can be people that are ready our readiness this characteristic of youthful vessels kind of an orientation if you've ever worked at a restaurant they probably did some kind of orientation I go to a few places and I don't think anybody had any orientation nobody was oriented in what they were supposed to do right and just throw the food out the window and move on right and so there's some places you know that have an orientation well serving the master's table deserves some orientation all these things put in the remembrance charging them first of all those of us who want to be honorable vessels unto the Lord for his honor and glory and there should be no pride in this we're talking about bowls and plates and vessels that he is serving this world through we are not the hero of the story he is using our lives but we want to do it in a way that is honorable unto him you must be faithful to the master and that's demonstrated in the faithfulness to his word you cannot be faithful to a master if you're not obedient to his word and so put these things in remembrance that I'm charging them simply you're not ready to serve the master if you ignore his word we're accountable to God we know that we're visible to God and we listen to his word second be discerning and avoid the distractions of life



Paul when writing Timothy uses this analogy about being a good soldier not getting entangled with the things of life and in the Titus he gets more specific and he says but avoid foolish questions and genealogies and contentions foolish questions and genealogies the Jews had a tendency in this time to trifle with relatively unimportant issues they would suggest they just talked about everything everything was of most importance and they were always having debates and conversations my great uncle Joe I remember being in the living room with him and he went I had a question I have a question and he said well remember there are no dumb questions there's only dumb people asking questions alright and my aunt Nellie in the other room said Joe don't say that alright but he was always making some statement like that you didn't know where he was going to go no dumb questions only dumb people asking questions and he wasn't allowed to say that and I'm not allowed to say that either but the intention of the question really does matter there are foolish conversations met a man outside of an apartment complex many years ago and he wanted to talk to me about different church models and multi-site and church buildings and like everything in the world

I asked to hear his testimony the man wasn't a believer he didn't love Jesus Jesus was not king so any of those conversations that I was going to have with him which might be appropriate for me to talk to Pastor Bo about or to talk to you about that might be of interest in that moment that was a foolish question that was a foolish conversation that if I was to give that man any more time about that in the context it would be a foolish use of our time or contention now that one may seem odd yeah I know that we shouldn't just go on about genealogies as those ladies who've been reading through the Bible together when you get the genealogies you're like I don't know why anybody want to spend a whole lot of time here and argue about different things that are going on foolish questions here's another one it's contentions to avoid contention and that may seem odd to you because aren't we supposed to be defending the faith as it would say in Jude to earnestly contend for the faith and we have a real example in 2 Timothy of a couple that they shun and profane vain babblings verse 16 but they will increase unto more ungodliness and their word will eat as doth a canker of whom

Harmonius and Philetus who concerning the truth have erred saying that the resurrection is past already and overthrow the faith of some they believe that the bodily resurrection isn't going to happen well look tonight if you're here with us about it is well with my soul and the story of the hope that we find in a bodily resurrection how important that it was and they had a misunderstanding that they were teaching about it and it says that it was affecting other people that it was spreading this is no small matter what they were teaching and so what are we to do with contention and it tells us here in this passage admonish reject and move on shouldn't we be concerned with heresy that we see shouldn't we give our lives addressing these two people verse 10 and 11 a man that is a heretic after the first and second admonition reject knowing that it is he that is such as subverted and sinneth being condemned of himself so this shows a gracious and sincere heart to not just lobby something across at that person but to go to that person one time and then to another time to them a confrontation with the word of God admonish them face to face with an open bible be patient don't just do it once go it a second time then realizing that this is a matter of the heart and not a lack of information at this point and that's important this isn't a lack of information this isn't a person that if you were to show them this isn't like

[ 30 : 47 ] Kubmeier says that wrong I may be but a heretic I'm not because I ask you to confront me or admonish me with the bible which should be all of our hearts in here you can come to me and show me and say you are wrong in this and you ought to say thank you in that area but you go to that person one time and then another time and they're not going to change and then we pray for them knowing that they will face a judgment before the lord but we're told to avoid foolish questions and genealogies and contention and that seems like some of us in here say this seems like that would be the best use of our time is to contend but then we're told why we are to avoid those things I've already made one reference to the food so I know you're thinking about it already so I'll continue there I used to give my mom a hard time because she was always burning the rolls alright no matter how good the meal was the smoke alarm was usually going off because we forgot about the rolls in the oven we would sit down and we played baseball with it one time and she didn't appreciate that but I mean we would always forget about the rolls and now when I cook

I realize how easy it is to forget about the rolls it just takes no time in the oven right and then you think oh I don't need to set a timer I got this and you don't remind yourself about it you're not affirming yourself constantly to go back and to look at the rolls and to remember it you and I get caught up in things and when we do it hurts other people when Christians get caught up in lesser things the world who should hear the gospel from us they get hurt they are hurt by that they are hurt by our distraction 2 Timothy 2 14 and of these things put in remembrance charging them before the Lord that they strive not about words of no profit but to the subverting of the hearers striving about words that of no profit but the subverting of the hearers subverting means it ruins those that are listening to it it ruins those that are listening as I heard one pastor say you cannot exalt Christ and commend yourself as clever you cannot exalt

Christ and commend yourself as clever Christianity has tons of people that can debate has tons of people that are quite clever but will there be people that constantly affirm the gospel is what matters that's what I want to share with you that's what I want to talk about I don't want to study about all these lesser things I want to know about the Bible I want to know about the theology that ought to shape my life isn't it a sad indictment that people know Christians people spend time talking to Christians even about things about religion but they never hear about Jesus so God forbid Paul brings the gospel and he lays it down upon the life many times in the New Testament and here he lays it down upon this church and he says the way that you spend your life the topics that you talk about the speech that you have it ought to be one that majors on the major thing which is the gospel of Jesus Christ and so I must do I must insist of us as believers that we stay diligent to be honorable vessels fit for the master's use so look here at the gospel and the faithful sayings of Jesus concerning our salvation look at that and apply it to your life and then secondly in here don't let Satan steal your joy of service because you have fallen get up receive forgiveness and serve the Lord wash your hands and get back at serving alongside of us in here but also add to that if you believe that you're serving the Lord but you're living in unrepentant sin then don't continue any farther until you repent of the Lord the Holy Spirit that's working in you he'll work through you in the life of other people but only once you say yes to him and allow him to do the meaningful work in his life in your life that he desires and then lastly here before I pray let us consider how profitable our speech is we're not to be clever we're not to be consumed with good but distracting things let us do the work this week of speaking about salvation and from God's word there's a distraction there good works we've talked about

I showed you a few weeks ago I had a basket of blankets up here and I said there's no doubt a lady sewing and knitting blankets to be given the kids who come into foster care that is a good work do you know that this week and the topics that you choose to talk about you have an opportunity of doing the good work of speaking like a Christian who understands the gospel if it's in here among you and you haven't controlled your tongue you're a person that uses profanity let the day be the day that it stops that should not be among God's people your words are not going to be heard when you share the gospel if you're a person who cannot control your tongue and use vanity as a dad I know that I lose influence in my life when I lose my temper with them it doesn't have to be profanity but it can be unkind speech that's given we ought to submit ourselves today and say Lord I want to be a servant that serves you in an honorable fashion I don't want to be limited and that's what I shared with those teenagers years ago and I pray that I didn't leave guilt to them and I just said this I don't know what God has for me in my life so I want to live in an honorable way and pleasing unto him so that there's no limitations upon my life and how he could serve me

I don't want to show up to the concert without a mouthpiece and just pretend that I'm playing I want to show up and say Lord I am here ready for any good work that you have for me and that's not a role inside of a church that means that this week there's opportunities that are prepared for you but will you prepare your heart for those opportunities and serve him with diligence Heavenly Father Lord I thank you so much that you would allow us to serve you that there would be a way in which we could even do anything that would be honorable unto you and worthy of serving you so Father I pray for bowls and plates and vases in here of the day Lord that every one of us will do the work of asking are we prepared unto every good work may we submit our tongue unto you Lord so that you can use it to be a minister of grace to those that need to hear it with heads bowed and eyes closed and Pastor Bo will come and before he does I just want to speak to the believers in here this is a passage of scripture written to a church one like ours one that he would say

[ 37:10 ] I want you to be usable unto me I want you to give your life I want you to live in submission to his word there ought to be repenting of sin there ought to be a submitting of ourselves and say Father I want you to do the cleaning that you can do in my life and I want to be used in a way that would be honorable unto you I want to work in a way Lord that brings you honor and glory and then ask him say Father would you prepare me for that good work in which you have for me this week