

1Tim 24-06-23a

Good morning. Welcome to the Sunday morning services at Grace and Truth Bible Church. It's the 23rd of June, 2024.

We are in 2 Timothy chapter, I'm sorry, 1 Timothy. My Bible was at 2 Timothy. We are in 1 Timothy chapter six, picking up this morning at verse three.

Let's ask God's blessing on our time of study and fellowship. And we'll begin. Father, how grateful we are for the many ways that you bless us and provide for us and watch over us.

Uh, we are no doubt unaware of many of the things you do to hold us in your hands, to surround us with a ring of fire and to carefully calibrate the challenges and tests and opportunities that come our way to enable us to grow in grace and knowledge of our savior, the Lord Jesus Christ. We thank you for him, for his example and the words and doctrines that you have given to him to pass on to the apostles and through them to us. These that we look at this morning, we ask that you will bless to the, uh, edification of each heart and soul.

Uh, may we more fully and effectively represent the Lord Jesus as his body on this earth as a result, uh, and may each one of us come away, uh, renewed and refreshed and restored and thoroughly equipped for every good work. We ask it in Jesus name. Amen.

We are on the final approach to the runway here to conclude our study of first Timothy. It's, uh, been a very fascinating set of exhortations that the apostle Paul passes on to pastor Timothy and enjoins him to further pass them on to the congregation. We saw the purpose of the instruction, the goal being love from a pure heart, a good conscience and a sincere faith.

We saw what exemplary Christian, uh, patterns of behavior should be. These things, uh, characterize leadership because they are, uh, visible to others and translate principles and truths into a, uh, an example that can be seen and understood and followed. After that in chapter five, we have seen, uh, rather than looking at the leadership, how should those in the fellowship, those in our periphery really be, uh, looked after whose concern is it, uh, what kind of concerns are involved in putting a shoulder under the burden of, uh, those who need relief and what does that look like? And then in verse 21 of chapter five, once again, Paul emphasizes to Timothy the charge before God and the Lord Jesus Christ and the elect or unfallen angels that you observe these things.

This is the first of 10 imperatives. Uh, my Bible happily has the left-hand page beginning with verse 21 of chapter five and displaying the entire rest of the book, uh, on that page and the next. But all 10 of these, uh, imperatives, these aren't the only imperatives, but they are the, the action words, the primary ones, and they are not only for Timothy, but

for us because the things that Timothy is urged to instruct and teach, uh, to exhort, to enforce, to encourage are things that all of us should know and follow.

So beginning at 521 and extending through 621, uh, you have the material that wraps up and, and gives the applicational force and value of all of the preceding material. We have seen the, uh, observance of these things without prejudice, doing nothing with partiality. This should be true of all of us.

We should not be respecters of persons. And, uh, this means neither to discriminate against someone nor to favor someone, and there's been the effort in recent generations to sort of reverse discriminate, looking at sins of the past and the oppression and mistreatment and abuse of certain people groups, uh, to try to compensate for that or overcompensate by granting, uh, favoritism and, uh, you know, positive reinforcement of someone simply because they belong to a group. This is just as wrong as discrimination.

It doesn't feel wrong to the human mind. We think, well, I'll, I will correct the injustices perpetrated by people in the past. That is not the way to do it.

Impartiality and a godly view of people based on where they fit in the circles of love is the answer. And we are neither to discriminate nor to exhibit partiality based on some false criterion or criteria. Uh, but here in chapter six, which in my view begins at verse three, the previous two verses attached to chapter five, and we've seen them, uh, if anyone teaches otherwise and does not consent to wholesome words, does not consent to wholesome word, what would you say is a wholesome word? How do you know if a word is wholesome or not? How do you know if food is wholesome or not? You can't always go by the taste, especially with what you get in the store today, because they load it down with high fructose corn syrup and, uh, sugar.

And, you know, you get a beverage and it's got 39 grams of sugar in it. That's the average load in a Coke. Um, and that's, I think eight or nine teaspoons of white sugar in a single standard Coke.

Um, people that have three or four of those in a day and wonder why they're having weight problems, uh, ought to read the label, but because it tastes good or because it refreshes doesn't necessarily mean it is wholesome. What does wholesome mean? Well, this is the Greek word, uh, who Guion, Oh, or who Guion or who Guiono. But, uh, remember in Greek, when, when the second letter is a U, it comes over into English with a Y. So what does that tell you? H Y G I E N E. What is that hygiene? This is the root of our word hygiene, our regimen for taking care of ourselves, cleanliness, uh, nutrition, you know, uh, looking after our health.

And, uh, it goes back to this word who Guiono, which has the sense of something when it comes to the metaphorical use here, words that are true and, uh, correct. So if you're eating foods that have a balance of, uh, proteins and carbohydrates and fats and

vitamins and minerals, this is the food that our bodies were designed to thrive on. Designed to thrive.

And the same is true for our spiritual nutrition. We are designed to thrive spiritually on these words. So how do you know if a word is wholesome or not? Same way, you know, if food is wholesome.

If you start a diet that, uh, incorporates these words, these teachings, and it does not contribute to faith and hope and love. If it doesn't enable us to cultivate a pure heart, a good conscience and an unhypocritical faith, we will begin to see symptoms, weakness, apathy, uh, inabilities, just as you do on a bad diet in the physical realm. So if anyone does not consent, doesn't consent to true and correct words, these wholesome words, the, the idea of consenting here means to, to pay attention to, to accept, to take up.

It was used in secular Greek of bringing a case before a judge. And you're bringing that case because you want it to be accepted. Ideally, your lawyer believes in you and believes in your innocence.

If he's defending you, believes in the guilt of the defendant, if he's a prosecutor and you're, you're invested, you're convinced and you make the case that you care about it. You have it organized in your mind. And so it doesn't simply mean that you'll allow someone to say it.

I will consent to let you put a political sign in my yard. Doesn't necessarily mean I care anything about the guy whose name is on that sign. This is much more than consent.

This is to be in agreement in a positive and active way. And to not support and encourage the understanding and practice of these words is to fail to consent. So they're going to teach otherwise.

They've got a different view, a different understanding or interpretation than what these words of the Lord Jesus through Paul, through the teacher, in this case, Timothy, what they say. So, and Paul emphasizes, these are the words of our Lord Jesus Christ. If you have any doubt that scripture is inspired by God and profitable, this affirms the chain of custody for these truths, these true and correct words.

They originate with God himself through the Lord Jesus Christ to Paul, to Timothy, to us. They are true and correct. They are wholesome words.

And someone who teaches otherwise and doesn't heartily agree, affirm and support these concepts, these doctrines, these practices and the doctrine that accords with godliness. Remember we saw last time doctrine isn't just words on a paper or a list of points under a title. Doctrine is that truth, which you practice.

We've just seen people resurrecting the notion of the Monroe Doctrine in recent weeks

with the Russians putting military ships and submarines in our waters, just a few hundred miles off the coast of Florida, near Cuba. And there is a doctrine. There is a practice.

There is a policy that is followed by the United States or has been up to this point about whether or not we allow foreign powers to exercise hegemony and influence in our hemisphere. It's a doctrine. Same thing here.

So first of all, you have to support, affirm and endorse the teaching and repeat it. Teach it yourself. Don't teach otherwise.

And secondly, the doctrine, the outworking of it. It's not just theoretical or hypothetical. It is practical.

And it is practical truth that results in, accords with, is in harmony with and in keeping with godliness. This is what we've been seeing and emphasizing ever since chapter 3, verse 16, the mystery of godliness, which is centered on and founded on Jesus Christ himself. So if anyone isn't in that camp, if any church, if any believer or any group of believers isn't on board with impartiality, not positive discrimination or negative discrimination, not treating people differently because of class or ethnicity or economic status or past, our evaluation, our perception and decisions about how to treat people, whether or not to cultivate and encourage fellowship or whether to maintain a distance or a separation is based on the spiritual truths given in this book and the rest of scripture.

That's how we decide what to do. Doesn't matter if people think that it's unkind. It doesn't matter if people don't understand why we won't allow someone at our table or under our roof or why we are happy to have someone that is socially unacceptable or looked at askance by others in the world.

That is not to matter for us. We have a prayerful approach based on the word of God, the influence of the spirit of God and the result of our prayers for guidance and understanding so that our godliness is evident in how we interact with other people, both in positive and in not so positive ways. There's people that just don't agree with that.

It just doesn't sit comfortably with them. It puts a burr under their saddle in some way. They just think, well, I can't act that way.

And they won't follow it. They won't teach it and they look with anything from disapproval to disdain at those who do live this way. What are they? It tells us in verse four, anyone teaching otherwise and not affirming and supporting and practicing these words is proud.

This is a symptom of arrogance. If you're going to disagree with this word of truth and doctrinal practice that comes from God, the Lord Jesus Christ and the inspired apostolic

witness, you think you've got a better idea. You've got a more accurate evaluation of how things ought to be.

That's pride. You know more than God. You've got a different policy than the Lord Jesus gave to the apostles to communicate to us.

And if you want to twist and distort the scriptures and you want to leave part of it out because you don't like how it sounds or how it works out in practice, that's arrogance. It is pride and that is the problem. It's the original sin.

Pride got Satan in trouble when he was the guardian cherub of the throne room of God and he was eventually kicked out and cast to earth. Pride is what motivated Eve to pick the fruit in violation of God's command. It seemed like a good idea to her, a better idea than following the mandate from God himself.

He is proud knowing nothing. In other places, when Paul talks about knowledge puffs up, love builds up, this sort of, it doesn't mean they have absolutely no knowledge. It means they don't know what they're talking about when it comes to spiritual truth, doctrinal correctness, proper interpretation and application of the scriptures.

He is proud knowing nothing. Nobody who knows nothing thinks they know nothing. Everybody that I've ever encountered, including myself, who at various times think we know something and we're wrong, we don't know that we don't know.

We think we do know. We think we're right. And this goes back to the good conscience, to the am I wrong detector.

And when it says, no, you're right. Look at how good that sounds. Look at how many other people will approve of it.

And it's faulty. There is a way that seems right and it just isn't. And we think we know.

We think we've got it figured out and we don't. I was reviewing some of the lessons that we're annotating and revising and updating the listings on the church website. And I went back to a lesson in Matthew from the year 2020, and it's November the 29th.

And I was amazed. It's four years ago. And we were in a different book looking at a different passage.

And the same truths were being emphasized about the possibility of thinking we're right and we're not. It's Jesus talking to the Pharisees and their teaching and their practice, their example, their influence on the rest of the Jews, the Israelites under their spiritual tutelage. And if you have a chance, I think it's the second session in particular.

If you don't want to listen to it, you can now read it. Check out the listing. But these same truths from a different angle.

It's like having the depth perception we get from two eyes. You go back and review the content of that study with this one. And they inform each other in a very wonderful way.

I clicked that just randomly to see if the processes I was using were working. And I couldn't stop reading the transcript. Once I got started, I thought, wow, I didn't remember all of this being in the Matthew study.

But it's there. Knowing nothing, but is obsessed with disputes and arguments over words. We are anxious to understand the meaning of words.

True and correct words are in view here. Wholesome words, right? But to argue and dispute over their meaning means that you never get to the application. If you're going to wrangle and argue and try to defeat somebody with whatever tools at your disposal, you're more interested in a conversational victory than you are in figuring out how should we then live.

And the dispute becomes the issue instead of understanding and meaning. And something the Holy Spirit can use to lead and to guide. And if we find ourselves in an argument and someone is espousing a different point of view, and they're not seeking, they're not listening, they're not considering that maybe their truth detector and their rightness detector might be faulty.

And we should always be willing to question our own understanding. It isn't a lack of faith to ask questions and say, have I got this wrong? We have the tools to know. Does it comport with the true and correct words that are found in Scripture that we have spent time in detailed study of? There are very few doctrines, very few Christian healthy life practices that turn on the interpretation of a single word.

It is the entire witness of Scripture. It is the bulk, the very clear passages that help us understand those that might be a little bit controversial or less clear. But there's no important applicational truth that depends on the proper definition of a single word.

So if somebody thinks that word means something different, they don't think wholesome means wholesome, they don't think doctrine means doctrine, okay, fine. But what is the weight? My favorite example of this, and I've used it over and over, is when you're driving and you're looking through your windshield or out your side windows on a muddy day, there can be mud, there can be bugs, there can be droplets that limit your vision from being a perfectly brand new factory direct windshield to something like 85 to 90 percent. 10 percent, 15 percent of your windshield can be unusable.

You can't see through it. But when you're driving, the remaining 85 to 90 percent is generally sufficient to stay between the lines, to drive safely, to get where you need to go. You don't have to have a perfectly clear windshield that's got no blemishes, no obstructions whatsoever.

What is clear, despite the chips or the cracks or the bugs or the splats or the mud or the raindrops, what is clear is sufficient to guide us safely and effectively to our destination. It is the same with scripture. We don't have to get hung up if there's a verse we don't understand, a word that doesn't seem clear.

Obviously, when we stop for gas, what do we do to our windshield? Grab the little rubber squeegee and get that thing as clean as we can. And we do the same with our spiritual understanding, but it should not stop us and we shouldn't spend all our time trying to get every last speck off the windshield. These people that obsess over every little question are in view here.

And again, it is a function. These are symptoms of arrogance. Pride, knowing nothing, obsession with disputes and arguments over words.

There's always somebody else to dispute and argue with, right? So instead of seeking to understand the scripture so that with the enablement and guidance of the Holy Spirit, I can live a life that pleases God first and foremost, that the Lord Jesus Christ is glad He died for me and wants to present me before the throne to His Father by name. That ought to be our focus, not can I impress this person? Can I defeat them in an argument? Did I look up one more fact than they did? And so I can put a big exclamation mark at the end of a sentence and they have no comeback. This horizontal obsession with disputes and arguments isn't healthy by way of application.

Any extended discussion, whether it is political, whether it is social, whether it is on any kind of an issue with our fellow believers ought not to devolve into disputing, wrangling, arguing, the desire to win the point or win the day or silence the critic. If we sense that things are taking that kind of turn, change the subject. Remember our memory verse, whatsoever things pure, true, noble, lovely of good report, think on these things.

We ought to be the adult in the room as they like to say. And if a conversation starts drifting in a bad direction, if anybody is equipped to turn it in a positive, wholesome and edifying direction, it ought to be us. We ought to be the ones to be sensitive and to prevent this kind of thing from happening.

Disputes and arguments over words from which, look what happens. You start with a dispute and you think, but it's important. You don't understand this properly.

These vessels of honor and vessels of wrath fitted for destruction in Romans nine, you've got to understand what that is. And you're pushing the Calvinist point of view, and I'm not gonna let that stand. Drop it, forget it.

Let the Holy Spirit lead people in their own time, in their own way, with their own foundation underneath, more advanced truths. You can't put somebody on the third floor of their house when they haven't built the second story yet. They're gonna be at best

clinging to the top of a chimney with nowhere to go.

Let God bring his children along. And we can be speaking the truth in love and providing useful, helpful understandings at the level that someone is ready to understand. But if it starts being an argument, if you see someone getting disturbed, losing their confidence, you are causing a brother or sister to stumble.

And that's the opposite of what we're supposed to be doing. And what happens? You start with a dispute or an argument over some small point, the meaning of a word, and what comes from it? Envy, strife, reviling. Inevitably, these things, when they start to generate more heat than light, you end up with personal attack.

How can you say that? That's just ignorant. Don't you know this? Haven't you read that? And it ends up in negative personal evaluations, reviling, evil suspicions. I think you're trying to manipulate me with that.

I think you're wanting me to give money to the church, or you're wanting me to pull out my association with this or with that, or you're wanting me to change political parties. You're wanting me to change my position on something that I hold dear to my heart. Evil suspicions.

Notice all of this emphasizes and focuses on the horizontal. Now it's between me and thee. It's what do you think versus what I think? What's your opinion? And I think you're talking bad about me.

You're thinking bad about me. You're accusing me of something that's not true. Where did God go? Where did the useful, wholesome, true and correct words go? The next phrase in verse five, useless wranglings.

You've got a text note in your New King James, and it's a good one. Constant friction. When these sorts of disputes come up now, every time you see each other, the memory of that difference of opinion that created problems the last time you spoke is near in hand.

And there's friction. People can't get over, in many cases, the fact that someone disagrees. And in the meantime, you've gone and dug up some other things and you wanna try to angle the conversation to get back to that topic so that you can launch some fresh ammunition at them.

And try to win them over or beat them down or defeat them or impress them or whatever it might be. And so there's constant friction. Heat, not light.

Men of corrupt minds. And this doesn't necessarily mean that this is the corruption of evil and wickedness so much as your mind is no longer working correctly. You've got a kind of a broken mind.

You've got a mind that isn't properly maintained and serviced and lubricated and all of its parts aren't in synchronization. Corrupt mind, your mind can't work right. Why? You're destitute of the truth.

This goes back to the knowing nothing at the beginning of verse four. They've got information, but it's not truth. And we can think that information is true when it isn't.

And this is between us and the Lord. If we're not sure that our understanding or our grasp of something that is directly related to our Christian life and faith and practice, if we're not sure we're on solid ground, where do you go? Don't go to a fellow believer. Don't go to your pastor.

Go to the Lord first. Take it to God. Go to the heavenly father.

I'm losing my peace and my confidence. I'm not sure of what to do. Take it to the father and wait.

Wait on the Lord. Be of good cheer. He will strengthen your heart.

Wait, I say on the Lord. He will provide that someone that needs to speak that truth will be prompted by the Holy Spirit. It will come up naturally.

You won't even see it coming in many cases. You haven't asked, you didn't broach it, but you're daily devotional the next day. The Bible class that you pull up and listen to, the notes that you review, the scripture passage that you go to will speak to your heart because when you are asking and seeking and knocking, God is canvassing the earth, looking for believers who have that attitude and he will answer always without fail.

Have to wait sometimes because the pause in the answer is often used the same way the Lord Jesus did when the disciples would ask him a question. Disciples would ask him a question. And you notice many times, Jesus didn't give them a simple direct answer.

Lord, when will these things be? What are the signs of the end of the age? Matthew 24. Well, Jesus spends the entire rest of the chapter before he finally gives them some of those signs and gives them some of those answers and the pondering and the questioning. And many times when God doesn't answer, it's because we already know the answer.

We just haven't sat down and reviewed what we know. Parents famously do this with their kids. Your kid will come up and ask you a question, your child, and you don't give them the answer because they already know it if they will stop and think and use their previous training and experience and the previous exhortations.

It's 15 minutes before supper time. Can I have a popsicle? I don't necessarily have to say yes or no. I can give a look with a raised eyebrow.

How many times have we said you can't have sweets before supper because it spoils your appetite? You're not gonna wanna eat your healthy food if you have a sweet snack immediately before. And I don't have to repeat that out loud every single time. So this idea that your mind is not working properly and you're destitute of the truth, the destitution here doesn't mean you don't have access to it.

It's that you're not availing yourself of it. It is already there. You need to dig a hole and you're trying to do it with your mind instead of going to the garage and getting the shovel that you already have so that you can effectively dig a hole.

Supposing that godliness is gain. Notice a means of is in italics. Supposing that godliness is a means of gain.

But means of isn't there. Godliness is a gain. They're supposing this and you think, well, that's gotta be a false supposition.

But then in the next verse, Paul says godliness with contentment is great gain. Well, is it gain or is it not? Is it profit or is it not? And how is the godliness that these people destitute of the truth who are teaching otherwise, who are arrogant, who are sponsoring disputes and arguments, leading to strife and envy and evil suspicions and the rest of it. They have suppositions about godliness.

They know there is such a thing as godliness and they suppose that there is a kind of godliness that is legitimate and leads to gain. Paul says, well, there is godliness that leads to gain. What is the difference between verse five and verse six? Well, we're gonna pause here and take our break.

When we come back, we'll find out.