

1Tim 24-06-23b

We're ready now to look once again at 1 Timothy chapter 6, and isn't it interesting the emphasis of modern mainstream Christianity versus the emphasis given to a local church and its pastor in this book. Think about the emphasis that is prevalent in the Christian culture, if you will, in our country that emphasizes things that are truly legitimate. We should be sensitive.

We should be ready to meet the needs of people and to endeavor to help them when they have problems. So in large churches, certainly those of my acquaintance, you find that there are special Sunday school classes where people are organized by their marital status or their age or their gender even. There's ladies classes, men's classes, those for the divorced or for the newly married or for those with kids and certainly classes for the kids.

And there are outreach programs and so on. Nothing at all wrong with any of that. But what is the trunk of the tree? What is the vine to which all of those branches should attach? And you find it emphasized in this book.

If you flip back a few pages and you find the exhortations going all the way back to verse 3 of chapter 1, remain in emphasis that you may charge some that they teach no other doctrine. Paul has come full circle to this concern he voices at the outset of the letter. You have got to charge some that they teach no other doctrine.

If you are going to teach, teach the wholesome words. Teach the sound doctrine and teach no other doctrine. Don't give heed to narratives, to stories, to just so explanations and views.

Why? Verse 4, which caused disputes rather than godly edification. Remember godliness, godly edification, building up. An edifice is a construction, is something that is built.

And this is true not just of the teaching in a church, but it ought to be the effect that issues forth from the power of God within you and within me. Our presence ought to be a conduit through which the grace of God and the power of God, the upbuilding that God produces ought to be manifest and evident in and through us. Disputes and arguments, disagreements, controversies that lead to envying and the other symptoms that Paul has described here.

Evil suspicions and focus on the material. We are turning the corner into what gain and profit is and people that are proud knowing nothing that spend their time trying to get other people to agree with their point of view is always accompanied by another symptom. And so throughout this letter and without reviewing the whole thing, just look beginning in chapter 4 in verse 1. Those who are going to depart from the faith, what

happens? They are heeding deceptions and doctrines of demons.

These are practices, these are priorities and goals and values that people pursue thinking that they're living an ethical, moral, socially acceptable life, politically correct life. And the doctrines, those practices are actually sourced in fallen angels, not in God's truth. And it results in lies and hypocrisy in verse 2 of chapter 4. So what is the antidote? Verse 3, end of the verse, we should be thankful people who believe and know the truth.

Everything else that we do, whatever benefit we can provide, whatever encouragement and edification and support and upbuilding and care for widows and others in need, all of these are wonderful things. But if they happen like ended up in this church, God says, I know your works. The Lord Jesus says, I know your works in Revelation chapter 2, but you've lost your first love.

You've got the periphery, you've got the bark and the outside wood, but the heartwood, the center of the tree has rotted. The source from which these things are supposed to derive their energy and their guidance and the glory and power of God has slipped away. You've lost your first love.

Love is to have the words of the Lord Jesus and keep them. The one who has my words and keeps them, he's the one who loves me. He's the one that is going to experience the presence and the power of all three members of the Trinity.

Love for God, the first and greatest commandment is to have his words, his doctrines, and keep them. Nothing else. You can't substitute sensitivity, goodwill, laboring in the fields of care for others and dishing out chow at a soup kitchen or donating clothes or coming by and trying to cheer somebody up who's down.

Nothing wrong with any of those. They can be wonderful expressions of Christian love, but they have to source in something. They can't be an end in themselves.

They can't be arms without a head. They can't be done for any reason other than love for God and a desire to be pleasing in his sight and to be done impartially without prejudice in a positive or a negative direction. That's the tricky thing.

It is so easy to be deceived by the appearance, a form of godliness. Remember that? They have a form of godliness in Romans, Paul says, the legalistic Jews. They have a form of eusebia.

They have a form of the godliness that is being spoken of here, but they've denied the power. There's a lot of righteousness going on, but the power at the center isn't there, and it is tainted and corrupted by false motivations. What are those motivations, and how do you find the antidote? What is the preventative? Over and over again, Paul gives it.

In verse 6 of chapter 4, if you instruct the brethren in these things, these words of truth, these doctrines nourished in the words of faith and the good doctrine, same verse 4-6, instruct the brethren in these things, nourished in the words of faith and good doctrine, carefully followed. Next verse, reject profane, this is humanly sourced, earthly ideas, fables. Anytime you see the word fable, just substitute narrative.

So much of what happens today is driven by narrative instead of by evidence, facts, reason, and certainly not by God's truth. Verse 11, these things command and teach, these things, these things. It's in verse 6, it's in verse 11.

Verse 13, until I come, give attention to reading, exhortation, and doctrine. Reading, exhortation, doctrine. This is the vine.

This is the Lord Jesus. This is what we abide in, in order to bear much fruit. Verse 15, chapter 4, meditate on these things.

There's these things again. Verse 6, verse 11, verse 15, verse 16, take heed to yourself. Instead of arguing and disputing with somebody else, take heed to yourself and to the doctrine.

This is the focus. This is the way. When all of the dust settles, we leave 1 Timothy, we're going to go back and be living our lives.

What is the takeaway? When you think of 1 Timothy, what's the summary? In a sentence or two, how would you summarize 1 Timothy? 1 Timothy, God instructs us. He gives us the word of truth. He schools us in doctrine.

For what purpose? What's the goal of our instruction? It's threefold, and you know what it is. And over and over again, instruct, exhort, preach, teach these doctrines. Believe and know the truth.

Good doctrine, not narratives. Once again, in verse 8 of chapter 4, this informs what's coming up in our next verse. Bodily exercise profits a little, but godliness is profitable for everything.

Beneficial. This godliness and profit is coming up in our next verse. Verse 16, take heed to yourself and to the doctrine, continue in them.

For in doing this, you will deliver yourself and everyone who listens to you. This is working out your salvation in fear and trembling. This is the actual traction that your salvation has.

It's a lot more than just a ticket out of eternal destruction. Our salvation should be a daily experience, and to experience it, we continue in these teachings, these words. You have that practical advice throughout chapter 5, and then in verse 21, I charge you

before God, the Lord Jesus, the elect angels, observe these things.

There's these things again. That's four times in the space of about a chapter. These things, these words, these doctrines.

Verse 22, the end of the verse, keep yourself pure. Don't get imbroglioed in other people's sins. Maybe they want to dispute and argue.

Maybe they want to devolve into strife, reviling, evil suspicions, constant friction, and a destitution of the truth. They want to talk about something that doesn't partake and emphasize these good words. Let that go.

Disinvest. Put some distance. Change the subject.

Try to get onto a wholesome patch of ground. Why? Because these people think that there is some kind of gain, a material benefit, a profit to be had in doing this. This is such an interesting truth.

As we just saw, Paul has already touched on it back in chapter 4. Turn to 2 Peter, chapter 2. 2 Peter, chapter 2. The description that Paul has just given of those who purport to be teachers and leaders and are not, Peter says the very same thing. Chapter 2, 2 Peter. There were also false prophets among the people, even as there will be false teachers among you.

How can you spot these false teachers? They will secretly bring in, they will surreptitiously, without being noticed, they are not out on the radar, they kind of slip in the back row and move forward. They surreptitiously bring in destructive heresies, even denying the Lord who bought them. This is one of the scariest things in the New Testament.

These false teachers who bring in destructive heresies instead of constructive truths are believers. They are saved. How do I know that? They deny the Lord who bought them.

It doesn't say who died for them and there is potential salvation. They are blood bought. They are purchased.

They are not just God so loved the world so that whosoever believes. They are redeemed. These are redeemed believers who are enemies of the cross, fallen from grace, cut off from Christ and leading others astray in an active and destructive way.

They deny the Lord who bought them. What does this look like? Think back on our review of progressive Christianity with its subtraction of half of who the Lord Jesus Christ is. He is only the Jesus that was the suffering servant and came at the first advent and set a child on his lap, never judged, never sent anyone to destruction, never started a war, was just going about doing good and the gentle Jesus.

If you deny that he is also the coming King that John the Baptist was thinking about in prison, John knew without question that he was the Lamb of God taking away the sin of the world, the Lamb of God who takes away sin. What about the Lamb that is marked in blood and is full of wrath and judgment in the book of Revelation? You can't deny part of who Jesus is. And part of what his role and function is.

They want him to be a beneficent gentle King who just goes about doing good. Kings are government. Government bears the sword and not in vain and it punishes evildoers.

If secular governments are tasked with that, how much more the Lord Jesus when he is ruling the world from Jerusalem in the millennial kingdom and breaking nations in pieces like potter's vessels. Well, they don't like that. They don't want it.

And so they introduce destructive heresies, even denying the Lord who brought them. They want to focus on the redemption, not on the Lord Jesus mounted on the white horse with King of Kings and Lord of Lords on his thigh and with a sharp sword issuing out of his mouth. And they bring on themselves swift destruction.

2 Peter 2.2 Many will follow their destructive ways. Notice destructive heresies, destructive ways, because of whom the way of truth will be blasphemed. It's going to be misunderstood, misinterpreted.

It's going to be corrupted, perverted, distorted, robbed of its power, robbed of its traction, made ineffective and useless. We're not going to accomplish our purpose when teachers like this with their destructive ways and destructive heresies rob the witness, prevent the body of Christ from doing its representative work by covetousness. Here's where we strongly intersect with Paul.

By covetousness, they will exploit you with deceptive words, greed, desire for something, something worldly, something immediate. Is it fame? Is it influence? Is it money? Is it reputation? Is it speaking engagements? Is it notoriety? Is it being a household name? They are coveting something and it is something earthly. And this objective is accomplished by exploiting believers.

Now, how can you exploit believers? Well, you can get them to follow you. You can get them to pay you. You can get them to buy your resources or send a love gift in exchange for your CDs or your DVDs or your downloads or whatever it may be.

And in verse three, this is where the concept of making merchandise of the word of God comes from, because you're in it with a profit motive. And I will reap this profit from the people who listen and the people who follow and the people who pay attention. And if I were preaching and teaching truth as one of these individuals, none of that would happen because their attention would be directed to pleasing God and to endeavoring to represent the Lord Jesus and to follow these doctrines and to care for one another in a

healthy way, not putting someone in an intermediate position of authority or adulation or respect or, well, this is what so-and-so teaches and so-and-so has got a series of Bible studies.

And we all go and we listen to this gal's series or this guy's series or this latest Christian fad that is selling books and tapes and study guides and get together and discuss and tell each other what you think and so on. There is a way to fellowship around the word. You can be widely scattered and have a program of scripture reading that you follow.

You can exchange thoughts and so on. There's nothing intrinsically wrong with that. But when it becomes a substitute, when it happens without that central core that Paul emphasizes over and over again, these things, sound words, exhort, teach, instruct, it is truth, it is doctrine, it is wholesome words.

Without that, these peripheral things that are given that name and are said to be, well, when I get together and share my thoughts and opinions and the way it struck me when I read it over my coffee this morning, that is not exhortation from the linear path of the Father to the Son to the Apostle to the Pastor to my heart. That's the path. Not once in 1st Timothy, 2nd Timothy or Titus does Paul say, encourage believers to get together and share their thoughts and feelings about some scriptural aspect.

The concept of sharing insights in the word amongst each other without guidance, without paying attention to the gift that God emplaces in a group to hold accountable and responsible for ensuring that they are good and wholesome words, that they do comport with sound doctrine. There's got to be accountability. If the group is just kind of tossing stuff out and one person takes one thing away and another person takes, where's the accountability? Well, I can't remember who said it, but it seems to me that Balaam's donkey represents this or the pitch and the tar on Noah's ark represents that.

There's no accountability. There's no authority. There is probably no gift imparted by the Holy Spirit and enabled and empowered by that Spirit that is providing the guidance that gives confidence.

You're not going to have a pure heart. You're going to not have a good conscience and you won't have an unhypocritical faith when it's spirituality by committee. It's unbiblical.

It is a narrative. It is wives tales. Let's get the wives together and have them tell what they think and that's going to be our Bible class.

That's going to be our guidance on how to live Christian life. The Bible invades against that over and over again. Look at Israel coming out of Egypt.

If there's not a Moses, is God just going to say, I'm going to have a couple of guys yell from the housetops, time to leave Egypt. Y'all just figure it out. Talk to each other.

Decide what to take and when to go and how far to go and where to encamp. There is a leader and he is accountable and severely so. He doesn't even get to go into the land because he messed up following instructions from God on behalf of the people.

There is wonderful blessing for those who labor in the word worthy of double honor as we've seen. Pay attention to them. It doesn't say anybody who has a nice thought about the Bible, pay close attention.

There are those who are elders. They have been qualified and recognized and they have been given that assignment and they are accountable. And there is double discipline for somebody that messes that up.

And that is what Paul is talking about here in first Timothy chapter six. So there is a profit, the right kind of gain. And he starts talking about it in verse six.

Godliness with contentment. Gracious sakes, aren't a lot of people content with the kind of view they have of the Christian life and the kind of practice that they perpetrate? Aren't they content? What is contentment? Well, it isn't what it sounds like. The word contentment here is autarcheia.

So you've got auto on the front, you've got arch in the middle, and you've got in the end. And this is something that is sufficiency. It doesn't mean I'm content.

It means it is sufficient to the purpose. It produces competence. I am competent to do my job with what I have been provided.

I have enough food to eat a meal and be enabled through that to do what I'm responsible and accountable to do. So it's not an attitude that, well, that's enough. Think of the feeding of the 5,000 and of the 4,000 and the fragments that were taken up.

People were content to eat a part of it and leave the rest. If Jesus provides an amount of food and it's handed to you, you need to eat the whole thing. Many of us growing up were not allowed to leave the table until we cleaned our plates.

Take what you want, but eat what you take. And if you don't like peas, too bad. Eat your peas.

You're not excused until those peas have disappeared properly down your throat, not into a drawer under the table or surreptitiously handed to the dog or all of the other strategies that have been employed. Sufficiency. Godliness with sufficiency, with competence.

Godliness that has the provision to accomplish it by God's power in God's way for God's glory. That's great gain. So scratch out contentment.

This is competence. It is satisfactory to get the job done. Godliness that is satisfactory,

that is sufficient to get a job done.

The job. That's great gain. We brought nothing into this world.

And then you have the phrase, it is certain. You can also cross that out. It doesn't really matter.

But we can carry nothing out. We brought nothing in. We carry nothing out.

Is this really true? It's true of a class or category of things. We didn't bring any notoriety or fame or social appreciation into the world, and we will carry none of that out. We didn't bring any material goods into the world, and we will carry none of out.

We didn't bring in influence on others and approbation and adulation and invitation to speak and be heard and provide a testimony. We didn't bring any of that into the world, and we can take none of that out. We didn't bring any of the word of God, any practical experience in observing it, interpreting it, applying it and remembering it, but we will carry that out.

That's the one thing we take with us. Our experiences, the memory of our life and God's effect on it and in it and through it survives death and is eternal. It is a part of our eternal life.

What you learn is eternal. These are eternal words of life. Our experience in endeavoring to practice and put into practice these truths is eternal.

The insight that we gain, the epi that goes on the front of our gnosis goes forward and is useful to God in the future. We will serve and execute functions and perhaps govern with the Lord Jesus, sit with Him on His throne, walk with Him in white, partake of hidden manna. You can't do that if you don't bring forward the positive growth and experience from this life.

In terms of material goods, in terms of influence and effect on others, we bring nothing in, we take nothing out. But what God does in us and through us, God being at work in us to will and to do for His good purpose, all of that goes forward. Think of the metaphor of the judgment seat of Christ, wood, hay and stubble burns up, leaving things behind, and gladly so.

Wood, hay and stubble, man can grow those. You can plant seeds and grow that stuff and figure out where it should be and harvest it and reap it and do things with it. But until recent scientific advance, you can't make gold and you can't make silver and you can't make precious stones.

Those are God's creation in the true sense and that is what survives and goes forward. The flames eliminate all of the humanly sourced detritus and what God does in us

survives. That is genuine profit.

Godliness that is sufficient to the task, that accomplishes God's purpose, that effectively leverages a pure heart, a good conscience and a sincere faith, that godliness is great gain. Great gain. In terms of material goods, should you really spend a lot of time trying to generate a giant retirement fund? Be sure that you can put all of your kids through college in advance and your purpose when you get up in the morning and when you go down to bed at night is centered around, do I have enough money to accomplish what I think are worthy goals? Look at verse 8, having food and clothing with these we shall be content.

Having food and clothing with these we shall be content. Once again, this is a form of this Archeo idea. This is Archis Thesometha and the thetas there is all you need to be aware of.

Theta is the sign of the passive and these things will be sufficient for us to get the job done. Take no thought. Remember Jesus' exhortation, don't get caught up in what you will eat, what you will drink, what you will wear.

Your heavenly father knows what you need. Sufficient to the day is the evil thereof. The Lord's prayer, give us today, today's food.

Let tomorrow worry about itself. This doesn't mean have no plan, have no strategy, have no concept of stewardship, but it is not a priority. Use common sense, moderation, reasonableness in ensuring that you're not going to incur excessive expenses compared to your income.

You know, go to the ant thou sluggard. You store up in the summertime and live on it in the wintertime. Remember the Aesop fable about the grasshopper playing the fiddle? I used to have a book when I was a kid that has a picture of that grasshopper and I was just fascinated by the fact that a grasshopper could use two of his legs to play a musical instrument.

Take no thought is kind of like he is proud knowing nothing. He doesn't actually know nothing and have a completely vacant mind. In the same way, taking no thought doesn't mean just bumble through life with no plan, no purpose, no budget, no management whatsoever.

It means don't think about it as a priority that edges out things that ought to be the true priority. We know this. It's common sense, really, spiritual common sense.

Having food and clothing, with these we shall be content to be acquisitive, to be greedy for rising above where we are. I want more stuff. I want more influence.

I want more notoriety. I want more recognition. I want more approval.

I want more appreciation. I want people to realize just what it is I do and the effort that goes into doing it. I want to be known for this.

That is not godliness sourced in sufficiency for the task at hand, which is to love God, love one another, love your neighbor, and do unto others. Those who desire to be rich, verse 9, fall into temptation and a snare. Fall into temptation and a snare.

This idea of the snare is not the scandalizo kind of causing someone to stumble or to trip. This is a different word. This is pagida and comes from the idea of being constrained, being netted in or ensnared.

You get tied to your money. You get tied to your need to publish or perish or to have speaking engagements or to sell books or to be thought of and be considered in your denomination or in your circles, your social circles or whatever it may be. You wind up embroiled in that and it's like the tar baby.

You can't get disconnected from it. And into many foolish and harmful desires. The word foolish here doesn't mean you're a fool to have the desire.

It means that you didn't see it coming. It's unsuspected. Not only do you not know, you don't even suspect.

You don't see this coming. It's unthought of. It's the word for thought with an alpha privative.

It's unthought for. I never knew this would be the result. These desires, maybe you just wanted to make a point and correct a faulty understanding of the word of God somewhere and you earnestly and genuinely went in and shared some truth and it had an effect and people appreciated it and they said, wow, can you do some more of that? And you suddenly find yourself hooked into going down a path of, well, I've got to find another innovation.

I've got to find a breakthrough. I've got to find an innovation or an unthought of interpretation to keep people stimulated because they really like that. And this is like a comedian that's got to come up with a new routine because people thought he was funny the first time.

Well, I can't just give the same old thing. I've got to have fresh jokes and fresh humor. And you suddenly realize that you have a desire to have that experience again.

This is how drug addiction works. The first time somebody gets one of these chemicals in their system, your system's unprepared for it. Your buckets of endorphins all dump and you have this wildly ecstatic experience.

And somebody says, wow, I want to do that again. And where you didn't have a craving

before, now you've got a craving. You start smoking and you want to quit.

You didn't have a craving for cigarettes before you smoked, but after you smoke, now there's a nicotine craving that you didn't see coming. You didn't know what that would be like. Even if somebody told you and the surgeon general warned you, you don't realize what it's like until you have it.

And Jerry Reed sitting there saying, it's a habit, son, and a habit you can break. A little bit of willpower is all it takes. It's just not that easy.

You didn't see it coming. It's unthought for. The grip and the control that this desire would have on your life.

And it begins by departing from priorities. Just don't go down that road and you won't have to find out how hard it is to come back. Stick with sound words of doctrine, avoid fables and false narratives.

Remember the source. Consider the source. Did this come from the father to the son, to the apostle, to the pastor, to me? Does it comport with the rest of scripture or are people having to push aside other parts of scripture? And while I don't like that verse, I just want you to focus on this one.

Let me take this out of context. Let me spin you a narrative. And then I'm going to put this verse in the middle.

And in my narrative, this verse will have a different meaning and make a different kind of sense. Oh my goodness, what they've done to the book of Revelation in this manner. There's a half a dozen books that I know of and have read portions of and have analyzed that partake of this.

Somebody wrote a book. They got famous. Now they got to write another book.

Well, I'll do Revelation and I'm going to give it a completely different spin. You've got to read a whole new light and I'm the person to lead you in that direction. It's an unthought for, and that's what the word foolish means, unthought for and unanticipated.

You didn't think about it and it kind of sneaked up on you and it is a harmful desire. And what is the result? It drowns. It plunges you into the murky waters of destruction and perdition.

This is a particular kind of destruction. Perdition is our old friend Apollia, like Judas, the son of perdition, son of destruction. Those who do not survive the great white throne judgment are destroyed.

Rewards and opportunities for believers are perdition. They are gone and don't come back. It's a one-way ticket to oblivion.

The second word there, perdition. This one though is Olethros, O-L-E-T-H-R-O-S. And this is that which brings corruption.

It looks at the source of making a thing fall apart, crumble, rot, desiccate. So these desires to accumulate, this need to satisfy a covetous attitude and you're not sufficient to the task. You're not content with the food and the clothing that God has provided for the day.

You will be drowned in other things that everything will start to fall apart. Other things will come unglued, your relationships, your marriage, your ability to raise your children properly, your ability to interact with society, your ability to do your job. You didn't see it coming and now you're drowning.

Everything you touch, it's the reverse Midas touch. It doesn't turn to gold. It turns to fertilizer, fresh, steaming, organic fertilizer.

Everything you touch, you drown in the causes for things to come apart. Everywhere you turn, things are on the downgrade. The love of money is a root of all kinds of evil.

The kinds of there is a good addition. That's the meaning behind the English here. Not just root of all evil, but all kinds of evil.

And the love of money has caused some to stray from the faith in their desire for it, their greediness, and they have pierced themselves through with many sorrows. This isn't so much sorrow. There's such a thing as godly sorrow, regret.

I feel bad about that. This is actually wounds. This is pains.

This is a painful piercing. They have pierced themselves through with many, many painful wounds. When you're wounded, things don't work anymore.

You get a gash in your hand. Now you can't use that hand properly and so on. So what is the antidote? Remember I mentioned that there are 10 imperatives in this section.

Very quickly, in verse 21 of chapter 5, observe these things. In verse 22, keep yourself pure. This is not just for Timothy, not just for pastors.

He is to exhort this and all of us are supposed to do it. Observe these things. And you go back and there are three other these things in the preceding context.

Don't share in other people's sins. Keep yourself pure. That's number two.

Number three is in verse 11 of chapter 6. Flee these things. There's two kinds of these things, good these things and bad these things. The immediately preceding context here, flee these things.

Flee those who desire to be rich. Flee all of this false motivated activity. Flee it.

Verse 12, pursue. You're going to pursue. It's still in verse 11 actually.

You flee these things and pursue righteousness. That's the fourth. Number five, fight.

Same verse. Verse 12, fight the good fight of faith. Also in verse 12, lay hold on eternal life.

Lay hold on it now. Grab it now. Leverage it now.

Implement it now. Live it now. That's the sixth one.

The seventh, verse 14, keep this commandment without spot blameless. Keep it. Treasure it.

Guard it. Implement it. Follow it.

Verse 17, command those who are rich in this present age not to be proud. If you've got some material goods, don't let pride start that downward way that you see beginning in verse 4. If you've got some goods, watch out for pride. It's the first and foremost cause that sponsors all the rest of it.

And in verse 20, oh Timothy, guard what was committed to your trust. Guard it. Preserve it.

Watch over it. Don't let anything happen to it. And avoid profane, idle babblings.

It is the content of what we say. It is the content of what we believe that matters. You've got sound doctrine.

You've got profane babblings. Which are we heeding? Which are we following? Which are we representing? Which are we living out on a daily basis? It isn't good intentions. It isn't results.

Look at the people I helped today. Look at how I encouraged or lifted up. That may be a wonderful result, but it is not the means.

Can't get that cart with no horse to go anywhere. Horse has to come first and over and over again. It is the content of our faith.

Sound words. Sound doctrine. We'll pick up at this point next time.

We are going to see three different areas of soundness. This word, sound or wholesome, is used in wonderful ways. And three specific targets for this adjective.

And we'll see them when we pick up our study Wednesday night. But we'll close here in a

word of prayer. Father, thank you for the clear, undeniable light that these passages shed on our path.

We pray that God the Holy Spirit will help us to see where they pertain, how we can make fruitful personal application, how we can improve in our dedication and our faithfulness to guard, keep, preserve and practice these truths so that the glory of the Lord Jesus will be reflected in our lives. And the witness to these words that draws people to you will be effectual in us and among us. We ask it in Jesus' name.

Amen.