

2Timothy 24-09-08b

We're ready to resume our study in 2 Timothy chapter 1, and it is so important to see and to understand that your understanding of verse 12 is correct, and the New Contemporary Scholarly View, like so many New Contemporary Scholarly Views, is a distortion in service of something else, because this is a reflection of hope. Again, if you want to write the literal translation of the last part of verse 12, for this reason I also suffer these things. Nevertheless, I am not ashamed, for I know whom I have believed, in whom I have faith.

This is your faith word, Pistis, Pistuo, and it's an heiress. I have believed in the past, and I continue to believe. My belief hasn't changed, it hasn't wavered, it hasn't weakened.

I trust him then, I trust him now. I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep my deposit, my deposit, with a view toward that day. And my deposit is that which I have committed to him.

It's a long way of saying it, but literally in Greek it is my deposit, the deposit of me. It's a genitive possessive pronoun. He is able to keep my deposit with a view toward that day.

And what happens when you put money on deposit at the bank? You do not have immediate access to it. You can't see it. You can't necessarily make use of it, but you know it's there.

It becomes potential for the future. And you trust that the bank is not going to lose it. They are going to guard it.

They're going to take care of it. And in the day of redeeming or recovering that deposit, it will be there with interest. It was worth putting it there because it comes back to you worth even more than what it was when you placed it on account, when you entrusted it to the bank or whoever holds it.

He is able to guard, to keep, to preserve my deposit with a view toward that day. So verse 13 is where we pick up now. Hold fast the pattern of sound words.

It is amusing in one sense and kind of, it's tragicomic. It's sad in other ways. What people will do with turns of phrase in the scripture.

And there is a development called pattern theology that relies on this verse and a few others like it. And pattern theology is an attempt to understand the Bible in a new way, which is not necessarily a bad thing. If you start with the scripture, but if you think you see a pattern and then you start using the pattern, this is similar to having a theological grid.

You get a certain perspective on scripture. And then anytime you come to a new verse,

you try to fit it into your grid. Instead of letting the scripture define your theology, your theology winds up interpreting scripture.

And you have a kind of myopia, whatever that tunnel vision disease is, where you lose your peripheral vision and you can only see what's right in front of you. And what that does is deprive one of context. You can't see the other things that help you put something into perspective and figure out depth and so on.

So pattern theology, here's one of many examples with regard to the Trinity. So people have trouble with the Trinity. I don't understand it.

From the time I was a child of single digit age, I never had any trouble understanding the Trinity. There are three separate and distinct persons that are God. It's God incorporated.

If you had a corporation that had a president, a vice president and an executive officer, and you say, that's the grace and truth company. It's composed of three people. That's the Acme company.

There's three people. So when I talk about the company, I'm not specifying which individual the company has decided that they're going to make an acquisition. The company has decided they're going to move their headquarters.

The company has decided when you say the company, that's God, God in concert, God in harmony, God in unity. We're not concerned about which specific member of the company engineered the decision made. That's just not in view.

The company is acting as a whole. We're not privy to the discussions or the debates or the priorities, or if somebody had a slightly different desire, the company has settled on a plan, a policy, a course of action. It's the company, that's God, it's God incorporated.

But there are three entirely separate and distinct individuals. As you know, there is God, the Father, there is God, the Son, and there is God, the Holy Spirit. They are separate and distinct.

The Holy Spirit did not die on the cross. God, the Father did not die on the cross. All of them were involved in creation.

God, in the beginning, created the heavens and the earth. God incorporated. The Father planned it.

The Son oversaw it. The Holy Spirit provided the power. All of that is in Genesis 1 and John 1. We get a breakdown of what the individuals did.

The Holy Spirit hovered on the face of the water. God, the Father, spoke. God, the Son, carried out with however many angels He chose to use.

There were intermediate agencies. God spoke and said, let there be, and there was. We're not given all the details of the construction crews and the engineering and the design plans and maybe some testing and some failed attempts.

We'll bury that in the rocks and start over. We don't know how that all took place. It's not important.

What is important is God created. In other passages, whether you go to John, the Psalms, or Genesis, Job, there are places where the individual portions are described in some detail. Pattern theology says, I don't know.

The Trinity is just difficult. It doesn't explain things. So it's important to understand how I'm reading from a pattern theology website.

It's important to understand how a patternist views the doctrine of Christ before you can understand how he views the doctrine of God. So you have to first start with pattern Christology and figure out your understanding of Christ from a pattern. And then you come back to the Trinity.

So what they basically do is re-imagine the view of God, instead of being the three in one, holy, holy, holy. It's God exists as two persons who are one. Now watch this because you're going to hear some familiar material understood in a pattern way.

God exists as two persons who are one, the word and the spirit. I love an understanding of the word and the spirit, don't you? We know some things about that. But this takes that truth and expands it to define God.

God is the word and God is the spirit, and you're kind of done. So this pattern of pairs instead of a Trinity, instead of three things, we're going to simplify it to just two. So with the pattern, look at the pattern now.

God is the word and the spirit. That's two things. The universe is two things, the heavens and the earth.

The new birth is a union of the word and the spirit. Mankind exists as two persons who are one, man and woman, Christ and the church. The human soul and body also reflect the image of word and spirit.

You've got the material and the immaterial. So I've got a pattern of two things. So I'm going to use that pattern a lot of other places.

Do you remember the commitment idea that we saw? Well, what has been entrusted to you, Timothy, entrust to others. I was entrusted with it. I have entrusted you with it.

You entrust others with it. So anytime I see this idea of this becomes the pattern. So that's why I am confident that God will guard what he entrusted to me, this same

deposit.

God gave it to me. I'm giving it to Timothy. God's going to guard it, whether I've got it, Timothy's got it, or the faithful men have it.

God's going to guard it all the way down. The truth will always be available. That may be a true thing in the same way that the word and the spirit are true.

The only reason I'm bringing this up, you could get through the day, the week, the month, and until the Lord comes back without delving into some of these bogosities and erroneosities. But I am pointing these out as examples of the subtlety. Remember in Genesis, when it says in chapter three, now the serpent was more subtle than any of the rest of God's creatures.

The almost right, largely true, but not entirely true aspect. Did you know that there is enough explosive power in your car to incinerate you in an instant? This is true. Unless you're driving, especially if you're driving an electric car with lithium batteries, there is enough potential power there to incinerate you.

Your gas tank, when it's full, has enough gasoline to create a magnificently large mushroom cloud explosion. So go get in your car. You just said it's got enough explosive power to incinerate me.

Well, let me give you some additional detail. That is true, but there's 159 different safety measures so that your car isn't going to blow up and it's safe. You've got all kinds of engineering design that makes carrying around a 25-gallon tank of gas safe.

And they're working hard on safety for lithium batteries, wherever you find them, things large and small. But when you start a lithium battery fire, it cannot be put out. There is no extinguishing agent.

You can't deprive it of oxygen. It's got its own oxygen. It's like white phosphorus.

It will burn underwater. No matter what kind of fire extinguisher you have, powder, foam, it doesn't matter. You cannot extinguish a lithium battery fire.

It has to burn itself out. And it is hotter than blazes. It is an extremely hot fire.

It will melt through almost anything. So why would I want anything that's got a lithium battery in it? Well, because I know other things besides its destructive effect. It is so important.

This is why we look for context. This is why we compare scripture with scripture. And we don't take one fact in isolation or a small set of facts in isolation and run with them and carry on as though that's it.

Look at the way political figures are quoted. Look at the careful excision of certain phrases, bloodbath, dictatorship, you know. And he has said that this is going to happen on day one.

There's going to be a bloodbath and a dictatorship on day one. Is that true? It actually is true. But it is wildly out of context.

And context is necessary to understand. So when Paul says, hold fast the pattern of sound words, he is not saying find a pattern and then start superimposing your pattern on everything you see. Just because God has committed the gospel truth to Paul, he is the steward of the mysteries, as we saw in detail.

And he is committing it, same word, to Timothy. And Timothy is going to be exhorted to commit it to others who can teach it. Well, so now I've got committed in verse 12.

Well, my pattern tells me that this is talking about not what Paul has committed to God, but what God has committed to Paul. And God is going to guard this deposit because it's a pattern. When you see deposit, it's the deposit of the gospel.

And you lose an important truth. What is the important truth in verse 12? It is one leg of the triad, not the duality of Christian virtues. There are three primary Christian virtues.

Now, there are many others, and Paul mentions them over and over again. But there is a core of faith, hope, and love. And if you say, well, I'm looking for my pattern, so I've got to let one of those go.

But one full third of that triad is hope. And hope does not disappoint. Faith is the substance of what is hoped for.

And when Paul commits himself, commits his suffering, commits his hardships, commits his disappointments, and the failures of those around him, he doesn't get wrapped up in it. He doesn't get distracted and dragged down by it. He doesn't become discouraged, depressed, and neutralized by it.

He commits it to God. And he says, nothing has come into my life but what God allows. With every test, there is a vindication.

It's called a way of escape. It doesn't mean I'm going to be, you know, parachuted out of the burning plane, or I'm going to be ejected out of some situation. With every test, there is a reason and a purpose.

We're never tested above what we are able to bear. We are supposed to bear our testing. Not in our human strength.

Nobody can bear testing in their human strength successfully. You're always going to screw it up. You're always going to end up in sin and clusters of sins.

Mental attitude sins, sins of the tongue, actionable sins, heart sins, thought sins. They're always going to come if we try to do these things in our own strength. It has to be according to the power of God.

Verse 8. It has to be according to God's grace and God's purpose. Verse 9. With that, suffering is turned from cursing to blessing. It is a potential.

But we don't, most of the time, we don't see the vindication. We don't know why. And the thing is, we don't have to know why.

There are people who won't do anything unless they fully understand why you've asked them to do it. I don't see why I should do that. I don't understand why you're making this request.

I don't understand why the instructions say this. Why should I do this now? Why should I? I don't understand. And I'm not moving until I have a full understanding.

You cannot live the Christian life that way. Paul has entrusted God's purposes, God's divinely ordained and foreknown circumstances for Paul. Paul has committed what he does not know to God.

My sufferings, why doesn't God turn me loose? Why doesn't God miraculously de-imprison me so that I can go and preach to more churches and write more epistles and encourage more pastors? Why am I locked up? Why am I enduring hardship? Why can't I see anymore? You know the number of epistles I could write if I had better eyesight, if I had better light, if I had better circumstances, if I weren't waking up in the morning feeling like I got hit by a camel train? Why is God putting me through this suffering? I'm an apostle. I've been entrusted with the gospel. I can't do my job when I'm hemmed in and imprisoned and beaten and scourged and shipwrecked and all these things.

Why didn't God smooth my path so that I can just run rampant? The New Testament could be twice as big. We could have double the number of Paul's epistles. He could have established and encouraged two or three times the number of churches.

Could have gone to Spain. We could have Paul's epistle to the Spaniards. We could have Paul's epistle to the Macedonians.

We could have all kinds of things. Why did Paul suffer so? Why was he limited so? It doesn't make human sense. If I was writing the plan for the first century of this era and I was deciding what Paul was going to do and where he was going to be, it would be completely different.

If Paul was writing it, it would be completely different. Why is it the way it is? Paul says, I know not. There's a lot of things I don't know.

We had a wonderful piece of music between the sessions this morning detailing all of the things we don't know. But we know whom we have believed. And we are convinced that when we commit our lives, our circumstances, our sufferings, their purpose, the grace of God, the power of God, and the purpose of God in our lives may not make sense to us.

Loss of a child, bereavement of a loved one, circumstantial setbacks financial employment-wise, you lose a job that you love and you're good at and you're kind of left twisting in the wind and you think, I just don't get it. You have a sudden windfall and you're not real sure what you're supposed to do with it. I feel very sorry for rich Christians.

If you're blessed with millions of dollars, what on earth does God want you to do with it? Buy a boat? Probably not. A yacht? Get a big mansion? Slather it around on expensive cars and collect fine possessions? God's given me these millions of dollars. What do I do with it? That takes a special gift, a gift of stewardship to know whom to support and who to say, that sounds like a wonderful ministry, but that's not what God put me here to underwrite.

To have the wisdom, to not just expend all remaining in the first couple of weeks. I don't know. I don't even know what I don't know.

I don't know how much I don't know. So I commit that to God with a view toward the day. Things will be revealed on that day and I've got to trust in the meantime in the areas where I don't know.

It's such an important principle. And they wipe it away when they retranslate this. And, well, God's going to guard the gospel.

You want to talk about a tautology and a truism? Of course God's going to guard the gospel. Nobody could get saved if the gospel were not available. So why would you point out such an obviousity? No.

This is an encouragement to Timothy and through this letter to all of us in the power of the Holy Spirit to not be discouraged when we don't necessarily know what's going on. If I don't know the big picture, I've got to concentrate on the small picture. What do I know? What can I accomplish? Well, I know the nature of relationships with other believers and many of those relationships have responsibilities and opportunities.

I know what my own personal walk should look like. I know that I should be walking by faith and not by sight. I should be trusting in God.

I should be looking for opportunities to manifest love and good works that I should hold fast. In verse 13 here, the pattern of sound words, which you have heard from me, Paul says, you have heard from me the truth. That truth is not really contained in 2nd Timothy.

You go back to 1st Timothy. We can go back to Titus. We can go to Romans.

We can go to 1st and 2nd Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, 1st and 2nd Thessalonians, Philemon. Paul has communicated an enormous amount of gospel truth. Hold fast.

Focus on that. Are you going to establish your perspective based on what the world says, on what the news says, on what social media says, on the gathered opinions of those who collectively decide? Modern contemporary scholarship says, well, this is what we think it means. What is the pattern of sound words? The pattern isn't how many of a thing are there.

Are there two? Are there three? Are there five? Are there seven? Biblical numerology, you know, the Jews took this to an extreme. When Paul talks about endless genealogies and wrangling about words, they were trying to find these allegorical patterns. No, it is the pillar and ground of truth.

There are solid things that I know. I know whom I have believed. I know the character of God, and I will find the pattern of God's character of faithfulness, of mercy, of grace, of compassion, of provision.

That is a pattern throughout the scripture. Hold fast the pattern. What you have learned and what you have seen revealed in scripture consistently across the law, and the prophets, and the writings, and the gospels, and the epistles, and the revelation.

There is a pattern, and it is largely the discovery, the revelation, the epiphaneia, the appearance of God in his character most fully revealed in Jesus Christ. That's the pattern. Hold fast the pattern of sound words, which you have heard from me in faith and love, which are in Christ Jesus.

If you have any questions, look at the Lord Jesus, faith and love. Notice again, the triad of Christian virtues is not just kind of a happy coincidence in a couple of passages. If you watch, you see it over and over again.

How would you sum up verse 12 in a single word? I know whom I have believed. I am persuaded that he's able to keep my deposit with a view toward that day. What is that? That's hope.

In the very next verse, you have stability, durability, perseverance in faith and love. Hope is the motivation, faith is the means, and love is the outworking, the measure. This tells you your hope is solid, your faith is solid, and instead of being self-occupied, I am expressing love.

I love God. I love the pattern of the revelation of his character. I love to see the way he provides, the way he guides, the way he sustains.

I love to think about Elijah by the brook Cherith. I love to think about the widow with her cruise of oil and her pot of flour that never runs dry. I love to think about the Israelites whose sandals never wore out.

I love to think about Gideon, threshing indoors and with sweaty skin and hay stuck all over him, and the angel comes to him and says, Hail, mighty man of valor. I love to think about Joshua. I love to think about David.

I love to think about Daniel. The pattern of sound words is an encouragement. All of those men were in wildly different situations, and the women.

You look at Esther. You look at Hannah. You look at Rahab.

You look at the widow. Over and over again, the widow loses her son, and she will not rest until that prophet comes back and fixes that situation because she knows that he is her contact point with God. It is kind of like Jacob wrestling with the angel.

I will not let you go until you bless me. As misguided as the effort was, the principle was sound. The source of blessing is God, and God does bless him, and he becomes, on that occasion, instead of Yaakov Chisler, he becomes Yitzra'el, Prince of God.

That is when he gets his name. Even when he messes up the means, there is faith in that effort, and God honors the faith even though he criticizes the means. You are trying to do it in your own strength.

You don't have to wrestle me. You can just ask. Why did he wrestle until dawn? He could have just said, please don't go until you bless me.

He could have saved the wrestling match, but he did it the hard way. God honored his faith despite his failure. Hold fast the pattern of sound words which you have heard from me in faith and love, and that is not any old faith, and it is not any old love.

It is the love that is in Christ Jesus. Verse 14, that good thing which was committed to you, very same word that you had in verse 12, that good thing which was committed to you. What is the good thing that was committed to Timothy? Well, whatever it is, you have to be able to keep it.

How do you keep what is committed? How do you keep a stewardship? How do you keep a spiritual gift functional? How do you keep the word of God that has been stored in our soul? How do you keep your faith and your hope and your love? Where does the power come from? How do you keep the word, the gospel, the good news, the stewardship of the mysteries? How do you keep it? What does the verse say? It tells us how. I don't have to grit my teeth and clench my fist and try not to let go. I don't have to wrestle till dawn.

How do I keep it? By the Holy Spirit who is already dwelling in us. The Holy Spirit is here. Go back up to verse 8, according to the power of God.

All you have to do is choose. When you turn the key in a car, I'm on car illustrations today. When you turn the key in a car, your wrist motion and the power of your arm is not cranking the engine, is it? You are choosing to start the car, and the power that is already in the car starts the engine, gets your combustion process going, and the car, with all of its horsepower, is running on power that is already there.

You just chose to activate it. The power is not in your key rotation. It is your decision to activate and aim the power that is already there.

So, keep, guard, notice, and Paul is intentionally reversing the direction here. He says, God is able to guard my deposit. You guard the deposit by God's power.

God is a trustworthy, safe guarder of what is committed to Him. You should be a trustworthy guard of what is committed to you. This is godliness, to be a faithful steward.

We have stewardship of time, of opportunity, of conversation, of interaction, of use of resources. God has put things in our power and under our care. How can we do that wisely? It's not my imagination, my invention, my creativity, my notions, my emotional impulses.

It is the Word of God and the Spirit of God that will guide me, and enable me, and empower me to keep, to guard what has been put under my care. So, Paul reverses this intentionally. I just can't believe they mess up verse 12.

It's very fast what you commit to Him. You hold fast what He commits to you. It's love in both directions.

God loves us. We love God. God entrusts things to our care.

We entrust things to His care. This is relationship. This is closeness.

This is love in both directions. So, the good thing committed to you, keep by the Holy Spirit who dwells in us. He's already there.

He's not far away. This you know, all those in Asia have turned away from me, among whom are Phygelus and Hermogenes. Now, think about this.

Paul is in prison in Rome. He knows that his execution is near, and he is a criminal. He is a convicted felon and is under sentence of death.

So, who is going to stand with him? Who is going to stand with him? Paul is going to say toward the end of this letter, look at chapter 4 verse 16. At my first defense, this is his opportunity to escape the death sentence and to be released and to continue being an

apostle. At my first defense, no one stood with me.

All forsook me. The word forsook there is the very same word we have here. Paul is going to return to this.

All those in Asia have forsaken me, have abandoned me, have turned away from me. Now, when it says in Asia, you know, this is not Asia of the modern day. This is the Roman province of Asia.

These are where the seven churches are located that the Lord Jesus sends letters to in Revelation 2 and 3, the Roman province of Asia. What's one of those towns in Asia? Ephesus, remember? To the church in Ephesus, right? Thyatira, Smyrna, this is Asia. Paul is not saying every single believer in the Roman province of Asia has turned away from me.

What he's saying is there were those who came to him and were initially with him, but by the time he came up for trial with the Romans and was at his first defense, they didn't want to be seen with him. They were afraid. Who knows about this situation better than anyone in human history, about being brought up for trial and having your closest associates forsake you and even deny you around a campfire at the questioning of a servant girl? Who knows about being forsaken in a time of trial? The Lord Jesus himself.

Paul, similarly, at his defense on this new set of charges on which he has been imprisoned, they, out of fear, abandoned him. They turned away. The ones he was counting on to be with him, to stick with him, to help him, to support him in his bid to stay alive and stay free and continue his work as an apostle, Phygelus and Hermogenes.

These are Greek slash Roman names. These are not Hebrew kinsmen. These are guys who could have helped him and supported him and encouraged him in his trial.

And these guys are mentioned because they were foremost. They were the leaders of a group of believers who initially were saying, oh yeah, Paul, we're with you. They'll all forsake you.

I will never forsake you. This is Simon Peter all over again for Paul. And when Paul says, I enter into the sufferings of Christ.

Believe me, he knew the sufferings of Christ to be abandoned in your hour of need by those who were ministered to. Timothy is these guys pastor or nearby communities. Timothy's the pastor in Ephesus.

These guys are from Asia and there was a group and they've all turned away. When the trial came up, it's too hot for us. We'll pray for you, Paul.

Goodbye. And they're gone. So these who are from Asia, they have all turned away from

me and abandon, forsake are all valid translations among whom are Phygelus and Hermogenes.

And the reason I think they were from Timothy's church is that when Paul names them, he knows that Timothy knows these guys. He doesn't have to describe them in any way. And he says, even these guys that you and I, they're mutual acquaintances.

They may even be from Ephesus. They couldn't take the heat. They couldn't take the pressure.

They feared for their lives. They've left. They're gone.

And they are ashamed. Do you see the references now looking back in this letter when Paul says, don't be ashamed of me and my chains. Don't be ashamed of the testimony.

Those who turned away and left him were ashamed of Paul. It was too much. I can't go down that road.

That's too hard. And Paul is pleading with Timothy, don't be like these guys that lost sight of the goal, that lost sight of the commitment and the trust in God. I know I'm persuaded.

I'm committing my life unto death to God with a view toward that day. And I'm persuaded that he will guard it and keep it. Nothing of my life and my dedication and my faith in him, my claiming of his promises, nothing of that will be lost.

Jesus says in the upper room to his father, what you've committed to me, I've lost none of except the son of perdition. Paul in his shipwreck says, if we are obedient, God has promised that none of us will be lost, but here everyone has left. And so Paul is pleading with his son in the faith, Timothy, don't you lose your hope and your faith.

I'm persuaded God will honor my hope in faith and love through the Holy Spirit. You've got to do the same. Be strong in the Lord and the power of his might, the power, the purpose, the grace.

Don't forget it. This is such a tightly woven letter. There are people who say 2 Timothy wasn't even written by Paul.

Oh my gosh, what a loss. If you miss the message here, it is so important. All of us suffer.

All of us have a gift. God wants to reveal himself to us in our times of challenge. But if we get occupied with the challenge, we're going to miss the revelation.

We're going to miss the epiphany. We're going to miss the grace. We're going to miss the power and we're going to miss the opportunity to be prepared both in this life and

the next for every good work.

Paul pleads with Timothy. All of these other people missed it. You're the one guy I can count on.

Before the letter's over, he's going to say, I've sent Tychicus. He's another faithful guy. By the way, Tychicus is from Asia.

This is how we know all of the Asians haven't abandoned Paul. Tychicus is following Paul's instruction. He's on a mission.

But all of those that were with him in Rome have left. He's got no comforters at all. We're going to come up next time on the house of Onesimus as we conclude this chapter.

What a fun section. Don't miss the house of Onesimus. This is going to be a wonderful encouragement.

And we'll see it when we reconvene next time. But we'll close here in a word of prayer. Father, thank you for the wonderful gift of your word.

Thank you for the presence of your Holy Spirit who is with us to reveal your power, to administer your grace, and to reveal your purpose in us and for us, and to give us that hope and confidence that even when we don't fully understand what's going on, we know and are persuaded by your promises that what we have entrusted to your care is preserved and will be revealed and will reflect your glory in that day. We pray that as we move forward in the day and in the week, that the Holy Spirit will remind us of these truths so that we can be the faithful few who are presented before your throne when the Lord Jesus returns to take us to himself. We pray these things in Jesus' name.

Amen.