

EXPOSITORY
SERMONS
AND
MEDITATIONS
in the Scriptures

August 2026

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MEDITATIONS IN 1 TIMOTHY

August 2026

MEDITATIONS on the 1st Letter to TIMOTHY

1 Timothy 6: 3-5

For Sunday, 2nd August 2026

IN the next three verses the instruction Paul gives to Timothy is concerned with pure doctrine, and teaching of the truth. He indicates something of the harm false doctrine and teaching causes in the church, and also something concerning the attitude of those who promote false doctrine.

It is responsibility off all clergy and ministers to preserve the truth, because every departure from the truth causes harm to precious souls and is a work promoted by the devil. Timothy needed to be given the importance of preserving pure teaching, and to be instructed concerning its preservation.

This instruction is exceedingly important in culture of the church, in all denominations, at the present time. The church is being infiltrated with false opinions as to the truth in a massive way, and Satan is gaining authority in the church to the churches destruction. There are faithful ministers in the church, but they are in the minority.

In this instruction to Timothy Paul in the first place lays down the place where true and sound doctrine is found. False doctrine is found when teaching does not agree to sound instruction. Where is true doctrine found? Paul makes this abundantly clear. It is found 'in the sound instruction of our Lord Jesus Christ and godly teaching'. Where is godly teaching found? It is found in the instruction and example for Our Lord Jesus Christ in the Gospels.

In the first case the action and teaching which Jesus gave shows he accepted the whole of the Old Testament as the Word of God – as God carrying along all the Old Testament writers so that, without overcoming their natural thinking and expressions, God makes sure that all they write expressed the truth and the mind of God. Jesus constantly quoted from the Old Testament as God's holy word in the Gospel's. One great evidence of this may be found in the record of his temptations by the devil in the wilderness after his baptism and the Holy Spirit resting upon him (Matthew 4: 1-11; Mark 1: 9-12; Luke 4: 1-13). In his response to Satan's seductive suggestions Jesus quoted Scripture with the words 'It is written'. When Satan used Scripture against Jesus, Jesus corrected and rebuked Satan with the words 'It says' "Do not put the Lord to the test".

These days many clergy and theologians come to the Bible and interpret it falsely. Jesus shows here that they are acting after their father, the devil. Scripture is only the truth of God when the interpretation of Scripture is true and according the true meaning of the text.

Paul then goes on to reveal how the influence of Satan has worked in those clergy and teachers who regard the Old Testament and New Testament false in various ways. Paul mentions 'godly teaching' which simply means seeking out, under the power of the Holy Spirit, to the true meaning of the text, in both the Old and the New Testaments.

Paul's description of such people is expressed in very clear and decided terms so that we all may be careful not to be led astray into unbelief and disobedience which will destroy the soul everlastingly. Paul calls them 'conceited and understanding nothing'. He goes on to accuse such people as having 'an unhealthy (spiritual ill health) interest in controversies and quarrels about words, that result in envy, malicious talk, evil suspicions and causing friction between men of corrupt mind, and who have been robbed of the truth and think that godliness is a means of financial gain'.

This last accusation seems rather harsh and uncharitable. Perhaps the old song of the Vicar of Bray who said in the song 'whatever king may reign I'll be the Vicar of Bray, Sir!' gives some clarity to this accusation.

It is abundantly true that all the teaching which in any way departs from the plain meaning of the sacred text causes 'controversy and quarrels'. Even these false teachers disagree with one another massively in various ways. Disputes are rampant as different theologians vie with each other in claiming that they are the true expositors with true spiritual understanding. I have known examples of even those who seek to be faithful to the Bible being destroyed by a love for controversy.

The fact is that Paul is simply guarding against Timothy being infected with wrong teaching even in his day, by such warning; and to cause Timothy to work hard at abiding in the truth, and urging him to be faithful in teaching to the truth so that his people may be found safely following the truth that saves the soul, and which causes people to follow Christ faithfully in their living.

MEDITATIONS on the 1st Letter to TIMOTHY

1 Timothy 6: 6-10

For Sunday, 9th August 2026

IN THESE next five verses the instruction which Paul gives to Timothy for his ministry is teaching concerning living a godly and saintly life, and not as the people of the world live, in other words living as a Christian. This is expressed in this phrase 'Godliness with contentment is great gain'. As we look out on our world society one thing marks society and human life and this is 'discontent'. This is found in the way people are not content with what they have, and seem always seeking to grasp more. This appetite is fuelled by lotteries of every kind, companies tempting people to spend more by special offers, wages spiralling because others are seen to have more.

True godliness is in living for God in faith and trust, and being content with what God gives his people. Contentment in life is found in being content with the position in life that God has given us, and being content with the

prosperity God gives. This does not mean that the Christians should never seek to better themselves, but that in all things the will and purpose of God is the motive governing all progress in life. Paul develops this in the teaching that follows.

So in verse 7 Paul states this profound true fact. We come into the world with nothing, and at the end of our life all that we have of this world in goods and honour cannot be taken out. If a person simply lives for honour and riches in this life, he is fool because it is only possessed in this life. Jesus speaks concerning this wisdom in the sermon on the mount. This is found in Matthew 6: 19-21 where Jesus teaches 'Do not store up for yourselves treasure on earth, where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break through and steal. But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where moth and rust do not destroy, and where thieves don't break through and steal', Then Jesus ends with the profound truth 'For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also'. The heart moves us, either towards God and Christ, or to this world and what it offers.

How profound is this wise teaching of Jesus! In this life, due to advance in medical knowledge, human life is continually being extend. The Bible length of life is stated as three score years and ten, which is 75 years. Today many people live much longer than this, and some live to 100 and more. Although at the beginning of earthly life this may seem a very long time, compared with eternity it is wretchedly small. The Bible makes clear that there is an existence beyond this life. It teaches that there are only two destinations to which we all reach in eternity and these are 'heaven' and 'hell'. Jesus taught that heaven is a place where we exist in an eternal present in the presence of God in everlasting bliss. He taught that hell was an existence of an eternal present of excruciating misery. This describes an unchanging existence. How important we should lay up treasure in heaven. The whole Gospel is concerned to make clear to us how we may achieve this goal.

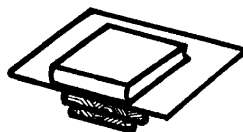
With this teaching Paul goes on in his advice to Timothy in verse 8 with the words 'But if we have food and clothing, we will be content with that'. He is speaking to believing Christians and not to the world as a whole, and these words must be understood with this in mind. Paul makes clear that when

we become children of God through faith in Jesus Christ as our Saviour and sin-bearer, our lives are hidden with Christ in God. In this faith we know that our lives are in the hands of God as is expressed in Romans 8: 28 'And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, and who have been called according to his purpose'.

This is fulfilled in all sorts of different ways in the lives of true believers, and some may have more in this life and some may have less, in various ways, so we may be able to be content with the way God is working in our lives, and be content, and not be discontented with what God has given us,

In verses 9 and 10 Paul's teaching to Timothy for his ministry as a wise and true pastor, gives the reason why contentment is so wise a condition to be in.

Paul shows Timothy that if believers fall into the trap of Satan and seek treasure on earth, then it means we will fall into temptation, and into foolish and harmful desires, which plunge men into ruin and destruction. Here Paul is not talking of ruin and destruction in an earthly sense, but in a spiritual and eternal sense; and he makes his meaning more clear in verse 10 where he says that love of money is the root of all kinds of evil. He explains this as he goes on by saying 'Some people, eager for money, i.e. earthly treasure, soon find that this concentration on gaining the wealth and glory of his life, means to wander from the faith. When this happens they 'pierce themselves with many griefs'. How many Christians find this to be awfully true. We only have to read the history of Lot in the Old Testament to have this illustrated terribly. Lot is called a 'righteous man' in the Bible, but his end in the life was so miserable. Saved but as through fire.



MEDITATIONS on the 1st Letter to TIMOTHY

1 Timothy 6: 11

For Sunday, 16th August 2026

IN these closing verses of 1 Timothy we have Paul's personal charge to Timothy in verses 11 to 16, then in the rest of the verses Paul gives his charge to Timothy concerning his ministry to the people under his charge.

All true pastors and ministers cannot but be moved and stirred by these words, and take them to heart. Surely they also must stir the hearts of all true and faithful believers. This is how we long to be and live as Christians.

Verse eleven is the focus for this meditation, and as we read it the first thing that must stir our hearts is how Paul addresses Timothy. This is found in the words 'But you, man of God'. Timothy, by his faith and his calling was a man of God. Such expressions in Scripture move the heart, but often are not fully worked out in their meaning. Adam in the garden of Eden was God's man. In all his thinking, feeling, living he lived for God and lived to please God, and to love God. This is how God had created him. After he chose to believe Satan's lie, he ceased to be a 'man of God' but became Satan's slave. All humanity since then have been born ceasing to be 'men of God'. When Paul spoke of himself at the beginning of his letters, he spoke of himself as a 'slave of God'. He had been called and saved to be a 'man of God' again, and in this title, which he used to describe Timothy in his ministry, he was describing the reality of everyone born of the Spirit and justified by faith. We have been rescued from Satan's dominion and translated into the kingdom of God. In a very particular way every person called to be pastors and ministers this title is specially relevant. We are 'slaves of God' to live for him to do his will and to serve him in making God and our Lord Jesus Christ known in the world.

In this most sacred calling Timothy, and all called to be ministers of Christ, must, from the heart, flee from all this, that is all the living which comes from the world which Paul had been speaking to Timothy about in the previous chapters. Fleeing in this way is not cowardice but true righteousness. We have an example of this in the life of Joseph when in the service of Potiphar in Genesis 39. When Potiphar's wife sought to seduce him, in the end he had to leave his garment which this woman had seized, and flee from her. When temptation is severe the only thing to do is to flee, and to flee to Christ.

What is the mind of the man of God? It is to pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, endurance and gentleness. So often, at least it is a failing I too easily fall into, we agree heartily to such words without seeking to truly understand and know what each of these qualities are indicating. Let us now seek to search the meaning and apply it to our minds and hearts.

What does it mean to pursue righteousness? Surely in the first place it is to pursue believing and hiding in the righteousness of Jesus Christ. As believers the perfect righteousness of Jesus, worked in his life and death, has been imputed to us for our acceptance with God as his dear children. Satan is continually seeking to return us to feeling we are too bad to be accepted, and must make ourselves accepted by our own works and efforts. So pursue believing and resting in Jesus as our righteousness. Then to pursue righteousness is to put off the old self and to be made new in the attitude of our minds, and put on the new self, created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness (Ephesians 4: 20-24).

What is godliness? Godliness surely is living for God; serving God; living to please God; seeking to live in the presence of God. Godly living is obeying God, special according to his command to be holy as he is holy. How will we begin to achieve such living? Answering this question could fill volumes. Let just say it is to live in the Scriptures as Jesus did.

Next pursuing faith is our every day task. Attacking faith is the centre of Satan's business. We live by faith. It is through faith we have peace with God. By faith we seek to live every day in the will of God. Satan will destroy

our faith unless, like Mary we diligently sit at the feet of Jesus, and put this above all other duties in life.

We must diligently pursue love. Firstly deep love for Jesus is found in dwelling on his great love for us, and this is the foundation of our love for the brethren and for others. What testimony our lives will be if the world sees Christ-like love in all our living and reaction with other people. After this supreme love we must give to God love to our neighbour.

Paul completes his call saying to Timothy pursue endurance and gentleness. Paul teaches that we must endure as good soldiers of Jesus Christ. Gentleness comes when we live in Christ's gentleness to us. Endurance holds Satan at bay and gentleness attracts souls to Christ.

MEDITATIONS on the 1st Letter to TIMOTHY

1 Timothy 6: 12

For Sunday, 23rd August 2026

AFTER charging Timothy to pursue righteousness etc., Paul now in this 12th verse urges Timothy to fight. There is an old hymn which has these repeated words that once we have been saved, we are 'happy all the day'. It is so true that dwelling in the peace of God through faith in Jesus Christ brings a happiness so precious, but Jesus warned that to be his disciple meant also taking up our cross and following him. However the truth is that the moment Satan loses a subject from his kingdom, he retaliates with wrath. Before we became sons and daughters of God, Satan left us in peace. He wanted to make serving him as pleasant as possible in order that his subjects rejoiced in his dominion. The moment we escape, Satan attacks, and the nearer we walk with God in faith in Jesus, the greater we find Satan assaults us with temptations, doubts and fears, and persecution. This is particularly true for pastors and ministers who are faithful preachers of the truth in the Bible. If we are blessed by the Lord in

our ministry, and specially in any sort to revival, Satan throws all the weight of his malice to bring harm in the work of God. Paul speaks of this in our personal life in Ephesians 6: 10-18, which begins with the words 'Be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power. Put on the full armour of God so that you can take your stand against the devil's schemes'. This fight every believer enters into the moment they become citizens of the kingdom of God; but it is peculiarly relevant in the life of a pastor as he or she defends the faith.

Let us understand that there is no rest from this fight this side of the river of death. In Bunyan's Pilgrims Progress, he paints the picture of how 'Faithful' and 'Christian' face the river of death. 'Faithful' goes over the river getting wet only up to his ankles; on the other hand 'Christian', when he goes over the river of death the water comes up to his neck. Some believers are strong in faith and like 'Faithful' face death with strong assurance. Others, like 'Christian' face death with Satan hard upon them with trials and doubts. However Bunyan is right. Both get over the river and land safe in the heavenly land. We who have been granted saving faith in Jesus all are saved through him, though some have a more comfortable passage than others.

The enemies for the believer to overcome are the world and the flesh and the devil. They are ever present with us through this earthly pilgrimage. Just as Satan assaulted Jesus with severe temptations, persecutions by his followers, so the believer is assaulted.

The flesh is with us throughout this earthly life. It can not be improved or made better, it can only be mortified. Paul emphasises this in Romans 8: 13, and he tells us that it is by the Spirit that we put to death the misdeeds of the body, and in Romans 8: 11 he tells us how this is achieved. It is by the Spirit living in us.

The world is another weapon in the arsenal of Satan. The world is all around us, and even in our homes in the television and the news paper. These things of modern life are good in themselves, but Satan fills these

things with thoughts to entice us. Because of this we need to be diligent to watch what we read and watch.

Satan himself is a lion watching all the time how he may devour us. The apostle Peter speaks of this in 1 Peter 5: 8-9. He warns us that the devil is like a roaring lion prowling around looking for ways to devour us. Peter goes on saying that we must resist him, standing firm in the faith. First he tempts us to fall, and then when we are crushed with sorrow, pursues us with thoughts that causes us to return to works to gain favour with God again. Peter tells us to resist him, standing firm in the faith. The way to overcome temptation is first to live in the Spirit, and second, when we fall to be renewed by the Gospel way of repentance, and faith. Never return to works, but always renew faith in Christ and his grace. Christ in abundant grace has fulfilled all righteousness for us in our place, so in genuine sorrow for sin we rest in his love and in his blood of cleansing that cleans from all sin.

Paul tells us we triumph over the devil. We take hold of the eternal life in which we were called when we made a good confession before God and his family the church.

When we are granted repentance towards God and faith in Jesus Christ as our Saviour and Lord, we are raised to new life. We are translated from Satan's kingdom into the kingdom of God. We are created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness (Ephesians 4: 24). What this means is that we have been born into God's kingdom with a nature that conforms to that holy place. We already are fit for heaven. We have been clothed in the righteousness of Jesus and born again with this holy life. This means we are already citizens of heaven, and the moment this life is ended, whether sooner or later, we enter fully into that heaven. We are already sitting in that heavenly place with Christ in this life (Ephesians 2: 6), though assaulted by virulent enemies. This is what we need to remember by laying hold of eternal life.

MEDITATIONS on the 1st Letter to TIMOTHY

1 Timothy 6: 13-14

For Sunday, 30th August 2026

IN these two verses Paul forcefully charges Timothy to keep this command which he has made clear in verse 12. The force of Paul's command is twofold. In the first place reminding Timothy in whose sight he is living. In the second place in the way he is to obey the command. We need to keep the command in verse 12 in the forefront of our minds, that is to fight the good fight of faith and take hold of eternal life. This command is not only to Timothy, but specially to pastors. It also is a command every believer should take to heart.

As we seek to understand this charge which Paul gives to Timothy it is good to keep clear in our minds the way Paul gives this charge. To do this let me quote the text in order to make clear what Paul is saying. Verse 13 commences with the words 'In the sight of God ...'. then we need to jump forward to the end of verse 13 and to verse 14. As we do this we read as follows 'In the sight of God I charge you to keep the command without spot or blame ...'. Paul gave the command in verse 12, and in these two verses before us he presses home this charge.

So in the first place Paul enforces the importance of this charge by describing the God in whose sight we live. Perhaps, it is a failing of us who believe that we do not take heed of the glory and omnipotence and holiness of God as he has revealed himself in the Scriptures, and so fail to worship before him, and be conscious of his greatness, as we come before him. So let us hear how Paul introduces him, that we may bow down in worship which then effects how we live before him.

We live in the sight of God 'who gives life to everything'. How this statement chatters the puerile idea of our universe which is the foundation of the wisdom of man and the supposed findings of science. It reveals God as the

author of life, and in this shows God as the eternal, ever living one, who is creator, sustainer and ruler of the whole universe. Life was given by God. Life did not appear by chance, in some favourable environment in a primitive form, and then over millions of millennia evolve by chance into the various facets of life which are found in the world today. No! God is the author of life. He gave life to everything – that is every different examples of life, from the lowest and smallness, even to the highest which we see in human beings, though what we see is far from the perfection which God gave man in the garden of Eden. How human wisdom and science laughs at this revelation given to us through the apostle Paul, but nonetheless it is the revelation of God throughout the Bible, and is expanded here by Paul in verses in verses 15 and 16.

This is the God in whose sight we live, not only us who have been given the gift of spiritual life, but also every human being who has lived, and lives, and will live.

But Paul does not stop here. He speaks with the revelation of this almighty God as he has revealed himself as one God in three persons. Paul reminds all of us who believe that we live in the sight of Jesus Christ, and special calls us to note what we owe to him because of what he did for us when he lived on this earth. Paul describes this in these words 'who while testifying before Pontius Pilate made the good confession'. So we live in the sight of God who has saved us wretched sinner, by giving himself in the person of his beloved Son, the second person of the blessed Trinity, to the greatest of suffering, to fulfil all righteousness for us who have been given the grace to believe the incredible love of God who laid on Jesus the iniquity of us all.

So we live in the sight of God, the almighty creator and giver of life, but also in the sight of God in amazing undeserved grace and sovereign love, at such tremendous cost, loved us sinners with the greatest of loving.

Then Paul adds our obligation as the beloved of God to live our lives before him in keeping of his charge fight the good fight of faith and take hold of eternal life Christ won for us, without spot or blame, until Christ returns in glory as he promised.

It is the charge to all the redeemed to live before God and our Lord Jesus Christ, in holiness which fits the resurrection life we have been raised to. This is the way of life which all the redeemed are called to live until the time when Christ returns to judge the living and the dead, and bring this fallen world order to its end, and issue in the new heaven and earth, where the redeemed will serve the Lord in the perfection, which God purposed from the very beginning of creation. Satan and sin will be no more, and we who have been given the gift of eternal life through the faith we have been given in Jesus, as our all-sufficient Saviour, Lord and God, will live in an everlasting present to give glory to God in the perfection we were meant always to give.

GOD'S WORD FROM HOSEA

Number 34

UNFAITHFULNESS TO GOD

"Do not rejoice, O Israel; do not be jubilant like the other nations. For you have been unfaithful to your God; you love the wages of a prostitute at every threshing floor. Threshing floors and winepresses will not feed the people; the new wine will fail them."

Hosea 9: 1-2

THESE opening two verse of chapter 9 of Hosea describes an unfaithful church, and the terrible sin and evil of being unfaithful to God. Hosea was addressing the visible church of God in Old Testament times. The church was represented by Israel, the progeny of Abraham, which God chose out of all the nations of the world to be his chosen people. Israel and Judah were the people of God which God had separated by election from all the other nations in the earth. He blessed them with

his word of truth codified by Moses. He had given them the promised land, he promised that he would be their God.

It is perhaps often thought that the Old Testament has little relevance for us in the New Testament, but these words of Hosea concerning Israel are tremendously relevant for the church today. Hosea is not speaking to the world at large, that is the various multiplication of heathen nations existing all around Israel. They were generally left out of the blessing of God. They collectively illustrate the world which generally lives without any thought of God. Hosea is speaking to the visible church of God which exists in modern times, which is made up of various denominations, and churches in different countries, who claim to be the church of God. The worldwide church is the modern Israel of God which claims to be the visible church of God and worship God.

Hosea in his time makes clear that Israel, who claimed to be the church of God, had become unfaithful to God. This expression of the church of God represented by Israel is so relevant for today, because it illustrates and speaks to the condition of the visible church today. There were many people faithful to God in the time of Hosea, but Hosea makes clear in his prophecy, that this faithfulness was not to be found in the majority of the people of Israel. This picture of the visible church illustrated by Hosea's Israel is a picture of the visible church today. There are still members who are faithful to God, believing and following the word of God faithfully, but like Israel there is a vast majority of the visible church today which has become unfaithful to God because they have in so many ways departed from the word of God contained in the whole Bible.

As we meditate on the first two verse of Hosea 9, we hear Hosea telling Israel, the church, the people of God in Old

Testament times, 'Do not rejoice, O Israel; do not be jubilant like the other nations'. Nations here refer to all the heathen nations which existed around Israel.

The heathen nations all around Israel, like the world today, lived to be happy and successful. This is the goal of fallen humanity. People live to be happy and successful. At its root it seeks to satisfy self. People live to be able to indulge their desires; to have all the pleasures of life; to be wealthy enough to be able to live in comfort; the desire is to have more money in order to buy pleasure. People live for this earthly life, and seek success in this life. In some there is a life which can be said to outwardly good, and caring. But in all this living God is left out or diminished to how people desire God to be, and their existence after this life is never considered.

Israel plainly was embracing this worldly living which they saw in the nations around them, but although outwardly they carried on the ritual of worship of Jehovah, in their hearts they were embracing the life they saw in the heathen nations which allowed them to satisfy the desires of their fallen human nature. They sought happiness and rejoicing in indulging these desires of the flesh.

Hosea tells them not to rejoice, because although they still outwardly embraced the worship of Jehovah, the eternal and true God, they had instead embraced the heathen culture of the nations, which Hosea exposes as loving the wages of a prostitute at every threshing floor.

Surely this is a description of legal brothels where the leaders seemed to live off the profits of providing such sexual indulgence. Verse 2 describes the nature of this immorality. Instead of concentrating on healthy labour to provide food and normal work to provide the necessities of life, where the grain and no doubt the grapes were brought to be processed, the

leaders and prosperous instead were using this natural production for indulging the desires of the flesh in providing wine for drunkenness, and prostitutes for fornication and adultery, instead of prosperity for the whole nation.

The rejoicing which was seen in Israel was simply being found in fleshly indulgence and providing riches from immorality. To this Hosea, as the faithful prophet of God, tells Israel not to indulge in such rejoicing and fleshly pleasure. The reason he gives is that in all this living Israel was being unfaithful to God.

What we have illustrated here in the life of Israel embracing the culture of the world, is a living which the church would condemn today. At that time this embracing of the culture of the nations is seen in gross living for the desires of the flesh, but there are less gross embracing of the world than this, and this is expressed in the life of the church today.

Why does Hosea say that there should be no rejoicing? His answer is implied. Living as they were living, Israel was causing God's displeasure by living in disobedience of God, and so bringing upon the nation God's judgement and his withdrawal of his blessing. The way Israel was living, and their refusal to heed the prophets whom God sent to call them repentance, was causing God to withdraw his blessings from his people, and then to act in judgement where God allowed the nations to overcome Israel and bring punishment in captivity where all rejoicing ended. When we read the history of Israel we find God's judgement did fall finally on the northern kingdom of Israel in the days of their last king, Hoshea. The ten tribes who made up then the northern kingdom from that time ceased to exist, although numbers of faithful Israel emigrated to Judah, the southern kingdom.

There is no cause for rejoicing in the visible church when it becomes unfaithful to God. Even if there is prosperity in this

earthly life, there can be no rejoicing when church members find themselves cast into hell. However history records that when there is a departure from God by unfaithfulness to his Holy Word, the spiritual life and blessing of the visible church is effected as God withdraws his blessing from the church.

Unfaithfulness to God can be observed in the visible church today in ways that are considered quite acceptable, and claimed to be a more intelligent and acceptable expression of faith and Christianity. Because of this it is a more subtle form of unfaithfulness, and because of this is much more dangerous. How is this unfaithful demonstrate in the visible church today?

How is the church being unfaithful to God in the present. After all the church is still active. Clergy and ministers are working hard in their congregations. How is the church embracing the ways of the world? We may realize that things are not prospering even though effort is increasing. Congregations are generally diminishing in numbers. Though great effort is made to attract people to worship by new forms of worship, and the seeking to make the worship of church more attractive to outsiders, these efforts seem to be failing. Further the visible church is experiencing diminishing of resources to carry on the work. This is seen in the closing of churches and the reduction of ministers and clergy.

With all this effort how is the visible church being unfaithful to God? The root of the problem is found, if we are prepared to see it, in the attitude of the visible church to the Scriptures, that is the whole Bible.

How is the church embracing the secular and unbelieving world in which the church lives and seeks to witness. This is seen in the way the world in its wisdom has taken over the thinking in the church. Over the last 150 years, the wisdom of the world is seen in its embracing the theory of evolution, and

made valid by human reason and the finding of science. It is not the purpose of this sermon to go into how this worldly wisdom has established itself, nor to expose the thinking of the theory of evolution, but simply to point out that this wisdom of the world has caused ministers and clergy in the church to believe this wisdom, and more and more to degrade the Bible as the truth of God.

This embracing of the the world has come about because the devil has so cleverly and subtly won the battle for peoples souls by discrediting the Bible so successfully that so many, even the majority, have been caused to accept this attitude to the Bible, and feel ridiculed if they don't fall into line.

This embracing of the worldly ways and reason is so similar to the success of Satan to get Israel to embrace the world in the days of Hosea. It allows church people to live in disobedience to God and follow the way of life which is in more accord with the desires of fallen human nature.

The Bible claims to be the word of God, where God, in wonderful love and mercy, has revealed himself and his ways to us fallen and sinful people. The writers of the various books in the Bible are said to be carried along by the Holy Spirit. In this way the Bible contains God's gracious revelation. The Bible is God speaking his word of truth. The truth that is thus made known by God carrying along the various writers of the Bible by the Holy Spirit, is that though the writers were writing in their own way, which seen in the different styles of writing, and so not taken over like robots, yet God made sure that as they wrote they were prevented from departing from God's truth, and so faithfully declared the truth of God. In other words the claim of the Bible is that it contains the infallible truth and word of God. Whereas human wisdom and reason declares that the Bible contains things that in the intelligence of modern thought

and reason are not true or unbelievable, and so is virtually telling us that God is lying. This is a most awful sin and evil.

The fact is that this evil thinking is because Satan has caused human sinful reason to treat the Bible as it treats all literature. We know perfectly well that there is no book written that is not flawed in some way, and so may generally hold wise and true thought and teaching, and but also has errors of fact and reason. When the Bible is treated in this way it is natural to assume that it will contain unbelievable things, which we with our more advanced knowledge and understanding can readily see as containing things that are false and untenable to our modern thinking, which worships science and exalts human reason and philosophy above the wisdom of God.

Those who have been given the grace of God to believe and accept that the Bible is the infallible and inerrant speaking of God do find as they progress in the knowledge and revelation of God, that the criticism of the Bible by science and human is flawed and the word of God spoken in the Bible is of all things true and reasonable

This is because by such faith, God by his Spirit opens our understanding to see that we have in reality the inspired revelation of God, and when we still have questions we are enabled to wait for more light and understanding. The truth is that in this life there never comes a time when everything is clear, but we are enabled to rest in the veracity of God until we are promoted to the heavenly kingdom of God, where all will be made clear.

One of things we learn when we by faith are faithful to the word of God is the omnipotence and omniscience of God. The Bible, from the opening verse of Genesis to the last verse of Revelation speak of this fact about God. Nothing is impossible for such omnipotence. Science never explains how matter

came to exist. Science never is able to explain the origin of life, but speculates that in the right environment it suddenly appeared. Because this is so incredible, speculates that it appeared in the most primitive form and then evolved by its own energy and power over billions and trillions of years.

The Bible commences with the truth that this world and universe had a beginning which was begun by God who has always existed, and by his omnipotence and his omniscience brought into being. The Bible reveals God as existing in an eternal present, and as the one who created time, had works all things in his creation according to his sovereign wise will, which nothing and no one he has created is able to oppose.

It is true that the origin of God cannot be known, but it is more able to be accepted than the theory of chance somehow bringing matter itself into existence. It is the wonderful grace and mercy of God that he brings so many people down the ages to know him, believe on him, and worship him.

The tragedy of Satan's work in Israel in the time of Hosea was and is the eternal loss that resulted from their unfaithfulness to God. From knowing the eternal blessing of God, they found themselves in loss and suffering. Though God was so patient with them, sending prophets again and again to bring them back to himself, in the end the just judgement of God in his eternal holiness brought about their final judgement and punishment.

Whatever fallen and sinful humanity believes and embraces there is still resting in the mind the conviction that this earthly life is not the end of existence. However human thinking may seek to rationalize death in one way or another, there is still a niggling consciousness that we have to face eternity and God. Most simply feel that death may bring a paradise, but this is

wishful thinking. The truth is revealed by God clearly in the Bible.

In the Bible God has clearly taught and made plain his truth. He has revealed his holiness which is totally unable pass over anything that fails to meet his purity and holiness; and reveals to us what he has done in Christ, in great mercy, grace and love so that he can justly accept and bless and welcome into his eternal heaven all those who put their trust in Jesus as their sin-bearer and Saviour.

Hosea was sent in perfect love to point sinful Israel back to the saving love of God. Israel then failed to believe the gracious overtures of God, and perished. He still gives us his Bible in the same way, and faithful ministers, to bring this truth to us; Oh! How we need to come with repentant hearts and receive and believe this saving truth, and in deep repentance and sorrow for our unfaithfulness to God, embrace in complete trust this Saviour, and receive the gift of eternal life.

AUGUST 2026

GOD'S MESSAGE IN 2 PETER

Expository Sermons in the 2nd Epistle of Peter

WISDOM OF GOD

"...just as our dear brother Paul also wrote to you with the wisdom that God gave him. He writes the same way in all his letters, speaking in them of these matters. His letters contain some things that are hard to understand, which ignorant and unstable people distort, as they do the other Scriptures, to their own destruction."

2 Peter 3: 15b-16

PETER has opened up to us such great and wonderful doctrine. He wants his hearers to receive it for their comfort, and so in these verses before us, he points them for their assurance in receiving them, to the writings of the apostle Paul as confirming what he has been teaching and exhorting his hearers.

We read in Ephesians 3: 2-3 these words from the apostle Paul. In writing to the Ephesians he says 'Surely you have heard about the administration of God's grace that was given to me for you, that is, the mystery made known to me by revelation, as I have already written briefly'.

These words of Paul need to be carefully meditated on and absorbed. In these words Paul is declaring that the truth of God which speaks of salvation is a mystery to the natural man. The natural men - the man who in natural human condition - even if they have been granted great intellect and powerful reason, the things of God, and the truth of God, is totally beyond natural human reason and understanding. However clever a person may be in the natural condition of all humanity, even with great powers of intellect and reason, cannot understand the things of God, because they are a mystery to them.

Because of this limitation, with all the excellence of their human intellect and reason, they cannot arrive at a true understand of the universe, and this means their reason will always lead them astray into speculation, even with all the great discoveries of science. There comes a point in all scientific discoveries that must lead to speculation.

Paul was taught all the mystery of God by grace. In totally undeserved favour, God opened Paul's mind and understanding in a miraculous way. He goes on these words from Ephesians to declare the result of this grace. He was given understanding of the mystery by revelation. God open his mind and understanding so that he understood what is mystery to human intellect otherwise.

In the Scripture we are concerned with in 2 Peter chapter 3 Peter goes on to describe the revelation which both Peter and Paul were given as the wisdom of God. It is a wisdom which can only be given by God. God has given this wisdom and revelation in the Bible. By these words of Peter we are given the tremendous truth concerning the Scriptures. It contains the wisdom of God.

How successful Satan has been over the last 150 years to make people exalt their human reason above the Scriptures. Let us now itemise what the truth concerning the Bible which Peter gives us here. -

1. Scripture is the wisdom of God. It is wisdom that can only be known by revelation from God. Because it is the wisdom of God it cannot be known unless God makes it known, that is reveals it. Because it is the wisdom of God it is totally unbelievable and unacceptable to sinful and fallen human beings. It is Satan's express action to turn people away from this wisdom, because if it is received people escape from his bondage. Satan is in control with human wisdom, which exalts itself in human pride of intellect above the wisdom of God.

The result of this, is that God's revelation in the Scripture is diminished to faulty human speculation, which contains some valuable incites, but still contains things which science and human reason calls false. Further, although the Bible is recognised as holding valuable human wisdom concerning right living and understanding, this comes not from God but exalted human wisdom.

Christ in his teaching is said to be valuable, but his divine power exhibited in his miracles are said to be myths which have a spiritual understanding, but they are only stories, and not true happenings.

2. This wisdom has been given. God in pure undeserved favour, has graciously made known his wisdom. By and in Scripture, God has made known the truth about the destiny of human beings, and the destiny of the universe in which we exist. It tells us the truth about humanity as we see it, and shows us the way that God has wonderfully worked the means of human redemption, by which human beings can be delivered from the curse that has overcome all human existence, and destroyed the history as it has developed.

In the Bible God tells the glorious manifestation of his love, by sending Jesus Christ, his only and well beloved Son, in the solution of the insolvable truth of how God can both forgive and save sinners, and still uphold his holiness.

3. This wisdom of God is wholly divine. It comes from God alone. It is God's wisdom, which can not be found anywhere but in God. It is a wisdom that transcends all human wisdom. Human wisdom, however excellent it may be, is totally inferior to it. Paul declares the truth about this wisdom of God in 1 Corinthians 1: 20-25. It is totally beyond human wisdom and reason.

4. Although Scripture can be read by anyone who desires to read it, it is totally incomprehensible to the natural mind. A person can come to the Bible and understand the content in an ordinary way. The history can be learnt. The content can be read and be held in the memory. The natural mind is able to evaluate what is read, as the text is approached like any other book. However the spiritual content is totally hidden from the understanding. This is because every human being is born spiritual dead.

Of course this truth which is expressed in the Bible is resisted vigorously and even contemptuously by the natural mind. Such thinking is an offence to the natural mind, specially by those who have been granted excellent brains and intelligence. Being dead spiritually it is impossible for people to understand the wisdom of God in the Scriptures. When we are dead physically there is no

further contact with human life. This is also true of spiritual life. It is impossible for those whom the Bible says are dead in trespasses and sins to have any perception of spiritual things and spiritual life. This is why the Bible emphasizes the need for new birth and being born again. This is declared in John chapter 3. In verse 3 of this chapter, Jesus told Nicodemus 'I tell you the truth, no one can see the kingdom of God unless he is born again'. It is by normal physical birth that we are made conscious of this world in which we live. The spiritual realm of God, and the truth and life in God, is not possible except by spiritual birth.

In verse 16 the provision of the wisdom of God to the apostle Paul is further explained. This verse tells us that this special revelation continues in all Paul's letters. Peter makes this clear with the words 'He writes the same way in all his letters, speaking of these things that matter'. The revelation of God is called spiritual matters. Spiritual matters speak of eternal life, which is the great blessing from God which we all need if we are to have a life with God when we die. The only other option is eternal death, which is separation from God eternally, where all joy is replaced by everlasting misery.

We have here the revelation which is darkness to all unless it is opened to the human mind and heart by God. God gives his new life, and he alone gives it. He has made this revelation in the Bible, but the Bible will only yield this blessing and truth when God gives his spiritual life to the soul. It will never be granted unless we are convicted of the darkness and sinfulness that all human beings are born in. The only prayer we can pray in spiritual death is 'God, be merciful to me a sinner'.

The deduction which is forced upon us by these words of Peter concerning his letters and Paul's letters is that this revelation has been granted by God to all writers of the content of the Bible. The only way to come to the Bible is to receive it as God given, and receive it as the infallible word of God. So if we come to the Bible

with a child like trust in the fact that the Bible is God's holy word, and seek God through the wisdom he has given in the Bible, and pray that God will give us understanding and faith to believe the good news of eternal life which it contains, then our understanding will be opened. Spiritual life can only be received as a gift of God's grace, his unmerited favour.

Peter then goes to describe approach to the truth of God in the Bible which has been so evident in the life of the visible church over the last 150 years, which has brought spiritual death into the church.

This was happening even in the time of the apostles as seen in the words of Peter in this Scripture before us when he says that Paul's letters 'contain some things that are hard to understand, which ignorant and unstable people distort, as they do the other Scriptures, to their own destruction'.

This is none other than the work of Satan as he seeks to keep people under his dominion, and prevent them being rescued from his kingdom, and translated into the kingdom of God.

In the church of God, wherever the visible church is found, Satan has and is working to introduce people who are religiously active, to question and denigrate the Bible, so that trust in the word of God is threatened and taken away from people. These religious people Peter call ignorant and unstable. This has nothing to do with their intelligence, which may be of a very high order, but because they have no real spiritual life by new birth, they use their intellect to discredit the Bible as God's word written. That is that they deny that the whole Bible is the wisdom of God which God has graciously made known.

Peter then tells us of the result of their attitudes to the Bible, which is the wisdom of God. Their ignorance and instability brings destruction on them, which means everlasting death in hell. The

awful result of their denigrating of Scripture is that they drag many people with them into this destruction. People are led by them to believe their end will be eternal life in heaven, when their end is destruction in eternal death.

Let us receive the Bible as truly the wisdom of God and receive it with child like trust unto our soul's eternal blessing.

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