

EXPOSITORY
SERMONS
AND
MEDITATIONS
in the Scriptures

July 2026

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MEDITATIONS IN 1 TIMOTHY

July 2026

MEDITATIONS on the 1st Letter to TIMOTHY

1 Timothy 5: 16 - 25 (Part 1)

For Sunday, 5th July 2026

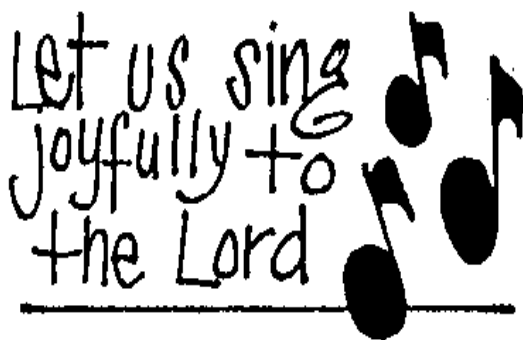
IN this close of Chapter 5 of 1 Timothy to the beginning of chapter 6 Paul gives miscellaneous instructions to help Timothy behave as a godly pastor. Again we see how Paul seeks to help Timothy in his youth to cope with ministerial problems and pressures.

In verse 16 Paul deals with the possible action of relations of elderly and needy widows placing the burden of their care upon the church when there are members of the family who are able to care for them. Even in the early church there must have been problems of believing members avoiding their own Christian responsibilities by looking to the church to support family members in need. Paul mentions a woman in the family who is able to support and elder widow in the family because she would be most appropriate to look after the care of needy widows. In this instruction Paul is not only helping Timothy to deal with such problems, but is also teaching godly family responsibilities. It is a fact that the responsibility for needy family members is something the world often seeks to avoid, and Paul shows this must not occur in the family of the church.

In verses 17 to 20 Paul teaches concerning the churches attitude to elders and ministers appointed and called to this responsibility in the life of the church. He speaks of them in verse 17 as being worthy of double honour. When Paul specially mentions the ministry of

preaching and teaching, it is plain there are other offices in the church, such as administrative duties which need to receive respect and honour in the fellowship of the church family. Paul lumps these under the 'affairs of the church' which need the right people for this duty, and this office in the church should be recognised with honour.

However Paul is specially concerned with those who are ministers and teachers in the church, and the church's proper care of them in a temporal sense. Paul is anxious that the preaching and teaching in the church should not be hampered by financial concerns. No doubt Paul was concerned that Timothy should know that he had every right to expect the church to allow him to be free from financial worries so that he may not have such temporal worries and be able to be devoted to the ministry of feeding the church with the word of God to nourish the soul. Paul quotes from the Old Testament to press this duty on the family of the church (Deuteronomy 25: 4. Paul strengthens this instruction with the words 'The worker deserves his wages'. When we read the ministry of Paul it is plain that he had to face this need, and often worked to earn a living in order not to burden the church with his care, but makes plain this should not be necessary for ministers, and that the congregation should so value their minister that they willingly gave for his temporal and his families' needs.



The next issue which Paul deals with in verse 19 is the protection of the minister from unjust and scurrilous accusations. It is a very terrible fact that ministers who faithfully preach the word of God, and truly care for the eternal welfare of their congregations, are often disliked and persecuted by members in the fellowship who, because they are not true believers, hate the truth and dislike the minister being faithful. This issue has often resulted in ministers, for fear of such people, holding back of the whole truth of God in the Scriptures. Paul also recognises that ministers may well be overcome by the devil, or in many ways deny the truth of God in the whole Bible, and in some way fall into sin, and this is an issue which must be dealt with for the good of the people and the honour of God.

Paul deals with this in verse 19. Paul is concerned that accusations against a minister may be absolutely just, and makes plain that any accusation against a minister must be supported by two or three witnesses. This issue Paul sees as effecting other offices in the church and uses the inclusive title of 'elders'.

Then in verse 20 Paul speaks of the way to act where accusations are found to be just and valid. He speaks of such failure or sin to be rebuked publicly, and gives the reason for making such failure in the church public. The reason given by Paul is so that others may take warning and be delivered from such failure. Paul is concerned here that this action of Satan may not spread and the fellowship of the church family may be corrupted.

This wisdom of Paul needs to be learned in the love of Jesus and not exercised in any self-righteous way. I have known in my ministry a case where a very godly servant of Christ, much used by the Lord, being trashed and cast out with accusations which had no foundation, because the need for just accusation was not observed. This was carried out in a very self-righteous and high handed way. I felt this was the flesh and the devil to triumph in the church.

MEDITATIONS on the 1st Letter to TIMOTHY

1 Timothy 5: 16 - 25 (Part 2)

For Sunday, 12th July 2026

PAUL is always a careful apostle and teacher, so having given instructions to Timothy, and through Timothy to the whole church, then and in the future, in verse 21 seeks to guard against these instructions being carried out in a wrong and corrupt way through personal preference or fear of others. He exhorts Timothy to carry out these instructions in the sight of God and Jesus Christ and elect angels, impartially and not corrupted by partiality or favouritism. Paul is telling Timothy that in acting on these instructions he must be sure that he remembers that God and Christ and elect angels are watching over and recording all his pastoral care, so that how these instructions in pastoral care may be carried out may not be spoilt by sinful pressures but be just and pure in the eyes of God and the congregation. This instruction needs to be faithfully observed by all ministers and elders, not only then but in every age of the church. There has been many examples of these instructions of Paul to Timothy being forgotten bringing corruption and spoiling the churches witness and image, and church members being hurt.

Paul continues in verse 22 to warn Timothy of two issues which would spoil his ministry and also harm the church to which he is pastor. The first is in the ordination of men for the ministry, and the second concerns his personal life.

Paul warns Timothy not to be hasty in ordaining men for the ministry. The positive instruction here is that Timothy should take care about who is ordained, and make sure of the person's calling, and examine carefully as to the suitability of the candidate for such a sacred task.

The negative instruction here is for Timothy never to allow his personal preference for the man to cloud his judgement. This instruction by Paul is so very important because Satan is waiting all the time to spoil and harm the church, and one of the ways he is able to do it is to promote unsuitable people to be ordained. The most important issue in the ordination of people to the ministry is to make sure of the spirituality of the candidate. It is absolutely of utmost importance that everyone ordained should be sound in the faith, and only preach and teach the whole truth of God's word. All down the ages Satan has worked his vicious harm by introducing error into the church. Once error has found a foothold it is enormously difficult to eradicate it. The history of the church makes this abundantly clear.

Then Paul reminds Timothy how error and harm can be brought into the church. Paul reminds Timothy how this is achieved. It is achieved by Timothy being infected by the sin of others. With regard to this Paul urges Timothy to keep himself pure. This means that Timothy should not only keep himself in holiness in his personal life, but that he must be sure that he holds fast to pure doctrine.

In the next verse, verse 23, Paul recommends Timothy to take a little wine for his stomach's sake. In this instruction Paul takes account of the fact that Timothy did not seem to enjoy perfect health, but was afflicted with frequent illness, and recommends a little wine as a medicine to limit this poor health. Let us notice that Paul mentions only a little wine. Paul is not recommending Timothy to drink much alcoholic beverage, but simply to take a little to help his health. Though Scripture does not condemn the drinking of alcoholic drink, it is careful to make clear that it should only be with care. Scripture is plainly condemning drunkenness. With greater medical knowledge today it may be said such a health remedy is not according to knowledge.

In the last two verses that bring chapter 5 of Paul's first letter of Timothy to an end, Paul gives Timothy general spiritual wisdom in order to help him in his ministry.

Timothy had to be able to observe the lives and living of his congregation in order to be a true shepherd of his flock. Paul tells Timothy that the sin in some members of the congregation will be obvious and bring such a sinner into the judgement of God. This would mean that Timothy would be clear in how to proceed, but this is not always so clear. Some people may be indulging in sinful practice, or be sinful in thought, which is not easily perceived, in such cases Paul teaches Timothy that as he is careful in caring for all in his congregation, he will find that such sinning will eventually become clear, and then can be dealt with with prayer and spiritual discernment.

On the other hand similarly people who are living in a Christ-like way will usually be proved to be faithful followers of the Lord Jesus, and can be suitably commended and encouraged. However true godliness may be hidden, but in the end true godliness will be made obvious.

Such Instruction from Paul would have been most helpful to Timothy in his care for his people. Being reminded of this he would have been able to be more able to care for his people.

MEDITATIONS on the 1st Letter to TIMOTHY

1 Timothy 6: 1-2

For Sunday, 26th July 2026

IN these two verses Paul instructs Timothy how to react to the fact of slavery in the social life of the time. Paul is not seeking to say anything concerning the rights and wrongs of slavery, but simply to give instruction as to how Christians should behave in the light of slavery which was endemic in the society of the time. In another of

his letters he gives advice to slaves to seek their freedom from slavery if this could be achieved in a proper way. Slavery was a social fact of that period in history, and it lasted for decades after.

So we see that Paul is not dealing here with the rights and wrongs of the fact of slavery in his time, but simply seeks to instruct believers as to their behaviour with regard to slavery, so that Christians should live according to the law and not cause society to become enemies of the church as far as possible. There were and still are issues concerning faith and practice which are not negotiable, and standing up for these is part of taking up the cross and following Jesus. However Paul did not feel the fact of slavery was one of them. For Christians in those days, where slavery was accepted without question, any campaign against slavery would bring upon the Church and believers unnecessary persecution and opposition. So what is Paul concerned about here?, and this seems plain that it was to save the church from such opposition.

In his instruction to Timothy in his ministry in the social customs of that period in time, Paul tells Timothy what advice he should give to believing slaves. His first instructions is that the believing slave should 'consider their masters worthy of full respect'. This means that the believing slave should behave to his master as a worker who he could trust and know that he would work to the utmost capacity. We have an example of such behaviour in the history of Joseph. When Joseph was put into prison unjustly he behaved in such a way that the prison governor knew he could trust him, and so gave Joseph responsibility in the prison in the care of the other prisoners (Genesis 39-41).

Paul gives Timothy the reason for such instruction concerning believers in slavery. The reason was 'so that God's name and our teaching may not be slandered'. This instruction has reason in two directions. In the first place a slave should work well and faithfully so that the name and glory of God would not be damaged. The word Paul uses is 'slandered' – that is that the name of God should not be

slandered. How important it is that the life of every believer should be such, that they may not bring any dishonour of God, and this was specially applicable to believing slaves whose behaviour should commend God to the praise of human beings who were unbelievers.

The second reason for this instruction was that if the behaviour of a believing slave was bad, then this would cause people to reject the Gospel. In this case there would be two adverse reactions. The world would despise the Gospel and reject the truth being preached; and secondly it would bring unnecessary animosity against the truth preached and even bring down persecution on believers.

To fail in carrying out such instruction would in fact tantamount to serving Satan, whose one great aim is to keep souls under his fateful control and bring dishonour on the truth of salvation. To hinder the preaching of the Gospel and the salvation of precious souls is just what Satan is working for.

Then Paul addresses another special condition in the culture of the time. It happened that slave owners became Christians. The expectations of believing slaves may be that they should be given special consideration by their believing master, and it could even be felt that the Christian master should release their believing slaves from servitude. However such was the acceptance of slavery in the society of the day, that such behaviour on the part of Christian masters would threaten the whole stability in society of that time. There is an example for all believers in Paul's letter to Philemon. Philemon was a Christian master who owned slaves. One of his slaves Onesimus by name, had escaped from Philemon before he became a believer. In his letter to Philemon Paul is sending Onesimus back to Philemon with requests as to how Philemon should receive him.

In such an occasion Paul instructs believing slaves should give such masters even greater respect because they are family in Christ, and

instead of using their joint faith as an excuse to give less services, but rather to serve them better as family in Christ.

IN such instructions Paul is facing the fact of the acceptance of slavery as acceptable in the social structure of the day. Paul is not concerned here about the rights and wrongs of slavery. Even in the Old Testament slavery was usual when an Israelite had to sell himself to another Israelite, when he became poverty stricken. In the Old Testament God gave instruction for the freedom of such a slave after 7 years of service.

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.

GOD'S WORD FROM HOSEA

Number 33

EVALUATION, ASSESSEMENT, RESPONSE

“(v.13)They offer sacrifices given to me and they eat the meat, but the Lord is not pleased with them. Now he will remember their wickedness and punish their sins: They will return to Egypt. (v.14)Israel has forgotten his Maker and built palaces; Judah has fortified many towns. But I will send fire upon their cities that will consume their fortresses.”

Hosea 8: 13-14

IN these closing verses of Hosea chapter 8 Hosea is inspired by God to express God's evaluation and assessment of the life and living of Ephraim, and speaks of God's response or reaction to this life expressed by these ten tribes, named here as Ephraim.

How easy it is while living this earthly life to forget God. Ephraim, like human life now and as it has always been, lived life without taking account of God who gives life and the blessings of life. In their case they were different to all humanity around them, for God had chosen them as descendants of Abraham and had given them the land they lived in. God is speaking directly to them and not to the world around them. However, although they still outwardly seemed to acknowledge God by continuing a pattern of worship handed down to them from the time of Moses, the fact was that they lived ignoring God and his ways and commands to live selfishly according to the way they desired. As we seek to apply this history in the present, it is the visible church, in its various denominations and expressions, that relates to this history of Ephraim. This history speaks to the church, and the question that must be raised is, is the life of Ephraim spoken of here, a pattern which is being followed by the church in the present. The Old Testament history is still God speaking and revealing himself in the present.

If we are to appreciate what God is saying through the prophet Hosea, we need to unwrap the meaning of these words spoken by Hosea. He spoke in words that would have been plain to Ephraim, but to us their meaning may not be so clear.

So when Hosea speaks of Ephraim offering sacrifices as offerings to God and eating the meat of the sacrifice, Hosea was describing the way Ephraim was treating their worship of God. They were outwardly carrying out the worship of God handed down to them in the first five books of the Bible. Ephraim were continuing to bring the sacrifices for the atonement of sin. The offering of the sacrifices, no doubt, were brought as directed by God through Moses. However we are told here that God was not pleased with them.

This is telling us that outwardly worship of God can be carried out, but carried out in such a way, that is not honouring God. At first this truth may be hard to accept and appreciate, but it expresses that worship can be formal, and without being true and honouring to God. Although the worship was outwardly correct, yet it was not offered in the right way and for the right purpose. It was simply following an outward idea that all God required was that God would be pleased simply with outward performance.

The worship expressed in the sacrifices was given by God in love and grace. In the worship of himself God directed Moses for the people of Israel was ordered because of God's great love for the nation he wanted and had chosen to love. God had poured out blessings upon them. He had safely brought them through the wilderness of Sinai. He had given them victory over all their enemies, and he had given them a land flowing with temporal blessings. But he had also provided a way for the people to worship him safely and continue to live safely in his love. This way was the way of sacrifice where a perfect animal suffered the penalty of the sins of the offerer, so that God could justly forgive and bless, and keep the people in his love. This was a temporary measure until the all-sufficient sacrifice would come to suffer for the sins of the people God delighted to love, even God's only begotten Son, Jesus Christ, who would come to be the Lamb of God to take away the sin of the world. God's love reached out in this amazing way because He could not overlook sinful failure and sinful living which fell short of his holiness, and tarnished his holy glory. God loved his people so much that he was ready to suffer for the sins of the ones he loved, in the person of his Son. The animal sacrifices were a temporary arrangement to deal with the sin of his people, until the perfect sacrifice came, because God is unable to overlook evil of any kind in men and women, and so that just dealing against sin could be met.

Verse 13 goes on to tell us that God was not pleased with Ephraim as they so carelessly worshiped him. In amazing love he provided the way of sacrifice in order to purge sin, and save the sinner. Its cost to him eventually would be infinite. Yet Ephraim could not see or appreciate such love, and selfishly followed their own godless ways, which grieved God to the heart. How could God accept and be pleased with such cavalier treatment of his love. Ephraim wanted God to bless them, but did not want God, or appreciate or understand his love.

How would we feel if we were treated like this? Can we not appreciate the action of God expressed in the words which end this verse! It is in this understanding that a right understanding of the words of God which follow can be understood.

The next words of verse 13 are 'Now He will remember their wickedness and punish their sins'. A superficial reading of these words from God often lead people to see God as unmerciful. They see only a God of wrath delighting in punishing, and thinking in this way they turn away from these words and reject them as not revealing God as loving and forgiving. If this is the way we see and understand these words, we are being led by Satan into great sinfulness.

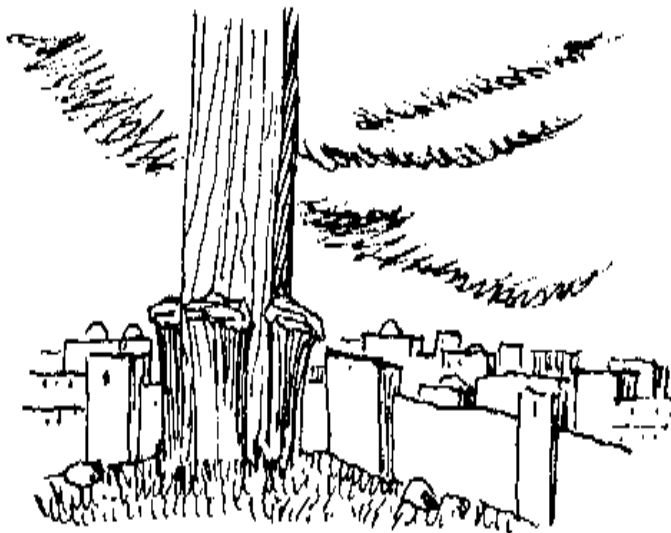
What the Bible reveals from start to finish is that God is holy, and in his character of holiness he is unable to overlook any falling short of his pure holiness. In the sight of God anything and any way that is less than his purity must suffer extermination. Impurity can't be allowed to exist with holiness. Sin, falling short of the glory of God, must be purged and destroyed. God's love is so deep that in the light of this problem he has met this great difficulty by visiting this purging, which ultimately means eternal death and separation from his glory, by visiting and pouring out this punishment on himself, in the person of his Son Jesus Christ, so that he can justly forgive and accept the sinner who deserves the

punishment. This love is expressed in the glorious gospel verse of John 3: 16 which is 'God so loved the world, that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes on him shall not perish, but have eternal life.' The sacrifices ordered by God before Christ came were symbols of Christ's sacrifice.

If this wondrous provision of God in his holiness is despised or rejected, the only course for God to follow is to purge the sin and impurity upon the sinner. If the sacrifice for sin is ignored and rejected there is no other option than the purging to take place, and this must fall on the sinner. In the case of Ephraim, and all who reject or despise God's provision of a substitutionary sacrifice, God has no other course to follow than to remember the wickedness, and punish the sins. This means judgment and execution of the purging of sin on the sinner, which in this case was Ephraim. The punishment mentioned here is the reversal of all God's grace after the slavery of Israel in Egypt, and so a returning to slavery. This was the punishment eventually visited on Ephraim.

Verse 14 goes on to describe the foolish ways of Ephraim in the light of the truth God had revealed to them. They had forgotten their Maker, that is they had forgotten the loving dealings of God with them from their release from slavery in Egypt up to the time they had been blessed in the gift of the land of promise. They had forgotten how much God and loved them, and protected them, and blessed them. They desired only the desires of their sinful and fallen nature, and God and his love had been shouldered out of their living. They still expected God to love and provided for them, and this was seen in their continuing to offer sacrifices, but these had become almost bribes to God to obtain his blessings, but allowing them to continue in unholy living.

Verse 14 goes on the describe the religion of Ephraim. They built their palaces - that is they lived for the riches and



comforts of this life, and in their own strength provided these. They then trusted in their own strength to provide for their safety. The means they used was to build fortified cities or towns to live in. In other words they returned to trusting in themselves for the pleasures of life, and for their safety in life. In the Bible teaching they were returning to works for their acceptance with God. They were blind to their offending God. They turned the grace of God into works, believing that the outward practices of religion what would satisfy God, so that his blessing and protection would continue, and allow them to live as they pleased in ignoring of God altogether.

By this way of thinking and living Ephraim felt that they were safe, and that any idea of God having to act otherwise was felt to be a fable. This folly in Ephraim is strongly contradicted in the rest of this 14th verse which ends chapter 8 of Hosea.

These last words of revelation from Hosea tells of the only way God can act when his grace and saving love is rejected and despised. The words of God revealed here are 'But I will send fire upon their cities that will consume their fortresses'. This actually happened in the case of ten tribes of Israel, named in Hosea as Ephraim. In the reign of Hoshea this happened in terrible devastation, and the northern kingdom of Israel was occupied by foreigners, and the religion of Jehovah was suppressed. In patience God withheld this judgment, and Ephraim thought that this patience was a sign that the words of Hosea and the other prophets were vain; But God never sends warnings by his prophets which are vain. God will execute eventually his word of judgement. Satan is so clever in his deceptions, and makes people believe that the revelation of judgment is false. But the word of God never lies.

APPLICATION.

In applying the message of Hosea in these last two verses of Hosea chapter eight, we need to ask some questions. Is the revelation that God has given of himself in the Old Testament the true one? Is the condition of the visible church today showing a similar condition as the church in the Old Testament, seen in the behaviour of Ephraim told by Hosea? If we are forced by the evidence that yes is the answer to both, then there is a very serious problem in the visible church today. Let us take each question in turn.

The first is the revelation of God expressed in the Old Testament. Is it true? To many in the church today the answer which is found in the visible church today is that the Old Testament revelation for God needs correction and that the greater wisdom of today reveals this. On closer examination this assessment can be found to be faulty, even though the thinking of today in much of the visible church would deny this.

When we look clearly at the revelation in the New Testament of God there is no doubt that this Old Testament revelation of God which we have observed in Hosea, is the same. It may be convenient to simply bring forward teaching in the New Testament that suits our idea of the revelation of God that suits our preference and teaching, but this is hardly honest thinking.

In every place in the New Testament the holiness of God is made clear. The New Testament clearly speaks of God's wrath being against all the ungodliness and unrighteousness of men and women (Romans 1: 18). Paul tells us in Romans 6: 23 that 'the wages of sin is death', and tells us in Romans 3: 23 that all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God. In Matthew 25: 46 we read that the eternal punishment for sin and falling short of God's standard of holiness is eternal death. This verse speaks of eternal existence having two destinations - eternal death and eternal life.

On top of this it is plainly revealed in the life and teaching of Jesus that he accepted the Old Testament as a whole as God's word and revelation, and that His Father in Heaven was the God revealed in the Old Testament. This is seen when Jesus quotes the Old Testament as the answer to the temptations of Satan, and the final answer to the questions, accusations and problems brought before him by the religious leaders of his day. When we read the Gospels it is plain that Jesus accepted the Old Testament as God speaking and revealing his truth to humanity.

In the rest of the New Testament it is plain that every writer spoke with the conviction that they were speaking the truth revealed to them by God, the Holy Spirit. In John 16 we are plainly told that the truth of God which the apostles could not absorb when Jesus was alive, would be revealed to them by the

Holy Spirit after Jesus had gone back to the Father and when the Holy Spirit was poured out on them.

It is very easy to say that the Bible has errors, but the Bible and our Lord Jesus Christ, and also the apostles believed and claimed otherwise. The God of the New Testament is the same as the God of the Old Testament.

Then when we address the second question the same is true. The question is the condition of the visible church today showing a similar condition as the church in the Old Testament, and the answer is that it is. There are a minority of congregations in the various denominations who are faithful to the whole Bible, and teach it and believe it, and is treated as God's infallible inerrant spoken revelation, but the attitude seen in Ephraim by Hosea is seen widely in the visible church.

Outwardly the various denominations hold what is presented as acceptable and true worship. The services are reverently conducted, but like Ephraim in Hosea's day it has features with which God does not find acceptable. In the first place the revelation of God, in amazing infinite love, has provided a substitutionary sacrifice for the atonement for sin. This is widely rejected as unacceptable. It is taught that Jesus did not die to pay the price of sin in the place of the sinner. It is openly taught that God's loving can easily forgive and overlook sin and sinfulness, and that there is no need of an atonement. God's sending his Son to pay the price of sin is spoken of as barbaric, and a false representation of God. It is plainly expressed that God accepts a much lower standard of living than his holiness demands.

This is just a small assessment of how much of the visible church today teaches similar things as Hosea reveals in Ephraim that is not acceptable to God. Because of all this hundreds and hundreds of worshipers are being led astray

without hope and without God, and being led unknowingly down the broad way that leads to destruction. How we need God to send another prophet like Hosea to speak and prophesy today.

JULY 2026

GOD'S MESSAGE IN 2 PETER

Expository Sermons in the 2nd Epistle of Peter

LOOKING FORWARD TO THIS

"So then, dear friends, since you are looking forward to this, make every effort to be found spotless, blameless and at peace with him. Bear in mind that our Lord's patience means salvation,..."

2 Peter 3: 14-15a

HOW are we living? Are we simply living for this life? Is this life all we look for? The early church during the time of the apostles were looking forward to the life to come. They were looking forward eagerly for the promise given by the angels at the time of Christ's ascension, where they said to the disciples gazing up into the heavens as Christ ascended and was taken from them, 'Men of Galilee, they said, "why do you stand here looking into the sky? This same Jesus, who has been taken from you into heaven, will come back in the same way you have seen him go into heaven"'. (Acts 1: 11).

The New Testament, specially in the epistles, speaks a great deal about the second coming of Jesus, where he will return with power and great glory, and bring in the creation of a

new heaven and earth wherein will dwell perfect righteousness. They speak of the wonder of this new creation, where we who are chosen and redeemed will live forever with our Lord in this new creation, and behold his beauty, and where there will be no sin or evil; where Satan will be excluded; and where there will be complete joyous fellowship with the Lord in that eternal present, and where time will be no more. This is the picture which is described symbolically in the last two chapters of Revelation.

By our redemption we have already been raised in our new self to this heavenly kingdom, and have already been created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness (Ephesians 4: 24), and we have access into the presence of God and know God as our Father. But while we are still living in this earthly life we are afflicted with our sinful nature, the flesh, which still remains while this earthly life continues, and we long to be delivered from it.

Do we live in constant longing for the fruition of this glorious destiny of the saints – looking forward to this. One of the songs found in one of the Billy Graham films expresses this longing, the words are as follows as I remember them -

This world is not my home, I'm just a passing through;

My treasures are laid up somewhere beyond the blue.

The angels beckon me, from heaven's open door,

and I can't feel at home in this world any more.

When Peter speaks of looking forward to this, do we find this is the longing in our hearts always, and so seek to be ready when Christ returns, and to be not ashamed at his coming. Peter makes clear that this was the longing of the Christians he was writing to, and goes on to urge us to be constantly

seeking, in our living, to be ready when Jesus comes, and not be ashamed.

To such people who have this longing, Peter gives his instruction. No doubt he is expressing in these words the way he sought to live the remainder of his life, and is sharing this with us in his words of exhortation. Let us now meditate on this instruction, so we may apply it truly.

a. Found spotless.

How is it possible to be found spotless in the sight of God? It is only possible in Christ. Augustus Toplady expresses how we are able to be spotless in the last two lines of the first verse of his hymn 'Rock of ages, cleft for me'. The lines are as follows - 'Be of sin the double cure; cleanse me from its guilt and power'.

We will be found spotless when Christ returns, or when physical death overtakes us, firstly by the cleansing of the guilt of sin which is found only in Christ. All of us, however good our life may appear to be, are guilty before God as we fall short of his glory. God's glory is his complete holiness, where no sin or evil can be found. The Bible tells us the requirement of God - 'Be holy, as God is holy'. Such holiness is beyond us fallen and corrupt sinners, where even our most holy thoughts and actions fall massively below true righteousness found in God.

In Christ, as Toplady writes, in the first place deals with our guiltiness. Christ, by his completely holy life, and then by his suffering the whole punishment for sin on the cross, provided for all who believe on him as their Saviour, a perfect righteousness, that is reckoned as the sinners possession, and by this our holy God sees only this perfect righteousness, and by this righteousness of Christ imputed

to us who believe, we are cleansed from all guilt, so that God accounts us guiltless in his sight.

Toplady goes on to speak of Christ, our Rock of Ages, as cleansing us from the power of sin. This is achieved by the resurrection to new life, by new birth, which Paul tells us is created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness. This is our new life, eternal life, granted by God to all who believe on Jesus. This is fit for heaven, and causes the believer to be cleansed from the power of sin. This a new principle of life allows us to mortify, that is put to death, the forces of our sinful nature, the flesh, and as we live this life gradually overcome sin; and when Satan's temptations continually afflict us, be able to live more and more in righteousness and holiness. As this mortification is never complete in this earthly life, we more and more increasingly look forward to the time when, by death or when Christ returns, we shall be free from our sinful nature and flesh, and in the life to come receive a new and holy body. This is how we may appear spotless when Christ returns.

b. Found blameless.

We shall be found blameless at the time of Christ's return when we are so abiding in Christ, remaining in Christ, that his saving work is found to be continually our place of living. As Jesus teaches us in John 15 as we abide in Christ, remaining in him, by faith as our Lord and Saviour, we bear much fruit. This is the fruit of holiness, good works, love for Christ and our neighbours.

In such living, the saving faith in Christ we profess is proved genuine, and cause us to be blameless in the day when Christ returns. At every moment of the believers living, we rest and plead only the righteousness and grace of Christ. We feel horrified if we claim any credit for ourselves, and

feel also horrified if anyone else looks upon any appearance of Christ in us as something we have performed. All faith, goodness, love found in us we give the credit always and only to Christ, and praise and thank him for such as work of undeserved favour, grace, to us which has made such living possible.

c. Found at peace with Him.

Paul speaks of this peace in Romans 5: 1. What a glorious statement this is 'Therefore, since we are justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ'. He then goes on to declare and tell us we have gained access to a position in the sight of God where we remain in his love, justified forever. In chapter 8: 1 he strengthens this truth with the words 'Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those in Christ Jesus'. And this is because through Christ Jesus we have received the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus that has set us free from the law of sin and death. The Spirit of God lives in us as his temple, and applies all these blessing in Christ to our souls, so the peace of God which passes all understanding fills our hearts and mind in Christ Jesus. Wondrous peace where we belong to Christ, and he to us.

This blessed life and existence does not happen automatically. Peter tells us to make every effort to be found like this. The world, the flesh and the devil, are continually working to dominate in our lives. This is why Peter exhorts us to make every effort. This leads us on to consider briefly how we do this.

In the first place we must believe only on Christ for our acceptance, and all the blessings we have considered. We

plead only and always for our acceptance before God Christ's merits which is our righteous, depending always on the power and working of his Spirit to keep us in such grace.

Then secondly we must reject and cast out from us any idea of our good living as gaining merit before God. It is one of Satan's constant temptations to cause the believer to think we have to merit in some way God's favour. Satan assaults us with this temptation at the moment of any sin or falling short in known failure, and tempts us to think we must earn God's favour. John tells us in his first letter the way forward for the saint of God. This is found in 1 John 1: 9 'If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins, and purifies us from all unrighteousness'.

Then thirdly our constant effort and action must be to seek to please Christ in all things - in our thinking and living and our affections. This is holding Christ as the love of our lives always and continuously.

Then we have the last phrase of the Scripture we are considering in the sermon. 'Bear in mind that our Lord's patience means salvation'.

This a rather enigmatic saying, so what is it telling us?

Firstly let us notice Peter's words 'Bear in mind'. Satan is working all the time to fill our minds with the things of the world, and all earthly responsibilities. By this he would seek to crowd out of our minds heavenly things, and what we read in Scripture. His success in this is when he succeeds in causing us to read little of Scripture, and to give so little time to read and meditate on God's word. Satan presents us with other things to occupy our minds. The pleasures of the world and the duties of the world.

Then Peter teaches us about the wonder and glory of God's saving grace. He tells us of the patience of God in his saving work in our lives. How slow we are to learn. How quick we are to forget. How worldly we tend to be. God's wondrous grace is so patient with us, giving us time to hear, listen and obey. Because of this his patience means salvation. How quickly we would give up on others if they were so slow to improve. Not so our gracious and loving and electing God. So let us praise him and thank him from the bottom of our hearts.

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