

EXPOSITORY
SERMONS
AND
MEDITATIONS
in the Scriptures

June 2026

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MEDITATIONS IN 1 TIMOTHY

June 2026

MEDITATIONS on the 1st Letter to TIMOTHY

1 Timothy 4: 15-16

For Sunday, 7th June 2026

Paul, in the closing two verses of this 4th chapter of his first letter to Timothy, includes one other quality needing to be practised by a minister of Christ, and that is diligence in executing his or her ministry. When a person is initially ordained, it is natural to be diligent. There is a natural desire to be energetic in the work. However as time goes by, and familiarity with the ministry is gained, there may be a tendency to let diligence fade. There will also be, as time goes by, the experience of difficulties and discouragements. When these occur it is important to heed this call of Paul to diligence. This will involve penitence in losing our first love, and earnest prayer to God to keep our hearts warm for Christ and his work.

The command Paul gives Timothy is 'Be diligent in these matters'. Then Paul as a good minister gives explanation of how this diligence may be maintained.

Firstly, Paul tells Timothy to 'give yourself wholly to them ...'. There are so many things in life which are pressed upon us. These are important and legitimate parts of our life and living. We have responsibility to family. We have necessary activity which the mere action of living demands. We have a right to some recreation and rest. But there is an active enemy to contend with and that is the devil. His tempting includes presenting many things to our attention so that he draws from diligence in ministry. Satan, with utmost

cleverness, interjects into our minds other things, even important things, when the Spirit calls us to prayer, or study, caring, or some duty, in order to draw us away from the call of the Spirit. The devil's influence in this way is presented with subtlety that captures our attention and affection. This is how Satan overcame Eve in the garden of Eden.

Secondly, Paul in order to strongly influence Timothy and us, adds 'so that everyone may see your progress'. The minister of Christ must never court attention and praise of others, but to so live and minister that we give an example to others, and specially those to whom we are called to minister, so that we may bring no dishonour on Christ and the ministry, but rather that we commend Christ, and draw people to Christ, and not turn them away. We do not court importance and praise but watch our living that we adorn the doctrine of Christ our Saviour.

Thirdly, and this follows closely with the previous point, Paul exhorts Timothy, and so all ministers of Christ, 'Watch your life and doctrine closely'.

Satan is diligently working in two ways to discredit the ministry of Christ. He diligently works to tarnish the life and living of a minister of Christ. He commences with temptation to bring a lowering of holiness in our living, and even to make us stumble dangerously. He is always working with our sinful nature to cause a minister to fail and sin. How often is the ministry tarnished by a loss of temper, rudeness, and lack of caring. How we must guard ourselves from these things. Satan knows all about our inner life, and will trip us up to disgrace our ministry.

Further Satan is working diligently to cause us to embrace error of some kind, either by presenting some new thinking attractively, or causing us to unfaithfulness to the truth out of fear of people. The fear of the opinion of others, or the fear of persecution, or being looked down upon, has caused a minister to go astray from the truth.

Paul warns Timothy of this by saying watch your life and doctrine. In the past clergy have been encouraged to go over each day before sleep to see any failure in behaviour or thinking, and repent of it. There are examples of ministers to have destroyed their usefulness by being carried away by some strange doctrine, or some weakness in living.

Paul ends this exhortation with the words 'Persevere in them, because if you do, you will save both yourself and your hearers'.

When a minister grows slack it will effect his or her effectiveness in preaching the truth with urgency and spiritual power. Paul presses this home to Timothy with the words 'you will save both yourself and your hearers'. Satan is working hard to lessen or destroy the power in preaching. He achieves this by causing ministers to be lazy in the preparation of sermons. He achieves this if he causes a minister simply to treat preaching as a duty. He achieves this when a minister prides himself in the correctness of his understanding of doctrine, in preparation for preaching, in his pride in his doctrinal correctness, fails to seek the Lord for a message for each occasion, so that he is able, like the good prophets of old, to say thus says the Lord to you at this very moment of preaching. Persevering means that the preacher seeks from the Spirit the particular message from God to be declared on each occasion of preaching. This perseverance is achieved by earnest prayer and seeking the Lord.



MEDITATIONS on the 1st Letter to TIMOTHY

1 Timothy 5: 1-2

For Sunday, 14th June 2026

FROM the beginning of chapter 5 of his first letter to Timothy to chapter six verse 2 Paul deals with Timothy's relations with his congregation. With preaching and teaching in ministry, there is also the important ministry of pastoring and caring for and seeking, by example and real humility, to nurture the family life of the congregation. This office of a minister of Christ is of real importance. If this side of the ministry is neglected, or if it is conducted in a way which is not Christ-like, then the congregation will be hurt and torn apart, and the ministry of preaching will be negated.

Paul commences this instruction to Timothy with the personal attitude of Timothy to every level of family life in the church. Here Timothy is regarded as the head of the family, and given instruction as to how he is to relate to every section of the family of the church to which he is sent to minister. Timothy was a young man. Paul recognises that his youth could easily cause people to look down on him, and take little regard for his ministry. This issue could be exasperated if Timothy behaved in less than a humble and loving spirit. Because of this Paul tells Timothy how he is to relate to every level in his congregation. Paul mentions four levels. Firstly elder men, then younger men. He then proceeds to older women and younger women.

So how should Timothy relate to older men. How should Timothy relate to older men who need to be led forward in their spiritual lives. For Timothy to come to them in a spirit of importance and superiority would not be appropriate. Young men should look up to their elders and revere them. Yet as a good pastor Timothy had the spiritual life of older men in his care. How should he approach them if he sees

things lacking in their lives as Christians, and understanding that is less than the truth of God.

Paul gives Timothy the way forward in the right pastoral approach. He instructs Timothy to approach older men as he would to his own father. This would be coming with humility, and with genuine love, as he gave instruction and even correction. The pastor has the great task of instruction in the truth, and also taking care that knowledge of the truth should, by the Holy Spirit, reform lives into the image of Christ. At heart the pastor's heart seeks that even the older men may be believing unto salvation and ready for the heaven promised in salvation.

The same advice is given to the young men. Timothy must not look down on them, or boss them, but treat them as an equal and members of the family of God as he is. This means Timothy must relate to the younger men as a brother. This means that family love must be at the heart of all he seeks to do to improve their Christian lives and godliness.

In the same way Paul tells Timothy how to approach the women under his pastoral care. Older women should be loved as he would love his mother, and younger women should be treated with sisterly love. Paul also adds an important aspect into Timothy's treatment of younger women. His approach to younger women must always be with purity. Anything less than this would be sinful. For this Timothy must guard his affections in purity.

Anything less than such approach of a pastor to his congregation could destroy all usefulness of a pastor. The way a pastor lives and behaves speak more loudly than word, and if the life is not in the likeness of Christ, then words, in preaching and teaching, will be made null and void. The best preaching will be made ineffective, if the teaching is not seen in the life of the pastor.

A pastor, called by God, has authority, but this authority is no personal, but the authority of God in the word of God, the Bible. He or she has authority only to declare the truth of God in the Bible, properly understood. This authority must be engaged in with courage and without fear.

However the example of Paul in all his letters is to be followed. Paul always referred to himself as the slave of Jesus Christ. Then there is the example of Jesus given in John 13. Jesus washed the disciples feet, which the disciples were too proud to do. He said to his disciples that as he their master washed his disciples feet, that is became a servant to his disciples, this must be the attitude of them to others, and this means that a pastor must be like their master, and be a servant to his or her people.

Paul enlarges on his teaching hear to Timothy in his letter to Titus in chapter 2 verse 2, where he instructs Titus more clearly how to relate to older men. He syas 'Teach the older men to be temperate, wothy of respect, self-controlled, and sound in faith, in love and endurance'. This must also be the pattern of all pastor's to their congregation all the time.



MEDITATIONS on the 1st Letter to TIMOTHY

1 Timothy 5: 3-8

For Sunday, 21st June 2026

THESE six verses are concerned with caring for people in the congregation who are in need. In those days there was no state caring for the poor, and any in straitened circumstances were left destitute. In the Acts this ministry was very evident. The apostles took on this responsibility to care for the poor, until it became such that they were hindered in preaching the word of God, and they appointed deacons to take on this responsibility.

The church is the family of God, and so part of the ministry of the church is to care for the temporal circumstances of church members as well as caring for the soul. Life in this world raises all sorts of temporal needs and problems, and showing the love of Christ to all in the fellowship of the church is showing practically the love of God to all. This need is what Paul is speaking about to Timothy in these six verses.

The case of need which Paul particularly raises is the need of widows, and particularly elder women who live alone in the world. Paul introduces this to Timothy in verse 3 where he tells Timothy to 'Give proper attention to those who are really in need. No doubt there were several widows in the congregation, but not all would be in need. By speaking of widows in need Paul was showing Timothy and the church that they were not responsible to help and look after all widows.

In the first place there would be widows who were well endowed by their husbands. Paul specially mentions those widows in need. He repeats this in verses 5 and 16. It is a fact that even in the best a most spiritual congregations there would be those who might trespass on the care of the church when they really had no need to

do so. Paul specially mentions elderly widows who were alone in their need.

Paul also speaks of the care being proper. By this he is indicating that the need of these elderly widows should be constant, so that their care may be properly monitored, and not forgotten as time goes by. Also that the whole need of the widow should be met, not providing too much and not providing too little.

In verse 4 Paul mentions those widows who should not be the responsibility of the church. These are the ones who had family. He mentions children and grand children. Paul points out that caring for relations in need is part of the life of a true Christian, and caring for needy relatives is part of putting their religion into practice.

Paul enforces this instruction by emphasising that such action was pleasing to God, and that this is a right response in remembrance of all the loving care which children and grand children had received from their parents, and elderly relatives. The fifth commandment which speaks of honouring our father and mother, includes such care and love in old age.

In all this instruction Paul assumes that parents and relatives were true Christians and members of the fellowship of believers, and had shown their children and family the caring love of Christ. With this teaching what should be the response of children and grand children concerning parents who had not dealt with their offspring with genuine love and care. There would be children whose parents were not Christian, and had not shown Christ-like love to their children. There may have been also believing parents who had not cared for their children in true Christian love and caring. What about Christian children's response to them. In all things the love of Christ constrains us to love others like Christ has loved us however hard this may be. This scenario is not being directly addresses hear by Paul, but it is still relevant.

In verses 5 and 6 Paul again addresses the responsibility of care in the church. There are those whose life is truly Christian, and those widows who are still living for the world. Paul identifies the truly Christian widow in need. She would be one whose hope was in the Lord, who in their loneliness put their hope in the Lord, and continues day and night in prayer believing in the care of the Lord for his own in their need. These are the widows which the church should particular help. But if the widow lives for pleasure and for the world, these should first truly live for Christ before they should expect to receive the blessings promised to all true believers.

Timothy is then urged in verse 7 to make these instructions concerning care plain to the whole family of God over which he has been appointed pastor. Such teaching may seem unspiritual, but it is instruction that adorns the doctrine of Christ.

Lastly in verse 8 Paul gives a serious word to Timothy what he must make clear to all who did not provide for their families. He says that such have denied the faith and put in doubt that they were Christians at all. It is taught throughout the New Testament that true faith is always expressed in living the love of Christ in daily living.

MEDITATIONS on the 1st Letter to TIMOTHY

1 Timothy 5: 9-15

For Sunday, 28th July 2026

THESE verses continue Paul's instruction to Timothy concerning care of elderly widows, and also for younger widows. This instruction is particularly detailed, and appears at first glance to be derogatory to women. In approaching this teaching perhaps we should look a little behind the scenes of the family life of the church to which Timothy was called to minister. Let us remember that Timothy was a young man having to relate to people in his

congregation who were older and more mature than he was, even if they were not more mature spiritually. In this social situation pressures would be brought on Timothy which because he was young he would have found difficult to feel able to deal with when they came from older men. It seems that in this scenario Paul gave Timothy more detailed instruction which he could rely on when he felt it difficult to assert his teaching to others older than himself.

Then being young Timothy would have found it difficult to deal with younger widows who might be able to manipulate his thinking because of his youth. Again Paul knew that Timothy would be strengthened in applying Christian truth in this area of his congregation by specific instruction. In the light of this problem Paul gave more specific instruction to help Timothy to make right decisions.

So instruction and attitude which at first seems Paul looking down on women may be seen to be unjustified. With this in mind let us now seek to understand the teaching of Paul to Timothy expressed in these seven verses. Immediately we see Paul was addressing two different situations. One of elderly widows, and the other of younger widows, so that in each case Timothy would not be overwhelmed with arguments against his decisions.

In the case of elderly widows Paul seeks to help Timothy to be clear as to what was real need in elderly widows. There seemed to be a list of elderly widows, and these were the ones whom the church would help. The church would not have unlimited resources, and giving was given by other members of the church community, so it was important for Timothy to have criteria over and above age to decide who should be placed on the List.

This list is given in verses 9 and 10. There seems no difficulty in understanding these conditions so there is no need to itemise them here, but just to note the wisdom of them, so that real need is supplied and the right elderly widows received this care from the

church. That some elderly widows would feel discriminated against may be inevitable, but the line needed to be made at some point.

The rest of the verses – 11 to 15, are dealing with the case and need of younger widows. The instruction concerning these may appear discriminatory, but Paul gives Timothy clear reasonable instruction which are reasonable considering all the different considerations that had to be evaluated in the situation the church found itself.

So in the first place a specific age range is given by Paul to Timothy, and by the previous verses this is shown to be under 60. There is no doubt all sorts of exceptions could be raised, but Paul knew Timothy needed direct authoritative instruction in order deal with all situations in the society of the church.

Then Paul gives reasons why this definite age limit is laid down. The first being that up to this age women's sensual and sexual needs would be still active. This may seem an arbitrary age to delineate such needs, but all Paul had to go on was experience he observed in life. Also Paul saw that Timothy needed exact limitations as to which widows should be helped.

In laying down this criteria Paul was considering the case that up to the age of 60 there was more likelihood for widows to marry again and then the husband would have the responsibility to love and care for their new wife. What Paul means in speaking of breaking their first pledge I personally do not understand, and so I do not want to speculate here.

Then Paul mentions another aspect he has observed in the life of younger widows. This was what Paul delineates as being idle. He seems to have observed that younger widows, having been released from their duties in managing a home, and caring for their husband, had become gossips and busybodies. Such living Paul knew was detrimental to the life of the church and to these widows and neede to to be repressed. So he advices younger widow to

marry again and have their lives fulfilled in a more proper way. Again this advice to Timothy may seem to be a bit arbitrary, but again Paul was seeking to give specific advice to help Timothy to deal with these various problems in the life of the church.

The last sentence of verse 15 gives the reason why Paul felt these instructions necessary to help Timothy in his calling is so relevant. Paul had seen that younger widows and fallen foul of the temptations of Satan.

THE
LORD
WILL
BLESS
HIS
PEOPLE
WITH
PEACE.



GOD'S WORD FROM HOSEA

Number 32

FORMAL WORSHIP

“(v.11) Though Ephraim built many altars for sin offerings, these became altars for sinning. (v.12) I wrote for them the many things of my law, but they regarded them as something alien.”

Hosea 8: 11-12

It is incredible how up to date the writings of the Bible are, and in this case, the writings of the Old Testament. These two verses describe the religion and worship of Ephraim, which is mirrored in the visible church all down history and in the present time. How relevant is this prophecy of Hosea for the church today. Ephraim still offered worship to God, and outwardly, evaluating this worship superficially, the worship would appear to be exactly as it ought to be. However Hosea, led by the Holy Spirit, and the word of God, was led by God to question this outward appearance, and expose its travesty of true worship.

No doubt Hosea found himself in difficulties as he sought to be faithful to God in exposing the worship of Ephraim, but he sought to remain faithful to the leading of the Holy Spirit. In our modern age within the church, anyone who is given to question the worship in the visible church, also finds himself or herself marginalized by the overall opinion of the visible church. No doubt, as is always evident in the history of the church, God preserved in the northern kingdom of Israel a remnant who were faithful to his word and ways, and this is still present, as it always has been in the history of the church, seen in congregations and ministers who seek to remain faithful to God's word written in the Bible, but still the words of Hosea, in these two verses, mirror the general condition of the visible church in the present. So we have in these two

verses a picture of the formal worship in the time of Hosea, which can be observed repeated in the modern expressions of worship in the visible church of the present. For this reason we can appreciate how relevant are these verse of Hosea, as we evaluate the worship of the main denominations of the church in the present.

Again, as we seek to understand the revelation of God in these two verses, we will look at each verse and each sentence in turn, so that we may see this expression of Formal Worship which was so offensive to God, and which Hosea was compelled by the Holy Spirit to challenge.

The first sentence in verse 11 is 'Though Ephraim built many altars for sin offerings'. As Hosea is led by God to view the worship in Ephraim, he was led by the Spirit to question the veracity of this worship.

It is plain that worship was being continued in Israel. It was worship outwardly given to God. It was worship expressing the need of human beings. Ephraim had built many altars, and these were built because of the need of human beings falling short of the holy glory of God. The altars were built to offer sin offerings.

As we meditate on this activity we are able to appreciate that the essence of true worship was being observed. The great need of human beings as they seek to worship God, is the problem of sin in the thoughts and actions of the human heart. As sinful human beings seek to approach God in worship, and seek his blessing, sin stands as a great problem for human beings to be able to approach God and gain God's blessing. From the very beginning when, through Adam's disobedience, human beings became defiled, God made it clear that he could not overlook such disobedience, and that some atonement had to be made, and the punishment of death for disobedience had to be executed. So from the very beginning, the death of a sinless offering to take the punishment for disobedience and rebellion was made obligatory. We see this in the offerings of Cain and Abel. Cain brought his own good works in his approach and worship of God. God rejected this offering. Cain presented his own merit for acceptance with God.

Cain's offering of his own efforts was rejected by God. Abel, in obedience to the revelation given by God to his parents, offered the most perfect lamb he had, and sacrificed this lamb for his acceptance before God. The lamb, being perfect in himself stood in the place of Abel as Abel came to approach God. The death for sin was executed on the unblemished lamb in the place of Abel. God accepted this sacrifice, and blessed Abel.

The revelation of God in the Bible makes it plain that death of the sinner or the death of a substitute in the place of the sinner, is the only way human beings falling short of the holiness of God, can be saved from the sentence of death. In the Old Testament God, through Moses, made this clear in all the sacrifices in the Old Testament. But because these offerings were imperfect, they had to be repeated again and again. So this way of coming to God in worship for acceptance was a temporary thing until God gave the pure Lamb of God, his one and only Son, who as a sinless all sufficient sacrifice, gave himself for the forgiveness and salvation of sinners when he died on the cross of Calvary.

The worship of Ephraim outwardly was just as it should be. Israel were offering sin offerings, presumably to satisfy the need for atonement for their sin. The next sentence of verse 11 speaks of the truth concerning this worship which Hosea observed as he evaluated, under the illumination of the Holy Spirit, this worship. The sentence is 'these have become altars for sinning'. What does this sentence tell us about the truth of this worship Hosea saw in Israel?

It tells us that this worship was purely formal. Outwardly it carried out sacrifice as a sin offering before God, but in reality the way this worship was being carried out and expressed was all wrong.

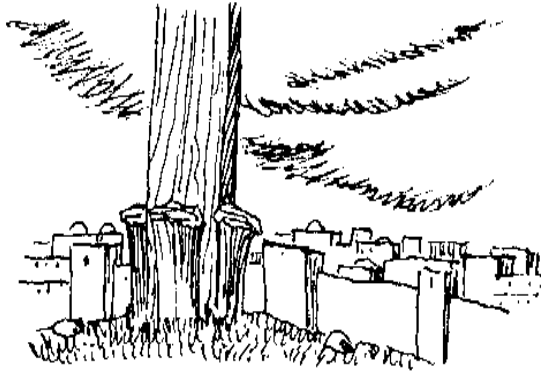
The worship was all outward. Hosea saw this because he observed that this worship expressed no change in the living of the people. Their behavior remained the same. They were living and sinning in the sight of God just as they had before they had engaged in worship. The people still continued their idol worship and godless living they had embraced

from the religion of the heathen nations around them. They were using the formal expression of offering sin offerings as a sort of charm which would fend off the action of God in displeasure and punishment.

The trouble expressed in this outward formal worship was that there was no real conviction of offending God by the way they had departed from word of God. Through Moses, God made clear the true and real purpose of the sacrifices for sin. This was that the penalty for sin had to be executed. Either the sinner had to die, or another life had to be forfeit in the place of the sinner. In the Mosaic established religion, a person came with an offering for sin where the animal was killed, and the person who brought the sin offering felt the guilt of his offending God, and so placed his hands on the animal to represent his or her sin being transferred to the animal, and the sentence of death for sin was taken by the animal in the place of the sinner, in order that God could justly forgive the sin of the one who brought the offering.

Hosea saw clearly that the people did not want to forsake the sinful living they were leading, and came with their sin-offering in this formal way thinking that this outward obedience to the law of God would be accepted, and so allowed them to continue in their evil and godless way.

The first sentence of the next verse, speaking through Hosea, expresses the vanity of this formal worship being expressed in the altars and sin-offerings sacrificed on them. The first sentence of verse twelve exposes the hypocrisy of the thought and actions of Ephraim in this worship. The words are 'I wrote for them the many things of my law'. These words expose the hypocrisy of the worship of Ephraim. It was hypocritical because God had written clearly through the Mosaic law exactly what was required in the worship of Israel. Moses was told clearly that he must do all that God had revealed to him on the mount, and that he was to make sure that every detail was made clear, and that the worship of Israel should conform to this revelation.



The fact was that Moses made clear to the people exactly what God required for worship which was acceptable to God. Israel had the first five books of the Bible, known as the Pentateuch. Together with these five books Israel had the recorded history of the church, not only in the Pentateuch, but also in the recorded history that followed from Joshua. Israel was careful to keep records of the life of Israel, which is seen in the careful keeping of the records of all the families. Together with this the Levites were trained in the correct worship of God handed down to them.

In the next sentence it is written how Ephraim treated this clear revelation from God – 'but they regarded them as something alien'.

What do these words from God reveal. They reveal that Ephraim judged the Law of God as alien to the way of life they wanted to lead. They understood what God required in worship, but because the commands of God did not fit in to what they wanted God to be like, they altered the Law of God to fit their own desire and way of life.

The question raised here is how Ephraim did this, and the answer must be, as it is even today, they rejected the truth of God where it did not fit their own thinking and preference, and justified this by some argument which set their wisdom and desires above God's revealed truth.

APPLICATION.

Is it not clearly evident that syndrome addressed by Hosea in these verses is repeated in the visible church of modern times. The Bible claims for itself that it is God's revealed and infallible word and truth. The Bible speaks of the Scripture as God-breathed – that is given by God. The Bible speaks of the writers of the Bible as being carried along by the Holy Spirit, to express and record that mind of God, and what God taught as his word, ways and commandments.

Like Ephraim the thinking of the visible church in its worship is expressing worship as it wants worship to be. Ephraim had embraced the thinking of the nations around them, and allowed the forms of worship expressed by these nations, and their thinking, to fashion their minds and their thinking, which had become the wisdom they applied to the worship of God. What did not fit into this new understanding and wisdom was rejected, and even though it was alien to the true worship that God had shown them in his law. In fact Ephraim was conforming their wisdom to the thinking of these alien nations. Why did Ephraim do this was because they had so absorbed this heathen thinking, and found it fitted their preferred idea of God, that this was thought to be greater wisdom than the very revelation of God and his truth.

Is not this an image of what has occurred in the thinking of the visible church. The heathen world, with its philosophy and scientific thought, has been absorbed in the thinking of the church. The thinking of science and philosophy of the world has been welcomed as the truth and the way forward. Why is this so? It is because this wisdom of the world is accepted as better and more correct and acceptable than the word of God.

The fact is that this thinking of the world more fits the thinking of corrupt fallen sinful nature, and so has been embraced, and the truth of God has been ridiculed as foolish, and not embracing the thinking of Science and worldly opinion.



There is a phrase in 1 John chapter 5 which addresses this attitude, which mirrors the attitude of Ephraim and the thinking and attitude of today's church. The phrase is found in verse 10 and reads as follows – 'Anyone who does not believe God has made him a liar'. John speaks concerning testimony given by God to his Son – Jesus Christ. In fact the whole of the Bible is God's testimony to His Son. From Genesis to Revelation this is the testimony of God's word. The better sacrifice of Abel pointed to Christ. This testimony is continued throughout the whole Bible, and made clear and full in the New Testament.

The Bible, God's word written, is God speaking his truth. When in some way the testimony of the whole Bible is questioned, this is tantamount to calling God a liar. Why does so great a sin committed by the majority in the visible church today. The testimony of Hosea in these two verses we have been considering give the answer. Verse 12 gives the answer. Ephraim had the word of God given by God clearly in the first five books of the Bible. But the worship of God expressed in the word of God known by Israel was found alien to the ways and thinking and preference of Ephraim. The result was that Ephraim pretended to worship God in its worship, they built their altars and offered their sacrifices, but this worship was sinful, because it did not conform to the true word of God that God had given through Moses.

Ephraim, like the visible church today, wanted God to be different to the revelation God had given of himself in his Word. It is no denial of this

fact when the wisdom of today says that the Bible contains the word of God, but much of it is alien to the wisdom of the worldly thinking and wisdom of the visible church. Where in this thinking and attitude is there any certainty of what is from God and what is not. This is specially evident because what is believed concerning the truth of God varies terribly. All expressions of what is the word of God in the bible varies from one expression to another. How can there be any certainty to be found in these variations. The fact is that what is happening is that each one who claims to be a Christian chooses out of the Bible what suits them, and what they want to believe.

The fact is that the apostles and Jesus Christ accepted the whole of the Old Testament as God-breathed, and God inspired Jesus, in his teaching, specially in John's Gospel, to make clear that the New Testament is also God-breathed. Thus the words of John, in this 10th verse of the fifth chapter of his first general letter, expresses the terrible blasphemy of the attitude, held by so many, in the church today. It is saying God is liar. There could not be a more terrible blasphemy than this.

What terrible judgment must fall on the church on account of such blasphemy. It fell on Ephraim, and it is plain it is falling on the the church which expresses this blasphemy in its treatment of the Bible. How relevant and apt are the words of Hosea in verses 11 and twelve of this eight chapter of his prophecy. This may be considered as destructive criticism, but Hosea was speaking from God because of the damage which was happening in the eternal welfare of the people of Ephraim. Ephraim needed to see and know how they were displeasing God by their thinking and acting, and were cutting themselves off from the love and blessing of God. We need to heed this warning and return to the whole truth of God which God has graciously given us in the whole Bible, so that seasons of refreshing from God may be poured out on his church.

JUNE 2026

GOD'S MESSAGE IN 2 PETER

Expository Sermons in the 2nd Epistle of Peter

THE END OF THE WORLD

“Since everything will be destroyed in this way, what kind of people ought you to be? You ought to live holy and godly lives as you look forward to the day of God and speed his coming. That day will bring about the destruction of the heavens by fire, and the elements will melt in the heat. But in keeping with his promise we are looking forward to a new heaven and a new earth, the home of righteousness.”

2 Peter 3: 11-13

In one sense Peter has said all that needs to be said about the end of the world at the time of Christ's return, but because of the importance of the event, and the need to be ready, he enlarges on this great event, which will bring an end to this world made evil by Satan, and the creation of a new heaven and earth to be the home of righteousness, which was the purpose of God in the original creation of our world, which was expressed in the garden of Eden.

THE END OF THE WORLD.

Let us first be clear concerning the certainty of this event where the world and universe we know will be brought to an end. Peter makes clear its certainty. Whatever science may declare, God has set a time, known only to Him, when this world and universe as we know it will be brought to an end.

Peter goes on to describe this event. He has declared this in verse 10, but he repeats what he said there in even more vivid language. Everything will be destroyed. This means the whole of space, the planets and our earth. This seems an impossible thought to the

world. Science can imagine devastating destruction caused by the way human folly, selfishly lives, and there is much talk of the result of global warming. But the whole of the universe being totally annihilated is something inconceivable.

The description which Peter gives is awful to contemplate. He tells us that the whole of the heavens, that is the infinity of space, will be destroyed by fire. It is hard to visualise this but it describes a destruction which fire causes, when it occurs in our world in different places. Fire as we know it in time, is very destructive, but still leaves a residue. This fire will destroy everything. Peter describes this as the elements being melted in the heat. This means space will disappear and the earth laid bare, as Peter describes this event in the previous verse. This is incredibly difficult to contemplate, and it expresses a destruction unparalleled in the present existence of the universe, but it is a certain event which our omnipotent God is able to do.

God is forgotten and disregarded by science. But as God describes his almighty power in the creation of the world we know, where he had just to declare it and it was brought into being, so according to his omnipotence, by his word of power, he is able to destroy this world and universe.

The next question that is raised in the minds of those who believe, is the time. When will God make an end of this world we know. Peter does not fail us as he is carried along by the Spirit of God. This is found in the words 'as you look forward to the day of God and speed its coming'.

Scripture truth makes plain that this day of God is the day when Christ will return to this universe in power and great glory. Our creeds describe this in the words 'from thence he will come to judge the living and the dead'. This time, Jesus told his disciples, is known only to the Father, that is God, who not only created our world and

universe, but also sustains it, and is always sovereign over it to fulfil all his eternal purpose.

The phrase 'and speed his coming' is difficult to understand. How can the company of faithful believers speed this event which is in the hands of God alone. The only clue would seem to be that Scripture makes clear that the return of Christ will occur only after all the elect, the chosen for salvation before the foundation of the world, have been gathered into the kingdom of God and heaven. With this thought in mind the believing church can speed Christ's return by the preaching of the Gospel of salvation vigorously.

PROMISE OF A NEW CREATION.

From the moment when Satan brought the destruction of the purpose of God in the first creation of our world, God made a promise that by the coming of our Saviour Christ Jesus, Satan's power would be overcome, and his destruction finally reversed, and a new world would be created in which righteousness would be returned. This promise, as Scripture reveals, has two parts. Jesus as the stronger than Satan, the strong man holding his goods in peace – that is his dominion over the world; overcame Satan at his first coming by his perfect work in his life and death, and provided eternal release from Satan's bondage, and translation into the kingdom of God for all who are granted faith unto salvation. The second part is when Jesus comes to judge the living and the dead, where all his chosen ones will be gathered into his everlasting glory.

Peter is referring to this promise in verse 13. The words of Peter are 'in the keeping of his promise we are looking forward to a new heaven and a new earth, the home of righteousness'.

The question which may often be raised in our minds is the question as to why God allowed Satan to tempt Adam and Eve, and bring about their disobedience, which caused Satan's triumph in obtaining the choice by our first parents for Satan to be their god, and place

all humanity under Satan's dominion, and make Satan 'the god of the world'. This fact is affirmed by John in 1 John 5: 19 in the words 'and the whole world is under the control of the evil one'.

However the answer to this question is in the sovereign and eternal rule of God, who does all things in accordance with his perfect and eternal will. His will is always perfect and good. God is working out his eternal will as year succeeds to year. God is in control over Satan, and Satan can only express his evil malice by the permission of omnipotent God. This made clear in the opening two chapters of the book of Job. Satan could only work his evil against Job by the permission of God.

THE BELIEVER'S RESPONSE.

This is the purpose of all this revelation of the final judgement. Peter is seeking to make sure that all of us who believe are prepared for this real event, and are looking forward with anticipation to the time when all Christ's believing people are gathered into heaven to be with the Lord forever. Peter is seeking to cause all who believe to be living with this great event in mind, and being ready to receive our Lord, and not be ashamed at his coming.

What is the teaching of Christ and the Scripture to achieve this readiness? Although our salvation is all of grace, and won by Christ providing perfect righteousness, who provided it for us for our salvation and acceptance with God, yet God looks for in all of us what Peter describes at the end of verse 11 in the words 'You ought to live holy and godly lives'. How are we to do this?

a. We must place God first in our lives.

This is easy to say, but it needs amplifying. What does this involve? It means that we are always living in the consciousness that we are living in the presence of God, who searches the deepest things of our lives. He sees our action. He knows our thoughts. He never leaves us or forsakes us. We are his children, and he is watching

over us constantly. His presence with us means that it is impossible to hide anything in our lives from him. In the light of this to live holy and godly lives, we need to seek to live to please him as our Father, in all we do, say and think.

b. We must observe the rule of life given by God.

What is the rule of life which God has given us? It is the ten commandments given by God to Moses on mount Sinai.

Keeping the commandments can not save us. Paul makes clear that this first covenant of works, under which Adam and Eve lived, can never save us. This is because there is no way the perfection of this covenant can be met by us fallen sinners. Even our best thoughts and aspiration are flawed with imperfection. Even if it were possible by God's help to live in complete obedience to this covenant from the moment we believed, there is still no means by which, in our own strength and by our own effort, can the sins of the past be atoned for.

It is the wonder of the Gospel of grace in Christ, that Jesus as our Lord and Saviour, has fulfilled all righteousness to complete perfection for us in his life and death, and this righteousness by grace is imputed to us who believe, and God sees only this garment of righteousness covering all true believers, and justly accepts us who receive in absolute trust the gift of this sin-bearing provided so completely by Jesus. But although we are freed from the dominion of the Law of God for salvation, the Law is still the rule for our living which we are called to observe in the fullest way we can. This means we live with this rule constantly before us, and seek to live by it. It means further that when we are anyway convicted of falling short of its requirements, we repent and seek for mercy and forgiveness, believing that if we confess our sin, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sin, and cleanse us of all unrighteousness. This is applying constantly for the washing in the blood of Jesus, which cleanses us from all our sin.

c. How is this living achieved?

It is achieved by the imitation of Christ. Jesus lived a perfectly sinless and holy life. In all the history we read in the Gospels, the perfection of the life of Jesus, in his love for his Father; in his relations to others; and his love for his disciples. As we read and meditate on his perfect life in every way, we must seek to imitate his life. In this way we will be constantly seeking to conform our lives to the example of his perfection.

Jesus, as the Son of Man, was sent by God 'in the likeness of sinful man' (Romans 8: 3). This means that his humanity was not blessed with the Adam's creation, where he knew no sin. Jesus, though sinless, had to face all the horror of the devil's dominion over humanity, and so he was tempted by Satan most virulently, and he suffered the hate and attack and malice of self-righteous Pharisees. He also had to live with all the discomforts and hardship Satan had caused in the world, yet was without sin. He won our redemption by his perfect keeping of the rule of life, and then as the Lamb without blemish bore our sins in his body on the cross. To achieve this he spent hours in prayer so that the holiness of his Father may always fill his life. This is the life we must seek to follow.

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