

**FOUNDATION OF FAITH!**  
**INTRODUCTION**  
**PART 2**

This morning we are in part 2 of our introduction to a study series I am calling *FOUNDATION OF FAITH!* As we saw last week, this is so important for us to understand. It is so important that we know these things. God's people, Christians, are being destroyed because they are ignorant of the things of God and they are being swayed into believing all kinds of things that are not of God.

The solution, of course, is getting back to the Word of God, knowing what God has for us, what He wants us to do, how He wants us to live and-so-on. The problem is, we will spend more time watching television, more time with our I-Pod or whatever electronic device we have, involved with sport activities, than we are studying the Word of God! Because of that, there are consequences as this story illustrates for us. We are told,

The new minister was asked to teach a boys' class in the absence of the regular teacher. He decided to see what they knew, so he asked them, "Who knocked down the walls of Jericho?" There was dead silence in the class. No one said a word at first. And then, all the boys denied having done it, they did not knock down the walls of Jericho and they did not know who did it! Well, this new preacher was appalled by their ignorance.

Thus, at the next deacons' meeting he told about the experience. "Not one of them knows who knocked down the walls of Jericho," he lamented. The group was silent until finally one seasoned veteran of disputes spoke up. "Preacher, this appears to be bothering you a lot. But I've known all those boys since they were born and they're good boys. If they said they didn't know, I believe them. Let's just take some money out of the repair and maintenance fund, fix the walls, and let it go at that."

- Source Unknown

Now that is funny and yet, I wonder how many people today know the stories that are in the Bible? And please, when I say stories I am not saying that they are just stories, but these are actual events that have happened and there is the spiritual application that is to be made to our lives. These are the Words of God coming from God Himself to us and thus, we must take them seriously. This morning I would like you to turn to II Timothy chapter 2 and let's begin reading in verse 14 as we look at Paul speak of what a diligent worker of Christ is and isn't.

**II TIMOTHY 2:14-19**

As you look around and see what is happening in the realm of spirituality, in the realm of religion, it is appalling! There are many cults out there that are claiming to be Christian and they are not. They speak of a different Jesus, a different Gospel and thus, they are not Christians. There are many protestant denominations that at one time proclaimed the Gospel message because they believed the Bible to be inerrant, they believed the Bible came from the breath of God! But now they have turned away from that and are teaching the flock that God has entrusted to them human philosophy, secular wisdom, New Age practices and Eastern religion. And in doing so they have moved away from the central truths of Biblical Christianity, such as the deity of Jesus, the Holy Trinity, the virgin birth, the sinless Christ, His substitution atonement, salvation by grace alone through faith alone in Christ alone, and much more.

And when you move away from the truths of God found in the Word of God you are going to embrace all kinds of evils, all kinds of wickedness because God will give you over to the passion, the desires of your heart, which is evil! Thus, as we look at the church in general today and compare it with the world, there is no real difference. All the evil that the unsaved are involved in, all the ungodly practices, are also going on in the church today because we have rejected the truths of God found in the Word of God! Like it or not, the effects of ungodly teaching are devastating, they are damning not only for those who attend those churches, but for those who listen to them and read their books!

Let me give you an example and you will see what I mean if you don't believe we are seeing a departure from the faith, a departure from the truths of God found in the Word of God. James Montgomery Boice tells us in his book, *Foundations of the Christian Faith*,

Shortly after Harvard College was founded in 1636, the trustees of the school wrote, "Let every student be plainly instructed, and earnestly pressed to consider well [that the] main end of his life and studies is to know God and Jesus Christ . . . and therefore to lay Christ in the bottom, as the only foundation of all sound knowledge and learning." In the three hundred and fifty or so years since [now almost three hundred and seventy-five years], Harvard (as well as most other schools, colleges and universities) has moved far in a purely secular direction. But the words of those early trustees are still true, and many people still see their chief goal in life as knowing God better.

James Montgomery Boice, *Foundations of the Christian Faith*, p. 11

Go to some of these Christians schools that began strong but now have departed from the faith. And when I say Christian schools, that is how they started out but they are truly secular today, as we have seen with Harvard! As you look at these schools, good luck finding anything Christian in them! And what we have seen happen in these schools is now happening in churches and God has warned us of these things, we just many times refuse to listen! My prayer this morning is to show you how God's Word is important to us as we examine the verses we have read this morning more closely, as Paul, through the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, is admonishing us; he is calling for us to be diligent workmen!

## II TIMOTHY 2:14-19

### VERSE 14

How important it is to have a firm grip on the truth and not be sidetracked with other things. And Paul is instructing Timothy to make a regular practice, reminding the people to keep the main thing the main thing. What is the main thing? The main thing is what Paul previously spoke of in his second letter to Timothy. It is keeping Jesus Christ the main thing, it is the Gospel message, that is what he is to be speaking forth, keep on sharing the Lord with people, building people up in the faith. Paul said in II Timothy 2:8, **“Remember that Jesus Christ, of the seed of David, was raised from the dead according to my gospel.”**

When Paul tells Timothy to **“Remind them of these things”** in the Greek it is in the present tense, which means he was to be persistent in these things. He was to continually preach the truth! That is exactly what Paul told Titus in Titus chapter 2, **“But as for you, speak the things which are proper for sound doctrine . . . Speak these things, exhort, and rebuke with all authority. Let no one despise you.”** Titus 2:1, 15.

I truly believe this is something the church is lacking today, giving people the Good News, teaching them the things of God, giving them sound or healthy doctrine. Churches have turned into entertainment centers, they present a social gospel and people are losing faith because, **“ . . . faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.”**

The church is weak today; it is unhealthy because of the diet it is taking in, spiritually speaking. Think about it, if you were to eat only junk food, you would be unhealthy, overweight and that is what we see in the church today and just like physical manifestations of not eating properly, there are the spiritual manifestations of not eating properly. We see them in the way we live out our faith and it is the works of the flesh that are seen instead of the fruit of the Spirit!

Walter Kaiser had this to say regarding the unhealthy spiritual diet the church is taking in today. He wrote,

It is no secret that Christ's Church is not at all in good health in many places of the world. She has been languishing because she has been fed, as the current line has it, "junk food"; all kinds of artificial preservatives and all sorts of unnatural substitutes have been served up to her. As a result, theological and Biblical malnutrition has afflicted the very generation that has taken such steps to make sure its physical health is not damaged by using foods or products that are carcinogenic or otherwise harmful to their physical bodies. Simultaneously a worldwide spiritual famine resulting from the absence of any genuine publication of the Word of God (Amos 8:11) continues to run wild and almost unabated in most quarters of the Church.

- John MacArthur, Expository Preaching, p. 24

Thus, Timothy is admonished to stay focused on the Gospel message and warned not to focus on the things that are not important, things that don't matter because if we start to focus on these unprofitable things it will be the ruin of those that are listening, it will be a catastrophe to them! Don't let silly debates; don't be distracted by unprofitable things. Keep the main thing the main thing – Jesus! This is so important because as Christians become less and less familiar with the Scriptures they open themselves up to all kinds of garbage. Thus, keep focused on the profitable things and don't be distracted by the unprofitable things.

Is it such a big deal this false teaching? Obviously the answer is yes and Paul explains to us why this is so dangerous. He tells us that it will lead “**to the ruin of the hearers.**” It not only harms unbelievers by putting up road blocks or obstacles to the faith but it also does harm to believers as they become confused and begin to doubt God's Word, as they become discouraged in the faith, which leads to a disobedient life. To the unbeliever these false teachings keep them out of heaven by not showing them the way of salvation, through Jesus Christ. To the believer, it destroys his walk; it weakens his faith and makes him incapacitated in his walk with the Lord!

If you think that is a little too strong, think again. The word that Paul uses for **“ruin”** in the Greek is KATASTROPHE, (kat-as-trof-ay’) and the idea is to be overthrown or overturned and the idea here is that Paul is speaking of being spiritually ruined. And if you think this is not a strong word, listen to how Peter uses it in II Peter 2:6, **“and turning the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah into ashes, condemned them to destruction, making them an example to those who afterward would live ungodly.”** The word **“destruction”** is the same Greek word that Paul used and thus, as Sodom and Gomorrah was destroyed physically, Paul is saying that the spiritual lives of unbelievers and believers are also being destroyed with this false teaching. That is how dangerous it is!

In regards to this, Calvin tells us, “Let us notice first that teaching is rightly condemned on the sole ground that it does no good. God’s purpose is not to pander to our inquisitiveness but to give us profitable instruction. Away with all speculations that produce no edification!” It is as Paul said in II Timothy 3:16-17, **“All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.”** You see, God’s Word builds up, corrects us, it helps us while the other things are of no profit to us!

In fact, Paul warned the believers in Colosse, **“Beware lest anyone cheat you through philosophy and empty deceit, according to the tradition of men, according to the basic principles of the world, and not according to Christ. For in Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily; and you are complete in Him, who is the head of all principality and power.”** Colossians 2:8-10.

This is a very stern warning by Paul to the believers in Colosse to be aware, to pay attention because the world's philosophies are deceptive and they want to take you away from Christ, they will rip you off! The Greek word for "**philosophy**" is PHILOSOPHIA (fil-os-of-ee'-ah) and it comes from two Greek words; PHILEO, which means, "to love" and SOPHIA, which means, "wisdom." So the word means the love of wisdom! Now here is the problem, you cannot find truth regarding life apart from Christ!

I know, some of you disagree with me, but hear me out. Look at the philosophies of the world over the years and how they change, how they contradict each other. Do they sometimes get it right? Yes, that is possible but why grope for answers to life's problems, to life's questions when God has the answer for you. Os Guinness puts it this way in regards to the futile effort of man and his search for the truths of life. He says:

Contemporary man, with his self-drawn picture of society as the "closed room" with No Exit, is caught metaphysically and sociologically. In the darkness of the room evidently without windows, perhaps without doors, he gropes round and round the edges. Can one hope that someone will dare to wonder whether there is any light other than the feeble sparks of his own making? Or will he stubbornly persist in treading the barren circle of poor premises?

- Os Guinness, The Dust of Death, p. 148

Thus, false teaching is according to the basic principles of the world, elementary knowledge like the ABC's and not according to Christ. In fact, Paul put it this way in Colossians 2:20, **“Therefore, if you died with Christ from the basic principles of the world, why, as though living in the world, do you subject yourselves to regulations.”** Don't become a prisoner to the basic principles of this world because we have died to those things in Christ!

Here's the thing, when you have a problem with your heart and soul you bring it to Jesus, you get into the Word of God because the Word of God deals with life's issues; with ourselves, with our fellow man, and with God. The world's philosophies won't help you here, but they will hurt you!

And think about this for a minute. If the fullness of the Godhead dwells in Christ, then Jesus can't be “a god” or a “junior god” or “almost god” but He is fully God; always has been and always will be!

Now is Paul saying that those outside of Christ are not complete? You bet he is. Sorry if you disagree with this but you are wrong! You see, ever since the fall of man, we are born into this world in a state of incompleteness, spiritually speaking because our fellowship with God is broken. Morally speaking because we do our own thing, we don't follow the will of God. Mentally speaking because we don't know the ultimate truth of God. But once we are saved we are complete spiritually, our fellowship with God has been restored. We are complete morally in the sense that we have God's will to guide us. We are complete mentally because we have the truths of God in our lives. We have the mind of Christ.

Peter put it this way in II Peter 1:2-4, **“Grace and peace be multiplied to you in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord, as His divine power has given to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him who called us by glory and virtue, by which have been given to us exceedingly great and precious promises, that through these you may be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.”** Thus, may we enjoy that fact knowing we are complete in Him!

Thus, don't fall prey to the empty philosophies of the world, the traditions of men, but look to the Lord to guide you in all your ways. Paul is telling us here in II Timothy that we are to remind each other of the truths of God found in the Word of God. We are to avoid those teachings that are false, to stay away from them, don't allow them into your life, into your home because they will destroy you and those around you if you let them in. A strong warning by Paul and an important one!

#### VERSE 15

Paul now speaks on what we are to do if we are to be reminding people of the things of God found in the Word of God. He says we are to **“be diligent”** and he uses the Greek word, SPOUDAZO, (spoo-dad'-zo). This word carries with it the idea of zealous persistence as you accomplish a certain task or objective. In the context here, Paul is saying that we are to give our maximum effort in bringing forth God's Word to people. We should give a clear understanding of the text and explain how it applies to our lives and the only way that will be accomplished is if you study it, and that is what Paul is saying here.

It makes me crazy when I hear people who are teaching, not here because I would not allow it, who say they get up in the morning and they don't study, they don't prepare, but wherever and whatever the Lord leads them to teach on, that is what they teach! That is just plain lazy and that is not what Paul is saying here. And I will deal more with that in a minute.

First of all I want you to notice who we are seeking approval from, and it is not man. Our approval is from God and again, when you hear of pastors who are people pleasers, that is a warning flag for me. We are not doing this to seek our own approval or the approval of man, but of God! And the way that Paul has constructed this verse he is basically saying that we are presenting ourselves to God, we are standing alongside of Him and we are waiting for the inspection of our work so that we may be approved of Him!

Now, when you preach God's Word faithfully, you many times are not so popular because you are saying things that people don't want to hear. John MacArthur put it like this as he wrote, "The preacher who brings the message people most *need* to hear will often be the preacher they least *like* to hear. But anything less than a commitment to expository preaching by the preacher will reduce his sheep to a weak, vulnerable, and shepherdless flock." (Expository Preaching, p. Xvii).

Now being a pastor is not a popularity contest. I look at the prophet Jeremiah, a spokesperson for God and yet no one listened to what he had to say, no one repented and got right with God. Many today would look at a ministry like that and see it as a failure. But God was pleased with Jeremiah because he was faithful in service; he was a God pleaser rather than a man pleaser. Thus, the people hated him because they didn't like what he was saying to them, but God was well pleased! In other words, he was "**diligent to present himself approved of God**" and so must we because we are rightly dividing the Word of God, we are presenting the message of God no matter what man may say or do!

And we see Paul telling Timothy to work hard, be diligent in the work he is doing. There are times when people should be ashamed at the work they are doing because it was done poorly. But that should not be the case in our service to the Lord, and as a pastor, Timothy was to "**rightly divide**" God's Word or "to cut straight." The Greek word, ORTHOTOMEIO, (or-thot-om-eh'-o) was used of a craftsman cutting a straight line, or a farmer plowing a straight furrow, or a mason setting a straight line for bricks. Thus, there is a right way to teach God's Word, to share what it means, and a wrong way!

You see, we are not teach God's Word any way that we want, make it mean what we want it to mean, as that is done very often today as heresies are being taught. Some will say, "That is the way you interpret it!" No, that is what God's Word has to say and it doesn't matter what I think! You see, people love to twist the Scriptures to make them fit their own end, for their own gain!

Let me give you this horrible example of someone not rightly dividing the Word of God. “In explaining, and evidently trying to justify, the conception of his first child out of wedlock, a prominent evangelical leader maintained that true marriage with his wife began at that time, rather than at the time of their wedding. That claim, of course, utterly contradicts what Scripture teaches about the unconditional sinfulness of fornication.

When the man’s wife was asked how she felt about that “indiscretion” being made public, she added to her husband’s twisting of Scripture by responding, “Well, now I understand the meaning of John 8:23, ‘the truth shall make you free.’” The most cursory look at that passage reveals that Jesus was not speaking about the feeling of relief that often comes with having a sin justified. He was speaking about the truth of His divinity and messiahship. He was speaking “to those Jews who had believed Him,” explaining that their knowing and being made free by that truth was conditioned on their abiding in His Word, which would mark them as “truly [His] disciples” (v. 31).

Equally blasphemous was a young woman who posed nude for a pornographic magazine and said the experience had drawn her closer to God. She even claimed the scriptural promise “Draw near to God and He will draw near to you” (James 4:8). The arrogant folly of her statement is made clear in the next half of that verse, which commands: “Cleanse your hands, you sinners; and purify your hearts, you doubleminded.”

It is one thing to genuinely repent of a sin and to have the assurance of God's forgiveness. It is a different thing entirely to twist God's Word in an effort to justify the sin. It is one thing for an unbeliever, who makes no claim of godliness, to be unashamed of a sin. It is quite another thing, and immeasurably worse, for a person who claims salvation to be unashamed of a sin, especially when God's Word is used to defend it." (John MacArthur, II Timothy 2:15).

You can listen to the health, wealth and prosperity teachers who are trying to justify why they keep asking for money and make outrageous claims that God does not want us to be poor, monetarily speaking! They will tell you things like, "Jesus was rich because He had someone carry his money bag!" The disciples wore designer clothes! But they are not rightly dividing God's Word but twisting it for their own gain and that is wrong and God does not approve of it! Don't twist God's Word to make it say what you want, to use it to justify your sin. God means what He says and says what He means and we must not only proclaim it but also live by it!

One more illustration of what people are doing by wrongly dividing the Word of God, the Word of truth. In John 18:1-6 we are told, **“When Jesus had spoken these words, He went out with His disciples over the Brook Kidron, where there was a garden, which He and His disciples entered. And Judas, who betrayed Him, also knew the place; for Jesus often met there with His disciples. Then Judas, having received a detachment of troops, and officers from the chief priests and Pharisees, came there with lanterns, torches, and weapons. Jesus therefore, knowing all things that would come upon Him, went forward and said to them, ‘Whom are you seeking?’ They answered Him, ‘Jesus of Nazareth.’ Jesus said to them, ‘I am He.’ And Judas, who betrayed Him, also stood with them. Now when He said to them, ‘I am He,’ they drew back and fell to the ground.”**

Those who are into being slain in the Spirit will use this verse as evidence to support this practice. The power of God is so strong it will knock you to the ground; some are even glued to the floor. That is not rightly dividing the Word of God. In the Garden of Gethsemane, when Jesus was arrested, those men who fell to the ground were not saved, they were not believers. When Jesus said, **“I am”** I do believe it was the power of God that knocked them down, but not a practice we see with believers or even with unbelievers. You don't see it practiced in the book of Acts, nor do you see it in the Epistles. You see, rightly dividing the Word of God doesn't mean you make it say what you want it to say, but what God does say!

In regards to God's Word, Spurgeon wrote, "Swords are meant to cut and hack, and wound, and kill with, and the word of truth is for pricking men in the heart and killing their sins. The word of God is not committed to God's ministers to amuse men with its glitter, nor to charm them with the jewels in its hilt, but to conquer their souls for Jesus." Folk's, apart from God's Word, apart from rightly dividing the Word of God, we are giving people empty philosophies of the world or our own doctrine that is not of God!

Thus, we are to rightly handle God's Word as one would handle a sword. We are to plow straight with the Word of God, properly presenting the essential Christian doctrines. We are to properly dissect and arrange the Word of God just as the priest would dissect and arrange an animal for sacrifice. And we are to distribute God's Word that we have taken into our lives to others so they may grow as they partake of it!

I like the way that J. I Packer summed this up for us as he contrasts what preaching is not with what preaching is to be. And again, this is for all of us because we all share the Word of God and we have to be ready to give them the correct information and if we can't then we are not going to be living the way God wants us to live because we don't know what He wants from us! Packer wrote,

The purpose of preaching is not to stir people to action while bypassing their minds, so that they never see what reason God gives them for doing what the preacher requires of them (that is manipulation); nor is the purpose to stock people's minds with truth, no matter how vital and clear, which then lies fallow and does not become the seed-bed and source of changed lives (that is academicism) . . . The purpose of preaching is to inform, persuade, and call forth an appropriate response to the God whose message and instruction are being delivered.

- John MacArthur, Expository Preaching, p. 18

And so, we need to be zealous in accomplishing the task that God has before us so that we might be approved by God and not necessarily by men! That task that Paul is speaking of is rightly dividing the Word of truth, the Word of God and not wrongly dividing it. That means you need to read it, study it, meditate upon it and ask God, by His Spirit to help you to understand it and He will!

Paul has spoken of what we are to do and now he will be sharing what we are not to do or what we are to avoid. Let's read on and see what he has to say.

#### VERSE 16

As Paul opens up this verse he tells Timothy and us to “**shun**” these things and he uses the Greek word, PERIISTEMI, (per-ee-is'-tay-mee) and it means to stand clear of, to avoid certain things. I don't know why, well I do, it is that sin nature in people, but when they are told not to do something, there is that desire to do it and that is what we see today.

I don't know why but it is always amazes me to listen to the garbage some teachers are teaching and the following they have. Paul warned Timothy to shun, avoid, don't listen to their message, why? Because it is "**profane,**" and Paul is not saying that these are dirty or filthy words, he is not speaking of swear words here, but anything that is taking away from God's Word is not holy, it is filthy! Thus, this kind of talk, this kind of teaching should not be handled at all!

And the reality is, these profane words are nothing more than "**idle babblings**" or "**vain babblings**" there is no substance to them, there is nothing substantial to them. May we be wise and understand that what God has for us will make us complete!

This kind of teaching is not rightly dividing the Word of God, it doesn't make a person more holy but it moves them more and more down the path of un-holiness. You see, you are not being drawn into the presence of God with these teachings, but into the person who is teaching them. And please understand that Paul is not talking about idle chitchat or gossip, which is wrong and can be very destructive. He is talking about destructive heresies that perverts the truth and leads to ungodliness!

Over the last several months I have received some flak or criticism because I have opposed and exposed some of the false teaching that is going on in the church, even at some Calvary Chapel's. The problem by not opposing them and exposing them is that this will continue on and many will fall to their destruction because of it. Look at the spiritual plight of many denominations today and the reason is simple, these false teachings that were creeping into the church were not opposed and exposed and they became part of the church and to the hurt of their people.

False teaching and false doctrine only leads to ungodly living! Think about it. Can error or false teaching restrain the flesh? Of course it can't! Can error or false teaching halt the Devil? Of course not! Can error or false teaching protect us from the world? Absolutely not! The bottom line is this, error, false teaching, false doctrine provides no defense against iniquity, it gives to us no strength to do what is right and God honoring and thus, we see this moral depravity that has infected and affected the church today! And look at the next verse and see how this spreads!

### VERSES 17-18

Notice how serious false teaching, false doctrine, error is in the church. Paul likens the teachings of this false doctrine, these unscriptural lessons to that of cancer, spreading quickly. I witnessed the affects of cancer and how quickly it can spread in my dad's life. He was diagnosed with colon cancer, had part of his colon removed. There was no evidence that the cancer had spread anywhere else in his body at this point, although over 95% of the lymph glands they did a biopsy on had cancer. That was not a good sign. Within 9 months his cancer spread to his brain, his lungs, and his liver and he died! How can that be when they removed part of his colon and thus, removed the cancer?

Because this deadly disease had spread unnoticed, very secretly to the lymph glands and that is like the superhighway in the body, going everywhere. Thus, these cancer cells took a ride and infiltrated his body and what was once not a big issue now became a big issue and destroyed his body, he died!

I am amazed at how quickly false doctrine can spread, to the ruin of its hearer. And people today think that it is not such a big deal, there is some error mixed with the truth, but not to worry about it. They say things like, "I eat the meat and spit out the bones." That sounds great but it is not Scriptural. What did Paul tell us to do regarding false teachers, false doctrine? He told us to shun them, avoid them, don't allow them into your life and yet, we are living in a time of tolerance, we tolerate everything but the truths of God found in the Word of God!

Today the push is for New Age teaching and Eastern Mysticism being accepted as part of the church's teachings. They will use Christian words, Christian doctrine and change the meaning of them. And like it or not, they need to be opposed and exposed. You don't tolerate error, false teaching, you avoid it, you expose it and you oppose it but you don't let it into the church! If you do, it will be like a cancer and it will spread quickly with devastating results! And like cancer, it is not building people up in the faith, but weakening their faith. It is like taking in junk food and poison, it is like a cancer in you, instead of the solid meat of God's Word that will build you up and keep you strong and healthy because it is sound teaching!

Now for those of you who don't like to name names of those that are teaching heresy, are you kidding me? I used this illustration before but it does drive the point home. Imagine if there was a doctor in town that was a surgeon but he was a horrible surgeon. He was a butcher! And what if you needed surgery and I told you that there is this bad surgeon in town but I refused to name names because that is not loving, but the reality is that it shows I don't really care for you. Thus, you would be angry with me because if I don't tell you who it is, you won't find out until it is too late!

And look at what the Scriptures teach us regarding naming names of false teachers. Paul names two men, probably leaders in the church at Ephesus at one time, who were not rightly dividing the Word of God but teaching heresy! And it seems that they still had an influence in the church in Ephesus!

In I Timothy 1:20 Paul tells us, “**of whom are Hymenaeus and Alexander, whom I delivered to Satan that they may learn not to blaspheme.**” Hymenaeus rejected the faith and now, here in II Timothy he still didn’t learn his lesson, he didn’t repent and now he is with Philetus spreading these profane and vain babblings. They must have been popular, had a strong following, but they were in error and leading others down that same path.

Now they started out correctly, but then they strayed from the truth. One of the things they taught was that the resurrection was over, that it is past. Are they speaking of our physical resurrection? It seems like it. Maybe they only saw a spiritual resurrection and denied any physical resurrection, a kind of early Gnosticism you might say.

By denying our physical resurrection they were denying the resurrection of Jesus in bodily form. Paul makes that point in I Corinthians 15:12-19, **“Now if Christ is preached that He has been raised from the dead, how do some among you say that there is no resurrection of the dead? But if there is no resurrection of the dead, then Christ is not risen. And if Christ is not risen, then our preaching is empty and your faith is also empty. Yes, and we are found false witnesses of God, because we have testified of God that He raised up Christ, whom He did not raise up — if in fact the dead do not rise. For if the dead do not rise, then Christ is not risen. And if Christ is not risen, your faith is futile; you are still in your sins! Then also those who have fallen asleep in Christ have perished. If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men the most pitiable.”**

If Paul ended there, that there is no resurrection for us, if Christ did not rise from the dead, then we are still dead in our sins, we are lost, and how hopeless our faith would be. But he didn't end there. He goes on to say, **“But now Christ is risen from the dead, and has become the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep. For since by man came death, by Man also came the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ all shall be made alive. But each one in his own order: Christ the firstfruits, afterward those who are Christ's at His coming. Then comes the end, when He delivers the kingdom to God the Father, when He puts an end to all rule and all authority and power.”** I Corinthians 15:20-24. Because He was raised from the dead, since He conquered death, then one day we too will be raised in glory, our bodies will be resurrected like His!

Now this doctrine was not all the heresy they taught, no doubt. If they were wrong with this fundamental doctrine, chances are they were also wrong in other areas, had many other “goofy beliefs” as they were moving away from Jesus. Thus, they have destroyed the faith of some as they listen to this garbage. These lies choked out any leanings towards Christ and kept them in spiritual darkness, spiritual death. Thus, Paul’s warning is to shun them, avoid their heresy, to not associate yourself with them!

And please understand that when it says that the faith of some was “**overthrown**” Paul is not saying that some believers have departed from the faith. That would not line up with the rest of the Scriptures. These are people that heard the Gospel message and had not yet made a commitment to Christ and upon hearing these false teachings, the faith that was there for them to receive was overthrown or upset, they did not come to saving faith because of it! That is how dangerous this stuff is and we are to oppose it and expose it as being false whether people like it or not because this false teaching will choke out spiritual life or you might say that they will choke to death on the spiritual bones they were to spit out!

Paul is now going to sum up what he has been talking about. Make these concluding remarks regarding what he has said about rightly dividing the Word of God and avoiding or shunning false teachers, not embracing them.

VERSE 19

In Isaiah 40:8 we are told, “**The grass withers, the flower fades, But the word of our God stands forever.**” God’s Word will stand because it is a solid foundation. Cancer eats away, destroys life like false doctrine. But the Word of God brings forth life, abundant life! In spite of these false teachers, in the end God will win, these men and their doctrines will be cast in the Lake of Fire! Our responsibility is to teach people the truths of God from the Word of God so as these false doctrines come blowing in, God’s Word, like a cancer fighting drug, will destroy it!

Now, because you are His, and you know that you are as Paul tells us in Romans 8:16, “**The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God,**” then let us live lives apart from iniquity, lives that are holy! If you are living an immoral life, living with your boyfriend or girlfriend, having intercourse outside of the marriage relationship, if your speech is filthy, if you can lie and cheat saying “It is all covered by the blood!” are you still a Christian, are you really His? I don’t believe you are, I don’t believe you ever were, you are deceiving yourself! If there is no conviction in what you are doing wrong, then I don’t believe you are saved, you are living a lie!

Peter admonishes us to, “**Therefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and rest your hope fully upon the grace that is to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ; as obedient children, not conforming yourselves to the former lusts, as in your ignorance; but as He who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct, because it is written, ‘Be holy, for I am holy.’**” I Peter 1:13-16.

Now our good works don't save us, but they do show that we are saved. And if you can live an immoral life with no conviction, the evidence is not there that you are saved! You see, it is not just a short-term fall, but it is your life that you are now living in sin that shows you are not saved! And Jesus said in John 8:34-36, “. . . **‘Most assuredly, I say to you, whoever commits sin is a slave of sin. And a slave does not abide in the house forever, but a son abides forever. Therefore if the Son makes you free, you shall be free indeed.’**” May we stay focused on the Lord and His Word and we won't have to worry about our faith being overthrown!

As I close this morning, let me leave you with this. What is going to stand the test of time? We talked about it already; Paul has mentioned it here in this verse. It is “**the solid foundation of God**” that will stand. It is His Word, the truths of God found in the Word of God, and I am speaking of Genesis through Revelation, that is all of God's Word, every Word!

Thus, next week we will continue our study of the Foundation of Faith and we will be looking at God the Father, as the best place to begin a study like this is God! We will end up looking at the Holy Trinity, God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit over the next several months, and I didn't say years! I think this is a great place to start and lay down this foundation of truth so we are all on the same page and each of us will be able to “**. . . sanctify the Lord God in your hearts, and always be ready to give a defense to everyone who asks you a reason for the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear.**” I Peter 3:15.