

2 Timothy 1:6-17, 2:1-5, 2:15, 2:20-21, 3:1-5, 3:14-17, 4:1-8, 4:17

Sunday 8/7/2005

This morning, we are going to be getting into 2 Timothy, that great book. If you remember, we have been coming through the Bible every week, book by book, not in the depth that we will come through them as we take the books individually and really lay out the material. What we have been trying to do is to give you an understanding of how the Bible goes together. I do not know a better way to do that than to just take one book at a time and not only show you how they all go together in your Bible, which we have done, but give you the outline of each book so that as you begin to read it and you begin to study it yourself, you will know exactly what you need to be looking for.

That is one of the problems that I found that Christians have, and it is the main problem that I try to solve for you here. As you know, throughout the week, we have multiple meetings. Everybody that wants to get to spend time in the Word of God. I told you when we started our church that I would spend an hour a week with anybody that wanted to learn how to learn the Bible. Over the years, I found out that one of the problems that God's people have that defeats them so quickly when it comes to the Bible is simply this: they begin to read the Bible or try to study the Bible, but they do not know what they are looking for. Consequently, because they do not know what they are looking for, it gets boring very quickly. You come to the point where after a while you just kind of give up. You just think, "What is the point? I am not getting anything out of it."

Not too many churches today will take the time to really help you understand. As you know, for those of you that have just gotten saved or have come into our church, we have stages for everybody. We have a discipleship program that if you are a young man or a young lady, I will put somebody with you to bring you through and show you the basic fundamentals of the scriptures. We are about learning the Word of God. A church is absolutely no good if it does not fulfill its mission. The mission first and foremost is to train men and women in the Word of God and then let the Holy Spirit of God take them from there. So that is our job and that is what we try to do here. Everything we do, everything we try to accomplish, is based on that principle and the Word of God.

I. The Pastoral Epistles: 1 & 2 Timothy and Titus

Last week, you remember we started the book of 1 Timothy, and I told you that when we entered into 1 Timothy, we entered into another segment of the Bible. The book of 1 Timothy, 2 Timothy, and Titus are commonly called the pastoral epistles because they are the books that are written to men who were pastors. In those books, you find, as we saw last week, all the great material that you really need to understand what it takes to be a leader in the church. We talked about the different places of leadership: the deacons, the elders, and then of course, the pastors. We laid those out and I showed you how that this book is a must-read for anybody who is going to try to become everything that God wants them to be.

We saw that, as I said, it is the handbook for a pastor. It is basically how I operate when I pastor my church. I told you last week that every church has its own philosophy of ministry, every church has its own style of doing things, but every church ought to have its basic ministry based on the principles of the Word of God. We saw that developing the gift, taking men and women through the Word of God and teaching the Word of God, bringing them to the point where they really develop their relationship with God.

We talked about the relationship that Paul had with young Timothy and what a great example that was of how in my life as a pastor, my job is to take young men and young ladies and couples and to show them and put them on the right track and then train them and get them ready to do whatever God wants them to do. We looked at twelve charges in the book of 1 Timothy that Paul gave to young Timothy about the ministry and not only the ministry, but his responsibility as a pastor.

II. The Bittersweet Farewell of Paul

Now we enter into the book of 2 Timothy. It is clear, and I told you this last week, that 1 and 2 Timothy are the last things that Paul writes before he goes home to be with the Lord. He is in a Roman jail, and the end of his life is imminent. I told you that it is always an interesting thing. It is always a great perspective to see the last thing or read the last thing that a man or a woman says at the end of their life. I told you examples of that because it gives their perspective, and there is no greater place where that great lesson comes true than in the book of 2 Timothy.

In 2 Timothy, it is clear that Paul understands that his time on earth is short. He says in 2 Timothy 4:6, "For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand." He knows he is going home to be with the Lord. You cannot help but feel what Paul must have been feeling at that particular point in his life. There is a real bittersweetness to the book of 2 Timothy. You do not see it so much in 1 Timothy, but you see it in 2 Timothy because I believe the reality began to set in in his life.

Here he is sitting in a Roman jail. He has had a very fruitful ministry. Paul was the type of man who was very intense in what he did. There is no man in the Bible that understood his mission better than Paul did. He never loses his focus. I do not know of one time, even when he made the mistake in the book of Acts when God told him not to go down to Jerusalem and he went anyhow, which wound him up in the mess that he is in, he never lost his focus. His focus was not going to Jerusalem because of something that he wanted to do. He had such a burden for his own people. There is a whole case study within that situation in itself.

You cannot help but see and feel, if you have any kind of intimate feel for the Word of God, that he is happy to be going home. Paul did not love this world. Paul is the only man in the whole Bible that gives you the insight of how he really thought about this life. He got caught up in the third heaven and he saw all the things that God had for him. Just about the time he was in awe of all that God did, God grabbed him by the shirt and neck and threw him back down on planet earth. Paul never lived his life the same once he saw the glory of God and all that God was and all that God was doing.

He comes back to this earth and he lives his life with one purpose, and that is Christ. You see it in every aspect of his life. As you read this, you cannot help but see and understand that there is a happiness to be going home, but there is a sadness because of the relationships that he has built. Paul did not love this world, but he certainly loved the men and women, the brethren that God had put him with. I do not care how spiritual we say we are. I do not care how heavenly minded we are. If you are really doing your job and you are really being what God wants you to be, there is a tearing between the two.

Sure, absent from the body is to be present with the Lord. But you know what? Even though this world is what it is and this world is filthy and violent against God, you build relationships down here with men and women who shoulder the ministry and the responsibility with you, and you genuinely love them because you know they genuinely love you. It is a hard thing. It was a hard thing for him. It is a hard thing for every believer to balance that out between wanting to go be with the Lord and having to be down here. Ultimately, when it comes down to that, no matter how you feel, you want to be with the Lord. But the struggle and the emotion is still there.

You see this as the last thing that he writes, and as I said last week, the last thing that he writes, he has on his mind a young man that he was training for the ministry. What a perspective of where we ought to be.

III. The Central Theme of 2 Timothy: Remember, Don't Forget

I do not know what you know about 2 Timothy, but the whole book is built around one theme and one context. Within this book, again, there are many charges. We are not going to have time to look at them all today. We do not really need to. You need to go out of here understanding what this book is built around. It is built around one key verse. That verse is found in 2 Timothy 1:6.

Let us pray.

Father, we thank You and praise You for the Lord Jesus. Help us, Lord, to understand today all that You have for us. We pray, Father, that You will open up the Scripture, that You will illuminate our understanding. Give us wisdom and insight. Help us to see in our own hearts and our own lives everything that You have for us. Father, we will be careful to give You the honor and the glory and the praise. In Jesus' name, for His sake we ask it. Amen.

He says, Paul wants to stir him up. We all need stirred up every once in a while because we find from this great book an incredible thing that we all have to deal with. It was in 1975. I told you last week how that I heard a great message that really changed my perspective on ministry. Again, in 1975, I heard another life-changing message from an old war horse of a soldier by the name of R.G. Lee. R.G. Lee was an old Southern gentleman. He was certainly one of the last of the old Philadelphia soldiers. When I heard him preach, he was probably in his 80s, but he had not lost any fire and he had not lost any steam.

When he preached that night, it was one of those nights just like I was very impressionable back then, and I was just a young man and I was trying to find my own way. God had no doubt called me to the ministry. But just like everybody else, I had struggles and questions, and I am trying to find my way along to get myself exactly where God wants me to be. God had put a man in my life just like He is putting me in many of your lives. That man became my mentor. He became the Apostle Paul of my life. To this day, some thirty-some years later, he is now well in his 80s. Yet to this day, I always look at him as someone who I would never be where I am at today if I am anywhere with God if it would not have been for him and him caring enough to give me what God had given him.

That night as I sat there, I heard old R.G. Lee preach. His message was basic, it was clear, and brother, he was right to the point. He preached out of Psalms 77, and he preached just four verses. He preached verse 9 and verse 12.

Psalms 77:9, 12

9 Hath God forgotten to be gracious? hath he in anger shut up his tender mercies? Selah.

12 I will remember the works of the LORD: surely I will remember thy wonders of old.

Psalms 77:10-11

10 And I said, This is my infirmity: but I will remember the years of the right hand of the most High.

11 I will remember the works of the LORD: surely I will remember thy wonders of old.

Psalms 77:12

12 I will meditate also of all thy work, and talk of thy doings.

That night he talked about the number one problem that we have as God's people. It is the number one problem that every pastor has that walks this planet. It is the number one problem, and probably the single problem, that gets every Christian into trouble at some place in their life. I do not know if you know it, but if you go through the Scriptures, you will find out that there are three infirmities that are directly listed and specifically named that you and I have to watch out for. This is one of them. The other two are in Romans. There are three infirmities that we have where he names specifically and says, "These things are going to be your infirmity."

That night he talked about Psalms 77, and he talked about the number one problem. I remember him saying it. He said, "The reality is that the source or the root of every failure in our Christian lives after we are saved, somewhere, some form, finds its way back to this problem." The infirmity that we have, that is the number one thing that when Paul was talking to young Timothy before he went home to be with the Lord, he was saying, "Do not... this is the thing you have got to keep in front of you." He charges him in a number of issues about the same theme. That same theme is, "Do not forget. Remember. Do not forget. Remember what God has done and what God is doing."

That night, R.G. Lee preached a three-point outline. It was so clear and simple, and I will never forget it. It moved my heart at that young point of my life like nothing had ever moved. I remember driving home that night, and I was living by myself, and I remember driving home that night, and I sat in the car in the carport, could not get out, and I went in the house, and I just... I got on my knees that night, and I said, "Lord, I do not ever, ever want to forget You or ever forget what You have done in my life. Lord, help me never to forget. Never to come to the place where I forget where You are at, what You have done, and what I need to do."

That night he preached, that three-point outline was so simple. He preached, first of all, "Remember the years." He said, "The thing that most of God's people forget is the day that God saved them." Remember how it was before you got saved? Remember how there was so much disappointment, so much heartache, so many problems. Remember how it was when you stumbled in at night? Remember how it was out there, that way out there, without God, without Christ, when you went to bed at night, and the uncertainty in your heart, or where you would spend eternity, the fear of death, the fear of dying, the fear of everything. He said that night, "God's people forget to remember the years as an unsaved man."

Then he said, "Remember the works. Remember thy works." I will tell you another problem we have. We forget the day God saved us from that mess. As you go along in Christianity, and you learn more, you do more, you grow more, it is vitally important that you never forget where you come from. You never forget the way it was before you had God in your life. If you do, you are going to lose your perspective. I never want to forget how empty I felt as an unsaved man, trying this and trying that, looking everywhere in education and philosophy and science, everywhere in the world to find something that would quench the thirst that my spiritual soul had, and then God did a work in my life, the day God saved me. You can never forget to remember the years. You can never forget to remember the works, the day God saved you.

Then he said, the third point was, "Remember thy works." You remember how far He has brought you. You remember every day of your life how far that He has brought you. The first sign of your spiritual demise is when you forget what God has done for you. The book of 2 Timothy is nothing more in its most simple form. It is Paul's charge to his son in the Lord, not to forget in all that he is doing, in the busyness of ministry, in the duties of a pastor, what God has called him to do and God has saved him to do.

It is so easy to forget those things. Most kids, they do not appreciate or remember what their parents did. They really do not. It is a sad thing, but most kids do not appreciate and remember. I did not. I was 25, 26 years old. My dad had already died and I had gotten saved and was trying to do the best I could. It did not hit me then all the sacrifices my mom and dad made for me. Because I was growing up and doing what God wanted me to do, getting me ready for what God wanted me to do in my life. I did not remember it. It was later. Now I look back on it and I see it even greater, the sacrifice that they made.

I will tell you something else. Most husbands and wives forget how it was when they first got married. That is why they grow apart. Marriage is something you ought to get closer together as you grow, not farther apart. You know why you do? Because you fail to remember. You get

caught up on the little struggles that you deal with every day in your life and you forget to remember that God puts you together for a purpose. He puts you together for a reason. The obstacles you face as a husband and wife, you have to get over together.

I think it is an interesting analogy that the Bible talks about a husband and wife in the ministry together, or a saved husband and wife, like being oxen. We talked about this last week where the Bible says not to be unequally yoked together with unbelievers. You do not marry unsaved people. You do not even contemplate marrying unsaved people. You do not even flirt around with unsaved people and get into a relationship with them that you hope they might get saved. It is never right to violate a biblical principle, and it just does not work. Somebody can say, "Well, you know, I hope he will get saved." Yeah, but what if he does not, and then your daughter has already got her affections involved? You screwed the whole thing up. You never violate Bible principles for any reason.

I do not want my daughters to marry an unsaved man hoping, or date an unsaved man, hoping that they would get saved in the process because they were a nice guy. You never violate Bible principles. It is one of those things where most Christians, they come to the point where they take things for granted. Husbands and wives forget that God saved them for a reason, or they get into relationships with an unsaved person and then the whole thing goes down the tubes.

He likens the two saved people to be an oxen. An oxen are yoked together. They pull together. They work together. You know what oxen do when they come to a point that they cannot get over? This is an incredible thing. When you have two oxen tied to a cart and they are pulling you and they come to an obstacle they cannot get over, you know what they do? They both kneel down. They both kneel down. You know what a husband and a wife do when you come to an obstacle? Yoked together in Christ because you understand and you remember you have a mission, you get on your knees. You have problems in your marriage and you want to solve them. Just together get on your knees and pray it through together. It will fix your problem. It will fix your problem. Why? You cannot do that without going back and remembering. Remembering.

Most of God's people take each other for granted. They do. We take God for granted. We do. We take our walk for granted. We take our ministry for granted. God has a purpose for us and we fail to remember what that purpose is. I am telling you, it is the number one problem we have. You are going to find that God over and over again, in fact over 350 times in the Old Testament, God tells Israel not to forget or admonishes them to remember.

In Psalms 77, where the old boy was preaching years ago, where it said, "Remember thy work, years, remember thy works and remember thy wonders." He is talking to Israel historically. He is talking to Israel and telling them, "Remember the years where you were down in Egypt in bondage." Then you remember the work of God bringing you out in Exodus 12. Then you remember the great wonders that He did of splitting the Red Sea, feeding you in your wilderness with manna, and stopping the sun, standing it still in Joshua so you could wipe out the rest of your enemies. They have forgotten those things.

That is why last week I told you a great verse in 1 Timothy 4:16 was the verse that said, "Take heed unto thyself." The apostles have the same problem. One of the most amazing things that I sometimes almost cannot grasp until I put it in our own lifestyle. Here are twelve men that every day are walking with the Lord Jesus Christ. He is not up in heaven. He is not up in heaven and they are down here like you and I. When they get up in the morning, they all met for breakfast. The Lord and twelve men, He laid out the day what they were going to do. It was not that they opened up a Bible and read what He did. They stood right there and watched Him give eyesight back to a blind man. They stood right there and watched Him, a woman with a withered leg, watch that leg become whole. They were not reading it in the Bible someplace. They were eyewitnesses, as John says, of His majesty. They touched Him. They handled Him. They heard everything that He said. It was a process that there was nothing that they did not have right there in front of them that they saw it. They walked with Him. It was not like they had to come over to my house to ask me questions about the Bible. You were walking down the street with the Lord Himself.

You know what? The Bible says that their hearts got hardened. You know why? The Bible says because they remembered not the miracle of the loaves and the fishes. Now if twelve men walking with Jesus Christ for three and a half years, 24 hours, seven days a week, where they are camping out together and they are never really out of each other's sight and they are watching everything. If they have a problem remembering the miracles and getting hardened in their heart, what are you and I going to have to put up with? I am telling you, there are infirmities that you and I have as a child of God, and you better learn what they are. One of them is we forget.

When old Paul begins to take Timothy and to put the finishing touches on before Paul goes back to be with the Lord, I think he tells him probably the most important aspect of anything in a Christian's life. Honest to goodness, I believe that this is the most important thing I could ever say to you because I believe that every problem you get into, its root will work its way back to you have forgotten. You have forgotten where you come from. You have forgotten what God has done for you and you have forgotten the day God saved you. I believe that with all of my heart.

It is easy. You see people all the time. There are people who come to our church. The church, as you and I, ought to take it on the chin. There are people who come to our church that I will try to help that I know before I help them, I am probably going to get a sharp stick in the eye. That is beside the point. You do what is right and you do what you are supposed to do. The church is to put itself into position to get hosed. Now you do not do it in the sense of being gullible, but you know what? You have got to do what is right even when other people do not.

We have had people come to our church that came for three or four weeks or two or three months and we have helped them out financially or helped them out here or did this and that. You know what? They get a better deal and off they go. I do not like it. Does it bother me and grieve me? Certainly not because of the money, but because you want them to do what is right. But the bottom line is, hey, that is the business we are in. We are in the business of being transparent, open and honest that if you want to take a cheap shot at me and use this church, use me, you can do it. I do not have to take it personally. You know why? Because the day is coming when you

will have to deal with somebody else about it, not me. I am here to be used and abused within reason, but that is my job. That is our job.

It is easy for a pastor to forget that. You know why? Because they get so big and they get so powerful and they get so rich and they get to the point where they just cannot balance it all out. I will tell you something. That is one of the real issues that you really have to come to terms with. This whole thing is, how do you walk with God and yet walk with human people and not let one of them or the other one sway you? You can walk with God so much it can become so heavenly minded you are worthless down here on planet earth. Then you can come so worldly down here with people doing good things and you lose your perspective of what God wants you to do. There is the balance. The only answer to that balance is to remember and not to forget. That is why he says, "Take heed unto thyself."

IV. Specific Charges to Timothy

When you come into chapter one, we need to start moving through some of these. We will do them quickly. When you come through chapter one, verse six, here is what he says in verse six, our key verse anyhow.

2 Timothy 1:6

6 Wherefore I put thee in remembrance that thou stir up the gift of God, which is in thee by the putting on of my hands.

The first thing he tells Timothy to remember:

1. Remember who you are.

Once you are saved, the Bible says, you are a new creature in Christ Jesus. Old things are passed away, behold all things become new. You are not the same anymore. In fact, when you come through the New Testament, you will find that there are six things that changed about you the day you got saved.

- Your Affections Changed
- Your Citizenship Changed
- Your Position Changed
- Your Love Changed
- Your Conversation Changed
- You Became an Ambassador

In 2 Timothy 1:7 he says,

2 Timothy 1:7

7 For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind.

The second thing you have got to remember is:

2. Do not be afraid.

I will tell you something. The number one thing that keeps God's people from serving God is a simple little thing. You are afraid. You are afraid. You are afraid of what people are going to think about you. You are afraid your buddies are going to laugh at you. You are afraid that people are not going to look at you the same way. You are afraid. I am telling you right now, the Bible says in 1 John 4:18 that there is no fear in love, but perfect love casteth out fear because fear hath torment. The more you perfect your relationship with God and the more you love Him, the more you do not have to be afraid of anything because you begin to get your perspective.

This is the common thing and this is so the way it is. Many on planet earth are afraid of everything about what they ought to be afraid of. The Bible says, "Fear him which is able to destroy both body and soul in hell." The Bible says, "Noah moved with fear in the preparing of the ark that is saving his household." Today we do not fear the things that we ought to fear and the whole thing is backwards. We have lost our concept and Christians are afraid of what they should not be afraid of and the things they should be afraid of they are not afraid of. It is as simple as that.

Then he comes to 2 Timothy 1:8, the next verse. He says, "Remember, do not be afraid." Then he says:

2 Timothy 1:8

8 Be not thou therefore ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me his prisoner: but be thou partaker of the afflictions of the gospel according to the power of God;

Let me tell you something. The first thing you have got to worry about, the first problem you will have is being afraid. You know what? It will keep you from serving God. You know what the second thing that will keep you from serving God is? Being ashamed.

3. Do not be ashamed.

Some people are ashamed to stand for God because they are afraid and they are ashamed to take a stand. Nobody likes to be made fun of. Nobody does. Nobody likes to be called names.

Nobody likes to go to work and have the, when you used to be the head center with all the guys, and now they make fun of you and they call you silly little names like "preacher" and "deacon" and all these things, and it bothers you when you are a young Christian.

Paul said in Romans 1:16, "For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek." I have come to the conclusion after many, many years in the ministry, I do not give a flip what anybody thinks about what I believe. I could care less. I know in whom I have believed and I know all goes along with it. I am telling you, you come to a point in your life and you do not care. You can

give it back just as good as they can dish it out to you. Then you find out they really like it. They will intimidate some of you. You get a little older, you will not get intimidated.

Go down to work there someplace. So what he says and says, he says, "Hey, how are you doing?" "What I am doing is fine. I am saved today. How are you doing?" Another one is, "You know what is up?" "Well, heaven is up. What is New Jerusalem? Galatians 4, Revelation 22." I mean, you know, you give it back as good.

I remember one time years ago, old Bill Econ. I saw him on two occasions. Old Bill Econ, one time we were with Mel Savoca. We were going down to Bridgeport, Ohio. Mel was preaching down there. I was leading singing, and Bill just went around for, I guess he was our bodyguard. We stopped at a little truck stop, and we did not have a truck stop to get a piece of pie. We had about two hours to kill before we had to go to the service, and we did not have anything to eat, so we stopped and got a little bite to eat. There were truck drivers over here on the deal over here. We were sitting at a table. We were really out of place. One of those truck drivers was just taking God's name in vain up one side down the other. When he kind of eyeballs us that we are strangers, and they just really got going. They were just taking God's name in incredible fashion. We were down there, and Bill said to Mel, he says, "You keep the check here." He walks over to a big old truck driver, I mean like five or six of them. Old Bill walks over and he put his arm around two of them. He says, "Hey boys," he says, "I heard you talking about a friend of mine." He said, "I just wanted you to know you ain't got the true scoop on it." The truck driver looked up and said, "We do not even know you. We were not talking about any of your..." He said, "Yeah, you were. See, you are talking about my friend Jesus Christ." He said, "He is not the person you are saying all those bad things about." Boy, if you want to watch five truck drivers shrink in their seats.

We were one place one other time eating down there. We got into more trouble down there outside of Steubenville. Steubenville, Ohio, back in the 50s and the 60s, that is where old Hank Williams died. Old Hank Williams, remember the guy who is just saying, "I saw the light, I saw the light." Died in the back of a taxi cab in a heroin overdose back in Steubenville, Ohio. He is back there drunk and on drugs and the cab driver is taking him someplace and he turns around he says, "Hey Mr. Williams, sing me that song, 'I saw the light.'" You know what Hank Williams said? He said, "There is no light. There is no light." Died in the back of that old cab.

We are down there in Steubenville getting ready to do some preaching. We are in a restaurant. We are sitting down there and old Bill, he is sitting over there again. We are down through there and there is a bunch of them down there and we got our food and sat down and old Bill, he said this, asked the blessing. Christians today when they bless their food, it is like, look around, see who is looking, just get this in and quit and get it out. Back then it did not work that way. The whole room got their food blessed whether they wanted it or not. It was not out of place. It was just, "Father, we thank You for the Lord Jesus and we ask You to bless this food and take it to our body's strength. In Jesus' name, amen." Everybody in the world and old Mel prayed and one of the guys over here, one of the old rough town guys, he says, "Hey boys," he says to all the people, "Where you come from pray like that for the heat?" Old Bill said, "No boy, the hogs do

not." I thought we were going to get killed that night. You know what? He was not ashamed. You see, he was not ashamed.

We have a bunch of Christians today because they have no steel in their backbone. I want to say this going in, I appreciate the men in this church because I meet with you throughout the week and you tell me the stories of your adventures and getting into it with them and that is what you need to do. Do not be ashamed of who you are, what God has done for you, and you have got to be able to take a stand. That is all there is to it.

I have had people, I was preaching one time when I was up there and I was going to town and about halfway back one of the old deacons that was so out of fellowship with God, he was saved and all, he yelled out, he said, "I do not like the way you speak." I did not even lose a beat. I said, "Well, hang on pal, you are going to like it less before I get through." And kept right on going through the middle of it. Do not ever be ashamed of what He has done for you. You have got to remember.

Then in 2 Timothy 1:12 he says this:

2 Timothy 1:12

12 For the which cause I also suffer these things: nevertheless I am not ashamed: for I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day.

The next thing he tells young Timothy:

4. Remember this, Timothy, God is able.

God has a process to bring you through life. He did not bring you this far to leave you now. I have young men all the time, young couples, they will get to the point in their life and maybe God will give them some great hurdle to go up and it is a natural thing. It is a natural thing. It is not a bad thing at all. Just part of the process and you will stumble at it.

I had a young man one time that God called him to preach and he was going to another city and he would come in to see me and he was, and this was a good kid and he is a guy that had it together. He could have got the job, could get the job done. He came in and he sat down and he was visibly shaken and I understand where he is at because he is making a big leap, boy, leaving his friends, leaving every family and taking his wife and kids and going across the country to start a church. I told him his fear was he was afraid he could not do it. He had a lack of faith. He was afraid he would fail. I just simply told him, "You know what pal, look back in your life. Remember where you come from. Remember the first time we met. Remember what God did for you, you got saved. Remember how God brought you through all these things." Well, the same God that brought you to this point will take you the rest of the way home. You are just in that part of your life. You have got to remember He is able.

Moses struggled with it. Moses argued back and forth with God all the time. Moses kept saying, "I just cannot do it. I just cannot do it." I am going to tell you, a lot of God's people think they cannot do it. The key is you cannot do it. Let God do it. He is able. We talk about faith. We talk

about faith being this and people talk about faith being, "Well, I just have faith to believe when I cannot." Faith is never about anything you cannot see. It is just where you look. I have faith in God out here where I cannot see because I can look back here and I can see Him being faithful in everything up to this point. I know He will be faithful out on this point. It is as simple as that.

Then he says in 2 Timothy 2:1-2,

2 Timothy 2:1-2

1 Thou therefore, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus.

2 And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also.

He says, "You know what?"

5. Remember to teach others.

We talked about it last week where I told you about the eight things that a pastor has to be able to do. One of them was duplicate himself. Be able to take people and train them up and commit to them what God committed to him. You train somebody up so that they will take what they have got and give it to somebody else and the process goes on. The man that taught me did not get it all out of the Bible by himself. There is somebody that taught him and there was somebody that taught him and somebody that taught him. The process goes on down through the history of the United States, back through Europe, back through everything, that there has always been faithful men that have learned what God had from somebody else and then gave it to them plus what they already learned themselves and the process goes on.

Genesis 1:28, when God put Adam and Eve down here, He said physically to them, "Be fruitful, multiply, and replenish the earth." Your job and my job is to do that spiritually. We take the Word of God and we reproduce ourselves. God does not build a church by adding. God builds a church by multiplying. You multiply and you replenish and you refurbish by winning people to Christ.

Then he says in 2 Timothy 2:3-4, a great lesson:

2 Timothy 2:3-4

3 Thou therefore endure hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ.

4 No man that warreth entangleth himself with the affairs of this life; that he may please him who hath chosen him to be a soldier.

He says, "Timothy, remember you are a soldier. Remember you have got to endure hardness and remember you are here to please Him, not yourself or anybody else. Christ has called you to be a soldier."

6. Remember you are a soldier.

When I go back through the Bible, the Old Testament is just littered with principles and concepts that illustrate all the New Testament principles. I look at David, and David is a great, great man

in many different ways. One of the greatest ways that he is is the fact that he is a picture of the Lord Jesus Christ. He is a picture of Christ in the sense that he is a captain of the army of Israel. You are going to find back in 2 Samuel 23 a listing of men who were separate from all the other warriors in Israel. You have got to remember now that when Israel went to war back in the book of Numbers, and the book of Numbers is called Numbers because it is a book where they called out and numbered the men that were going to go to war to fight these battles.

A long time later, the nation of Israel's army is an incredible army. They are probably the greatest military power on the face of the earth back then. They certainly are the greatest military power today on the earth, and their ability to do what nobody else can do and survive through the wars that they have been through is quite incredible in a study in itself. But you are going to find back there that David, out of all the host of Israel, he has a list of men who stand head and shoulders above everybody else. They are called David's mighty men of valor. He goes through detail and he talks about some of their exploits, men who stand above the rest, men who if you study their lives and what they have done, I believe are an example of what we ought to be today in our relationship with Christ.

You will find that these men have tremendous courage. Courage is something that is lacking today in men's lives for God. You are going to find that they have determination. Nothing seems to stop them. There is no obstacle in their battles that makes them afraid. One of these men single-handedly killed 800 men himself. Now that seems like it is an impossible thing. Yeah, that is exactly the way we look at it. Yet we are told that the Bible said in Joshua 1 that if a man obeyed the Word of God and did what he was supposed to do, that nothing or nobody would stand before him. So we see the examples one after the other: men with courage, men with determination, men with incredible discipline that they work together, that they understand each other together.

Then I guess the greatest quality that they have is a tremendous loyalty. A loyalty to each other, a loyalty to their commander, a loyalty to everybody that is connected with it, that they work together and understand together and they realize that they are in a war. You see, the reason why Christianity has the problems it has, a couple of reasons. The first reason is that we have lost our militancy. We no longer understand the sting of battle in our faces. The reason I know that is because any man who has been in battle, any man who has been in combat. I do not know if you know it or not, but yesterday or this weekend they had the, down at the downtown, they had the First Marine Division reunion. First Marine Division went all the way back to Guadalcanal. You are going to find that when they, when they had every, every guy from some of them were in wheelchairs for World War II up through Vietnam War up to everything, Marines around there. They had a guy on the news the other night and he was a tough guy, was probably, he had a little hat on it said Guadalcanal. He is down there and he says, "You know what?" He says, "That is what makes it great." He says, "No matter where you go, whatever, once you are a Marine, you are always a Marine, and we are brothers together." I heard him talking about that and I watched the old guys and the young guys, the middle-aged guys, the guys from World War II. I watched the Vietnam guys pushing the World War II guys around in the wheelchairs, the Korean War guys, the young guys and the guys. I saw every phase of Marine Corps uniform probably in the

history of the Marine Corps and they were everywhere. I thought to myself at that point, "Wow, here are unsaved guys that are probably dying and going to hell and they have got more cohesiveness because of the remember that the battles they were in together made them brothers." We do not have that today. We do not understand the real battle so we fight among ourselves. That is the way it works. We lose the battle. Why? We forgot. We have not remembered. Because we have not remembered, we have lost that concept of really understanding that battle, war, combat makes brothers.

Anybody who ever has read the book *Band of Brothers* understands the bond. The 101st Airborne who jumped from Normandy all the way through to Nijmegen and all the way through in every major battle and jump in World War II, to this day they understand that concept of how they are bonded together. I have many times looked at things like that and I thought to myself, "If you could just get God's men to stand together and hang together like that instead of picking each other apart and fighting each other because they cannot direct the battle, what we could get done for God." There are not many mighty men of valor around today. Of course, that is a distinction: courage, determination, self-discipline, and loyalty. The Marines call it *Semper Fidelis*, always faithful.

2 Timothy 2:15, the next one:

2 Timothy 2:15

15 Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.

The next thing he says is:

7. Remember to study.

I told you this last week and I have said it over and over again. He says in that thing, "Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth." Four things here. Let us start at the back, at the bottom, and work up.

- Not to be Ashamed
- To be a Workman
- Approved unto God

Next one, 2 Timothy 2:20-21:

2 Timothy 2:20-21

20 But in a great house there are not only vessels of gold and of silver, but also of wood and of earth; and some to honour, and some to dishonour.

21 If a man therefore purge himself from these, he shall be a vessel unto honour, sanctified, and meet for the master's use, and prepared unto every good work.

He says this:

8. Remember God has vessels of honor and vessels of dishonor.

Most people do not figure this out. The goal of God, and it is a good goal, is He wants and demands honor and glory from everything and everybody on planet earth because He is God. He rightly should demand it because He deserves it. Now what happens is that we as little gods try to take that honor and glory from Him, and of course you are going to get in trouble doing that. The bottom line simply is this: at the end of your life and the end of my life, it will be looked back on and you will either be written down as a vessel of honor or a vessel of dishonor. One or the other.

You see, God is going to get honor and glory out of your life one way or the other. God is going to get honor and glory out of your life because you submit yourself to Him and you let God use you and God grows you and you learn the Word of God and then God takes you and at the end of your life you look back and people say, "You know what? I would not be where I am at today if it would not be for that gal, would not be for that guy, if it would not be for this." In your life, even though you are human, you have problems, you screw up, the bottom line is the consistency of figuring out what God wanted to do through your life and then had done it is overwhelming and everybody understands you were a vessel of honor.

I have preached funerals of young men. I preached funerals of young ladies. There were some of the hardest funerals to preach because I knew in my heart and sometimes the moms and dads asked me to say so that this young man is dead here today because he did not do what God wanted to do. Mom and dad knew it. I knew it. If a kid could tell you right now, he would do it.

An old friend of mine preached a funeral one time for an unsaved guy and this old boy was incredible. I wish I would have had his guts, but I do not. This old boy one time got up, they asked him to preach a funeral of an unsaved biker and everybody knew he was lost. I am telling you what, you never saw such a sad thing. I went with him to the funeral and when his mom was crying, his dad was crying, and they all were professing Christians and this kid lived a wanting life that was just a wreck. He did not go to church, played games with God and everybody else. This old boy got up there and when he opened up his sermon he simply said this, "I do believe, ladies and gentlemen, that if we all would have shed this many tears over him while he was alive, we would probably not be shedding them today over his death." And then he went on from there. So true, so true.

Let me tell you something, at the end of your life God is going to get honor and glory out of it one way or the other. He is either going to use you and you are going to do everything God wants you to do and you are going to be used of Him and you are going to be hung up there and somebody who followed the rules and did what was right, or you are going to do your own thing and you are going to thumb your nose at God and you know what? At the end of your life people are going to look at you and say, "You know what? That is what happens to a child of God who does not do what is right." One way or the other, He is going to get the honor and glory. You might as well just understand it. You have got two choices to make. Your first one you have got to make to be saved. Once you are saved, you have another choice to make and that is to be used. Those two choices you do not get around one way or the other.

Why do we come into chapter three, moving right along here, chapter three, verse one? He says this:

2 Timothy 3:1

1 This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come.

He says in 2 Timothy 3:2-5:

2 Timothy 3:2-5

2 For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy,

3 Without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good,

4 Traitors, heady, highminded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God;

5 Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away.

He says, "Remember, Timothy, where you are at: perilous times."

9. Remember you are living in perilous times.

Remember, Timothy, you are dealing with perilous people and you are living in perilous times. You are living in a day and age where the Christian world has a form of godliness but denies the power thereof. You are living in a world where as a Christian no good deed you do will go unpunished. You are going to get clobbered anywhere you go and you have got to realize that the church, the body of Christ today, only has a form of godliness. It is like the nation of Israel was. If you go back to the nation of Israel in David's time or Solomon's time and you would look at what they were doing back there and then you would walk into the nation of Israel right before Nebuchadnezzar comes down when Zedekiah is in charge or Ahab is in charge, you would not be able to put the two in the same context because there is so much time between the two and it is all written in a book that nobody reads anyhow. We lose sight of that.

If you would have lived in a Philadelphia church age in the real days when men like Jonathan Edwards, just like George Whitefield, preached on Boston's Common and 30,000 people came to a saving knowledge of Christ in one afternoon. Old Ben Franklin said, he said that when I went to hear George Whitefield, he never put any money in my pocket, left it all at home because I always had this urge to give him everything I had. He says one night, he says, "I walked off at clearly one mile from where George was preaching with no microphone, no amplification, no sound system." He said, "You could hear every word of his message clearly." Why? Because they had the power of God in his life and God was using them in a great way. We do not see that today. It is all a sham. You know why? It has a form of godliness but it denies the power, and the power is the Holy Spirit of God through the Word of God. So what you see is a big empty shell.

What you see is Jesus talked about the scribes and the Pharisees when He said in the book of Matthew that they got white sepulchres. They are beautiful on the outside. They are painted.

They have stained glass windows. They have all the great beauty that the world could want, but on the inside there are dead men's bones. A form of godliness looks good, sounds good, smells good, but it is not real. No power, no power. The bottom line is it is about your money. It is about today that a pastor gets this grandioso idea that he wants to be the number one in whatever he does and you are going to pay the tab for it. So he drives his people, never teaches in the Bible, never gives him anything spiritually. If you have got a problem, you come to see him, he has not got time. He is the pastor. He will send you to a Christian counselor, a Christian psychologist or worse, but he wants your money. He wants you there. He wants everything you have got so he can do whatever he wants to do. A form of godliness but denies the power thereof. Heavy emphasis on the word "denying."

Then we got in 2 Timothy 3:14-17 goes right along with this one really. He says:

2 Timothy 3:14-17

14 But continue thou in the things which thou hast learned and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned them;

15 And that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.

16 All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness:

17 That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.

He says, "Timothy, remember the book God gave you."

10. Remember the book God gave you.

The number one reason for that Bible is doctrine. Doctrine shows you what is right and you are in time learn to rightly divide that book to know what is right and what is wrong. He said that the man of God may be perfect. He is not talking about perfectly as far as sinless. He is talking about perfect as far as the work of God. God wants to do a perfect work through you and the only way He can do that perfect work is to have you in the Word of God where He can grow you, multiply you, use you, train you, and show you what is right and what is wrong. That is why it says that the man of God may be perfect. Watch it very careful, "thoroughly furnished." All the new translations say "thoroughly equipped," "thoroughly finished." By doing so, they destroy one of the greatest doctrines in the Bible. It is not "thoroughly," it is "throughly." It starts from the inside out. It goes through you, throughly. It is not finished or equipped, it is furnished. We studied a couple of Wednesday nights ago about the tabernacle. It had furnishings in it: seven-prong candlestick, showbread, the showbread table, the altar of incense. All that stuff is a picture of something in your life that is spiritual that you furnish for the Holy Spirit of God to rest in and when He does not have it, you grieve Him. Simple as that.

He says in 2 Timothy 4:1-5:

2 Timothy 4:1-5

1 I charge thee therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom;

2 Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine.

3 For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears;

4 And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables.

5 But watch thou in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry.

He says to him here:

11. Remember to preach the Word of God.

My job is to preach the Word of God in a world that will not endure sound doctrine. That is just the way that it is. That is why you cannot be ashamed. That is why you have got to endure hardness. You are preaching a negative message to a world that wants nothing negative and everything positive. I am telling you something, a single issue that has sent our country down the path of destruction is pastors seeking to preach the Word of God and becoming teachers.

I do not know if you know it or not, but back in the 20s they had a thing called prohibition, and prohibition is when literally booze was illegal anywhere in this country. Prohibition came in single-handedly by one man, and it was not a congressman, it was not a mayor, it was not a president. It was a Bible-believing preacher called Billy Sunday. Billy Sunday gave up a career as a baseball player when God called him to preach. He single-handedly took on a liquor business in America and preached from one coast to the other and literally by his preaching of the Word of God turned this country into a dry country. It got repealed under Franklin Roosevelt, but the bottom line is the power of preaching of the Word of God shows you that it changed the country then, it will change it now. You will never change anything or anybody by just teaching. You will have to be able to preach in season, out of season. You have got to reprove, rebuke, exhort with long suffering and doctrine. You cannot do that in teaching. I have made up my mind, I am going to turn some preachers out of here or die in the process. Teaching is fine, I am all for it, but you know what? This church needs preachers. It is as simple as that.

You ever see the movie Elmer Gantry? Elmer Gantry starred Burt Lancaster as an evangelist that got shackled up with a female woman evangelist and they become drunk and bums and everything else, putting on the front out there that they were doing it, getting your money. You know why? Sinclair Lewis was an old demon-possessed, depraved person who hated Billy Sunday with a passion and he spent all of his money putting out that movie to discredit Billy Sunday. That is the power of preaching. You know when you are doing something right when they start making whole movies and spending millions of dollars and hiring people to portray and assassinate your character, you are doing something right. Old Billy Sunday, he dared an affliction. He endured a hardness. Old J. Frank Norris did the same thing with the Southern

Baptist Convention. He took on the whole convention. They tried to hang him one time and he said, "You better not go out there, there are nine men down there waiting to hang you." He got his Bible, walked right down, got on the back of a pickup truck and preached to them and nine men got saved instead of hanging him. That is J. Frank Norris. Go to the internet sometime, type in Peter S. Ruckman and see what comes up. You will get every imminent ad in the world destroying a man's character. Took a stand on the Word of God and the only reason you and I have a Bible today is because a man like that, going through Frank Norris, going back the line that held the line and did what was right. Remember, he says, "You have got to preach the Word, preach the Word, preach the Word, preach the Word." The legacy of this church will not be kept by teaching. It will be kept by young men getting on fire for God where you can flat get up and preach the Word of God.

Then he says in 2 Timothy 4:7:

2 Timothy 4:7

7 I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith:

He says:

12. Remember to finish what God has started in your life.

Philippians 1:6 says, "Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ." When God saved you, God started a work. You need to make sure you finish your end of the deal. Paul likens it, "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith." You go to 1 Corinthians 9:25-27, he talks about, he talks about likening it to running a race. He talks about the fact that in this course that we are running in life, it is like running a race. I have learned over the years that in this race the first thing you have got to do is run as hard as you can. Second thing you have got to do is stay in your own lane. Third thing you have got to do is no false starts. Next thing you have got to do is do not look at the hurdles that are in front of you, you have got to jump over. The last thing, and this is probably the most important, do not get watching the people in the grandstand watching you. 2 Timothy 2:5 says that a man strives for the mastery, he runs hard, he runs fast, but he is not crowned because he does not run lawfully. You have got to do it by the book.

2 Timothy 4:8 he says this:

2 Timothy 4:8

8 Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing.

The next thing he says:

13. Remember, Timothy, the judgment seat of Christ is around the corner.

There are five crowns in the New Testament that you can get as a New Testament Christian. The Bible says that at the judgment seat of Christ we are going to stand before God and someday we

are going to stand before God and we are going to lay our crowns at His feet. That doctrine in the old church was such a profound thing that even in your hymnal right there, the old hymns of the faith on page 418, you have got a song that simply is titled "And Must I Go in Empty-Handed?" It just simply says:

And must I go in empty-handed? Thus my dear Redeemer meet? Not one day of service give Him, Lay no trophy at His feet?

Must I go in empty-handed? Must I meet my Savior so? Not one soul with which to greet Him? Must I empty-handed go?

Yet my friend, I am telling you, God's people today are living their lives in every form and fashion except for God and what He has called them to do. They will fit God into their schedule instead of fitting their schedule into God. They will give God what is left over in their life. They will give God what is left over in their time. They will give God what is left over in everything in their life. To them, life is down here doing all you want to do and getting all you can get and just forgetting the concept that God saved you. He tells Timothy, "Remember, the number one problem you and I are going to have is to forget. To forget what God has done, where He has brought us from, and forget the fact that we are here for a purpose and we have a mission and let nothing, no circumstance, no problem, no trouble, no person, no anything dissuade you from what God has called you to do."

Then lastly, and I am done, 2 Timothy 4:17. This is probably the most important concept right here. They are all important, but this one says it all. I understand this.

2 Timothy 4:17

17 Notwithstanding the Lord stood with me, and strengthened me; that by me the preaching might be fully known, and that all the Gentiles might hear: and I was delivered out of the mouth of the lion.

The last thing he says here in his chapter, if you study it very carefully, Paul begins to go down through the chapters or the verses and he starts, he starts to remember one of the things that he says. In fact, it is the last thing he says to Timothy, and it to me is one of the most telling statements in all the Bible between Paul and Timothy when he says, "Do thy diligence to come before winter." Wow, there are some lessons in there that sometime I will share with you. He says, "Do thy diligence to come before winter."

I look at this thing and down through here you can see where Paul wants Timothy to come. He wants Timothy to come because I guess like any human being, Paul, he feels the weight of where he is at. He knows he is going to die and he lists down through there. He says, "Only Luke is with me." He lists down there who has stayed with him. He lists down there who has done him wrong. You could not be a man like Paul and take the stand that he took and do what he did without not having some of God's people try to clobber him. As he comes down through that last chapter in those last verses, he says, "Do thy diligence to come before winter." You know, I have often thought, I wonder if Timothy got there in time. I wonder if Timothy was as diligent in everything as he appears to be. I wonder if Timothy got there and it was too late. Paul had

already had his head cut off. I think about that thing and I think about Paul sitting that old jail cell and thinking about that, recanting in his ministry. Yet he comes down through there and he talks about those that have stayed with him and those that have left him. He says, "Timothy," he says, "Do your diligence to come before winter."

But then he says in 2 Timothy 4:17, "Notwithstanding the Lord stood with me, and strengthened me." You know what he is saying?

14. Timothy, remember this: the bottom line is this, you and Him are all you need.

You and Him are all you need. You better develop the character qualities in your life to do the work for God as if you are all by yourself and everybody else has forsaken you. It is nice to have people around you. It is nice to have support around you and it is nice to have people that love you around you. But you know what? You better not rest in that. You better learn and you better do what you do for God like you and Him are the only one in existence because there may come a time in your life when it just might be you and Him. You cannot rely on your wife. You cannot rely on your kids. You cannot rely on your friends. You are in a situation where it is just you and Him. If you have not lived your life that way before you get into that situation, you will fold up like a broken accordion when you get there.

The bottom line is this: people are nice and they are great and I understand the concept of the ministry, but you better get it in your head and in your heart that the truth of the matter is people will fail you. They will let you down and they will turn their back on you. The reality, even though you have people that love you and are faithful in everything you do, and thank God for it, the bottom line is do not ever trust in anybody more than you do Him because ultimately when push comes to shove, He may be the only one there.

I am telling you, the greatest problem we have and the greatest problem you will always have is to work at remembering what He has done for you. When you get into the ministry or you get into leadership or you grow and you come to the place that I give you some responsibility, you are going to understand the loneliness of that in the midst of everything that is going on. You are going to see how that is immediately going to separate you because now you may have to make hard line decisions over people that just the other day you could go do whatever you want to do with and you still can, but that decision may separate you from them and in doing so you find out really who your friends are and who they are not. You find out who is along for the ride and you find out who is with you and has your heart going to go to the end with you. That is the way it is. But you never come to the place where you forget.

I wish I could sit here and tell you from that time back there as a young kid when I got on my knees that night and I asked God never to let, I wish I could sit here and tell you that I never forgot Him all that time, but that would be a lie. But I am telling you right now, every day of my life I work and fight never to forget. That is what you have to do. If you want to put the warfare in a battle someplace, divide it out from the people you do not like, divide it out from the world of flesh and the devil and just put into that category right there: you have to fight every day to remember who you are, what He did, what your job is, and remember to do it by the book, to do it right.