

## 8/25/24 - 2 Tim. 2:14-19 - "Pastor or Imposter?"

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[0:00] We're reading from 2 Timothy 2, 14-19. Remind them of these things, and charge them before God, not to quarrel about words, which does no good, but only ruins the hearers.

Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a worker who has no need to be ashamed, rightly handling the word of truth. But avoid irreverent babble, for it will lead people into more and more ungodliness, and their talk will spread like gangrene.

Among them are Hymenaeus and Philetus, who have swerved from the truth, saying that the resurrection has already happened. They are upsetting the faith of some, but God's firm foundation stands, bearing the seal.

The Lord knows those who are his, and let everyone who names the name of the Lord depart from iniquity. Praise God. Good morning.

How are we doing today? Good, good. So, for those of you that don't know, I'm Carmen, and I've been a pastoral apprentice here for about a year or so, and I am so excited to be bringing the word to all of you this morning.

[1:16] And the thing is, though, as I was getting ready and preparing for today's sermon, I couldn't happen but remember a story that I heard.

I wanted to share with you guys to kind of lay the groundwork of what we're going to be going through today. So, there was this pastor that, while he was walking his way to church to work, he was crossing a bridge, and he saw this man that was standing on top of the bridge who was about to jump.

This man, trembling, saw this pastor and was startled. But the pastor cried out, wait, don't do it. What are you doing? And the man turned back and said, no one loves me. What do I have to live for? The pastor screamed back, sir, God loves you.

Do you believe? And the man, looking back again, said, yes, I believe. And the pastor was like, great. Are you a Christian or a Jew?

[2:23] And he said, I'm a Christian. The pastor was like, great. Are you a Protestant or a Catholic? And the man on the bridge said, I'm a Protestant. And the pastor said, great.

Me too. What kind of Protestant are you? And the man on the bridge, now getting a little bit more confused, is like, well, I'm a Baptist. And the pastor was like, great.

I'm a Baptist. What kind of Baptist are you? Are you a Northern Baptist or a Southern Baptist? And the man on the bridge, again, really perplexed, is like, I'm a Southern Baptist. And then the pastor was like, great.

Me too. So are you a Southern General Baptist or are you a Southern Particular Baptist? And for those of you that don't know the difference between the two, get with me afterwards.

I can explain to you. And then the man was like, I'm a Southern Particular Baptist. The pastor was like, great. Me too. And so he's getting closer and closer to this guy. And so the pastor was like, sir, are you a Southern Particular Baptist that believes in the faith and message of 1963?

[3:33] Or are you a Southern Baptist that believes in the faith and message of 2000? And the man turned around and said, I'm a Southern Baptist of faith and message of 1963.

And the pastor gets real close, pushes them over the bridge and says, die, heretic. And so that's today's sermon.

And this is exactly how we are to treat every single brother and sister in Christ that has the minute little difference between one of us. Right? So, amen.

Enjoy your Bob Evans. See you tonight at family nights or summer nights and next Sunday. No. Obviously, I'm being facetious about something that is very, very, very serious.

And it has been present since the dawn of time. This false teacher is these false doctrines. And in fact, we can actually go back and look to see the original false teacher.

[ 4 : 37 ] If you wanted to turn with me now to Genesis chapter 3, verses 1 through 6. There is the first false teacher, the great example.

And let us read. Now, the serpent was more crafty than any other beast of the field than the Lord God had made.

He said to the woman, did God actually say you shall not eat any tree in the garden? And the woman said to the serpent, we may eat of the fruit of the trees in the garden.

But God said, you shall not eat of the fruit of the tree that is in the midst of the garden. Neither shall you touch it, lest you die. But the serpent said to the woman, you will not surely die.

For God knows that when you eat of it, your eyes will be opened and you will be like God, knowing good and evil. So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food and that it was a delight to the eyes and that the tree was to be the desire to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate.

[ 5 : 48 ] And she also gave some to her husband, who was also with her, and he ate. You see, church, Satan has and will remain for a limited time a deceiver.

Infiltrating our Lord's church to try and persuade those who belong to Jesus from the truth, Satan will manipulate, play on our sinful desires, and try to convince us through many beautiful and convincing ways that our God, that what our God has said wasn't really what he meant.

This infiltration and this deception of God's word has plagued his people for generations found in the Old Testament, the New Testament, and even today, and will be the emphasis of our text this morning.

Because like Adam and Eve, Timothy too faces a formidable foe, an opponent, a few bad apples that have been identified. And as a result of these heretics and heresies, Paul is telling Timothy to remember Jesus Christ, remember what he's been taught by faithful men, and teach others.

That this calling, this ministry is going to be painful. But nevertheless, under the banner of our God, our Lord, we must soldier on. So, and what we're going to be seeing here is that over the last few weeks, we've been diving deeper into 2 Timothy and in chapter 2.

[ 7 : 20 ] And what we've been seeing here in 2 Timothy and leading up today's verses is that although Paul was suffering himself, he continued to press Timothy to be confident and courageous in his work.

And it's here in chapter 2 we read that Paul wrote in verses 1 through 3. So as I was saying, Paul is reminding Timothy to remember Jesus Christ.

That his ministry is going to be painful. And that Paul continues to empower Timothy and solidify the foundation on which his faith stands. As we read in verse 8, Paul calls Timothy to remember Christ again and never let him be far from his mind.

That he is the prophetic son of David. He has risen and he is alive. And then later on in verse 9, he bolsters Timothy's foundation and his courage and his confidence by writing that the word of God is not bound.

That he, Paul, might be bound. Timothy might be bound. But the word of God is not. And verse 10, Paul builds upon these truths by showing Timothy that his ministry will be the instrument that brings God's elect to eternal glory.

[ 8 : 44 ] And finally, as we went through last week with Pastor Rick, verses 11 through 13, Paul again fortifies this foundation by pointing out that God cannot deny himself, that we must trust in him.

And our salvation is as sure as his commitment to his name. But Paul's not there, which leads us to today's text, verses 14 through 19.

And some of you might be asking yourself, what does this text, this letter to Timothy have to do with me? I'm not a pastor. I'm not a preacher. I'm not an elder.

I'm not a deacon. Why do I have to worry about these types of things when I'm none of those things? Why don't I let the leadership in the church, the pastors, the elders take care of it?

It's their job, isn't it? To that, I have to ask, are you a Christian? Are you concerned with what is being preached from this pulpit, from your children's minister?

[ 9 : 48 ] From your friends' and family's churches? From those in your Bible study groups, your house churches, and around your dinner table? If so, then this text is as important to you as anyone who dares to step in this pulpit or into the role as pastor.

Because church, like Timothy, we face a darkness still. A darkness that aims to dissuade and confound the minds of those seeking the truth. So what must we do?

Well, I've divided today's sermon into four parts, and it's titled, Pastor or Impostor? We will examine Paul's continued encouragement to Timothy on what and how to remain faithful to the special revelation of God's word as a bedrock foundation for Christianity and how to respond to false teachers, false doctrines within the church.

By doing so, we, as his church, can be better equipped on what this special revelation is and how to respond to today's heretics and heresies as the world continues trying to redefine what truth is.

Let us pray. Father God, we come to you, and we are just amazed and so grateful and thankful that we are able to come together under one roof to rejoice and worship your mighty name.

[ 11 : 22 ] Father, I pray that you soften our hearts, that you open our eyes and ears, and that the words that are being spoken today aren't the words of myself or man or anyone else, but it's only a reflection of what you want, Father.

Your word, your truth, your authority. Father, I pray that every single person here is able to listen for all those who can listen.

In Jesus' name, amen. So, in today's first part, we'll be looking at verse 14. And in this verse, Paul is setting up a preface.

And so, part one, a preface to remind them. And what we see in these first verses are two encouragements, both of which will be further explained in the verses to come.

But the first encouragement Paul gives Timothy is to simply remind them of these things so that one must ask, who are we reminding? So, if we go back and look, just do a little rewind, what we're looking at are the same people that we read in the very first few verses in chapter 2.

[ 12 : 45 ] Be strengthened by the grace that is Jesus Christ and what you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses. Entrust to faithful men. These faithful men are the overseers, the bishops, and the elders of the church in charge of, and they will be responsible for, teaching and giving instruction.

So, what are we to remind them of? These things. We'll remind them of these things. What are these things that Paul is referring to?

Well, simply, we just go right back up at verses 8 through 13. That Paul is referring to the gospel.

That Timothy is to remind others that the gospel of these trustworthy things, to not only edify them, but to also encourage himself and strengthen his faith.

You see, church, we must be constantly reminded of the gospel, and know the gospel, so that when instances arise, we are equipped to defend the truth. So that if we have died to him, we will also live with him.

If we can endure, we will also reign with him. If we deny him, he will also deny us. If we are faithless, he remains faithful, for he cannot deny himself.

[ 14 : 09 ] That we need to focus on the main point, to focus on what we know, and we must know that the suffering of rejection by the world due to the obedience of Christ is eternally profitable.

The second encouragement Paul gives Timothy is to charge them before God not to quarrel about words, which does no good, but only ruins the hearers.

Now, let's take a quick stop here and focus in on this word, charge. Paul has used this word previously in 1 Timothy. So let's go back, and you don't have to flip with me, but if your dexterities are good, we can go ahead and look at 1 Timothy 5, verses 21, which reads, In the presence of God and of Christ Jesus and of the angels, or the elect angels, I charge you to keep these rules without prejudging, doing nothing from partiality.

Paul uses it again in 1 Timothy 6, verse 13, stating, I charge you in the presence of God who gives life to all things and of Christ Jesus, who in his testimony before Pontius Pilate made the good confession.

So this word charge, what does this mean? This indicates that it is the interposition of two parties, meaning to put oneself in between. Literally meaning you have two people, and there is a third person that comes in between them.

[ 15 : 40 ] Paul is reminding Timothy, the bishops, the overseers, and the hearers, of whose presence they are in. That God's eyes upon both the preacher and the congregation, and when they speak of his truth, they are in fact before the divine tribunal, in the sight of God.

I mean, if that doesn't make you wonder and are afraid of what you say, then I don't know what will. So, which leads us to this next part of that verse.

Not to quarrel about words, which does no good but only ruins the hearer. Now, church, don't misunderstand what Paul is saying here. He's not saying that there's no room for discussions or controversy, but rather the emphasis here is the way in which we speak and the motive to why we are having these discussions.

He specifically calls out not to quarrel about words. In another translation, this word quarrel is replaced with wrangle, in the NASB, for instance.

It's literally a war of words. So, how many of us were nerds like me and were in speech and debate in high school? All right.

[17:07] Thankfully, there's a few of you guys. All right. So, for those of you that don't know what speech and debate is, it's literally just a team of students that get together and literally write speeches, and then the other team debates.

Pretty straightforward stuff, right? So, the thing is, is that I love speech and debate. I was a debater, and during the week, what we would do to practice is, we would have these topics of politics, religion, current events, and we would form our own argument, our own opinion, and then face off against a different team to practice, dissecting their words, using their logic against them, and trying to win over this argument just for the sake of winning it over, because sometimes I didn't even agree with the position I was taking.

So, I thought I was fantastic at speech and debate until I got married. Laughter And so, we're actually still debating.

Words matter. Numbers matter. But, you know, my wife likes to say she's 14 months older than me. I like to round up and say it's two years.

So, I think it sounds better that way. But, what you see is that, anyway, what you, I'm going to be in trouble, guys.

[18:42] What I find interesting, or increasingly interesting, that Paul actually points this out, because he's someone who was once a lawyer.

He was no stranger to being in an argument, to being debating and sharing ideas all around the world.

And so, I found it, and he found it so prudent to highlight this to Timothy. Doing so, Paul is warning him of what this type of senseless debating, this dissecting of words could lead to.

And we can find examples of this warning in 1 Timothy and Titus. So, it's multiple times that he's been pointing this out. In 1 Timothy, chapter 6, verse 4, Paul warns of what could happen to a person when they partake in this kind of babbling, that they are puffed up with conceit and understands nothing.

He has an unhealthy craving for controversy and for quarrels about words, which produce envy, dissension, slander, and evil suspicions. Then, in Titus, chapter 3, verse 9, he says to avoid foolish controversies, genealogy, dissensions, and quarrels about the law, for they are unprofitable and worthless.

[20:00] How many of us, when we're talking to other Christians about Christ, do so just to prove a point about being right? That we don't care to really learn together.

We don't care to turn back to the truth. But instead, we use our own intellect, our own knowledge, to dissect verses, words, phrasing, saying, historical content, just to prove a point.

Now, don't get me wrong, truths regarding the gospel are worth discussing and talking about, but when there is a blatant opposition to what we know to be right and true is unavoidable.

But quarreling, wrangling, and debating about words can be proof that the love of yourself and proving a point has taken the place of the love of truth.

Let me repeat that again. that the love of yourself and proving a point has taken the place of love of truth.

[21:14] that the word splitter quarrels, not for the sake of arriving at the truth, but for the sake of a linguistic victory. And such things will not help his fellow Christians who are earnestly yearning for the truth, but instead they leave their minds confuted, confused, bewildered, let me say words, and clouded.

God's word is meant to be profitable. So what does Paul tell Timothy to do? Well, I'm so glad you guys asked.

The second part of today's sermon is a plea for Timothy as he's exercising his role of teaching to be a workman for God.

That even though this will be costly and sometimes people will not want to hear what you have to say, don't give up and to properly handle and stand firm on the solid foundation of his word.

So what does this look like? Well, let's go ahead and go to verse 15. Here we see Paul telling Timothy to simply do your best.

[ 22 : 38 ] Now, some of you might be thinking and admonishing that statement. Like, what is this pacification, everyone gets a trophy type of saying and talk that we're here?

Do your best. That's what you hear from losers sometimes, right? Depends on who we're being compared against. So, we are all human and we can't be convincing, we can't be persuasive or have the ability to be on point every single day.

We all have bad days. Even your pastors. Some of us don't fall asleep until three something in the morning and then wake up at five o'clock and a few hours later.

Some of us are balancing trying to learn Greek and family life and prepare for a sermon while keeping up a whole church and praying for a church. Some of us are going through medical issues. Some of us just had their in-laws in town. Pray for your pastors. Because all of us fall short of the glory of God and it isn't Timothy that is able to save them nor open their eyes to see.

[ 24 : 00 ] But, in that same breath, we should also be equipped and ready and be able to properly handle the word of God. To handle the truth.

To be able to present yourselves to God as one approved. Meaning, the things that are done today out of love and obedience to Christ that advance what is true and right and benefits others and advance their eternal welfare will be rewarded on the day of judgment.

I found an encouragement in Mark 9, verse 41 where Christ said, for whoever gives you a cup of water to drink because of your name as followers of Christ, truly I say to you, he will not lose his reward.

That Timothy and anyone who preaches or teaches the word should be zealously persistent, not ashamed, and give their maximum effort to fill each other's cups with God's word completely, accurately, and clearly to their hearers.

In other words, to rightly handle the word of truth and to live this day for that day when we come face to face with almighty God.

[ 25 : 29 ] And in addition to rightly handling the word of truth, Paul again warns Timothy to avoid irreverent babble or worldly and empty chatter as translated again by the NASB in verse 16.

This type of talk is the exact opposite of what Paul promoted, is empty and useless and will lead people to more and more ungodliness. And again, I think it's important to recognize Paul's repetition here of this warning.

The key here is that talk precedes action, that we think or talk and then we do. Our thoughts and our words are a gateway drug that drives our actions.

Today, we see this taking place in many shapes and forms, especially by way of what we're being exposed to our own culture, our own society, what we see on TV, what we're watching on our phones, the videos that we watch online, the movies that we watch, the books that we read, the things that we know we shouldn't be watching and looking at that we scroll hours upon hours on Facebook or Instagram.

It creates something in us. It looks at us and it plays on our sinful nature or it can play on it. We see what others are doing.

[ 26 : 55 ] It's polluting our minds with these images, ideas, and these videos that push us towards envy, hate, and lust. Being exposed to it for countless hours and days, it's eating away our principles and our priorities and our life to eventually cause us to act on these things, these thoughts, these chatterings by means of stealing what we envy, assaulting those we hate, and committing acts of fornication and adultery with those we lust.

You see, church, as Paul warns Timothy, we too need to focus on the right thoughts which will lead to a life of deeds that will be approved by Jesus.

And as Deuteronomy 30, verse 14 states and Paul repeats in Romans 10, verse 8, but the word is very near you in your mouth and in your heart that you may observe it.

Now, church, I'm not talking about here is legalism. I'm not talking about we need to be so rigid that we need to follow what the Bible says from Old Testament to New Testament.

I'm not saying that we need to be so confrontational with people that if they don't believe in what we believe at the very moment that we have that conversation that we are going to admonish them, that we're going to hate them, that we're going to cut them out of our lives.

[ 28 : 22 ] No. But we should be yearning and striving towards righteousness and the truth because it is the blood of Christ that is justified and continues to sanctify us because if we are continually keeping his word near us in our mouth and in our hearts, we will become infected or if we aren't continuing to keep his word near us in our mouths or in our hearts, we will become infected and these heresies will spread like gangrene.

The imagery here shouldn't be passed over. Not being medically inclined to myself, I had to look up what gangrene was.

I knew it was pretty nasty. I knew it was gross. And the thing is is that why, I can see why Paul compared the spread of heresies to this nasty disease.

Gangrene, according to Johns Hopkins medicine, is a dangerous and potentially deadly health problem. Listen to this. it happens when the blood flow to an area of tissue is cut off.

This causes the tissue to break down and die. Symptoms of gangrene are pains in or beyond the affected area.

[ 29 : 48 ] Sores and blisters that can produce pus or other discharges. Muscle aches, weaknesses, confusion, pain, and shock.

Isn't his word amazing? So you're telling me that the spread of heresies is like gangrene. That if we try to change the gospel, restrict the gospel, or not tell the whole truth of the gospel and what he was able to do in his life, in his work, and in his blood, and if it doesn't flow to where and to whom it should be, then it will produce weakness, it will produce confusion, it will produce pain, it will produce shock, and it will produce death.

That if we try to restrict the blood of our Lord, and we try to change it, and it doesn't reach those who it's intended to reach, we become infected, this then made me wonder, how is gangrene treated?

Treatment will depend on the symptoms, and how bad the condition is. Commonly, the first line of treatments towards gangrene have caught early enough are antibiotics, simple pill, maybe a shot, not too bad, right?

These medicines can be used to kill the bacteria and heal the infected area. Guys, the more and more that you read this book, the more and more that this word, the more and more that it will come alive to you.

[ 31 : 39 ] Let us, if you, again, have your dexterity fingers going, another medical term, let's go to Psalm 107, verse 19 through 21. It reads, Then they cried to the Lord in their trouble, and he delivered them from their distress.

He sent out his word and healed them and delivered them from their destruction. The psalmist here is recalling the mass affliction and subsequent mass healing found in Numbers chapter 21, verses 4 through 9, whereas Moses made this bronze serpent after the Israelites were being attacked by these serpents.

They were getting infected. They were getting bitten all over, and a lot of people were dying. And so he took this brass serpent and set it on his staff, and if anyone who was under his care looked to the bronze serpent, they lived.

Now, let's go to John chapter 3, verse 14, where Christ said, as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up, so that whoever believes in him will have eternal life.

His word is a living word. And if we remain diligent and focus our eyes and point others to him, to his word, to his truth, then all these heresies will be defeated and we will all be healed.

[ 33 : 14 ] So if you hear this chatter that goes against the word of God, make sure that you earnestly and humbly approach them and patiently be with them in his word with the goal of exposing his truth before it gets too late.

We're not here to win word wars. We're here to learn more about our God. God. And if you think you know everything there is to know about our God, then we have another discussion to have. Now what happens if gangrene isn't treated quickly? Gangrene can spread rapidly and quickly over a large area of the body, so the amount of dead tissue can sometimes become quite large.

Treating these large areas may result in amputation. You have to cut it off. The same can be said about false doctrine and teachers of the truth.

Now, this might sound harsh to some of you, but we must remember what's at stake here, that sometimes Christians go negative because we are guarding eternal souls.

[ 34 : 33 ] eternity is at stake and due diligence requires that the church both proclaim the truth and attack errors, especially for those who have been given leadership positions within his church.

That these qualified leaders, preachers, elders are crucial because they are a lot, there are a lot of bad people out there. These people are rebellious, they're empty talkers and they're deceivers, their influence is corrosive, they are upsetting whole families teaching bad things, and so they must be silenced.

Now, church, please don't misunderstand what I'm saying. I'm not calling for you guys to give a phone call to my Uncle Vito and go around getting people and putting them in cement one-size-fits-all shoes and throwing them in the Mahoning River.

I'm not saying that. I'm not saying that at all. but we need to know the truth and to discern how to identify pastors, teachers, and others who have firmly planted their feet not on the solid ground of biblical truth but in the thin air of political or social opinions and preferences.

That we are to remain peaceful, we're supposed to remain loving, and stick to the positives as much as possible, evil. But we shouldn't shy away from dismantling error when necessary.

[ 36 : 08 ] Paul has been a proponent of rebuking falsehoods in the faith and can be found in Titus where he describes a qualification for an elder as we read in verse 9 through 10 in chapter 1. He must hold firm the trustworthy words as taught and also to rebuke those who contradict it.

For there are many who are insubordinate, empty talkers and deceivers. In verse 11, they must be silenced since they are upsetting whole families by teaching for shameful gain what they ought not to teach.

13, therefore rebuke them sharply that they may be sound in faith, not devoting themselves to Jewish myths and the commands of people who turn away from the truth.

Paul wasn't the only one. who sharply rebuked and called out frauds of others claiming to be heralders of the truth. Christ himself called the Pharisees vipers, fools, hypocrites, blind guides, and whitewashed tombs in Matthew chapter 23.

Again and again and again Christ calls them hypocrites and calls them out. You see, church, both Christ and Paul used strong descriptive language and issued strong warnings because they both believed in the value of human souls.

[ 37 : 37 ] They believed in heaven. They believed in hell. And therefore, he and his disciples found it necessary at times to use this extreme language in order to protect his people, the people that belong to him.

which leads me to the third sermon and part, third part of today's sermon, a portrait.

In, we're going to start at the second part of verse 17, where Paul specifically calls out two leaders or bishops in the church of Ephesus, Hymenaeus and Philetus.

This is the first time Philetus has been actually mentioned in the Bible. But Hymenaeus was previously mentioned in Paul's first epistle to Timothy in chapter 1, verse 20, when he was with Alexander.

And having made a shipwreck of his faith, and have been delivered unto Satan by the apostle to cure him of his blasphemies. talk about some hefty language, right?

[ 38 : 48 ] However, despite his first letter and warning, Hymenaeus has persisted in teaching heresies. It is here in these verses that Paul describes the types of errors of the faith Hymenaeus and Philetus were charged.

Although we're unsure of what the entire scope of these heresies are, or how deep they went, what these imposters were teaching, Paul does call out specific issues that contradict a major revelation from God that is the bedrock foundation for Christianity regarding the future bodily resurrection of Christians with Christ.

What they taught was a combination of what Christ promised the thief on the cross found in Luke 23, verse 43, where Christ said, truly I say to you, today you shall be with me in paradise.

And also what is written in 1 Corinthians chapter 15, verse 12, now if Christ is proclaimed to his, excuse me, now if Christ is proclaimed is raised from the dead, how can some of you say that there is no resurrection of the dead?

And what they ended up doing was they took these things, they took this language and idea and they combined it with contemporary Greek philosophies of the time where what they believed was that matter, physical bodies, this flesh and blood was evil and that the spirit was good.

[ 40 : 18 ] It was this dualism and they were battling back and forth with one another. and this resulted in the false belief denying the future bodily resurrection of Christians and affirmed instead that a spiritual resurrection at conversion was the only resurrection a Christian would encounter.

that once you're saved and you've been baptized and you come up from the water, that spiritual change, if there was one, was the only change that you were going to witness as a Christian in this life and in the next.

That this life is the only thing worth living for. that all we had as believers, that our sins were forgiven and that nothing we did was sinful.

So live it up. They placed the thoughts and ideals and exaltation of man on the same level as the word of God. And by doing so, swerved so far from the truth that they had to put themselves and all of those who listened to them at odds with the gospel.

And they completely upset the faith of some. Now we read this word upset and I don't want us to get confused with the idea that it was kind of like we're talking about an upset stomach after we ate too much Mexican food or how our toddlers react upset when they haven't watched 10 hours of Bluey.

[ 42 : 01 ] That is not what I'm talking about. This type of upset is drastic. It's ships being turned over in the ocean and people dying and drowning and grasping for their lives.

Unfortunately, we Christians are still faced with this type of swerving from the truth today. And over the next few minutes I'm going to provide some present day portraits.

examples of errors regarding special revelation and doctrine we face in this very city. Now, this might be hard for some of us to hear and I can confidently say that because it's going to affect every single one of us whether it's going to be someone that we know, that we went to school with, a family member, or even a loved one or a sibling.

However, I do believe it is to be important for us as Christians to know these errors so we can earnestly and humbly and boldly have these conversations with those around us when God brings people into our lives.

things. And however, there are so many that we can choose from today, so many different things that we see this world waging war against the gospel.

[ 43 : 33 ] What I'm going to be sharing today and talking about today is addressing Romanism, also known as the Roman Catholic Church and Protestant liberalism.

Now, before I do, I want to define a few things, a few vocabulary words, so that way we're all on the same page because words mean things, right?

We're going to be going back and forth between the differences with what these organizations identify and correlate with special revelations.

Now, before we do begin, there's two different types of revelations. There is the general revelation that's open for everyone to see. It's God's glory manifested in everything that is the earth, that is the sky, that is our consciousness, it's the universe, it's all points of order and design and a creator.

Every single person on this earth is able to see his glory this way. It exalts his name, it praises him. The next and other type of revelation is special revelation.

[ 44 : 47 ] This special revelation is special. It's for those of us that read his word and it's comprised of his word and it's comprised of the word of God that was brought down from the prophets to the laws to Jesus Christ himself and then through the Holy Spirit in the writings of this scripture.

This is how we know our God. This is how we have the key to know how to be more like Christ. This is how we know that Christ loves us and has saved us.

This is a special revelation and it's the only thing that can be given to us to produce any type of salvific repercussions. are you guys with me so far?

We got the two different kinds. So, okay, so let's first address the prevalent special revelation error in Romanism. over the years since Jesus said to Peter in Matthew chapter 16 verse 18, and I tell you, you are Peter and on this rock I will build my church and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.

Romanism has declared that the Pope and the bishops possess a perfect ability not just to interpret the Bible but to add its own traditions and judgment which have the same divine authority and must

be kept just like divine laws.

[ 46 : 21 ] This declaration was codified by Roman Catholicism in the church's official confessional statements and is still asserted today in the catechism of the Catholic Church of 1994.

And as Christians who place the word of God as the supreme authority can respond to this argument by observing that Christ did not say anything about the infallibility of the Pope or bishops of Rome or any church organization.

In fact, we actually have examples of early church leaders being corrected in the scripture itself.

Look only to Acts chapter 18 verse 26. We see Priscilla and Aquila approaching Apollos and taking him aside explaining to him his errors while speaking the way of God in the synagogues.

Another note that we have to see here is the traditions that the Roman Catholic Church claims are also a means to divine and special revelation that through these man-made revelations that they're placing these traditions, these sacraments, these things that they do at the same level as the word of God.

However, time and time again we see throughout the Bible how man has lifted tradition on the same level of God and special revelation and it has fallen short.

[ 47 : 43 ] We need only to go back to Christ chastising the Pharisees that we just talked about. The next fundamental error that has plagued the church is the replacement of special revelation with human reasoning or emotion found in Protestant liberalism which started during the age of enlightenment in the 17th and 18th centuries.

That in contrast to elevating tradition to divine authority, the enlightenment writers and the Christians of the day elevated human reasoning and emotional experiences to the highest places. They denied divine special revelation and placed the ultimate source of truth in the natural process of human life. From there, many people would still claim to be Christians but a more accurate description of probably what they believed would be considered deism.

That they believed in a God. They believed in a higher power but they didn't believe God. God.

They believed in a God but they didn't believe God.

And they viewed the Bible, this Holy Scripture, as just another historical text to reference and build upon the human experience. Over the years, this then mutated further and inserted itself into the Christian church by way of modernism that combined modern philosophy and science with the teachings of the church.

[ 49 : 27 ] Sound familiar? We just read about the two Paul called out with Greek philosophy. This has led to congregations splitting off from either a more rational and logical approach to faith or a more based off of emotional experience and sensationalism.

they disguise these doctrines with the same language and terminology from Scripture. That's what makes this dangerous and that's why we need to be careful when we approach people.

Because we do it out of love. But we have to be bold and we have to be able to talk to it. Because we need only to look at some of the Protestant churches to see there are many who attend this church because of the experiences they feel while they're there or because the church has adapted their theology from ancient Scripture to one of acceptance of sin versus calling them to repent and strive towards righteousness.

They're parading themselves as apostles and prophets that your best life is what God wants for you right now. That if you pray hard enough your cancer will go away. That your financial troubles will go away.

And all your desire will come true. That when you command God and Jesus to do your bidding you're simply praying and rebuking in the name of Jesus. That's not prayer that's witchcraft.

[ 50 : 58 ] Who are we to think that we can control and command our God? That these teachers can affirm the truth that man is born sinful but God needs you because you have because of how much valuable and amazing you are.

God doesn't need us. God doesn't need anything. He does what he wants because he does what he wants. That one can believe the new birth and work of the Holy Spirit to sanctify us but teach that Christians are no longer sinners but only saints leading to a life of unrepentance.

That we can claim Jesus gets us in commercials. No. He saves you.

He changes you. And he judges you. That Jesus is not just simply knocking at the door and we have to let him in. No. He bashes the doors down and he takes what is his because you are his.

He opens our eyes. He fills us with the Holy Spirit. And there is nothing that can stand in his way. Knock. No. So we must endure.

[ 52 : 12 ] We must persist. We must rely on his Holy Spirit to embolden us to be humble and spread his truth and exalt him above all other names. Because there are many, many perversions of his truth and can have catastrophic consequences.

Especially for our children. children. They may believe that they're not fully saved because they don't have a certain gift. They may believe that they're going to hell because there are certain things that are unforgivable.

We, as adults, we as parents have this responsibility as Christians to guard the truth, to protect the truth, to defend the truth, and to preach the truth.

Roman Catholicism and liberal modernism draw from the same poisoned well as all the others. they exalt man over God. To both we must cry out with Isaiah, which reads, stop regarding man and whose nostril is breath, for of what account is he?

[ 53 : 35 ] And then, the grass withers, the flowers fade, but the word of our God will stand forever. Which brings me to my final point.

Final part. It's a promise of God's firm foundation, and we see it in verse 19. Now, I don't believe that all of those who fall under Romanism and liberal Protestantism are going to hell.

That's not what I'm saying, church. I do believe that there are Catholics out there, and that there are people in other types of liberal churches that actually read their Bibles.

And if they read this word, if they read this scripture, I believe that there's power in his word, in his name, and if they are the ones that are able to read, and...

they can believe... they can believe... because there is power in his spirit, will fill them, and those that belong to him, and they will be with him for all eternity.

[ 54 : 56 ] So... So... we look to the last thing the apostle says, is to remember God's firm foundation.

And in other words, Timothy, don't panic over this. Yes, there may be heresy in the congregation, there may be dissension among you, and you may have to do battle against it, but remember God's firm foundation stands.

That this verse is like a coin with two sides. God's side and man's side. And at God's side, we can read the Lord knows you are his.

Another remarkable thing that when you read this text, and it becomes alive to you, you see that Jesus knew that Judas was a traitor from the very beginning.

The scripture tells us that Jesus knew before he chose him that Judas was the devil. He knew those who were his and those who are not his.

[ 56 : 09 ] Paul reminds us that God's church is never going to be altered, shaken, or diminished. Even by the heresies that may range among us, God knows them that are his.

The other side of this coin is that man can know those who are God's excuse me, man can know those who are God's when he sees them departing from this kind of iniquity, this wickedness, a false doctrine, a false teachings, of sin.

We can be confident that those who really are Christians will ultimately see the error that is involved and leave it. That is where our faith can rest. Both of these quotations in verse 19, again, are taken from a story in the Old Testament back in Numbers 16.

There was a rebellion with Korah, Dathan, and Abiram during Israel's wandering through the wilderness. Those men challenged the authority of Moses, saying, why do you listen to Moses? He's no different than any of us. We are men of understanding like Moses. Why don't you listen to us? That's what they were implying.

[ 57 : 31 ] Moses took the problem to the Lord, and the Lord said, bring them here, separate yourselves from them, and let me give them an examination. I'm paraphrasing.

It's a long chapter. And Korah, and Dathan, and Abraham, or Abiram, and their families all stood together. Suddenly, before the eyes of the whole congregation, the ground opened up, and they went into the pit, and the ground slammed shut behind them.

You see, church, God knows those who are his. He has his own ways of dealing with this kind of thing.

Because vengeance is the Lord's. It is not ours. The apostle says that those who are genuine will depart from iniquity, from wickedness. And that is the true test of a believer.

So, some of you might still be sitting here wondering about some of the people that are in your lives, some of your family members, some of those that you work with, some of those that you've talked to, that you've ran across, that you know maybe even online, maybe you've not even met them in person.

[ 58 : 54 ] And you see the pain and the sin, and you see everything that is going on, and we live in an age full of darkness.

Constantly being barraged by things that kind of sound like what the word says. Kind of look what a Christian is.

kind of is what we're kind of supposed to be. Church, the thing is, is that we shouldn't be putting our identification, our identity in anything that's Catholicism, Protestantism, conservatism, liberalism, humanism, deism, mysticism, any of the isms, because it's none of those.

It is him. It is him. It is him. It is him. And when we come into conflict, we come into this type of scenario, we are to do what Daniel 11, verse 32 says, that even though he shall seduce with flattery those who violate the covenant, but the people who know their God shall stand firm and take action. So what do we do? We have to know our God. How do we know our God? We read his scripture. We pray. We meditate. And we read on the scripture.

[ 60 : 25 ] If it is anything, personal revelation, that you have, and it contradicts what the Bible says, keep it to yourself. If it goes with what scripture says, it doesn't need to be said.

We have an opportunity to be strong and fight on for the Lord, to continue to work and do our due diligence and be proficient in his word.

So to close, let me remind you, just as Paul did for Timothy, to remember the gospel, the truth, to remain diligent in doing the best, to saturate yourselves with his word, to remember who you are and stop quarreling, to work and labor for accuracy and understanding the scripture, to avoid complicity, to be bold and earnestly share your faith, unashamed, and do not panic because God is in control.

not worry so much about your sons, your daughters, who may be wayward, you may be thinking they're wayward, and you're like, what can I do?

You preach them the gospel, you share with them the gospel, and under God's own time, he will reveal his will for their lives. We can't be working, he will not be working on our timeline.

[ 62 : 04 ] We are on his. His firm foundation will stand for God knows those who are his and they will manifest themselves sooner or later by repenting and leaving this wickedness behind.

That wonderful word of advice is now is how God urges us to handle quarrels like that in this modern age as they try to redefine what truth is for us.

I pray that these ancient words, his holy word, continues to guide all of us and our paths as we navigate through this world.

That it gives us strength and that in him we find hope. Soli Deo Gloria, for the glory of God alone, let us pray.