

2 Timothy 3

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Tape 8200
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Let's turn now to 2 Timothy, chapter three, as we continue our journey through the Bible.

Paul, writing to Timothy, said, *This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come.* I believe that we are living in the last days. And I believe that we are seeing the perilous times of which Paul spoke. There are so many areas that are out of control.

I was reading an article this week in the newspaper, concerning the number of police who have been arrested because of the dealings with drugs. These are either taking payoffs from the drug dealers or taking the drugs that are confiscated and selling them themselves. In 1980 there were 141 arrests. Last year there were close to 500 arrests of the police officers. The temptation to take the money, to take the bribes, is so great. They offer them large sums of money. If you don't have a strong moral base, if you grow up with existential philosophy, that what is right is what you feel to be right, what fits the circumstances, if you don't have a strong Biblical, moral base, you have no moral base! And a culture, a society, that lacks a moral base, is going to fail.

We see it in Russia today, where there is no moral base at all. There is no base for morality. We see the chaos that has ensued in the Russian society. The lawlessness, we see the anarchy. And we are seeing it more and more here in the United States. Perilous times will come.

Behind the perilous times or the reason for it, is ²*For men shall be lovers of their own selves,* All of these other evils spring out of that first one—lovers of their own selves. *Philautos*, in the Greek. *Phileo* is love and *autos*, is self. *Philautos*, the love of self. And that putting me first, me above all others, from that springs, all of the other evils, of which Paul lists here in chapter three.

They become *covetous*, That Greek word is *philargous*. Now again, the love, *phil*, *phileo*, and *argous*, the love of money. And it's translated, covetous, but in Greek, it is the love of money.

And they will be covetous. They will be *boasters*, I guess we are going to have sort of a Greek lesson tonight. The word "boasters" is *alazones*. And in the Greek, the *alazones* were the quacks. They were the fellows that used to go around selling "cure alls". Boasting that this medicine would cure everything from rheumatoid arthritis to ear aches, you know. They were the fellows that used to travel on the plains, you know, in the covered wagons, selling the snake oil and things of that nature.

Socrates said of these men, they could be found in every walk of life, making these false claims, these false boasts. He said you find them in every walk of life, but he said unfortunately, you find them most in politics. Now that was Socrates. They say he was a wise man.

They would be covetous. They would be boasters. They would be *proud*. The word, proud in Greek is *huperephanos*. Now *huper* is "above", in Greek. And *phanos* is an appearance. We have some English words that come from this Greek word, *phanos*. It is making an appearance. The epiphany, the appearance. So *huperephanos* is to appear above others. Proud, that is, feeling that you are above others or appearing to be above others, proud.

They would be *blasphemers*, Our word blaspheme come from the Greek word, *blasphemos*. So, it's just a transliteration, our word blaspheme, is a transliteration of the Greek.

disobedient to parents, And how we see that manifested in our world today. The amount of crime, they say that the highest incidence of crime happens today between three and six in the afternoon. That's when the kids are out of school and there is no parent at home. And crime peaks between the hours of three and six, now, in the afternoon. Disobedient to parents, out of control.

unthankful, unholy, They are unthankful and unholy.

³*Without natural affection*, They are without natural affection. Now the Greek word, *stergo*, is another Greek word for love. We've dealt with the words, *eros*, (physical love); *phileo* (emotional love). We had *phileo* in a couple of the earlier things, here, the lovers of self and lovers of money. And then there is the

New Testament word, *agape*. But there was another word for love. And that was *stergo*. And that was the love in the family, the love for your child, the love for your parents—*stergo*. Now in Greek, “a” is a negative prefix. You put “a” in front of *stergo* and you have *astergo*, which is without love, or without natural love.

I believe it’s natural for a parent to love their child. There is just something innate, that God puts in the heart of the parent for the child. But in the last days, perilous times will come. And people will be without natural affection, the natural love that you should have for your child, seeking to protect them at all costs. It seems to be so lacking today. There is so much child abuse, physical and sexual. That has to be without natural affection.

In speaking of homosexuality, that they would be without, leaving the natural use of the women, men would burn in lust one for another. That’s without natural affection. That’s an unnatural thing.

But in the home, unnatural affection or without natural affection—that natural affection that you have for your children. I just am appalled when I read what is happening to little children today as a result of parents without natural affection.

It all comes back to lovers of their own self. That self love, me first. Not willing to make a sacrifice, not willing to do without, in order that you might be able to provide for your children and all.

Without natural affection, *trucebreakers*, *false accusers*, The word false accusers is an interesting word in the Greek, *diabolos*. We get our word, diabolic. The word for the devil in Greek is *diabolos*. And so here are people who are *diabolos*, that is they are slanderers. The Bible says, concerning Satan, he is the accuser of the brethren. The word means slanderer. Let me tell you this. Satan is no friend of yours. He may appear to be. He may come to you in very enticing fashion, seeking you to throw in your lot with him, promising you all kinds of things. But he is no friend. He is a slanderer. His only purpose is to destroy you. And men will become slanderers. They will become false accusers or slanderers.

incontinent, It means, no control. The Greek word, *krates*, is to control. Put the “a”, the negative a in front of it, you have *akrates*. No control. People today are not putting the brakes on. They are not trying to control themselves.

fierce, They would be fierce. The Greek word is *anemeros*. It’s usually used of a wild beasts. Men will become like wild beasts—fierce.

Then, he goes on to say. They would become *despisers of those that are good*, *Aphilegathos*, again the word *phileo* is in there, but the negative, no love for the *gothos*, or for the good. There is no love for the good. There is no love for good. Or despisers, as it is translated, of those that are good.

It’s interesting to me how that when a person does a good deed, often they are subjected to such harassment and ridicule, that there have been cases where people have had to sort of move from the area where they were living. If they reported a crime or if they returned money that they found on the street, rather than being praised, people called them crazy, fools! And people get harassed for the good deeds—despisers of those that are good.

They are ⁴*Traitors*, not keeping their covenant.

They would be *heady*, *highminded*, and then of course he gives it, *lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God*; Surely that describes the day and the age in which we live. Look at how much money is spent on pleasure. Look how much “Titanic” has grossed. Tonight, the playoffs. Think of the millions of people that are watching tonight on TV, pleasures, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God.

Aren’t you glad you’re here at church tonight. It doesn’t apply to you, you know. You say, give it to them, preacher, I’m in church tonight.

But surely in the last days, perilous times will come. As we go down this list and you might just, for the sake of interest, take your newspaper for a couple of weeks and read the articles in the newspaper. You will find behind the news, these very things that Paul is mentioning here. You will find that these are the things that are going on in the world today, in the last days, perilous times will come. It boils down to what a person loves. The love of self and the love of pleasure, more than the love of God. And from these two things, all of these other evils come forth.

⁵*Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof*: And how that describes the church, in

general, today. There is the ritual. There is a form of godliness. But in so many areas, the denial of the power of God. The churches have become more or less a social center, a tremendous entertaining messages that deal with psychological issues. How to be a better husband, how to be a better wife, how to have exciting romance in your marriage, how to keep love alive. You know, all of these kinds of things that have to do with interpersonal relationship and very little to do with a godly life as far as serving God and seeking God above all else. It's seeking how to get along better with your employer, with your children, or whatever. And so much today, has to do, so many sermons, you listen to them, and they are extremely entertaining. They are very insightful and tremendously helpful as far as how to get along with someone else. But rarely do they tell you how to get along with God and the necessity of having that kind of a relationship with God, where you experience the power of God in your life. They give you the seven steps to becoming a better person. But in those steps, they don't include the relationship with God and the power of God in your life. In other words, it's how to do it without God. But without God, you can't do it! Jesus said, without Me, you can do nothing! So they have a form of Godliness, but they in practicality, deny the power of God, that is so necessary in our lives.

Paul warns Timothy, *from such turn away*. Don't get involved Timothy.

⁶*For of this sort are they which creep into houses, and lead captive silly women laden with sins, led away with divers lusts,* Looking at the stories of the events in classic Greek, they tell of these fellows during the time of Greece's days of greatness, how that these men would go around. They would actually, usually to the wealthy women, they would play up to them. They would get involved with them, leading them away into diverse lusts. So these are the sort. He is referring to a group of men, that were known in Greece for this kind of living. They are of that sort of men, that do these things.

They are ⁷*Ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth.* They are always searching, but never finding. They are always looking at something new, something novel, something different. And the quest goes on.

And we see it today. We see that movement of people who travel around, looking for the excitement and looking for the latest novel, religious experience. A few years ago, they were going to Toronto, for the Toronto blessing.

But then the blessing apparently moved from Toronto to Pensacola and the Browning revival, down there. And so it's, you know, going down to Pensacola.

It will be soon be someplace else and the crowd will be off to someplace else. And you have those who are constantly designing some new gimmick, some new program, so that they can, once again, attract that travelling crowd, who is constantly learning, but never coming to the knowledge of truth, constantly searching, but never really finding the fullness and the richness, that we can have in Jesus Christ.

⁸*Now as Jannes and Jambres withstood Moses, so do these also resist the truth: men of corrupt minds, reprobate concerning the faith.* Now, we know the story of Moses, how that he went into the Pharaoh. He demanded the release of the children of Israel from Egypt. When Moses made his demand, the Pharaoh said, who is God, that I should obey Him? You remember that Moses threw down his rod and it turned into a serpent. So these two fellows, Jannes and Jambres, who were Egyptian magicians, they threw down their staffs and they became serpents, too. So they had supernatural powers, but not of God. Of course the interesting thing is that Moses' serpent swallowed the serpents of Jannes and Jambres.

Now we know of the story from the Book of Exodus, however, we did not get the names of these men from the Book of Exodus. Paul, evidently had certain writings that we don't possess today, in which these men were named. So Paul names those magicians of the Pharaoh's, who were able to duplicate up to a point, the miracles of God, in the place.

But there came that point where they could go no further. They said this is the finger of God. They could mimic or duplicate up to a point. But they were withstanding Moses. They were withstanding the Word of God through Moses.

And there are people today who are standing against the Word of God. So Paul said they are like these two fellows, Jannes and Jambres, who withstood Moses. They are men of corrupt minds. They are resisting the truth and they become reprobate concerning the faith.

⁹*But they shall proceed no further: for their folly shall be manifest unto all men, as theirs also was.* There comes a point where God exposes. God will let you get by. He is very patient. He gives you every opportunity to repent. He is very gracious. He will let you get by for a time, but then there comes that place where God says, alright, you've gone far enough! And because you haven't repented, then God chooses to expose. And there are so many, that when God has been patient with them and longsuffering with them, they misinterpret that as weakness on the part of God or inability on the part of God, or worse than that, the approval of God!

If God doesn't like what I'm doing, then why doesn't He stop me? And surely, it must mean, and we rationalize, that it's okay with God. It's something that God allows or approves of my doing. Wrong!

In time, Jannes and Jambres were exposed. And they could not follow Moses any further. They resisted. God allowed them. He gave them rope and more rope, until they finally hung themselves.

Maybe God is sort of fishing out the rope to you. And you're going with it, but you'll hang yourself with it, if you take it too far! So they will proceed no further, for their folly shall be manifest until all men as Jannes and Jambres, it'll come to you also.

¹⁰*But thou hast (you have) fully known my doctrine, manner of life, purpose, faith, longsuffering, charity, patience,* But you have fully known my doctrine, my manner of life, my purpose, my faith, my longsuffering, my love and my patience. Timothy, you have known me. You've been with me. Timothy was a companion to Paul. He was there to help Paul in the ministry. And he had been with Paul through a lot of difficult experiences. He had observed Paul under all kinds of pressure situations. And so Timothy, you know fully, my doctrine. We have shared. I have talked, not only publicly, but in our own private conversation.

You know my doctrine. And you know my manner of life. Paul spoke about how that he desired, so much, to bring the gospel to people, free of charge, lest he be accused of just being in it for the money. He was willing to work with his own hands in order to support his ministry. You know my manner of life. You know my commitment to Jesus Christ. You know my heart's desire is to just serve Him and to please Him. The way I live, you've been with me night and day.

You know my purpose to share the gospel of Jesus with as many as I possibly can. You know my faith, my absolute trust in the Lord. My commitment to Him.

You know my longsuffering, all of the things that I've had to put up with and do put up with. You know my love, the tremendous heart of Paul. He said his love to the Jews was so great that he could actually wish that he himself, was accursed of God for their sakes, for his brethren after the flesh! The tremendous love that Paul had! As you know, my patience.

You know the ¹¹*Persecutions*, Timothy had been with Paul when Paul was going through, in fact Timothy, was with Paul, experiencing some of the same persecutions as Paul did.

afflictions, which came unto me at Antioch, (that would be Antioch of Pisidia) *at Iconium, at Lystra;* Timothy was from the area of Lystra and Derbe. They were sort of sister cities. And it was there that Paul was stoned. They thought that he was dead! They thought that they had killed him. And he was drug out of the city. And Timothy could have been one of those that was standing around, weeping. When Paul sort of blinked his eyes and shook himself and stood up and said, let's go back into the city.

You know *what persecutions I endured:* You know the persecutions. You know the afflictions. You know the suffering that I have endured for the gospel's sake.

but out of them all the Lord delivered me. I wonder if we would say that if we had gone through the things. You know, we want the Lord to deliver us from these things, don't we? But the Lord often delivers us through these things as we are going through it, the Lord takes us through. We don't have a divine immunity from persecution, or from affliction. But the Lord will see us through, that's the big thing! So we need to have that assurance and that commitment, that God is on the throne. He is going to see us through. He rules. I might have to go through these things, but God is going to see me through it. And so out of them all, the Lord delivered me.

¹²*Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution.* One of my most unfavorable

promises in the Bible! You can't escape it! You shouldn't try! Recognize that if you were of the world, the world would love it's own. But you are not of the world, He has called you out of the world. Therefore the world hates you! Jesus said if the world hates Me, it will hate you. You are not greater than your Lord. And it is a dangerous thing to try to curry the approval or the favor of the world. If you seek to please all men, Paul said, you are not a servant of Jesus Christ. They that live Godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution!

¹³*But evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived.* Things are not going to get better as far as living the Christian life. More and more, we will be persecuted, if we dare to speak up, the truth of God's Word.

We have this thing known as, political correctness, where to be politically correct, you should not speak against sinful practices. And we have this big emphasis upon "hate crimes". Now I am opposed to hate crimes of any type, vehemently opposed, to hate crimes. That is probably one of the most ungodly things that a person can be guilty of, is a crime that stems from hatred. We as Christians, are told that we are to love, but yet there are practices that we must speak out against because the Bible condemns them. And we must be faithful to the Word of God.

But the way they are interpreting now, hate crimes, is, that if I should speak out the Biblical position, concerning lesbianism and homosexuality, then I can be accused of inciting people towards negative reaction to the homosexuals. And thus guilty of a hate crime, in an interpreting of the law.

There is going to be more and more pressure on the ministry to not speak out against sinful practices, not to speak our against abortion or homosexuality or adultery or pornography or things of this nature, because people might be incited by the message to rip up a Playboy magazine in a drug store or something, you know. So I've incited them to a hate crime.

It's going to get worse, not better. Jesus said, that in the last days, that evil will prevail. He said when the Son of Man comes, will He find faith on the earth? It's going to be tougher to live the Christian life. It's going to take real commitment and purpose of heart. There is going to be coming a dividing between those who are genuinely sincere and those who have just been sort of hanger on-ers. And it's going to cost you to serve Jesus Christ, even as it cost those who were living in Russia under the Communist regime. It cost them an opportunity for a higher education. It cost them the opportunity for a better job. A lot of suffering for the cause of Christ. Evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived.

¹⁴*But continue thou in the things which thou hast learned and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned them;* The things that I have taught you Timothy, continue in them! Be assured in these things.

¹⁵*And that from a child* Not only did I teach you, but your mother taught you and your grandmother taught you. Paul made reference to that earlier. His grandmother and mother had taught him in the Scriptures. So continue in those things that you have learned and that you've been assured of. You've been assured that this is God's Word. This is Gods' truth.

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.* What a heritage! From a child, you have known the Holy Scriptures.

I thank God that I had that heritage. From a child, I was taught the Scriptures. I was taught to memorize the Scriptures. I was taught to read out of the Bible, to memorize the Books of the Bible. I could spell them when I was seven years old. I was just steeped in the Word of God by a Godly mother and a Godly father. From a child, I had this wonderful heritage. And it's a heritage that we should pass on to our children. You've known the Holy Scriptures that are able to make you wise unto salvation, through the faith, which is in Christ Jesus. And so knowing the Lord from a child, being a child.

The only drawback probably, is that you don't really have a testimony of conversion. You can't really remember when you didn't believe in the Lord and when you didn't love Jesus and trust in Jesus. And you know, these people say, well, I was a drug addict and all this kind of stuff and you know, Jesus came and changed my life. That's a great testimony, well, sorry, I don't have anything like that. My worst addiction was Oreos cookies. If the aspirin companies depended on me, they wouldn't be in business. You wouldn't

be able to purchase aspirin if they depended on me to keep them alive. But from a child, it's been that way.

¹⁶*All scripture* You've learned the Scripture from the time, you've been assured in the Scriptures from the time you were a child. You've known the Holy Scriptures.

And all Scripture *is given by inspiration of God*, How much is all? Yes! And in the Greek, all means all! Now, there are those who are teaching today, that some Scriptures are given by inspiration of God. Now what does that do? It immediately transfers the authority from the Bible to the person who is teaching you. Because all Scriptures are not given by inspiration of God, I will tell you the Scriptures that you can believe and Scriptures you can't believe. You see, I become the authority, the moment I modify this. Well, you can't believe everything. I'm the authority. I'll tell you what you can believe.

And this is exactly what is going on today, this Jesus seminar thing, this fiasco, that is taking place over here at Claremont college, where these scholars, supposed, are gathering together to share their ignorance, in the name of scholarship, and determining which of the sayings in the New Testament, did Jesus actually say? And how are they determining, by voting? Now did Jesus really say this or not? So they cast ballots and you know, they all vote, rather or not this is really authentic of Jesus, or not. They are setting themselves up as the authorities. But they don't agree within themselves. They have differing views. They get into arguments over whether or not, Jesus actually said, what John said, He said. Or what Mark, said, He said. But what that does is to transfer the authority to man. But man doesn't agree with the next fellow. The teachers disagree with each other. They will argue with other. They will write papers that contradict each other. So what is the net effect? Confusion. I don't know which one to believe. He said that Jesus really didn't say that. And he said, yes, Jesus really did. Who can I believe? So you see, it leads to no authority. It leads to confusion.

And that of course is Satan's tool, to get you confused. I don't know what to believe. I don't know what I can believe. Now, when you take the Bible as the authority and the final authority for your faith, then you are not confused. What does the Bible say? And if I accept the Bible as God's Word—all Scripture was given by inspiration of God. If I accept that, then I have an authority and I have the basis for the authority. The authority is the Bible. It is my guide for life. It is my authority in life. I follow its precepts. I believe its precepts. All Scripture is given by inspiration of God. I believe that this is an essential element to hang on to.

I believe that the reason why the major denominations are losing members by the droves is that in most of the major denominations, this is rejected. They are trying to again divide the Bible and tell you what you can accept as inspired and what is not inspired. This business of higher Biblical criticism, has been one of the greatest curses to ever come to the church. All Scripture is given by inspiration of God.

Now David at the end of his career (II Samuel 23:2), said that the Holy Spirit spoke through him. He is acknowledging in the writing of those many Psalms, is that they were from the Spirit. The Spirit of God inspired the words of the Psalms. And surely as we read the Psalms, we can pick up on the inspiration. They minister to us. They bless us. They thrill us, as David expounds on the greatness of God and the wonders of His glory and of His mercy and of His lovingkindness! It just reeks of inspiration. And how we are inspired by the Psalms. David said, it was the Holy Spirit!

Jesus acknowledged that(Matthew 22:42, Mark 12:35). He said and the Holy Spirit spake through the mouth of David.

Peter acknowledged that(Acts 1:16). Men and brethren, the Scriptures must be fulfilled, which was spoken by the Holy Spirit through the mouth of David, acknowledging that God was the One who inspired the writings of David.

But not David only, but all Scripture is given by inspiration of God. The word, "inspiration" in the Greek, is God breathed. In other words, all Scripture is God breathed, or it is God's breath. God spoke through man. He used the human instruments to write it down, but God was the One who inspired the things that were written.

Now, if God has inspired the things that are written, then it must follow that they are without error, because God cannot make a mistake. Thus, not only is all Scripture inspired of God, but it is also infallible. It is without error.

I believe that it is important that the church holds to these two tenets. And where these principles have been left, the church has been weakened and the church ultimately, deteriorates and goes down hill, when they leave the teaching and the belief in the inerrancy and the infallibility of the Scriptures. Those are two things that we must hold on to.

You say, well, there are apparent contradictions. Well, the problem is not with the Scriptures, the problem is with my understanding of the Scriptures. There are no contradictions. If it appears to me that there is a contradiction, my interpretation and understanding of the Scriptures are wrong. All Scripture is given by inspiration is given by inspiration of God, and thus it must be infallible.

These are the points that I am pressing when I talk to the pastors of the Calvary Chapels. Do not let this go. Never let this go! The belief in the inerrancy and in the infallibility of the Scriptures. Because if they are not inerrant, then why should I be teaching it? We do we even gather to study It? We study It because It is the Word of God.

and is profitable for doctrine That is the understanding of God. The Bible proports to be God's revelation of Himself.

Now men have developed through the years many different concepts of God. There are many gods that are man made. The concepts that men develop of God are themselves, enlarged to infinity. So that if I were God, this is where I would live. This is what I would do. This is how I would respond. And so, my God is a concept in my mind of what I would be, if I were God.

Now so often when a person comes and they begin by saying, why would God allow? Immediately I realize that they are saying, if I were God, I wouldn't do that. And there are a lot of people, who say, well, I used to believe in God, but I don't believe in God anymore. Well, they believe in a different god, a god of their making. They've made their own concept of God now. They don't like the God that is revealed in the Bible. But all Scripture is give by inspiration of God, and is profitable for a proper understanding of God.

Now I would rather accept God's revelation of Himself than man's concept of what God is or what God has done. I would rather just read it, what God says about Himself. Surely, He knows Himself better than any man. So that's why we teach from the Bible and we develop our concepts of God from the Bible from what God has said about Himself, His nature, His character, His purposes, His plan. We learn an awful lot about ourselves in the Bible, the sinful nature, the need of redemption and the emptiness of life apart from God and the fullness and the richness of life, when we submit ourselves to God. We learn about God's plan of redemption, His love and the sending of His Son, Jesus Christ. We learn about the power of the Holy Spirit, that God has made available to those who have surrendered their lives to follow Him and the ability and the capacity that He gives to us to be what He demands that we be. We learn about the future, what God has in store for those who love Him and who will serve Him. And the wonderful, glorious, future.

Now in the seminary, they put big names on all of these things. We learn about soteriology, which is the doctrine of salvation, eschatology, the doctrine of prophecy. Just simply we learn about God and His plan for your future. And the Bible is there. It's inspired. God has told us what He has in store for us, who will love Him and will serve Him.

But it's also profitable, *for reproof*, When people are going astray, When they are straying from that straight and narrow path, when they begin to deviate from God's straight path, we use the Scripture for reproof. But God's Word says.....and we come with the Scriptures, showing them the path that God said we are to walk as His children. We are to walk in love. We are to be forgiving. We are to be sensitive to another's need. And we bring the Scripture for reproof.

But also, *for correction*, That is, correct belief. Now there are some people that seem to have a crazy penchant for the weird. They get all kinds of weird concepts and ideas. And so many off the wall, kinds of thing, that people come to me with. But the Word of God is there, profitable for correction. To keep you again, correct in your theology.

for instruction in righteousness: You want to know the right way, you want to know how God would have you to live, the Word of God. It will instruct you in righteousness.

The end result is ¹⁷*That the man of God may be perfect* That the man of God has become mature. You grow up. And surely this is something that the Scripture is constantly exhorting. And this is for us to grow

up. For us to become Spiritually mature.

Paul rebuked the Corinthians because they were spiritually immature. They had been around long enough, that they should have been able to chew on some meat, but Paul still had to give them the bottle. So he rebuked them for their carnality, for their spiritual immaturity. And the conditions that existed in Corinth, are all to common in the church. They are spiritual monstrosities. That is they should have developed and grown, but they are still in the crib, saying “Da, Da”. They are still having their little tantrums, when they should have matured and grown beyond that. And the Word of God is great because the Word of God is solid food that feeds the spirit.

Now the Word of God is alive. It’s powerful. It’s sharper than a two-edged sword. And it is able to cut between the bone and the marrow and to discern between the soul and the spirit.

A lot of times, people go to church and they have a very soulish experience. They are touched emotionally. You can get this in a very liturgical setting. The liturgical settings are designed to touch your emotions. And you walk away feeling, “I’ve been in the presence of God.” Your emotions have been touched. But there wasn’t any real teaching of the Word, and thus your spirit was starving, while your soul was overflowing.

In the ultra-Pentecostal churches, which are highly emotional, you can go and have your emotions lifted as high as the heavens. I mean you can be up waving your hands and shaking violently and going through all kinds of aberrant behavior, and come out there saying, well, the fire really fell today. Bless God, hallelujah! But your spirit can be starving because those things don’t feed the spirit.

You can go to Benny Hinn and you can wow, at the people are being blown over with the wave of his jacket. And you can hear these marvelous testimonies and you can see the people running up and down the stage. And you walk away saying, oh, wasn’t that glorious? Oh, that was so wonderful! Yes, touched emotionally, but not spiritually. I mean the Scripture teaching was garbage.

The Word of God is the thing that will bring you into spiritual maturity.

Now in writing to the Hebrews, the writer said, therefore, laying aside the first principles of the doctrines of Christ, the repentance from dead works, the baptism, the laying on of hands, let’s go on into maturity. But you see there are those who remain in spiritual infancy.

When our first child was born, I’ve had a love for children all of my life. When I was a teenager, I used to take these little five year old girls to the ice cream shop, next to the church, after church, and buy them ice cream cones. And they were in love with me and I was in love with them. I gave them a nickel and I said call me honey in fifteen years, you know. They never did, but I mean, I love children. I always have. And I couldn’t wait to have my own children, an intense love for children. There is just something that happens inside, when I see a little child—just a love.

And when I had my first child, our little daughter, no father could be more proud or happy. And I was determined that her first word was going to be “daddy”. And so I would be with her and over and over repeating, dad-dy, dad-dy, daddy. And her first word was “daddy”. I can remember it as clear as it happened five minutes ago.

We were living in a little apartment behind the church that we had fixed up. It was made to be a Sunday School classroom, and they didn’t have a place for the pastor to live, so we lived, it was a big room, but we divided the bed room from the living room with a curtain. I made a partition that served as our kitchen cupboard on one side and on the other side my bookcases and so forth, to separate the kitchen from the living room. It was just one big room. Our little daughter was in the bedroom with us in her crib. And I had made a closet in the corner. It was a Sunday evening and I was going into the closet to get my jacket. She was standing up in her crib and she said “daddy”! I screamed! I turned! I ran over to the crib! I grabbed her! I hugged her! I said, say it again! Say it again! And she just sort of gave me a knowing smile. But I heard it! And oh, it was so precious. It probably wasn’t quite that clear, it was da da, but I understood it.

Now some forty years later, if she were still in the crib and when I walked into the room, she would say da da, instead of being a thrill, it would be a heartbreak. You see, she should have matured, and thank God, she did!

But many Christians have not matured beyond the da da stage. They’re still in spiritual infancy. The

Word of God will bring you into a maturity, the study of the Word. It feeds the spirit. And thus you become *thoroughly furnished unto all good works*. You become thoroughly furnished for all good works. God gives to us through the Word, guidance for life. It furnishes us to deal with the issues of life. I become thoroughly furnished through the knowledge of the Word. And thus I'm able to live as God would have me to live. I am able to do the things that God would have me to do, because of the Spiritual growth that I've experienced through the study of the Word of God. But it is only the Word of God that is able to bring me to that Spiritual maturity. Experiences are exciting, but they don't promote Spiritual growth. Only the Word of God can feed the spirit.

Father, we thank You for Your Word. Help us, Lord, that we might devour the Word in order that we might grow and become strong. And let us be transformed by the Word of God as the Spirit uses the Word to bring conviction to our hearts, showing us where we have fallen short and do fall short. Showing us the divine model that which You would have us to be and showing us those areas which are yet lacking and where we, Lord, fall short of what You desire in and for our lives. Lord, help us that we would not be guilty of neglecting Your Word. But may we study to show ourselves approved. Workmen, that need not to be ashamed as we have the capacity to rightly divide Your Word of truth. Thank You, Lord, for Your Word. May we walk in its light. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.