

**Running the Race of Faith
2 Timothy 2:14-19 (Week 05) 05/17/2026
Protecting the Church from False Teaching**

This is my message written prior to being preached. Please excuse the bullet point format and any grammatical mistakes. This is meant to be spoken.

¹⁴ Remind them of these things, and charge them before God not to quarrel about words, which does no good, but only ruins the hearers. ¹⁵ 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. ¹⁶ But avoid irreverent babble, for it will lead people into more and more ungodliness, ¹⁷ and their talk will spread like gangrene. Among them are Hymenaeus and Philetus, ¹⁸ who have swerved from the truth, saying that the resurrection has already happened. They are upsetting the faith of some. ¹⁹ But God's firm foundation stands, bearing this seal: "The Lord knows those who are his," and, "Let everyone who names the name of the Lord depart from iniquity." (2 Timothy 2:14-19)

Introduction & Review

- If you've been with us in **our study through 2 Timothy**,
- You know that Paul's emphasis so far has been on Timothy's call to preach and teach the gospel.
- And I'm sure Timothy would have been happy to do **only** that. **But there was a problem.**
- As we saw in our study of **1 Timothy**, Paul had left Timothy **in Ephesus** to confront certain false teachers. **Paul began the letter with this reminder...**

³ As I urged you when I was going to Macedonia, remain at Ephesus so that you may charge certain persons not to teach any different doctrine, (1 Timothy 1:3)

- There were men (probably leaders in the Ephesians church) who were teaching different doctrine.
- Different from **the gospel of Jesus Christ that Paul preached.**
- And unfortunately, these same men, or possibly others, continued to plague the Ephesian church.
- So, beginning with **verse 14 of Chapter 2** Paul addresses this problem by giving Timothy crucial instructions for **protecting the church from false teaching.**
- And these instructions are just as crucial in our day.
- Because the church still has those who would seek to **teach different doctrine.**
- Now this passage certainly has special application here for Pastors and Elders.
- We, like Timothy, have been given the specific responsibility...
- **of protecting the church against false teaching.**
- As Paul, in **Acts 20**, said to the **Elders in Ephesus**, he says to the **Elders in all churches...**

²⁸ Pay careful attention to yourselves and to all the flock, in which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to care for the church of God, which he obtained with his own blood. ²⁹ I know that after my departure fierce wolves (false teachers) will come in among you, not sparing the flock; ³⁰ and from among your own selves will arise men speaking twisted things, to draw away the disciples after them. (Acts 20:28-30)

- **So clearly**, Pastors and elders are called to protect the church from fierce wolves who seek to devour the flock.
- But our passage is not just **for Pastors and Elders**.
- Because **every one of us** will, at one time or another, encounter a fierce wolf,
- Someone who is seeking to draw away **disciples from the true gospel into their falsehoods**.
- We may find him or her in a church, or on the radio, in a “Christian” book, on TV,
- Or in a conversation with another “**believer**”.
- And we’ll need to know how to respond. **Which brings us to our passage**.
- In these verses Paul gives Timothy **5 commands** that will help us protect **ourselves** and the church from false teaching. **And the first command is...**

1. Remind them of the Gospel

- **This is foundational**, this provides a wall of defense against false teaching.
- **Paul charges Timothy (the Pastor of the church in Ephesus) to...**

14 Remind them (the church) of these things... (2 Timothy 2:14)

- That word **remind** is in the **present imperative tense**.
- Which means that Timothy must **keep reminding the church** of “**these things**”.
- And what are **these things**.
- **Well**, they refer to what Paul has **thus far** been writing about in this letter.
- So let me remind you of what these things are....
- Paul has spent the first **chapter and a ½** focusing on Timothy’s call to engage in gospel ministry.
- In **verse 8 of Chapter 1** he told Timothy...

8 ...do not be ashamed of the testimony about our Lord, nor of me his prisoner, but share in suffering for the gospel by the power of God, (2 Timothy 1:8)

- Then in **Chapter 1:9-10** he **powerfully summarized the gospel**, ending with...

10 ...our Savior Christ Jesus, who abolished death and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel, (2 Timothy 1:10)

- Next in **verses 13 & 14 of chapter 1**, Paul calls Timothy **to follow and guard the gospel...**

13 Follow the pattern of the sound words that you have heard from me, in the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus. 14 By the Holy Spirit who dwells within us, guard the good deposit entrusted to you. (2 Timothy 1:13-14)

- Then in **chapter 2 verse 2** he calls Timothy to **transmit/teach** the gospel to others.

2 and what you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses entrust to faithful men, who will be able to teach others also. (2 Timothy 2:2)

- Paul then in **verses 3-7 of chapter 2, uses three symbols or metaphors to illustrate the difficulty of gospel ministry.**
- There was **the suffering soldier**, the **disciplined athlete**, and **the hard-working farmer.**
- All of which were meant to **inspire and encourage Timothy** to proclaim the gospel...
- **regardless of the consequences.**
- And finally, in **verses 8-13 of chapter 2, Paul calls** Timothy to remember the gospel.
- He begins by writing...

8 Remember Jesus Christ, risen from the dead, the offspring of David, as preached in my gospel, (2 Timothy 2:8)

- And he **concludes** with another summary of the **gospel and its impact.**

***11 The saying is trustworthy, for:
If we have died with him, we will also live with him;
12 if we endure, we will also reign with him;
if we deny him, he also will deny us;
13 if we are faithless, he remains faithful—
for he cannot deny himself. (2 Timothy 2:11-13)***

- And so, Paul's clear focus thus far in this letter has been **on the gospel of Jesus Christ.**
- He's in prison for preaching the gospel message, but he wants Timothy and others to continue to engage in gospel ministry, **even if it means suffering.**
- **And so, when Paul writes...**

14 Remind them of these things... (2 Timothy 2:14)

- He is saying keep reminding them **of the gospel.**
- The gospel I (Paul) preach, **the gospel of Jesus Christ that brings forgiveness, salvation,**
- **new life, immortality and eternal reward.**
- Keep reminding them of who Jesus is!
- Keep reminding them of what Jesus did for them!
- Keep reminding them of what it means to put their trust in Christ.
- Keep reminding them (keep preaching and teaching) the gospel.
- As pastors and Sunday school teachers and small group leaders, and disciple makers...
- We are to keep reminding believers of **the gospel of Jesus Christ.**
- We must as one commentator put it "**dare to be boring**" by **restating the fundamentals.**
- Now that's not to say we must seek to be boring.
- We can teach these truths in new ways, **using different illustrations,**
- relating gospel truths to our present circumstances.
- **But we must keep reminding them of these things.**
- And you might ask why the need to continually remind people of something they should all be familiar with and **in fact have all professed to believe.**

- Doesn't being a Christian mean, you **believe the gospel of Jesus Christ**.
- Why must we keep restating these foundational truths **of the gospel message**.
- Well let me give you three crucial reasons.
- **First**, and most obviously, **because people are forgetful**, we need **repetition to remember**.
- We may have professed **belief in the gospel in the past**,
- but do we remember what (who) we've trusted in and what that means for our lives?
- Then **second**, and a little less obvious...
- **We remind believers of the gospel because people are slow to understand and obey**.
- I remember when someone asked **Phil Busbee (one of our former pastors)** ...
- Why did his messages all seem to have the same application.
- That application being **the heart of the gospel**
- "WE MUST ENTER AND GROW IN RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD THROUGH JESUS CHRIST"
- Obeying him in every area of our lives.
- And Phil's answer was this: *When we get this application down, I will move on to something else.*
- His point being, we need to keep hearing the foundational gospel because we are slow to understand and fully obey it.
- We may have professed belief in Christ as our savior but are we on a daily basis submitting to him as LORD, that's the gospel we need to be reminded of.
- **So we need to be reminded of the gospel because we are forgetful and slow to obey.**
- **And the final reason we need** to be reminded of the gospel is because it guards us from false teaching or heresy.
- Given the context this the specific reason Paul wants Timothy to keep remind the church of the Gospel.
- Because as we keep the gospel message in the forefront of our minds,
- when we hear **contrary messages**, we are able to **recognize and reject them**.
- For example, the gospel says that...

⁸ For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, ⁹ not a result of works, so that no one may boast. (Ephesians 2:8-9)

- And so, if we hear a teacher claiming that **salvation involves any kind of work on our part**,
- Salvation by anything besides **faith alone**, then we can reject that teacher and his false teaching.
- So, Paul has called Timothy and all those who teach the word of God,
- **to continually remind people of the gospel.**
- And implied in that application is that all believers should put themselves in places where they will keep being reminded of the gospel.
- Attend a gospel reminding church, read gospel reminding books, sing gospel reminding songs.
- Because if we keep a clear understanding of the true gospel in the forefront of our minds,
- We are much less likely to fall for false teaching.

- But it seems that in the church in Ephesus **there was less reminding about the gospel,**
- and more **fighting over its precise interpretation,** For Paul then instructs Timothy to...

2. Restrict Word Fights

- **Verse 14** again...

14 Remind them of these things, (keep reminding them about the gospel) and charge them before God not to quarrel about words, which does no good, but only ruins the hearers. (2 Timothy 2:14)

- **This call to charge them before God** indicates the serious nature of Timothy's responsibility.
- God is observing **Timothy's leadership** and the **people's response**.
- And He is not impressed with their **quarrels about words**.
- That phrase **quarrel about words** is one word in the **Greek, *logo-mach-e-o***.
- And it literally means **to fight or strive about words**.
- We're talking **about word fights**.
- And it **especially applies to fights over trivial matters**.
- So, Paul is saying Timothy put a stop to these arguments over trivial matters...

which does no good

- Quarrels over trivial verbal matters do no good, **they are good for nothing**.
- But even worse they...

ruins the hearers

- That word hearers doesn't just mean **they happened to hear the quarrels**.
- It includes that idea of **taking them seriously** and even **involving themselves in the quarrel**.
- And that word **ruins** is a **very strong one**,
- Peter uses it to describe what took **place in Sodom and Gomorrah...**

6 if by turning the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah to ashes he condemned them to extinction (SAME WORD Logo-mach-e-o) ... (2 Peter 2:6)

- The meaning is one of destruction.
- Quarrels about words bring about destruction (ruin) in the lives of those engage in them.
- Paul had described this **ruin earlier**, in **1 Timothy**.
- He said that the **one who teaches false doctrine**.

4 ...has an unhealthy craving for controversy and for quarrels about words, which produce envy, dissension, slander, evil suspicions, 5 and constant friction among people who are depraved in mind... (1 Timothy 6:4-5)

- So, these fights over words have a very negative impact.
- They bring ruin (destruction, envy, dissension, slander, evil suspicion and constant friction).

- And so, Paul tells Timothy to charge his congregation...
- **DO NOT QUARREL ABOUT WORDS.**
- **So, I'm going to charge you all as well, don't quarrel about words.**
- But you might ask, **how do I know if I'm quarreling about words (which is wrong)**
- or seeking to correct some wrong beliefs **in the lives of my Christian brothers and sisters.**
- Which is sometimes called for, **in fact**, that's what Paul is calling Timothy to do in this passage.
- So how do we know the difference? Well, Paul doesn't tell us specifically.
- But we can draw some conclusions from the context... **Remember he wrote...**

14 Remind them of these things, (the foundational truths of the gospel) and charge them before God not to quarrel about words, which does no good, but only ruins the hearers. (2 Timothy 2:14)

- This tells us at least **three things** regarding these quarrels about words.
- **First**, they are **not foundational to the gospel.**
- **Paul is not talking about the need to defend the gospel of Jesus Christ.**
- We all must stand up against those who would seek to change the unchanging gospel.
- Or to Waterdown the word of God.
- We must fight the good fight for the truth of the gospel.
- **The gospel is not a trivial matter.**
- Paul is talking about are trivial matters, **side issues, non-essentials.**
- And he is saying don't get involved in **these kinds of arguments.**
- **Then second**, they are **quarrels, fights.**
- Paul is not talking about intelligent reasoned, Biblical based discussions between rational godly men and women over important issues.
- He's talking about often emotionally charged fights over disputed, trivial matters by immature believers, **or especially false teachers.**
- **Then third**, and most importantly, these word fights have a **very negative effect on the hearers.**
- They don't bring **about greater faith and love for God.**
- Instead, they result in ruin (lots of bad stuff) for those who listen and take in these quarrels.
- So, to summarize, we are not to engage in **quarrels** over trivial matters, for they result in ruin.
- And yet we are still called to engage in gospel ministry, proclaiming the gospel to all.
- And defending gospel against false teaching.
- And to do that, Paul says... **We must...**

3. Rightly Handle God's Word

- In **verse 15** Paul writes, instead of quarreling about words...

15 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. (2 Timothy 2:15)

- Now this is a great verse for us to know and memorize and apply.
- For it not only helps us **protect the church against false teachers**,
- but it also gives us direction for knowing and teaching the word of God.
- **Paul begins with the command...**

Do your best

- This means to **put forth every effort, to strive, to be diligent, zealous even.**
- As we saw with the farmer, **God calls his children to work-hard in gospel ministry.**
- And in the **same way we are called to do our best,**
- work hard to rightly handle the word of truth. More on what that means shortly.
- **But first,** I want us to see that **this is serious business** because God has his eye on us.
- As we go about our lives and ministry, we are in **effect presenting ourselves to him.**
- And it is those **who do their best** that He approves of.
- These are the **workers who have no need to be ashamed.**
- We need not be ashamed **if we do our very best for our Lord and Master.**
- **But the converse is true as well.**
- If we don't do our best, **if we are lazy, apathetic about God's call to proclaim his word,**
- then we are **not approved by God,** and we should be rightly ashamed.
- **So as God's workers we must...**

rightly handling the word of truth

- And what is **the word of truth,** it is the word of God, **it is the gospel of Jesus Christ.**
- We see this in Ephesians, **where Paul tells believers that...**

¹³ In [Christ] you also, when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, (Ephesians 1:13)

- So, this is our work, to **rightly handle the word of God, the gospel of Jesus Christ.**
- That phrase **rightly handling** in the Greek literally means **"to cut straight or without deviation."**
- In Paul's culture, **workers cut stones straight,**
- They cut roads straight through the countryside,
- and they cut fields straight with plows.
- In context, however, **the task is to handle the gospel faithfully (in a straight way).**
- We **cut straight** when we **proclaim the whole truth of the gospel.**
- When we exhort all to repent and believe (to have faith) in Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior.
- This is not **only crucial for dealing with false teaching.**
- For as we will see **shortly false teachers swerve from the truth.**
- But this idea of cutting straight emphasizes the importance of not changing the gospel **to conform to the crooked culture of the day.**
- Let me give a few examples of what I mean by this...

- **In a world that believes (falsely teaches that) all religions are the same.**
- We must rightly divide the word of truth that says...

⁵ For there is one God, and there is one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, (1 Timothy 2:5)

- The gospel makes it clear that our culture is crooked when it says all religions are the same.
- There is only one God, one true religion, only one way to have relationship with God
- and that is through his Son, Jesus Christ.
- And in a world that teaches **all people are basically good** and therefore don't need saving, just a better education.
- We must **rightly divide** the word of truth which says...

¹² All have turned aside; together they have become worthless; no one does good, not even one." (Romans 3:12)

- The gospel teaches that again our culture is crooked,
- it is wrong **to say or think** that all people are basically good.
- **In fact**, all people are basically bad, sinners and **therefore need a savior.**
- And in a world that says Jesus was **a good man but not God**
- We must rightly divide the word of truth that says...

⁹ For in him the whole fullness of deity dwells bodily, (Colossians 2:9)

- The gospel teaches that our culture is wrong about who Jesus is,
- He is not **just** a good man who taught some good things, **He is God come in Human flesh.**
- And we could add many more examples of how culture conflicts with the gospel.
- And the point is, **regardless of how crooked the culture is,**
- We must **cut straight**, we must **proclaim the full, straight powerful gospel of Jesus Christ.**
- This is true for us as individuals, and it is **certainly true in the church.**
- We cannot change, modify, or tone down the gospel.
- We can't seek to make it more palatable or even more entertaining.
- I've heard people use **1 Corinthians 9:22...**

²² ...I have become all things to all people, that by all means I might save some. (1 Corinthians 9:22)

- People use this verse to justify modifying the gospel, **or not preaching the full gospel,**
- Let's get them saved first, by only talking about the love, grace, mercy and forgiveness of God.
- Focus on John 3:16
- And then later we'll drop the bomb about all the things God says they can no longer do.
- **But the full gospel says you must count the cost...**

- **That yes**, “God loves us enough to accept us as we are,
- **but he loves us too much to leave us that way.**
- The full gospel is not just **John 3:16** or **Ephesians 2:8-9**,
- it includes the entire word of God; it includes Jesus’s words in **Matthew 16:24**...

24 Then Jesus told his disciples, “If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. (Matthew 16:24)

- So, when Paul says, I have become all things to all people that by all means I might save some.
- He is not talking about changing or limiting the gospel message.
- He’s talking about changing his behavior, **personally relating to people where they are.**
- In fact, **verse 22** begins with...

To the weak I became weak, that I might win the weak.

- Paul didn’t make the gospel weak, but he willingly became weak,
- He shared his weakness with those who were weak that he might win the weak.
- **But the gospel remained the same.**
- Now that’s not to say that we **should forget our human audience**,
- We have to know their language, their culture,
- and we have to present the gospel in a manner than can be understood.
- So, they can **either accept or reject the truth about Jesus Christ.**
- But ultimately our message (the gospel) is meant **to please an audience of One.**
- You must...

present yourself to God as one approved

- **That word “Approved”** means “tested and found worthy.”
- God endorses those **who faithfully proclaim his word with conviction**,
- **whether the message is popular or not.**
- And what this boils down to is that we should watch ourselves for undue interest in popular approval.
- This is one of the strategies of false teachers.
- Instead of preaching the full word of God,
- They adopt the values of their culture thus increasing their popularity in the culture.
- **We should beware of Bible teaching that has changed to reflect the current culture.**
- **For example**, and this is a big one.
- What is currently being taught in many churches about **women in ministry** is very different from what was taught over the last 2000 years.
- So, you have to ask yourself, **is this new teaching** based on a better understanding of Scripture or is it based on the current culture.
- **YOU MAKE THE CALL.**

- And this push to modify the gospel, is something that Pastors especially must be aware of.
- Our job, my job is not to communicate the word of Cliff **or the word of the culture**.
- That would be easy. My job, and any Pastor's job, is to communicate the word of God.
- And to do that, as Paul makes clear, **takes hard work**.
- Again, we are approved when we do our best,
- when we work hard to rightly handle the word of God.
- When I come to a text that I'm going to teach on Sunday morning.
- I spend time not only reading the passage many times and praying for God to help me understand what it means.
- But I also read through different commentaries. **I study key words and phrases**.
- I look at cultural and historical background of the text.
- I look at **other passages of Scripture** that teach similar things.
- All in an effort to get at the meaning that God intended **when he inspired the Biblical author**.
- And once I've come to an understanding of the meaning,
- I then seek to **apply the scripture in our context**.
- The question I ask is this: Based on the meaning of this text, what is its relevance for us today.
- Because part of (or even the goal of) **rightly handling the word of truth** is applying it to our lives.
- **And then finally, I take what I've learned, going over it again and again,**
- **write it out in a way that is understandable, applicable, and hopefully not too boring.**
- Now I share this with you not, so you are impressed with my hard work,
- but so, you understand the hard work needed to **rightly handle God's word**.
- Because if you are going to teach the word in any setting,
- or even if you are going to do personal study of the word.
- And especially if you are going to stand up against false teaching.
- You too must be a workman; you must do the work so that you come to a right understanding of what God is saying and what he wants you to do about it.
- I do the work for you on one passage a week, but that leave you to do the work on the rest of God's word.
- Because if you don't then you'll find yourself engaged, not in the right handling (understanding) of God's word, **but in what comes next in our passage**.

- Paul has made the importance of **rightly handling the word of truth** clear.
- And at least part of the reason for that is so that we can...

4. **Reject Godless Babble**

- Paul tells Timothy...

16 But avoid irreverent babble, for it will lead people into more and more ungodliness, ¹⁷ and their talk will spread like gangrene. (2 Timothy 2:16-17)

- **Irreverent babble** is empty, godless, and profane chatter.
- It's saying words that are devoid of God's truth, **therefore they have no value**,
- They are vain and pointless, **false teaching**. It's a bunch of **godless blah, blah, blah...**
- And if you want examples of this sort of talk, **just turn on your TV!**
- **But that's to be expected from a godless media.**
- The problem is when this **irreverent babble** makes its way into **God's church**.
- Again, **this is serious matter because irreverent babble...**

will lead people into more and more ungodliness

- With their many words, the babblers consider themselves to be **enlightened or progressive**.
- But they are certainly not **rightly handling the word of truth**.
- If they refer to scripture at all, **it will be out of context and for their own purposes**.
- Which leads, **not to a better understanding of God's word, but to more and more ungodliness**.
- And the unfortunate truth is there are always people who **will both speak and listen to such babble**. Paul says...

17 ...their talk will spread like gangrene.

- According to Strongs Dictionary...

Gangrene is a disease by which any part of the body suffering from inflammation becomes so corrupted that, unless a remedy be seasonably applied, the evil continually spreads, attacks other parts, and at last eats away the bones. (Strongs)

- What a horrible picture of how irreverent babble **can infect the church**.
- Clearly, Paul is concerned about the **spread of this type of false teaching**.
- So, he **gives an example of what it looks like...**

17 and their talk will spread like gangrene. Among them are Hy-men-ae-us and Phil-e-tus, ¹⁸ who have swerved from the truth, saying that the resurrection has already happened. They are upsetting the faith of some. (2 Timothy 2:17-18)

- The basic problem with these two guys, **Paul says, is that they**

have swerved from the truth

- Now to **swerve from the truth** means **there is truth to swerve from**.
- And the truth **Paul is referring to is the gospel** that we are to be **continually reminded of**.
- The gospel is **internalized by the hard work of rightly handling the word of truth**.
- But if you aren't reminded of the gospel and you don't do the work to rightly handle (teach and understand) the word of God then you will swerve (deviate) from the truth.
- **You will become a false teacher.**
- That's what happened to **Hymenaeus and Philetus**.
- And the main truth they swerved from had to do with the resurrection.
- They were...

saying that the resurrection has already happened.

- Now this is not talking about the resurrection of Jesus that had already happened some 30 years before.
- This **false belief** denied the **future bodily resurrection of Christians**,
- and instead taught that a **spiritual resurrection at conversion** was the sum total of the **Christian's resurrection**.
- According to Theologian **D. A. Carson**...

The false teachers viewed "resurrection" as a new spiritual awareness or state of the soul that had already taken place. They did not think Christians would receive new bodies after death like Jesus did. This contradicted the teachings of both Jesus and Paul. (D. A. Carson)

- We see this clearly in what Paul wrote to the Corinthians...

²⁰ But in fact Christ has been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep. ²¹ For as by a man came death, by a man has come also the resurrection of the dead. (1 Corinthians 15:20-21)

- The truth is Christians, like Christ will experience a bodily resurrection.
- **In fact, this is our great hope!**
- And so, when they claimed that

the resurrection has already happened. They are upsetting the faith of some.

- This irreverent babble, **this false teaching was causing harm in the church**.
- If the resurrection has already come, **how can we hold much hope for the future?**
- How can this **teaching make sense of the death of a believer?**
- It meant that **when a believer dies physically, they stayed dead**.
- **This life is all there is.**

- And this false message was rightly upsetting the faithful.
- **Professor Beth Felker Jones** remarks,

For to claim that the present—with all of its pain—is all that God has in store for us is to drain life of meaning and hope. It is to believe that this broken life is all there is, to believe that sin and death have the final word. (Beth Felker Jones)

- So, **this false teaching** was causing trouble in the church.
- **And this is true of all false teaching.**
- Quarrels about words led to the ruin of the hearers.
- And irreverent babble spread like gangrene and upset the faith of some.
- So, Timothy's job was clear.
- He must focus on **reminding people of the gospel**,
- He must **restrict quarrels about words**
- He must do his very best to **rightly handle the word of God**
- AND He must **reject irreverent babble.**
- **And not only that, but he must also teach the congregation to do the same.**
- **He is responsible for protecting the church against false teachers.**
- And this must have seemed a difficult task to Timothy,
- it certainly seems like a difficult task for me.
- And so, Paul ends, with **these encouraging words...**

5. Rely on God's Sovereignty

- Timothy, yes, you must work hard in **the many responsibilities God has given you**,
- but you need not rely on your own efforts to **protect the church from these false teachers.**
- **Because Verse 19...**

¹⁹ But God's firm foundation stands, bearing this seal: "The Lord knows those who are his," and, "Let everyone who names the name of the Lord depart from iniquity." (2 Timothy 2:19)

- Quarrels about words, Irreverent babble, false teaching may cause difficulties in the church,
- They may even upset the faith of some.
- **But they cannot wreck its foundation.**
- And what is the firm foundation?
- Well in this context Paul seems to be referring to those who have been sealed.
- That word **sealed expresses ownership and security.**
- God seals those who belong to Him. **Those who name the name of the Lord.**
- Those whom God has chosen and called as his own. **In a word, the elect.**

- So, what Paul is saying is that no false teaching is going to **unsave the saved**.
- **As Jesus said of his sheep...**

28 I give them eternal life, and they will never perish, and no one will snatch them out of my hand. 29 My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all, and no one is able to snatch them out of the Father's hand. (John 10:28-29)

- God seals, he protects his own until the day of salvation.
- As Peter wrote, those who have been born again...

5 ...by God's power are being guarded through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. (1 Peter 1:5)

- The salvation of those who **have truly put their faith in Christ is being guarded by God**.
- **Now** it can still be upsetting when we see people like **Hymenaeus** and **Philetus** “swerve” from the true faith that they once proclaimed.
- **But take heart**, God is in control he has sealed his own.
- **And what has he sealed them with**, with these words... First...

The Lord knows those who are his

- This is quote from **Numbers 16**. That chapter describes the rebellion of **Korah**.
- Korah **gathered 250** leaders of Israel to accuse Moses and Aaron of usurping leadership of Israel.
- And Moses asked God to judge between him and **Korah, saying:**

5 ...“In the morning the LORD will show (or make known) who is his, (Numbers 16:5)

- Paul quotes the Septuagint (the Greek translation of the OT),
- which read, **“The Lord knows who is his.”**
- That is, **God knows who does and does not belong to him**.
- God called **Moses and Aaron (they belonged to him)**;
- He did not know Korah, **who soon perished for his rebellion**.
- And in a similar way, God calls all true believers.
- And even though **WE** might not know exactly who they are, **GOD does**.
- And God will protect them, he will not let them be snatched from his hand by anyone or anything, **including word fighters and godless babblers**.
- However, **being sealed by God**, does not give you a license to sin.
- In fact, **continuing in your sin** is a clear sign that you **are not sealed by God**.
- For Paul says that those **who belong to him** are also sealed with **this command...**

Let everyone who names the name of the Lord depart from iniquity

- This is a call to holiness for God's people.
- If you belong to the Lord, **if you name his name**, if you call him your Lord and Savior.
- **Then you must depart from iniquity**, you must **seek to live a life of holiness**.

- Peter makes this very point in his first letter.

14 As obedient children (those who belong to the Lord), do not be conformed to the passions of your former ignorance, 15 but as he who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct, (1 Peter 1:14-15)

- So, to summarize Paul's **point here in verse 19**.
- The Lord promises to "preserve those who are his, despite the threats caused by false teachers."
- Korah did not destroy Israel, and no one can destroy the church of Jesus Christ.
- **No one can destroy those who belong to the Lord.**
- Furthermore, those who belong to the Lord are called to live for Him, **to depart from iniquity.**
- And so, as Timothy reads verse 19, he can breathe a sigh of relief.
- Yes, he must work hard to protect the church against false teaching.
- But he is not alone and the ultimate responsibility is not HIS, it is Gods.
- Timothy and all Pastors, Elders and True Believers are the means that God uses to protect his church against false teachers.
- And we can apply this principle to all the work God calls us to.
- We must step out in faith,
- Proclaiming the gospel, serving the needy, showing mercy to all, making disciples and more.
- We must work hard, to accomplish God's purposes.
- But ultimately, in his Sovereignty, he will accomplish his purposes in and through us.
- I don't know about you but that causes me to breathe a sigh of relief.
- And it also inspires me to work all the harder, knowing God is working in and through me.
- **Would you join me in prayer!**