

II Timothy, Sermon #11

II Timothy

I have entitled today's message "Christian Catastrophes, Part 1"

Let us stand for the reading of God's Holy Word

II Timothy 2:14-18

Let us pray

You may be seated

Christian Catastrophes

Vs. 14a

Remind them of these things

Them refers to the church (whole congregation) at Ephesus.

God's people have always had the tendency to forget

- Forget where we came from—lost to saved; miry clay to solid rock
- Forget that we are nothing without Christ

That's why God commanded us to partake in Communion—to remember the sacrifice of Christ, the price that was paid for our sins.

It makes our sacrifices for God look small.

Any good preacher will remind his church.

Timothy was to be stern about it—pastors are not to be “patsies” and pushovers.

Was Jesus ever gentle? Was Jesus ever strong?

Only the Holy Spirit can help us to know when to be which

- Timothy was to charge them before the Lord, vs. 14.
- This is a strong word!

★God wanted to make sure that Pastor Timothy and the church got the message.

Vs. 14 – charge them before the Lord.

They were to be consciously and continually aware of **the presence of God**.

Being especially aware of God's presence adds a measure of healthy fear.

It's like when the owner of the company you work for walks though the plant.

Consciousness of God helps us not to sin, but to serve Him more faithfully.

When we come to church, we are gathering with God's people around God's Word

- Singing, giving, and hearing from God
- It keeps us conscious and daily aware of His presence.

Look at II Timothy 4:1, saying, "*I charge thee therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom.*"

"Preach the Word, Pastor Timothy. You better be aware that when you open My book and speak, I'm listening and I'm present."

Would I preach any different if Jesus was sitting in the front row?

Would my TV viewing be any different?

Would my treatment of my kids, my wife, or husband be any different if Jesus was there?

Timothy was to keep the church conscious of God.

- How can a believer watch pornography and be conscious of God?
- How can he steal, lie, and gossip and be aware of God?

This is why church is so important—why the Bible is so important—why prayer is so important.

Now, what was Pastor Timothy to remind his church of?

What was he to warn them about?

Vs. 14b

"Strive not about words" means *disputes* of words.

God's people need to stick to essentials—people get into squabbles about such meaningless stuff.

Titus 3:9 . . . That sort of talk is time-wasting and confusing at best and spiritually harmful at worst . . .

We don't need to argue about empty words or philosophies or our little differences.
This would include gossip, evil speaking

God solemnly charges the church at Ephesus **not to wrangle about words, (not to argue about words) which is useless.**

There is no profit in that

The reason to avoid such talk is because it ruins the hearers – vs. 14c

Ephesians 4:29, *“Let no corrupt communication proceed out of our mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers.”*

How many of us are guilty of such talk?

Look at the damage it does to those who hear it.

What does the Bible say? Vs. 14e

It subverts them, overthrows—literally a demolition of their soul.

The Greek word here is catastrophe—words have a devastating effect—carries the connotation of being spiritually ruined.

God's people are ruined by talk and they can become Christian catastrophes, literally ruined.

Instead of building up the hearers, it tears them down; instead of bringing enrichment, it brings disaster.

This kind of talk causes confusion, doubt, discouragement, and disobedience.

The barrage of ungodly ideas and verbiage that is today assaulting the church is depressing.

More frightening than the false ideas themselves, however, is the indifference to them, and often acceptance of them, by those who name the name of Christ and claim to be born again.

Abortion, theistic evolution, homosexuality, no-fault divorce, feminism, self-esteem, political correctness, and many other unbiblical concepts and attitudes have invaded the church at an alarming rate and to an alarming degree.

As Christians become less and less familiar with Scripture, they become easy prey for jargon that sounds Christian but is against God's truth.

Whatever the specific doctrinal errors were that threatened the church at Ephesus, they obviously were serious.

★ Instead of striving about words, the Bible tells us what we should be doing.

Study what? The Bible. (Psychology? George Barna and his latest polls? Church growth books?) God wants us to be Biblically minded.

- The problem with God's people today is that they are not Biblically minded.
- The great scandal of today's Church: *Christians without Christian minds*, Christians who do not think Christianly

Proverbs 4:23, "*Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life.*"

Proverbs 23:7, "*For as he thinketh in his heart, so is he.*"

We can never have a Christian mind without reading the Scriptures regularly because we cannot be profoundly influenced by that which we do not know.

If we are filled with God's Word, our life can then be informed, influenced, and directed by God—our relationships, our parenting, our career, our decisions, our moral life.

The way to a Christian mind is through God's Word!

The word "study" means "to be diligent, be zealous." Earnestly Study

- The word has nothing to do with books and teachers.
- The emphasis is that the man of God, the woman of God, is to be diligent in the Bible—zealous about the Bible

The greatest teacher in all the world is the Holy Spirit – He can lead us into all truth.

Jesus said, He shall teach you all things, John 14:26.

Folks, this takes work – the Bible calls us what? Verse 15, **a workman**, and we need to be diligent in our labors so that we will not be ashamed when our life and our ministries are inspected.

Vs. 15b, c

Each of us as God's workman will be either *approved* or *ashamed*.

- The word *approved* means "one who has been tested and found acceptable."
- "Ashamed" means that a persons work is below standard and cannot be accepted.

So the purpose of our diligence is not to please others, and certainly not to please ourselves.

The idea in this passage is to study to show thyself approved unto **God**.

Don't get hung up worrying about man and his approval.

Young people, don't be worried about what other people think of you.

You just be concerned about what God thinks of you.

Vs. 15, rightly dividing the Word of Truth – vs. 15 – this means handling accurately the Word of God, properly dividing, properly expounding, understanding it.

Handling accurately means literally to cut it straight. We need Sunday School teachers, preachers, parents delivering the truth!
Not beating around the bush, tempering it down, watering it down.

It was used of a construction worker cutting a straight line, of a farmer plowing a straight furrow, of a mason setting a straight line of bricks, or of workmen building a straight road.

Every aspect of God's Word is to be handled **accurately**.

Just because a person has a degree or is called "Reverend" doesn't mean we are going to receive the straight teaching of the Word.

The first and most important principle is basing doctrine and standards of living on Scripture alone (*sola scriptura*)

To twist God's Word in an effort to justify our sin or laziness.

We can't just lift out a verse here and a verse there and choose to ignore a passage here and a passage there.

For the life of me, I cannot see how Christians can defend the movie industry.

This is the reason that the Bible needs to be taught in its entirety.

Paul said he had declared the whole counsel of God's Word.

Israel and the Church
Jesus Christ

If Pastor Timothy uses the Word correctly, it will build their church the way God wants it to be built.

But a sloppy worker will handle God's Word lazily or even deceitfully in order to make it say what he wants it to say

II Corinthians 4:2, *“But have renounced the hidden things of dishonesty, not walking in craftiness, nor handling the word of God deceitfully; but by manifestation of the truth commending ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God.”*

We can be lead astray.

We can become Christian catastrophes.

We need to study, be diligent in this Book—accurately understanding the message of this Book.

Vs. 16-18 – Christian Catastrophes

Let us stand for closing invitation

Every eye closed.

Maybe you are a Christian catastrophe and you need to be recovered.

You have been devastated by the words of other believers.

Jesus desires that you come back. Don't walk out on the Bible, Jesus Christ, the institution of the church—just because God's people gave words to no profit.

We must work in the Word—labor in the Word.

Be diligent to present ourselves approved unto God.

No excuses

Maybe you are lost today. You have never been born again.

The Bible says that we are dead in our trespasses and sins.

We know what it means to trespass – broken the rules of God.

We have sinned but God has provided a way