

Discipleship

Part 4

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[00:00:01] We referred last night to Acts chapter 16, where Paul discovered a young man called Timothy, and he was described as a certain disciple. And not only so, but he had a good testimony from the brethren. This young man Paul desired to have with him in his service. We considered a little the first letter that Paul wrote to Timothy, and saw how Paul sought to encourage this young man, give him further features of training, with a view that he should be thoroughly equipped to represent the Lord. And tonight we want to continue this, and see this second letter that Paul wrote to young Timothy, in very different circumstances from the first letter, and indicating some of the [00:01:07] responsibilities that belong to the disciple, as he would be true to the Lord in this world. We haven't the slightest doubt that this letter is relevant to the days in which we find ourselves, the latter days indeed, when apostasy is gathering strength, when declension is everywhere, where the keynote is to be faithful in the midst of the confusion. A number of years had elapsed since Paul wrote his first letter, and now he was in prison, not a free agent as he was when he wrote the first letter. And also a great deal of declension had come in amongst the people of God. So much so, that Paul says to Timothy, all those in Asia, they've left me. And when he was [00:02:08] standing before Nero, they all forsook him, just as they forsook his master. And so the conditions are very, very different. And we've often heard, and heard rightly, that when Paul wrote to Timothy in the first letter, he was considering matters that had to be attended to, when the saints were in a reasonably good condition. There was order, and there was some measure of spiritual power amongst the people of God. But that had changed, and changed rapidly. And instead of order and spiritual power, things were in a very broken and in confused condition. And because of this, Paul is encouraging Timothy to rekindle the gift that was in him. Obviously, Timothy had been very [00:03:06] affected by these broken and confused conditions. Perhaps saying to himself, as perhaps we have often said to ourselves, is it worthwhile going on? Things are so difficult. Things are so confused. Can the Lord direct us through this confusion? And perhaps we tend to give up in our minds. And perhaps this kind of feeling affected the mind of Timothy. And we find in this epistle, it's often been noted, I know it's nothing new, we find in this epistle that Paul continually directs the gaze of Timothy to Christ Jesus. Seven times over in this epistle, he refers to things that are in Christ Jesus. And dear brethren, that's a very encouraging thing. I'm sure it was [00:04:02] encouraging for Paul in his day. I'm sure it was encouraging for Timothy. And it's equally encouraging for us. That if things are confused today, and they are, no one can deny it, thank God everything is secure in Christ Jesus. And there's no power upon earth or in hell can in any way interfere with the things that are secure in Christ Jesus. And what Paul is saying, look Timothy, everything's all right, everything's secure in him. Eventually, everything is going to be carried out according to the purpose of God. In the meantime, you align yourself with that purpose, even though things are confused. Get your bearings right through being occupied with the Lord in glory. And so he sought to encourage this young man who obviously had [00:05:03] been very much

affected by the condition of things that prevailed. So he says in chapter one, wherefore I put thee in remembrance that thou stir up the gift of God which is in thee by the putting on of my hands. Mr. Darby, in his translation, uses the term rekindle, the very expression itself, indicating to us something that had been burning brightly, but was on the point of going out. A fire, the flames low, the fuel low, and the apostle desiring that this bright flame might be rekindled, this fire rekindled, so that there will be a bright flame of testimony in this young man's life. Mr. Darby has a very interesting footnote in his new translation where he says [00:06:06] in connection with this word rekindle, he says the keynote of the epistle is energy in the face of the darkening condition of the assembly. Energy expressed by devotedness in spite of the conditions that prevailed. You remember the Lord gave a wonderful testimony to John the Baptist. He said he was a bright and shining light. There was no need for rekindling in the life of John the Baptist.

His pathway was straight. He never deviated. He maintained a testimony for the Lord in spite of all that was against him, and the Lord gave him that wonderful commendation. Paul, in writing to the Philippians, he said that they were luminaries in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation. He [00:07:09] says ye shine as lights in the world or luminaries in the world, and you remember the Lord in Matthew 5, he said to the disciples, ye are the light of the world, and so as we think of these expressions, we see that the Bible requires of us a testimony that diffuses light, and light dispels darkness, and confusion and darkness, they walk hand in hand. But here the idea is more of a fire than perhaps a torch or a lamp, and the idea is that this fire is to be rekindled, that is to produce benefit for the people of God, and testimony for God. Now to encourage Timothy, he says, [00:08:04] God hath not given us the spirit of fear, but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind. Now these three things are very important for the disciple as he seeks to answer to his obligations to the master in this world, not to be governed by the prevailing conditions, love. Now how is this love to be expressed? It doesn't say, but one would surely think that first of all, love to God, and love to Christ, and then love to the people of God, and eventually love to the unconverted. Certainly not love to those who propagated evil doctrines, or who were upsetting the people of God. No, there were stern reproofs from the Apostle for people of that kind, but the disciple [00:09:04] was to be marked by love, and this love means the settled disposition. The Greek word that is used here conveys that idea, the settled disposition of the disciple, not something that fluctuates, something that abides, something that's true, and real, and lasting. And then not only love, not only love, but power, and the word here is dynamis, that power that can accomplish things. The word that we get, our English word from dynamite, this is the kind of power that accomplishes things for God. And so the Apostle has this, the servant has this in the gift of the Holy Spirit, the sound mind. It's not a question here of perhaps someone's mind being [00:10:01] unstable, but having a sober mind, able to think clearly and distinctly, able to put things in their proper place, able to judge rightly what is right and what is wrong, what is pleasing to God, what is according to the word of God, what is against the word of God, a clear mind. Dear brethren, I believe in the gift of the Holy Spirit, we have the power to do these things. And he goes on to say, be not thou therefore ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me his prisoner, but be thou partaker of the afflictions of the gospel according to the power of God. Don't be ashamed of the things that you've learned, Timothy. These things are worthwhile. They are real, they are true, they come from the Lord. They've been handed on to me from the Lord. I have imparted them to you. Don't be ashamed of them. It's the testimony [00:11:04] of the Lord. I'm his prisoner. Don't be ashamed of me either. And he says, be prepared to suffer afflictions. Dear brethren, many of our brethren in parts of the world are experiencing the reality of these things. I remember listening to a tape where a brother was speaking about a certain conference where certain Christians were speaking, and they were speaking about these scriptures, suffering for the sake of Christ. The brother said every one of these speakers had realized in his life what suffering was. They had suffered. They had suffered the

loss of possessions. They had been imprisoned. They had been tortured. They had been subjected to terrible treatment. [00:12:02] They knew what they were talking about. Perhaps when we talk about suffering for Christ, perhaps we don't know very much about it. I'm sure as being faithful Christians, we know a little. But Paul is saying to Timothy, be thou partaker of the afflictions of the gospel, and this is very important, according to the power of God. Not one person from Pentecost onwards would have been able to have endured persecution apart from the power of God. It was the power of God that enabled persons to go to the stake during the Reformation period. It was the power of God that enabled many Christians to endure martyrdom and persecution and pain and privation of liberty. The power of God was behind them. Although our souls, our minds might [00:13:09] recoil from the idea of suffering and persecution of that character, thank God, if the time came, there would be power available to help us to endure it. We might, like Timothy, give up. We might go back, but we might be recalled to the pathway of faithfulness and receive strength to go on and be faithful to the Lord. And who can tell, dear brethren? Who can tell in these days? But we might be faced with this very thing yet in our own country. Who knows? Nobody knows. Oh, how thankful we are that there are divine resources. We wouldn't be so foolish as to say we would do this and that and the next thing. We can remember only too well the proud boasts of [00:14:02] Peter, what he would do and how signally he failed. But we would desire, I'm sure we would, as loving the Lord, to be faithful to him. And so Paul reminds Timothy of the responsibilities of the disciple responsible to the teaching that he had learned. Now Paul wasn't saying anything different from what the Lord said. There aren't two philosophies in the Bible or three or four or more. There's only one, and it runs all through the divine teaching from God himself. And if the Lord is speaking in the Gospels, and Peter and John are speaking in the Acts, and then Paul is speaking, and then they speak in the Epistles, it's the same voice all the time. It's the voice of God, and that voice is instructing us how to live. And so when Paul was saying to Timothy, [00:15:02] Timothy, you take your part in the sufferings of the testimony, the Lord told his disciples, in the world he shall have tribulation. In me, peace, be of good cheer. I have overcome the world. And when Paul was instructing Timothy to be of good courage, because there was the spirit of love and power and wise discretion or soundness of mind, aren't we hearing the Lord saying to his disciples, why are you so fearful? Fear not. Don't be afraid of those who can destroy the body, and that's all they can do. Fear God. It's the same thing in principle, and so the teaching is always the same. Whether it's the Lord or the Lord's servant, it's the inspired words of God for their encouragement. Now we come to chapter 2, and we said a little about this last night, [00:16:07] about the man being strong before he put on the whole armor of God. And here Paul is saying to Timothy, thou therefore my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus. Sometimes we might feel that we are strong in our knowledge of the Bible, or we might be strong in the fact that we're in a very healthy company of the Lord's people, or we might feel we're strong because we're engaged in some particular form of Christian service. And dear brethren, none of these things are able to hold us in the time of difficulty. The only place of strength and power in difficult times is in Christ Jesus. And notice he says it's in the grace that is in Christ Jesus. Now if I [00:17:06] understand this term correctly, Paul's saying, Timothy, you take account of the favor that you are in. Just for a moment, just you consider how wonderfully you are blessed. You have a place in Christ before God that can never alter. You're beyond the reach of every power that is against you. Your eternal destiny is secure. You have a place in God's affections. You have a place of grace and love that no other person has. I mean no other unconverted person. And so this is true of every Christian. The wonderful favor and blessing that we stand in. Now I believe, dear brethren, that every blessing that we have brings its corresponding responsibility. That if we have [00:18:05] a place of favor, then it's right that our lives should be lived in accord with it. And so if Timothy was to be strong or strengthened or encouraged by taking account of his place of favor in Christ Jesus, he was to continue in the teaching that he had had from Paul and was to impart it to others who were faithful, who in their turn would give it to others. I've heard it

said or suggested that we're in the day of the others. And sometimes that has been put in such a way that the others are of an inferior quality than those who have gone before. Now I don't think this, dear brethren. I think the line of succession that we have here is a line of succession that can [00:19:01] maintain the truth of God in spite of the conditions that prevail. Now of course it began at the top in perfection in our Lord Jesus Christ, the faithful and true witness. That was handed on to the Apostles. We are extremely thankful for the devotedness of their testimony. And then the Apostle Paul came along and many things were committed to him that the twelve didn't receive. And then Paul handed that on to Timothy and Paul says concerning Timothy, a man of God. And then Timothy is to hand it over not to inferior persons but to faithful persons. And the faithful persons are to hand it on to others and I haven't the slightest doubt that the others are to be faithful persons too. And are to maintain the truth at the height at which it was revealed in the person of [00:20:02] Christ and in his servants. Now that's a very high standard but God never lowers his standard. And he expects us today, shall we say the modern disciples of the Lord, to maintain his truth in spite of the conditions that prevail. Then he goes on to say, thou therefore endure hardness as a good soldier of Jesus Christ. No man that woth entangleth himself with the affairs of this life that he may please him who has chosen him to be a soldier. Three things are brought forward in the way of illustration. The soldier, the athlete, and the farmer. And they're all very interesting. But what they set forth is what we said a few moments ago, energy. You remember the footnote of Mr. Darby? Energy in the face of the darkening condition of the assembly. Now these three figures all employ [00:21:09] this great principle of energy expressed in the things of the Lord. The soldier prepared to endure suffering in his warfare and not allowing himself to be entangled with anything that would interfere with his warfare. The athlete governed by rules and regulations and crowned lawfully when he wins.

And the farmer laboring at his work in order to enjoy the fruits of his labor before the master gets what is due to him. And so we want to consider these things. We find Paul often referring to this figure of a soldier. He himself speaks about it at the end of the epistle. I have a good fight. And so here he's saying to Timothy, Timothy, the true disciple is taught by the Lord [00:22:07] to fight, to contend for the truth of God, to make sure that he doesn't give way in spite of the suffering. He's got to endure suffering. It's the logical outcome of representing God in this world. When we read the Bible, we find all the men of God and all the women of God, they had to go through difficult periods. It wasn't easy. There were trials to be born. There were difficulties to be gone through, problems to solve. And all this was part of the suffering and endurance that marked those who stood for God. No one ever had an easy pathway that stood for the things of God. And we can think of them not only in the Bible, but down through the history of the testimony. [00:23:05] What suffering? You remember in the parable, it speaks about those who bore the heat of the day. Dear brethren, we are sitting here tonight in peace and quietness, enjoying something of the truth of God because of those who have borne the heat of the day. They wouldn't give way in spite of all the attacks of the enemy. Nothing would move them. And because of that, thank God we can enjoy something of liberty and enjoyment in the things of God. So Paul says to Timothy, you endure hardness as a good soldier of Jesus Christ. Then he says, no man that woth entangleth himself with the affairs of this life, that he may please him who hath chosen him to be a soldier. He's telling Timothy, now, good disciple, or in this figure, good soldier, he doesn't get mixed up with other [00:24:07] things so that his time is taken away from this one great matter in front of him to fight and to fight to please the one who has chosen him to be a soldier. Dear brethren, I believe a great deal of our spiritual weakness is because we get entangled with too many things that take up our time. And we can't find time to attend the meetings. We can't find time to read our Bibles. We can't find time to do the things that are so necessary in the Christian life and testimony because we get entangled. And sad to say, if it becomes a question of what has to be given up in order to do the things that we want to do, it's so sad that it's always the

Lord's things that must suffer. [00:25:01] It doesn't matter if we miss the prayer meeting. It doesn't matter if we miss the Bible reading. It doesn't matter if we miss the meetings. Well, we'll pay attention to our things. And it's because we get too much entangled. And the Lord is telling Timothy, the true disciple, he doesn't get entangled with things that rob him of his time and opportunity to please the one who has chosen him to be a soldier. You remember the Lord said that if we have a single eye, our whole body will be full of light. Now that's just another way of saying don't get entangled. Don't get your eyes occupied with too many things that divert you away from your main object. Have one thing before you and all the rest will click into place. Don't get entangled. Then he says, and if a man also strive for masteries, yet is he not crowned except he strive lawfully.

[00:26:10] Now, the apostle obviously was well acquainted with things that were happening in his day. We can understand this. He was an intelligent man. He would be quite aware of different matters, politics, sports, and all sorts of things going on around him. And this is what he's referring to, the games that were held in those days. Now, I understand that those games were ruled by, or were governed by very rigid laws. And I found in a book that those laws, and they're very interesting. Now, the first thing was that the competitors had to show that they were of pure Grecian descent. Now, that's very significant when we think of the Old Testament and how persons had to declare their genealogy before they were competent to serve in connection with the things [00:27:05] of God. Pure Grecian descent. Now, I think we could draw from that figure the fact that we all know our genealogy. That is, we can all trace our source and blessing back to God himself, and through our Lord Jesus Christ. And then they were to be clear from any political or moral offense. They had committed no crime against the political forces of the day, and no crime against society. In other words, they were to be upright citizens, and defending the government of the land, and not committing any crime against society. That's very important, because it simply means an upright person, pure in his ways and in his thoughts. And then they had to train for a certain [00:28:06] period, so that the persons who were coming out on the track were novices. They were persons who were trained and able to perform, whether it was the race, or the boxing match, or the marathon race, or the wrestling, whatever it might have been. They were trained and fit to take part in the games. Well, that too is very suggestive. We know that we require to be fully equipped to represent the Lord in this evil world, and we can only be equipped as we apply ourselves to the truth of God. And lastly, just before the game started, perhaps a day or two, they had to submit themselves to an examination by a board who were qualified to determine whether these persons were able to [00:29:03] compete. So you can see a very high standard was demanded of any person who competed in the games. Now, let's suggest that someone ignored those rules and regulations, and they came first in the sprint, or in the marathon race, or they came first in the boxing match. This is the one that's referred to here, striving for mastery. Or you remember Paul refers to it in Corinthians, where he says he didn't smite the air. Again, allusion to the combats in the ring. And when a person ignored these things and perhaps did become the winner, they would have been disqualified. They wouldn't have been crowned because they had ignored the rules. The Lord is saying to Timothy, Timothy, a disciple, when he answers to the obligations [00:30:06] of serving the master, he obeys the rules. He doesn't continue with a form of service outwardly, and inwardly he's not in keeping with his service. It's not that he's extremely adept in phraseology, able to say the right things, able to quote the correct scriptures, and yet perhaps his life not in accord with what he's saying. Well, that's not the point. No, the point is he obeys the rules. He's thoroughly in keeping with the truth that's revealed. His service is in accord, or rather he himself is in accord with his service. Very, very important thing, and I'm sure those of us who perform any little part amongst the people of God feel greatly challenged in this [00:31:01] connection. And lastly, he says, the husbandman, he must first labor before he partakes of the fruits. I understand in those days many husbandmen had pieces of ground which they tilled and looked after and cultivated, and then

they were entitled to the first fruits of that piece of land before the master received the rest. But the point was if they didn't plow the land, if they didn't till it, if they didn't sow, they would never reap. So a certain amount of energy had to be expended before there could be some gain. And dear brethren, how can we expect to rightly represent the master if we are not prepared to put some energy, some labor into the matter? We can't reap if we don't sow. If we sow sparingly, the Bible says, we'll reap sparingly. And oh, how we need [00:32:04] this. And the speaker, he feels the need of it as much as anyone, the need of doing something in order for gain to be expressed. Now, says Paul, consider what I say, and the Lord give the understanding in all things. I think this is a beautiful expression. He's not saying, Timothy, now I'm the one to tell you what to do. No, he says, I'll perhaps show you what should be done, Timothy, but it's only the Lord who can give you the real understanding of it. It's only the teacher himself who can make this plain to you. And he says, remember, and this is very important, remember that Jesus Christ of the seed of David was raised from the dead according to my gospel. [00:33:01] I think he's saying to Timothy, I know it's difficult, Timothy. I know there are pressures against us. I know there are powers arrayed against us, but Timothy, remember Christ. When he was placed in the tomb, it looked as if it was defeat, but God raised him from the dead. And you remember this, Timothy, that victory is always with God. Leave the thing in God's hands. God will bring eventual victory. Our responsibility is to do something, although it may involve arduous labor. It may involve a great deal of exercise. It may involve suffering. Remember Jesus Christ. And then he goes on in verse 15, study to show thyself approved unto God. Would you be surprised, dear brethren, [00:34:01] if I said that all the study in the world will never show you to be a man approved unto God? I believe this with all my heart that not all the study of the Bible makes us approved unto God.

Mr. Darby's translation says, strive diligently to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed. We have men and they could tie us in knots as far as biblical knowledge is concerned, their knowledge of the Hebrew and the Greek, their understanding of customs and times, their ability to know this book from cover to cover. And yet they don't know the first thing about spiritual values before God. No one could deny that they were students of the scriptures, very able students, very adept students, and yet they don't know the [00:35:09] simplest things that please God. This is all they're concerned about, an exact knowledge of the languages, an exact knowledge of what the ancient manuscripts give. That is why I say that not all the study in the world can make you approved unto God, but striving diligently, learning the mind of God and putting it into practice, it's this that makes you approved unto God. You see, the Pharisees, they read the word of God and the Lord warned the disciples, he says, don't do as the Pharisees do, but listen to what they've got to say because they're reading the word of God. And so the Lord was saying to them, put into effect the truth of God, but don't be like those [00:36:03] persons who are students of the word. And so this is what the apostle is saying to Timothy, strive diligently to make yourself approved unto God. Very good thing for Timothy to have a good report amongst the brethren, very good thing, it's far better than having a bad report amongst the brethren. But here the question is not the brethren, but God, approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth, cutting in a straight line. I don't know if there are any joiners here, but they have to cut things in a straight line. Otherwise they can't give a good join. And so I think this is the figure employed by the apostle, cutting the truth in a straight line, not deviating because of certain influences, [00:37:04] friendships, business relationships, any other kind of influence, but cutting the truth in a straight line. If the truth hurts either the speaker or the hearers, well, that's the fault of the truth. And the truth does hurt. The truth does present a challenge, but never let us allow the truth to be deviated because of certain influences. Let us accept the word of God as it bears upon our conscience and our lives, and the true disciple will make sure that he cuts the word in a straight line. He says there are certain

persons and their word is eating like a cancer.

We're all acquainted with that horrible, loathsome disease today and all that it accomplishes in the bodies of people, beginning perhaps very small and unnoticed and growing and enlarging until [00:38:09] eventually all hope is lost for the patient. And this is the action of ungodly persons turning aside from the truth and their word it eats as a canker. And he mentions two of them, Hymenaeus and Philetus. And Paul says in verse 19, let everyone that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity. And I believe these persons are examples of what iniquity is, persons undermining the truth of God, principles that are subversive to the spirit and power of Christianity. And Paul says those who name the name of Christ are to depart from these things. He says in a great house there are not only vessels of gold and of silver, but also of wood [00:39:03] and of earth, some to honor and some to dishonor. If a man therefore purge himself from these, he shall be a vessel unto honor, sanctified and meet for the master's use and prepared unto every good work. This word purge, I suppose it's well known what I'm going to say, but it's only used twice in the Bible, in first Corinthians five and here in second Timothy two. In first Corinthians five, the assembly was in a reasonable condition of power and this evil man whose name was a byword in the city was purged out from the company of the believers because it was evil. It was an action of leaven amongst the people of God that would have produced further sorrow if it hadn't been purged out. So Paul says, purge out the old leaven, put the evil thing away from among you.

[00:40:08] But then Paul here is considering a far different case. He's considering a case where the people of God are in such a weak condition that they don't even recognize evil amongst them and they haven't the power to deal with it. Well, what is a believer to do if he wants to be true to the master? Is he to sit beside a person and break bread with a person and serve with a person who is subverting Christianity and its principles? If he wants to be faithful to the master, he has only one course and that's to purge himself away from the evil. That is, he leaves it, he separates from it, he has no contact with it. And so Paul is instructing Timothy to be clear from all the evil that is subversive to the principles of Christianity, all that is dishonoring [00:41:07] to our Lord Jesus Christ. Does anything of this kind prevail today? Oh dear brethren, we would need to say very humbly that it does. That in the Christian circle, in that which is connected with the name of Christ, there are persons who teach the most awful, abominable things concerning the person of the Lord and the great fundamental truths of Christianity. Well then, who are we to be true to? To our own feelings of perhaps hail fellow well met? Or are we to be true to our master who has indicated to us that these kind of things would happen? And so Paul is no doubt at all as to the pathway of the true disciple but to purge himself from these evil influences and walk the pathway with others who are like-minded, [00:42:04] following righteousness, faith, peace and love with those who call upon the Lord out of a pure heart. Now, just lastly for a few moments, in chapter four, I'm sorry, I wanted to say a word about chapter three, it was very brief. In verse 14, Paul says, continue thou, and I want to point this out, that the thou in verse 14 and the thou in verse 5 and the thou in verse 15 of chapter 4 are all emphatic in the original. That is, Paul is very definitely putting the onus upon Timothy to be faithful to the truth. Dear brethren, this is always so. The onus is not upon my brother [00:43:01] to be faithful, the onus is upon me to be faithful. I am to be faithful in spite of the conditions that prevail. So he says to Timothy, verse 14 of chapter 3, continue thou in the things which thou hast learned, and we saw at the outset that a disciple is a person who learns and has been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned them. And then he goes on to speak about the value of the scriptures. Thank God for this book that we have in our hands, the holy scriptures, the Old Testament scriptures, the New Testament scriptures, equal authority, binding upon the disciple today to follow it. All the scriptures, the writings of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, the writings of the Apostle Paul, all the writings in the

New Testament [00:44:06] are the scriptures which are binding upon those who are disciples of the Lord. Woe to us if we say that this or that isn't inspired. All the writings are inspired and they are there for us individually and collectively to follow that we might be true disciples of the Lord. And so Apostle says, all scripture is given by the inspiration of God. And we hear in our day all sorts of arguments to get round the plain statement of scripture that this was because of a certain tradition, or that was a statement by Paul, or this, that, and the next thing isn't really inspired. And it's all an attempt to lessen the value of scripture and to hinder the disciple in his pathway of faithfulness for the Lord. And so I feel it's very important [00:45:05] that in 2 Timothy days of confusion and difficulty, Paul's saying, remember that the holy scriptures are inspired. Indeed, much of the confusion, if not all of the confusion, springs from this fact that the scriptures have been ignored and men's imagination has been put in the place of the divine record. Now, lastly, in chapter 4, I want to speak about this. He says, make full proof of thy ministry. The end of verse 5. Those who have missed the Darbus translation will remember that he says, fill up. He uses other words, but I just want to stress these words, fill up. And then Paul says in verse 6, I am now ready to be offered. And again, [00:46:08] the new translation says, I am ready to be poured out. Now we can't possibly miss what the apostle is saying. He's saying to this young disciple, he says, I want you to pay attention, Timothy. I'm poured out. Paul knew that his course was nearly run. And he says to Timothy, you fill up because you can't pour out unless you get filled up. Now the pouring out in Timothy's, in Paul's life had been a long period of faithfulness to his Lord from the day he was converted. Now he says, Timothy, you fill up. Get filled up with the knowledge of God and of Christ and the power of the Holy Spirit. Get filled up with the truth of God and pour it out in testimony [00:47:05] for the Lord and for the glory of God. Pour it out for the benefit of the saints. Pour it out for the unconverted. Do the work of an evangelist. And so here are the obligations of the true disciple. Here are the obligations for us today. Young men, young women, get filled up because if the Lord tarry, the Lord will need you. The older brothers will die. Older Christians will die. The testimony has got to go on and the Lord's depending upon you. Fill up so that you can be poured out. Oh, how we're thankful for a man like Paul and many more like him who filled up and who spent themselves in the service of the Lord. Many of them we could mention. Thank God for them. Only eternity will tell the greatness of their work. But this is our [00:48:05] day. This is our responsibility. Your responsibility. My responsibility to fill up, to pour out that we might be here for the pleasure of the Lord. May it be so.