

W292_Thoroughly_Furnished_4.mp3

[00:00:02] This is a recording made in the Chapel of the Open Book, and it is number four of the series entitled Thoroughly Furnished. It is a part of this recording that we read together a portion of Scripture. And will you turn with me then and read from two Timothy Chapter three. The third chapter of the second Epistle to Timothy. This know also that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves. Covetous boasters proud blasphemers disobedient to parents unthankful unholy without natural affection trucebreakers false accusers incontinent fierce despisers of those that are good. Ready are traitors. Heady highminded lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God. If you had in front of you at the same time. The last part of Romans, Chapter one. Especially if you were reading the original, you you'd see that the perilous times which are coming upon us now was practically Roman paganism that was rampant in the days of the Apostle Paul. Most of the words that are used by Paul to describe ancient Rome and its teaching are repeated here. Isn't that a sad thought? With nearly 2000 years of Christianity in between, and then you'll notice that he doesn't speak about faith. He says they're lovers of their own selves. And the word covetous is they're lovers of money. And in the middle, chapter three, they're without natural affection. And then in chapter said chapter 18, verse three, and then in verse four, they are lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God.

[00:02:04] It looks as though love is the secret. And so if you glimpse across at chapter four, verse ten. Demas hath forsaken me, having loved this present world in contrast to the end of verse eight, all them also that love his appearing. Serious, isn't it? So there is the forecast of the last days. And yet, verse five, having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof from such turn away. For of these sort are they which creep into houses and lead captive silly women laden with sins led away with diverse lust, ever learning and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth. Now, as Jannes and Jambres withstood Moses, so do these also resist the truth? Men of corrupt minds reprobate concerning the faith. But I shall proceed no further. For they are folly shall be manifested manifest unto all men as theirs also was. We end our reading there. It is a part of this witness that we read right through in sections. The second Epistle to Timothy in which our text is found. I remind you who are listening that this series is primarily addressed to those who may begin to feel that God is calling them to teach others also. It's a serious business to intrude yourself into it. It can be a burden both to yourself and

others if God hasn't sent you. You remember what he says. They speak a message of their own hearts and they say he saith.

[00:03:57] But I sent them not. And you remember in Romans the 10th chapter, How shall they hear without a preacher? And how shall they preach? Except they be what? Sent? Mean than many other qualifications for a preacher. But that's the essential one. Because after all said and done, you are a messenger. You don't invent the message. You receive it and you pass it on. As Paul put in one Corinthians 15, I delivered unto you first of all, that which I also received. You will find in the Scriptures that when a man brought a very unwelcome message, he was punished for it. Well, of course, that's the idiotic attitude of human nature, because the person who brings it, the postman, is not responsible for the message. So if you have an unwelcome message to give to people, if you speak about the wages of sin, you may have to be prepared to be held responsible. But you're not. You are responsible for delivering the message. God is responsible for the results, whether they are a savour of life unto life or of death unto death. So today we are considering a little bit closely this question of the way in which the Apostle Paul has emphasized something with regard to himself as a pattern. Now, we partly touched upon that last time. He in the third chapter, we didn't read as far as this just now, but he says in verse ten.

[00:05:31] Thou has fully known my doctrine and you've got a marginal reference. Thou hast been a follower of my doctrine. There has been a diligent follower of my doctrine that was that all know. There has been a diligent follower of my doctrine, manner of life. He links together two things. Now, shall we say this, that here we have then in front of us in the Scriptures, especially those written by the Apostle Paul, the matter. And the manor. Now, the word matter indicates the material. That is to say the stuff of your message, the word that God has given. And then inasmuch as you're not merely a postman delivering a letter through a letter box, you are you yourself are expected to commend the grace of God that you preach. You see, so we have to revise our idea of a mere messenger. We have an association with a message. We come to the person that we say, I believed it and look what it's done to me. We are commending it. So we have the manner. Not only the matter the doctrine, but the manner in which we present it. And I think that it's worthwhile for us giving a little time to those two. Now, in this first chapter, you have the matter One second, Timothy, chapter one, verse 13. Hold fast or

possess the form of sound words. That is not manner that that's matter. Sound words which thou hast heard of me.

[00:07:13] You You'll notice these rather keen on that that attitude in chapter three, verse 14. But continue thou in the things which thou hast learned and has been assured of knowing of whom thou hast learned them. So Paul is in a measure coloured his message by commending it. Of course we mustn't colour it with our own private ideas. But you see the point, don't you? So the form of sound words is the matter. And then in the first of Timothy, we looked at this already, but I'm gathering it up again in the first of Timothy. Chapter one, he says in verse 16, How be it for this? Cause I obtained mercy that in me first Jesus Christ might show forth all long suffering for a pattern to them which should hereafter believe on him to life everlasting. So that's a pattern to those who believe. And the form is a pattern for those who have to deal with the material and the two go together. The matter and the manner. Well, then surely it's something for us to ask. Here's a book. I start with Genesis. I end with a book of the revelation. Oh, what a tremendous amount of material. And what's it all about? Well, each one of us have got to get down to it as before God and search the scriptures and see. But you remember the very passage where we get the words Ye search the scriptures.

[00:08:40] The savior went on to say. And in them, do you think ye have eternal life? But they are they which testify of me. Oh, that's a little guide for us friends. He himself made the hearts of his disciples glow within them as he expounded unto out of them, out of the Scriptures, the things concerning himself. Well, now that gives us, I think, a point. A Christ less message may be full of wonderful illustrations and even wonderful material. But what are the questions to ask? Is, Will what I am giving to these folks go beyond the grave? Why don't you see eloquence and all the things that go to wake up every day? Ordinary human activity is going to end there. And what God is going to bring on into the new life will have no relationship with that. It will be related with Christ, a new creation in which Christ is head and the former things are passed away. So let's for a moment revive our memories, because I'm sure those of you who are listening are already agreeing that Christ himself is the very center and theme of our message. But we'll get it from the scriptures as well. Chapter and verse. Galatians Chapter one, verse 16. Now, Paul is reminded us about his conversion, that it should be a pattern to those who believe afterwards. So here he says, it pleased God to reveal his son in me. Notice

right straight away the person not merely reveals something about his son, not an argument as to the relationship of the deity and humanity.

[00:10:30] Not an argument as to Bethlehem and Nazareth. Oh, no. Revealed his son straight away like that. And then he says that I might preach all about him. Oh, no. That I might preach him if I can preach Christ. That is to say, you say Christ. What do you mean by Christ? Well, John's gospel written for our learning because we are Gentiles in the first chapter, says we have found him the Messiah, that is to say, Christ. So the Christ is the Messiah. Or will you say thank you? But what's the Messiah? Well, the Messiah is an anointed one. Well, why should that have anything to do with us? Because somebody has oil put on his head. Oh, it's not really the oil. It's the reason why. And that was a symbol of being anointed. Is to be appointed. I'm not playing with words. Of course, if you look at Psalm two, you'll see yet have I set my king upon the Holy hill of Zion that is also translated Anointed set. An anointed person is an appointed person for a for a work that God has called him. And Christ has been anointed and appointed to be God's prophet, priest and king. Sacrifice Altar Tabernacle, Hope of Glory Foundation, Top Stone. Christ is all. So the more you know of what Christ is, the more you will have the very center of the witness that God commends.

[00:11:57] Now that I might preach him among the heathen, let's look at one Corinthians chapter 123. One Corinthians 123. There you have a Paul writing to people who were more associated with philosophic wisdom not so much Judaic dealings with the law of Moses, but with the philosophy and wisdom. And here it says in the 23rd verse, in contrast with all this, But we preach Christ crucified unto the Jews, a stumbling block, and to the Greeks foolishness. But unto them, which are called both Jews and Greeks, Christ, the power of God and the wisdom of God. The power of God. But do notice the next verse because the foolishness of God. Would you dare to have said that if it weren't written? But it's one of those exaggerated figures. The very foolishness of God is wiser than men and the weakness of God. The weakness of God. He was crucified in weakness, said the apostle. The very weakness of God is more powerful than anything that man can do. Or what will it be when that power of God in its fullness, is manifested on the behalf of redeemed? So we preach a Christ who voluntarily stooped to become weak, that we might be made strong. And then we have in Romans the first chapter, the first few verses, the way in which Paul has demonstrated his association with this person of Christ in the witness that he was given.

[00:13:39] And remember, Paul, is the keystone or the top stone of Paul's first ministry. After that comes Ephesians, which goes on again to other aspects. But here is the zenith of his witness during the acts of the apostles. Paul, a bond slave of Jesus Christ, not merely a servant, called to be an apostle, separated unto the gospel of God. And as I've said before, he was a Pharisee. And the word Pharisee does not come from a Greek word, but the word aphorism I can you hear it would make anybody who knew both languages say to himself, Yes, yes. I was once Pharisee unto legalism, and now I'm Pharisee unto the grace of God separated. And Paul wasn't about playing with words if it gave a point to his message, which he had promised afore by his prophets in the Holy Scriptures, that's in brackets. But he puts that in before he reaches his next passage because he was emphasizing that the gospel he preached was not a mystery. It was revealed. Abraham had the gospel preached unto him. Cain and Abel had the gospel preached unto them. All the way through in type and shadow, Right through the acts. Right through the law of Moses and the prophets and the Psalms. Right up to the end of the Old Testament. There are fingers pointing to the Lamb of God. So after that, we go back to verse one and read Separated unto the Gospel of God concerning his son.

[00:15:13] If you want a definition of the gospel, there it is. What is the Gospel of God? It's concerning his son. So what was said of him in Galatians one? He said by him here. And then he goes on to expand. Concerning his son, Jesus Christ, our Lord, which was made of the seed of David, according to the flesh. Have you ever read a biography written of a great man that according to the flesh, he was so and so. Well, so that's nonsense. Nonsense. He can't come any other way. The greatest man that ever lived could never have these words written of him. That according to the flesh, he was so and so, son. Here is a unique person, according to the flesh. He was made of the seed of David. But declare to be the Son of God with power according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection of the dead. So here's a person that has to be explained in two ways two natures. And if you'll turn to the ninth chapter, you'll see Paul has picked this up again. He speaks about the people who are his brethren, verse three, or his kinsmen according to the flesh, and gives a little idea of the privileges of being a Jew in those days. Who are Israelites? To whom? Pertaineth the adoption and the glory and the covenants and the giving of the law and the service of God and the promises.

[00:16:43] Whose are the fathers and of whom, as concerning the flesh, Christ came. Well, you could stop there as concerning the flesh. The Messiah came. Born at Bethlehem, the son of man. But is that. Is that the only thing? Oh, no. He goes on. Who is over all God blessed forever? Who? Someone who came according to the flesh. I've never met anybody about that. Of whom that could be said of. You know, there's only one who feels that. So we've got it as a part of our witness. So without labouring this point here we have the centre, we have the matter, the Word of God. We have the manner, the mind of Christ. We have the centre of it all. God's purpose of the ages focused in His son. Well, now we're beginning to get things a little bit into their pattern. Now, if you'll turn to this, is because I want to help those who perhaps are willing to do a bit of study. You know, somebody once said to a poet about, did he what did he do when he wrote his poetry? You know, he sat there and suddenly had a wonderful revelation and the words flowed out of him before he could hardly put them down. He said, No, no. He said it's one point inspiration and 99 points perspiration. And it's the perspiration that some people want to avoid. They want all inspiration and nothing more. Well, unless God gives it to us all, our diligence will not lead us anywhere.

[00:18:22] But if we're going to serve him, he will expect us to seek to be as fit as we can when we are using all the abilities that God has given. So I'm just going to draw attention to this, that this man who is set before us as a pattern. In verse in Acts 21, he was up before the captain of the Guard. They thought that they'd got an ordinary prisoner, but they the really was about to be flogged. The. Ordinary soldier sent word to the captain. He said, you know, this man's a Roman citizen that you've told us to flog. Oh, that's a different point. A Roman citizen. So when he spoke to him, he says in verse 37, and as Paul was to be led into the castle, he said unto the chief Captain, may I speak unto thee? Who said, Cats that speak Greek? Well, I'm asking you this. Canst thou speak Greek? Well, I can't speak Greek because it's possible that the way I pronounce it, the person might think I was saying bad words or something. I don't know, but I'll read it. I'm not urging everyone to listen to this. To spend half their lifetime becoming a scholar. But I say, don't forget that the scriptures that we have were originally written in two languages, mainly Hebrew, Old Testament, Greek, new. Now, if you're not able to do both, and very few of us are able to encompass both, unless we can devote a lot of time.

[00:19:49] The New Testament is written in Greek and it does a wise thing to become acquainted, at least with its construction and its usage. Then further down, verse ten. And when he had given him license, Paul stood on the stairs and beckoned with a hand unto the people. And when there was made a great silence, he spoke unto them in the Hebrew tongue. I say he is a man who can speak Latin. He spoke to the Romans. He spoke Greek. He spoke Hebrew. Well, that was a man that God picked out to use to speak the word among the Gentiles and yet be a witness to his people. Israel. Now, don't be afraid. If you cannot even speak your own mother tongue correctly, perhaps that none of us do. You could still lift your finger and say, Behold the Lamb of God. But if you have any opportunity to delve into the original, whatever you do, do so now, in this course, under this heading through the furnished. I don't know whether I shall be able to manage to make it live. I don't know. It's difficult, but I would like to help you to use a concordance that gives you some facility even though you only speak English. To be able to verify your references and see what the actual word is. But if I can't do that, I shall have to admit it.

[00:21:09] Well, we'll pass on now. Whether you speak Greek, English, Hebrew or double Dutch, one thing is essential that what you have to say should be understood. You remember our savior turned to those who listened to him. He says, Go thou and learn what this means. And this. You know what a thing means, even though it's written in letters of gold. It'll save nobody. It'll help nobody. So whatever you do, make sure that the meaning that you are endeavoring to put is understandable. You remember the classic passage in the book of Ezra and Nehemiah. Shall we turn just back to the Book of Ezra? That's just before the Psalms. Ezra, Nehemiah. Esther. So on. And. Here we have one illustration. Ezra four seven and in the days of Artaxerxes wrote Bishop Mithridates Tabeel and the rest of their companions unto Artaxerxes King of Persia. And the writing of the letter was written in the Assyrian tongue and interpreted in the Syrian tongue so that they were. They were writing a letter and they were interpreting it and making its meaning plain. Then if you turn the passage to Nehemiah, which is the next book. It says, I think it is in the eighth chapter that in the first verse, the Ezra brought the book of the law of Moses out to read to the people. And then presently it says verse eight, Oh, at the end of verse seven, I'm not going to attempt to read all the names of these folks who stood there.

[00:23:11] They caused the people to understand the law, and the people stood in their place. So they read in the book of the Law of God distinctly. Now, that's a word for us. It's all very well to speak gently and quietly and mumblingly if the material doesn't matter. But if you are speaking and your words are words of life and death to those who hear. Surely one of the first things you should be inquiring about is can the people hear what I say? Do they understand what I'm saying? And you see, it wouldn't do you any harm to practice. A little bit, to be sure. I don't. Take me as a sample. I know I'm slipshod, but I know that pitfalls. Have you ever heard people singing one hymn that's in Sankey's? Sankey's. It makes it makes it rather bad hearing after once you've had your attention drawn to it. There's one hymn says, For whom our Lord did die. Well, the way they sing it, it's. Die, Die! Die! That's all law. Die! Die! Well, that doesn't matter so much in a hymn, but the person sitting at the other end of a chapel, if he's listening to words that are all mingled and muddled like that, he won't get your meaning. So it says they read in the book of the Law of God distinctly and gave the sense and caused them to understand the reading.

[00:24:41] They gave the sense. The word means to explain. They gave the sense. They made it mean something. Well, then, while we're about it, let's look at Proverbs chapter one. That is immediately after the book of the Psalms Proverbs chapter one. There we have a reference to in verse six, chapter one proverbs to understand the proverb and the interpretation, the words of the wise and their dark sayings. The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge, but fools despise wisdom and instruction. Those words of verse seven, instead of starting a new part, should go on from verse six. But. To understand a proverb and its point. That's the idea. It's one thing to have a proverb. But a problem as a point it's uttered in order to give edge to a certain thought. So. Sometimes when you're preparing for your address to other people, just put yourself in their position and say, no, when I've done it all, will they know what I'm driving at? Because if you don't know what you're driving at, they won't, will they? So there should be a point to which you are, as it were, directing attention. Well, now taking the hint from the apostle his manner. How did he adapt himself? Let us look at two illustrations. In the Acts of the Apostles. 13th Chapter. The Acts of the Apostles. 13th chapter. Verse 15. And after the reading of the law and the Prophets.

[00:26:35] So in the synagogue where the Apostle was now standing. They were reading the Old Testament scriptures and they were accustomed to the reading of the

Old Testament scriptures. It was a part of the very service every time they went there. All right. They said unto them and say, Ye, men and brethren, if you have any word of exhortation for the people, say on. Then Paul stood up and beckoning with his hand, said, Dearly beloved brethren, you will find out. Oh, no, he didn't. He said, Men of Israel and ye that fear God give audience the God of this. People of Israel chose our fathers and he starts going through Old Testament history. For verse after verse after verse after verse. All you say. I see. That's what I must always do. Oh, wait a minute, friends. Wait a minute. Turn the page, will you? To the 17th chapter of the Acts of the Apostles. Paul is now at Athens. And he stands again to speak. They said in verse 20, thou bringest certain strange things to our ears. We would know therefore, what these things mean. Then Paul stood in the midst of Mars Hill and said, Ye men of Athens. I perceive that in all things ye are too superstitious. You speak about an unknown God, God that made the world and all things therein. Seeing that he is Lord of heaven and earth. Dwelleth not in temples made with hands. Neither is worshipped with men's hands as though he needed anything.

[00:28:11] He goes on. He doesn't quote scripture at all. All you say, What a base. Betrayal. No friends? No. You remember the parable of the Good Samaritan? He came where he was. If you are dealing with people who all their lifetime have been taught this scriptures, then base your teaching on the Word of God straight away. But if you come to a person who has got the remotest knowledge of the Bible, some of the things you say will have no more meaning to him than if it was double Dutch. I've heard people in the open air quoting Scripture, but what that scripture can mean to the passer by, I don't know. You see, supposing you say by the deeds of the law, shall no flesh be justified in the sight of God? Man says, What does he talk about that scripture? Don't you see? He said, You're very poets have said this. You're very philosophers have said this. He's getting there here. And then at last he focused his attention. Verse 31, because he hath appointed a day in which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained, whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead. And when they heard of the resurrection of the dead, some mocked. Others said, We will hear thee again of this matter. And some believed. So the point that I'm trying to make is you want to gauge your listener.

[00:29:36] If your listener has no knowledge of the Bible, well, he needs teaching and he needs a good deal of sympathetic understanding. And you should try to find out

something upon which you both agree. However remote it may be. Find out something on which you agree. And from that point of view, you could begin to build. It's going to be difficult, but then it's in a glorious cause and it's worth patience. Well, now the Apostle's method, we still have the acts of the apostles and we still have the 17th chapter. I somebody might say, Oh, look at the apostle in the 17th chapter. He didn't quote the Bible. Well, let us look at the apostle in the 17th chapter and find that he did. It depended whether he was speaking to the Jew or to the heathen. You see. 17th chapter. Now, when they had passed through Amphipolis and Apollonia, they came to Thessalonica, where there was a synagogue of the Jews. And Paul, as his manner was manner went in unto them and three Sabbath days reasoned with them out of the scriptures. Dialga reasoned with them. Now, some people are very much afraid of the word reason, and there's a reason to be afraid of the word reason because our minds have been alienated so that we can't think straight. But no truth of God is unreasonable. Remember that right is right wherever it comes from and the Word of God is right.

[00:31:15] Now, then, if you have. I have to use a logical term if your premises are true. Now, the premises don't mean the building. It means the thing that you prebys at the beginning. If your premises are true, then it's utterly impossible to miss your way if you use the ordinary process of reasoning. Let me give you an illustration from two points of view. All men are mortal. That's a statement. All men are mortal. Socrates was a man. What's the conclusion, Friends? No other conclusion in heaven or earth. If all men are mortal and Socrates is a man, then. Socrates was mortal. You can't get away from it, can you? All right. Now we start again. All men are mortal. Jesus Christ was a man. They're here. What's gone wrong? Nothing wrong with the process. It's made me say. I see. I see. I've got to be more exact in my premises. That's the value of it. It throws you back again, right? All men descended by natural descent from Adam Immortal. Right. It's a valuable process when you're dealing with the scriptures to make sure that your practices are in harmony with his book and when they are, and you can go on. So he reasoned out of the scriptures. He got the scriptures and he could build his arguments, and they became that they couldn't stand his witness. Notice in the ninth chapter, keep verse chapter 17 open.

[00:32:49] But notice in the ninth chapter where his conversion is explained, he was three days without sight. Then we had an nice Carman lay his hands on him. Verse 20. And straightway he preached Christ in the synagogues that he is the son of God. Where

did you get that from? Well, do you have to see the person of Christ on the road to Damascus to say, Oh, he's fulfilling all these scriptures? He got the basis and now he can take it to its conclusion. And it says in verse 22, But Paul Saul increased the more in strength and confounded the Jews, which dwelt at Damascus, proving that this is the very Christ. He reasoned out of the scriptures he proved. Let's look at this word reason again, because some people are afraid of it. Chapter 18, verse four. He's again, this time at Corinth. And he was living with Aquila and following the occupation of a tentmaker. Verse four. And he reasoned in the synagogue every Sabbath and persuaded the Jews and the Greeks. Verse 19. He came to Ephesus. But he came to Ephesus and left them there. But he himself entered into the synagogue. What did he do? Well, he reasoned with the Jews. Look at 19, verse eight. And he went into the synagogue and spake boldly for the space of three months, disputing and persuading the things concerning the Kingdom of God. He was a lively sort, don't you? And when divers were hardened and believed not, but speak evil of that way before the multitude, he departed from them and separated the disciples disputing daily in the School of one Tyrannus.

[00:34:49] Chapter 20, verse seven. And upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached unto them. Do you know that's the word I'm looking at now? He reasoned unto them. The word preached is reasoned. He'd got his book and so he could call attention to its teaching. And so we could multiply illustrations. 24 I'll give you the last one. 24 verse 25. And this is a personal interview with a Roman governor. And as he reasoned of righteousness, temperance and judgment to come. Felix the Roman governor, not Paul the prisoner. Felix trembled. So I say, know what you're doing. Don't use your own reasoning. Don't argue from your own premises, but base your teaching on thus saith the Lord. And then you've got a basis from which you can go and reason. Now we'll come back to chapter 17 and see he did something more. Not merely did he reason. With them out of the scriptures, but it says opening. Opening. Well, we emphasized by the very title of this chapel, the opened book. I'm suggesting to you or listening to me never enter into any debate with anybody with your Bible shut. Open it so that both of you shall see in front of your own eyes what God has said.

[00:36:24] You'll be surprised how many times we misquote a scripture or we only half quote it, or we don't know what the next verse says. Open it. And then you remember

how they go together in Luke 24. He opened the scriptures. He opened their eyes. He opened their understandings. He made their hearts burn within them. Open. Open. Open. And then look at the word allege opening and alleging. Now, this word allege means to place side by side. Now, that is one of the ways in which a parable. The very word allege comes in. Matthew 13:24. I'd like you to see that because this will give you an illustration of how to arrange a subject matter. Matthew 13:24. Uh. Another parable put forth unto them saying. Another parable put forth. This is the idea. Now what does it mean? A ledge to put forth? To place side by side. Well, let me ask you a question. Do you know why a parable is called a parable? Well, you say that's its name. Oh, yes. But it ought to have some meaning, didn't it? You see what we're after? We're trying to get the meaning. Well, what's para mean? Para. Uh, parallel? Yes. Parallel lines. What's the B stand for? Well, in the original, it's the verb ballo to throw. It means to throw into two parallel lines your message. That's a parable, isn't it? Look, the Lord said, the field is the world.

[00:38:21] The sower is the son of man. The seed is the gospel of the kingdom. He goes all the way down, making two parallel lines. Wouldn't it be lovely if we could do that with all our teaching? So that set before the eyes of everyone who are there listening to us. We could see what the word said and how it applied, what it means. That's something of the manner in which Paul, who is our pattern is set before us. So we have his manner, he reasoned out of the scriptures. He puts the pros and the cons. Notice in the Epistle to the Romans in chapter five, he speaks about super abounding grace. Where grace abounded, where sin abounded, grace did much more abound. And then the next thing he was going to say is there is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus. He'd been talking about condemnation in Chapter five. Now he says it's all. But before you get to chapter eight, there's chapter six and chapter seven and chapter six and Chapter seven contain four arguments with somebody who shall we continue in sin That grace may abound? God forbid. He goes through that. Don't you see? He's anticipating the objections and he's dealing with them before he comes right out with his magnificent final presentation. So we must remember all these are set before us as examples for us to follow. And then one other feature I think we might introduce into this before our time is completely up is in chapter 20.

[00:40:00] Chapter 20. He has now realized that one part of his ministry is over and a second ministry awaits him. He's not quite sure about it all, but he says these words,

verse 22, and now behold, I go bound in the spirit unto Jerusalem, not knowing the things that shall befall me there. Save that the Holy Ghost witnesses in every city saying that bonds and afflictions abide me. But none of these things move me. Neither count all my life dear unto myself so that I might finish my course with joy and the ministry which I have received of the Lord Jesus to testify, the Gospel of the grace of God. Now He's introduced there another word, not merely to preach the gospel or to teach the gospel, but to testify. Now, what's testify? It means to bear witness. It means to say that I not only find you a verse in the scripture, but I say, You look at me and you'll find a verse to read. You've got to explain me. The Apostle Paul could say, Here was I a Pharisee of the Pharisees, a bigoted Pharisee, a Hebrew of the Hebrews. I could boast that touching the righteous requirements of the law blameless. And I collapsed. I found it all in vain. Now I stand not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through faith of Jesus Christ.

[00:41:29] Whenever you speak, friends, let it be obvious that not only are you telling somebody else the way of salvation, but you yourself have tried it and you know it. You can say that I can bear testimony that this is true, so far as I'm concerned, whether you are or not. See? Testify the Gospel of the grace of God. Then one encouraging word. Before we finish that, I might finish my course. He wanted to finish his course, even though it meant prison. Oh, he said prison is an accident. I want to finish my course. Some leave out the words with joy. Some manuscripts. Leave it in. Well, whether he finished his course with joy or whether the joy wasn't there, he wanted to finish his course. You know, we're going to see that he did two Timothy Chapter four. Here we have his words two Timothy Chapter four. Verse five. But watch thou in all things endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry, for I am now ready to be offered and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight. I have finished my course. Isn't it wonderful that God permitted him? To see that that prayer of his was answered as he faced this new ministry with bonds and afflictions waiting for him. He said, None of these things move me. The one thing that does move me is all that I might finish my course.

[00:43:03] And now he says, Here am I in Rome? And I know that there's no reprieve. I know that I'm a doomed man. Nero is going to have his way with me. And he was, as far as we know, he was led out and executed. But he said, I finish my course. Friends. Nero didn't stop the Apostle. God stopped the apostle. And when God stopped him, he

finished his work and he says, Nero, you're going to do what you like. You can't stop me. That's true of you. That's true of us all. So we end up on that little note of encouragement. And I pray that as we pursue these studies in these afternoon meetings and as others in different parts are listening to them, that they may stimulate an interest to search and see in these scriptures the matter, the book, the basis, the manner, the Apostle Paul's own example and the core of its teaching that he preached Christ. And I'm sure if we focus the attention of all our listeners on the Christ of Genesis one and you'll find it's there or the Christ in Genesis two or the Christ in Genesis three or the Christ in Revelation 22 and all in between, which will only be putting links together of a mighty chain of grace and glory that, as it were, links the ages together and leads to a Christ exalted and honored and far above all, a kingdom eventually laid at the father's feet and ultimately at long last. The words are written that God may be all in all.