

W293_Thoroughly_Furnished_5.mp3

[00:00:02] This is a recording made in the Chapel of the Open Book, and it is number five of the series entitled Thoroughly Furnished. The words being borrowed from Second Timothy Chapter three. Shall we read together the first half of two Timothy Chapter four. Two Timothy Chapter four. Reading from verse one to verse eight. 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. Be instant in season. Out of season. Reprove, rebuke, exhort with all long suffering and doctrine. For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine. But after their own lust, shall they heap to themselves teachers having itching ears. And they shall turn away their ears from the truth and shall be turned unto fables. 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. I have kept the faith. Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness which the Lord, the righteous judge will give me at that day. And not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing. Here is an exhortation in this epistle written by Paul. With a consciousness that his days were numbered.

[00:01:54] Giving a charge to his son, Timothy, who was going to enter into the tremendous responsibility of, as it were, following in the footsteps of this man of God. I want this afternoon and in this recording to try to help those of you to whom this study is particularly addressed as younger people who are feeling laid upon their hearts and consciences, that desire to speak to others, either privately or publicly, either by spoken word or written page, and to meet 1 or 2 objections and difficulties that will nearly always be presented as time goes on. And one of the things that you might have to meet. And I have had to read it is. Somebody will be listening to you. And then I will say. You are not an ordained man. Well, that can take the wind out of some people's sails. Oh, no, no. Bishop has placed his hands upon my head. Well, what about it, friends? I think it's worthwhile helping one another over that style and see what the scripture has to say about it. First of all, I remember having that put to me on one occasion. And I said to the lady who questioned me, I said, Your minister is ordained, isn't he? Oh, yes, she said. And I said he goes right back to Peter, doesn't he? Oh, yes. I said, Peter is no good to me. For one thing, he was a minister of the circumcision and I'm not.

[00:03:37] And another thing, he had to be rebuked by the apostle Paul. And the third thing, he had to recognize that Paul had an independent ministry. And they both agreed. Who never heard of such a thing? Well, I said, I think we'd better hear about it, shall we? For the benefit of most of us, look at Galatians chapter two. Galatians Chapter two. But before we actually look at the passage, which I've been quoting, I'll refer back to chapter one of where we have this extraordinary thing. In chapter one, verse 15 and 16, Paul himself says, But when it pleased God who separated me from my mother's womb and called me by his grace. You notice before ever, he was a converted man. Before ever he was a Christian, right back to the time of his birth. He was separated by God that didn't know it. You see there is an ordination there that no man can interfere with. And it doesn't matter whether you have hands on your head or not, that doesn't alter. And this man went out breathing, threatening and slaughter against that face and he came back preaching it. And what happened to him? Next verse. To reveal his son in me that I might preach him among the heathen. Immediately I rushed off to Jerusalem to get confirmed. He doesn't say that here, he says immediately. I conferred not with flesh and blood. Neither went up to Jerusalem to them that were apostles before me.

[00:05:10] But I went into Arabia. Well, there's nobody in there able to do anything. It was a wilderness. He went right back to where the law was given, as in this very epistle. He says, verse 25 of chapter four, verse 24. Sinai. Mount Sinai. Which gender after bondage, which is agar for this agar, is Mount Sinai in Arabia. So he went to the very place that spoke of the bondage of the law to get the whole thing thrashed out and settled not by an argument with somebody else, but with God. Well, that's one thing to remember. Now we'll look at Galatians two and see this question about Peter. He didn't go up to see Peter, evidently. He allowed three years to pass before he even visited him, as you read in verse 18. Now, in chapter two, it says in verse six, But of the who seemed to be somewhat Who is he talking about? Seem to be somewhat. He's talking about Peter, James and John, who were apostles. But you say this man is very rude, isn't he? Well, he's not exactly rude, but there comes a moment when you have to remember that when you're dealing with God and the things of God, even the greatest man in the land is a somebody or some whatever. He stands in the way. If you know better than me, God accepts no man's person, for they you seem to be somewhat in conference added nothing to me.

[00:06:39] But contrariwise, when they saw that the gospel of the Uncircumcision was committed unto me as the gospel of the circumcision was unto Peter, for he that wrought effectually in Peter to the apostleship for the circumcision. The same was mighty in me toward the Gentiles. But when they saw that when James Cephas and John, who seemed to be pillars, you see, who seemed to be somewhat perceive the grace that was given unto me, they gave to me and Barnabas the right hands of fellowship that we should go unto the heathen that's the Gentile and they unto the circumcision. So, Peter, the only thing that Peter ever did with regard to Paul was not to ordain him, not to confer any gift upon him, but give him the right hand of equality and fellowship and say, we recognize that you have been ordained of God just as surely as we were. Well, that's where we come in, friends. The Apostle Paul is the apostle of the Gentiles and those to whom I am speaking. Argentina was in the ordinary run of things. Or if they're Jews today, they're believers in Christ. It makes no odds. They have no relationship to be to the ordination of the laying on of hands of anyone connected with Peter. Would he say, have we got to find out somebody who's connected with Paul to do it? Or let's go a bit further.

[00:08:04] Will you turn to two Corinthians? Chapter one. Greetings. I'm sorry. First one Corinthians, chapter 16, verse 15. One Corinthians, Chapter 16. Verse 15. I beseech you, brethren, you know the House of Stephanus, that it is the first fruits of achaia that they have addicted themselves to the Ministry of the Saints, that ye submit yourselves unto such and to everyone that help with us and library. Now, when the authorized version was translated, King James had a tremendous influence over the minds of men who took the work on, and he was very, very keen to retain the power of the bishops. You will find in the acts of the Apostles Judas, the passage of the Psalms is quoted. Let another is bishopric take. There's no such word as bishopric. There is bishopric. And I remember. Reading that in the days of King James. Someone whose name was John Welsh spelling it w h was. Dismissed from Scotland and obliged to go live in France because he would not submit to the king's bishops. And his wife went into the presence of the king to plead that he might be allowed to come back again. And his wife, he said, Who are you? She said, I'm the daughter of John Knox. The daughter of John Knox married John Welsh. He said, If your husband would submit to the king's bishops, he can come back. And she held out her apron and she said, I'd sooner cap his head in that.

[00:10:02] He said you were the daughter of John Knox, Knox and Welsh. Could the devil have made a better pair? And would you believe it? That was about the time when Dr. Bullinger's ancestor was standing for the reform truth in Switzerland. History can repeat itself even with names, can't it? Well, I don't think I've got any connection with that John Welsh, except by name. I hope I have it in connection with Stand for the Truth. You see this question of submitting to the King's bishops or it was something to terrify people. You couldn't be married, you couldn't be buried, you couldn't have the ordinances. You couldn't even preach the gospel without a license. Look at Birmingham spending years in prison because he wasn't ordained in the sense that men said. And yet next to the Bible, almost, his very book that he wrote in prison is one that has been printed and printed and reprinted and influenced the minds of millions. Well, now the next thing is that this word, as I say, the word addicted here is the ordinary word to ordain. So we are ordained, but it says they have ordained themselves. Yes, because nobody else can do it. I'm asking you who are listening to this. If you have the feeling in your heart that God has called you to face this responsibility, nobody can tell you it's no good coming to me or writing to me or going to anybody and say, Now, can you confirm me in this? We can't do it.

[00:11:30] It's between you and your Lord, the one who is put in the scriptures as a pattern for us. At the very beginning when he was converted, he said, Lord, what wilt thou have me to do? And he tells you in this episode of the Galatians, as we've just read, that he did not go up to Jerusalem, but he turned right away from all men and went into Arabia. And he came back again and went on with his ministry of preaching for years past before ever, he went up to Jerusalem and saw Peter. So you see, we are in a peculiar position. We could easily make a mistake. But of course, the person who never makes a mistake never makes anything. But this is a serious matter. Should be weighed over. But when once the heart has become convicted, that this is a work that we must do, we've got to go it alone, friends. Apart from the Word of God and the guidance of his spirit and the fellowship of his people, that there is no ordination except this one. They have ordained themselves. He speaks about them. They were the first fruits of Achaia. They were among the very first believers in that district at Corinth. They have ordained themselves to the Ministry of the Saints. And he says, You submit yourselves unto such, But there be others, he said, and to every one others may ordain themselves.

[00:12:57] But of course, sometimes they may ordain themselves out of desire for prominence or made a mistake. We've got to face that. But it mustn't alter the fact and drive us to the idea that man can equip us whatever. If he will turn to two Corinthians, you'll find now the Apostle Paul met a certain position. Two Corinthians Chapter three. Do we begin again to commend ourselves or need we as some others epistles or letters of commendation to you or letters of commendation from you that makes you almost think you're in a Brethren meeting, doesn't it? Because, you know, if you belong to the certain companies among the brethren and you go on your holiday, you must pick out a place where there is a brethren meeting of the same character and you must take a letter of commendation with you. Otherwise you mustn't sit down at the Lord's table. You must take a back seat. Well, that wasn't obtaining here. But here's the similar idea. Paul says No friends. Who is going to give me a letter of commendation? Now, who could who could give Paul a letter that would be of any value if he didn't come with all the evidence of being an apostle with all the signs following the apostleship and all the witness that he gave. Nothing. No letters that he brought. So he said.

[00:14:25] Need we as some others letters of commendation to you or letters of commendation from you? And then he says, Yeah, I've got a letter. He said, that's read and known of all men. Oh, what is that? He says yourselves. Ask yourself the question. Corinthians How did you come into a knowledge of the saving grace of God? Oh, they said you came. I see. Well, you're my letter of commendation. I've only got to point to you and say there's an evidence that God sent me. Look what Grace has wrought. He's brought these idolatrous and philosophic people to the feet of Christ, and they're saints. Some of them are very unsaintly, but they were called saints and they were rejoicing in the gospel of grace and looking forward to the coming of Christ and the glory that shall follow. So you see, you are our epistles, written in our hearts, known and read of all men. Then he goes on to speak about the New Covenant being written on the heart and not in ink and so on. That's another story. So you see, we have this idea that the ordination of the believer who belongs to the calling we are ministering has no relationship to man or any laying on of hands of man or any ordination that can go back either to Peter, James, John or Paul himself. It's a transaction between you and the Lord. It's a great responsibility, but it cannot be shelved.

[00:15:53] There may be some who are listening to me and say, Ah, but what about there's a statement here in Timothy itself about the putting on of hands, so we mustn't

ignore that. Two Timothy Chapter one, verse five and six. When I call to remembrance the unfeigned faith that is in thee, which dwelt first in thy grandmother Lois and thy mother, Eunice. And I am persuaded that in thee also. When I think of your upbringing and all the scriptural basis there is, I put you in remembrance that thou stir up the gift of God, which is in thee by the putting on of my hands. Well, that took place during what we call the Acts of the Apostles, when there were signs and wonders and supernatural gifts and laying on of hands and miracles and speaking in tongues. And the man who had that didn't lose it. But you were not Timothy. Neither am I. We were never living in a period when Paul could put his hands on our head and give us supernatural gifts. We've come into the dispensation of the mystery and the grace of God with all those things are over. So you can quite understand that Timothy, being an evangelist, following the Apostle Paul, if he had any gifts, said Paul, Now don't let them die. Stir them up and let them let them blaze. Let them be manifested. But it's no good stirring up if you haven't got them friends.

[00:17:17] I don't know whether you ever I don't know whether some of you folks take sugar in your tea, do you? Or you've seen somebody else. And he's just sitting there stirring his cup. You know, he's talking to you and he or he forgot to put the sugar in. Look, friends, all the stir in the world won't make it sweet. And you may have meetings where you're jumping about and singing Hallelujah. And I don't know what you're saying, but if you haven't got the gifts, you can't stir it up. So you've got to have some other ways of approaching this subject. And we get them in the scriptures to guide us. Now, with regard to that word. Ordained. I think I would like to give you one check reference. Romans The 13th chapter. Because you see, this is a, I hope, an illustration on my part that I hope you will believe is worth following. If you can base your teaching upon the Scripture, do so. Don't let it be. I've told you, you take it from me. You see, the very berean spirit receives the word, but it searches to see if it is so. And I hope that you will go when you've got the opportunity and search and see whether the word addict can be translated ordain. I'll give you one illustration. Romans The 13th chapter. Let every soul be subject unto the powers, for there is no power but of God.

[00:18:37] The powers that be are ordained of God. Well, you can't say they are addicted because it couldn't make sense if they were addicted. They addict themselves. If they're ordained, they're ordained by somebody else. Same word. So you see, you could have translated. They have ordained themselves, but it sounds rather strange.

And we perhaps leave it as it is. They have received the word themselves. They have laid upon their hearts the burden of making it known to others and they stand or fall in relation to that. With regard to the Lord's people, supposing we look at Romans, the 14th chapter, as I've said that him that is weak in the faith receive ye but not to doubtful disputations for one believeth that he may eat all things another who is weak Edith herbs let not him that eateth despise him that eateth not and let not him which Edith not judge him that eateth for God hath received him. Just remember that sometimes when you're ramming it down as to whether you should eat this or eat that or eat the other, you see, just remember. But I'm not eating it from that point of view. I'm dealing with it because of this statement in verse four Who art thou? That judges another man's servant to his own master? He standeth or falleth. Yea, he shall be holding up for God is able to make him stand. Well, I think that is true with regard to the position we're taking.

[00:20:03] If you are this servant of the Lord and you have had laid upon you as far as you can see from the Word of God and prayer, a burden of standing up before men and pointing to the lamb of God in any shape or form. Well, the Lord is able to hold you up and to your own master, you will stand or fall. Will be pleased at the very beginning of this calling to have a complete independence of the opinion of men and an absolute dependence upon the Lord. I don't think there's any way out of it. I was only speaking about a simple illustration, but I'll repeat it here just now. I remember one occasion a porter or a ticket collector on a railway station was told by the stationmaster that he must. On that particular day the order had come down that every person's ticket must be examined. Well, in the ordinary way, it was one of those stations where the ticket collector knew half the people and said good evening and went right by and never showed their ticket at all. This is now an intolerable nuisance. And some of you won't like me, But he said, I'm not concerned about whether I'm pleasing you. The only thing I'm concerned about is pleasing the man up there. And he pointed to the station master's office. Well, I think there's a little bit there.

[00:21:22] We are not concerned of whether we please you. We're not trying to upset you, but we're not going to alter our program for that as long as we please the man up there. You see, we shall be pleasing somebody that matters. But if you sit on the fence and try to please everybody, well, you'll get into trouble all the way around and it won't be very successful. Well, here's just an introduction into the thought. But now what other what other qualifications are there that we could add to that? Because it seems rather a

slender thought to say, I feel that I've ordained myself to the ministry, you see. Well, I did just speak in passing about our brother, Mr. Grinch. I said not only had he the matter, but you could at least hear what he said. I mean, there's no doubt about our brother Dredge being able to fill this chapel, is there? Well, so in other ways, if God has called you to a ministry, you would expect there would be some qualifications that he could lay hold of. You may not always be brilliant, but that doesn't matter. But there will be some things which you may feel are practically essential if that ministry is to be successful. So let's look at a few of these as we approach the subject now from that angle to ordain yourselves. It may be a matter of presumption.

[00:22:42] And but it's a matter of your own conscience and no outside authority can interfere. So now we come to ourselves. We ask ourselves certain questions. In two. Timothy. Chapter two. We have these words now. Do you remember that the risen ascended Christ gave some apostles? And some prophets and some evangelists and some pastors and teachers. Now the apostles and the prophets have ceased. Two. Timothy two. Ephesians says that the present company, likened to a temple, is built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets. So the apostles and prophets are a foundation ministry. Well, the foundation of ministry is laid once and done with and is not continued, but it was succeeded by evangelists and teachers. So we haven't got Paul and we haven't got the prophets, but we've got the Timothy's and we've got the teachers. Now then an apostle spoke with Power and had it in his own possession. The prophet could speak straight away without quoting the scriptures because he was given the truth. But the successes, the evangelist and the teacher, he hasn't got that supernatural power. The teacher. He mustn't speak with a closed book. He speaks with an open book. So we have the foundation, Ministry of the Apostles and Prophets, and then we have the succeeding ministry that's been going on ever since of the evangelist and the teacher. Well, now in this two Timothy chapter two. The Apostle passes from his address to Timothy to have the form of sound words and so on to his relationship with others who should teach others also.

[00:24:51] Thou, therefore, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus. And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses. Notice the reservation. Among many witnesses. The things you has heard of me. He's not just giving a general commission. This is to do with this particular truth. The same. The same. Commit thou to faithful men. Who shall be able to teach others also. And at the end of this chapter.

Verse 24, The servant of the Lord must not strive, but be gentle unto all men apt to teach, ye shall be able to teach others also. It shall be apt to teach. Now, you do know that some people. They have a certain knowledge of a subject, but to use the colloquial term, they can't teach for toffee. And some of the cleverest people that you've ever sat under are the worst to listen to. If you've ever taken a course of instruction at a college or anywhere else, you'll often find that the lower grade, the humbler sort of person is the one whose teaching helps you tremendously. But the person who's got a yard of letters after his name, you don't know quite whether he's going backwards or forwards or what it's all about. He hasn't got the ability to teach. Now, I think here's a little word to us.

[00:26:18] It's not the clever person that God wants. He wants a sympathetic person, the person who says, I know the difficulties. I know the obstacles. I know the problems. And what a difficulty they are. You see all you saying, I'm glad you say that because the high and mighty person who rides over them and has no place for them can't teach you or me. So apt to teach is to a large extent putting yourself in the other man's position and apt to teach is to follow the example of the Apostle Paul that we were looking at last week when he spoke to the people of Israel in Acts 13. He goes right through the Old Testament history when he spoke to the philosophers at Marseille in x 17. He doesn't quote scripture at all, but he quotes their poets and their philosophers. Why? Well, he says, I have to come where they are for a start and make a beginning and get their ear, and then I can lead on. So you must always discover where your hearer is. And you have got to spend all the time going round the world with him, but you get a link and then from that you move on. That is a certain sympathy with his own position. If you can't sympathize with it, well, it'll be as dry as dust and he will not perhaps be ready to receive. Take the words out of their context of the of the parable of the Good Samaritan.

[00:27:37] He came where he was the priest, and the Levite passed by on the other side, and they could do no good to the man. He came where he was. It's a good thing the Lord came where we were. Otherwise, we may never have heard so apt to teach as that anybody did. It's not merely cleverness. It is certainly that you have some sort of ability that God can use and bless and supplement by his grace to make your point and make it clear. Well, then there's another one. When you read, say, in the Acts of the Apostles, that the time came when the the apostles said we are concerned with such a crowd of work to be done. We can't do all this. We must appoint some deacons. Will you turn to Acts the sixth chapter? We are not thinking of appointing deacons at this

moment in this. But it was just any appointment for any person who was to be given a ministry dealing with the sacred Scriptures. It says in Essex And in those days when the number of the disciples was multiplied, there arose a murmuring of the Grecians against the Hebrews because the widows were neglected in the daily ministration, there was a feeling of unfairness that the Hebrew widows were being given attention and the outsiders, the Greek speaking Jews, were not given so much attention. Then the 12 called the multitude of the disciples unto them and said It is not reason that we should leave the Word of God and serve tables.

[00:29:13] Wherefore brethren look out among you seven men of honest report full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom. The extraordinary thing to my mind is he puts on this report before he puts full of the Holy Ghost. As a warning to us, isn't it? You see if your manner of life, if there's something that you've said or done that's not been repented of and put right, if that can be circulated and made known, it'll upset all the testimony you're giving. So here we have not merely an ability to teach and an ability to speak about to be able, in some measure, to commend the gospel that you stand for. Now, this is a very great demand. Of course, a high calling. But we are dealing with holy things, aren't we? You have to ordain yourself that something between you and your Lord. But you look into your own heart and you consider the testimony of others and they say, Oh, yes, you could make it plain when you want to speak. Yes. And you say, Well, as far as I know, there is nothing that can be held up against me with regard to daily life, daily business. Well, in all, these things are accumulating and you go in that strength and Duncan gains, are you? Well, now there's 1 or 2 other aspects that we can weigh over before our time is up.

[00:30:35] Will you turn to one Corinthians chapter nine, verse 16 and 17? Let the Apostle Paul speak about himself, although of course, he's far away in front of us with regard to the powers he possessed. Yet he's a pattern. He's discussing the question about receiving a stipend as a minister, and he said I could receive. Oh, yes. He said, You don't stop the oxen from eating the corn when they're when they're treading it out. And God has left that law not merely for oxen, but for others. But he said, for the sake of the gospel and for the sake of the truth, although I have every right, I won't take a penny from you. And then he goes on to say other things. Verse 16. For though I preach the gospel, I have nothing to glory of y. Necessity is laid upon me. You see if a person hasn't got this burden on his heart, if he says, you know, I can't stop, I can't help myself

but to say, Oh, but surely it would be better for you and for all your family if you kept on with that particular business, which is bringing in so much a week or so much a year. He says, Yes, I know, I know. But this is always at me. You see, that's where the apostle put it. Ye necessity is laid upon me.

[00:32:00] Yay, woe is me if I preach not the gospel. For if I do this thing willingly, I have a reward. He doesn't mean to say he got much of a reward down here, for he was flogged and beaten, shipwrecked and starved. I don't know what, but it was in store for him. But if against my will, a dispensation of the gospel is committed unto me. What is a very high calling and a very great responsibility. And you may not get so far as that, but you see some of the character. Well, there's a lesser word that the apostle has used, which I think we can use of ourselves. Ephesians Chapter six. And doubtless the great apostle who could teach others and pray for them. He wasn't so high and mighty, but what he could put in scripture to be read for all time, that he wanted them to pray for him. So he says in chapter six, verse 19. And for me, that utterance may be given unto me that I may open my mouth boldly to make known the mystery of the Gospel for which I am an ambassador in bonds. That therein I may speak boldly as I ought to speak. Now the word ought is the word I owe it. We mustn't pronounce it like that. But that's what it means. It's an obligation. You owe it. And he says all I do need your prayers for.

[00:33:23] It's one thing for me to know the truth myself. It's another thing for me to speak unreservedly without holding anything back for fear that I may as I ought to speak. You know, there are some people who are always telling you what you ought to do. If you refer them to the New Testament, you find the Apostle Paul uses the ought about himself more than he uses about other people. And I ought to speak. Then this question of the word Oh, it being a debt makes you immediately think of Romans 114. He said. Now, I purposed to come to you at Rome quite a number of times, but up till now I've been hindered. Things have happened to stop me. I was wishing to come many times. So he said in verse 13. Now, I would not have you ignorant brethren, that often times I purpose to come unto you. That was let hither to let. Of course, being that old use of the word hindered that I might have some fruit among you also, even as among other gentiles. I am debtor. Don't think I've stayed away for any other reason. I am a debtor, both to the Greeks. Now, the Greeks were the wise, the educated, the intellectuals, even the Romans. Every Roman that could spoke Greek and quoted

Greek poetry and went to Greek dramas and everything. It was the fashion of the day. The Greek and the Barbarian divided the world up between them.

[00:34:50] He says, I'm a debtor to the Greeks, the fashionable ones, the intellectual ones at Rome, as well as the barbarians who live in every other part of the world. We are the barbarians of Scripture, both to the wise. And to the unwise. He said, I'm the data. This is something laid upon me. So much as in me is I am ready to preach the gospel to you that are at Rome also. I haven't held back because I thought, Oh, what? I don't like to go there. So because I've been hindered. Then he goes on to say his attitude to that gospel, which we must continue. For I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ. And that is a poor representation of the apostles, meaning there is a figure of speech which is found in Scripture and is found in our own tongue when sometimes we belittle a thing in order to magnify it. Now, if I were to say to one of the young people who went to the Chessington Zoo yesterday and said, Did you have a good time, it's possible. I don't know. One of those little ones would say, Oh, not off. Well, then I'll say, Oh, not off. I'm so sorry. It was, Oh, guv'nor, He said, We had a really good time. Well, what do you say? Not for. Well, he says, I don't know anything about figures of speech.

[00:36:08] You look at Dr. Bullinger's book, you see, we use it. We belittle a thing to magnify it, he says, not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ. I should think not. I glory in it. I give me life for it. Is He? That's the sort of person you must be if you've ordained yourself to the gospel, not ashamed of the gospel of Christ. Why, he said to the miracle of God, this word power is translated miracle over and over again. So one of these things you'd have to correct and say, don't say the day of miracles is past. Say the day of evidential miracles is past. But the one great miracle remains that God can save sinners. Still, that's a miracle that you could perform, even though no hands have ever been laid on your head and you don't possess any supernatural powers. The miracle of God unto salvation to every one that believe is without reservation. So I think we've got a few of the ideas which we could supplement by your own studies, collect them together of the essential elements that go to make an ordination. That's not an ordination of man. It takes place in no church and no ceremony. It's between you and your Lord. But if you can, you know, sometimes you see in a paper, a little quiz, do you always get up first in the morning or do you wait for somebody to bring you a cup of tea and you put a mark against which one it is? And at the end of it you add it all up and you see what sort of numbers you've got.

[00:37:39] You see, well, you put these things down and many more that you can find in Scripture and ask yourself an honest question and try to give an honest answer and you'll begin to see whether the marks of an ordained minister in the true sense of the word is yours and nobody else can do it for you. It's between you and the Lord. And then another feature. You remember that well-worn passage yet? A wonderful one. In Matthew 11. Take my yoke upon you. And learn of me. This ministry, whether it be to do with kingdom or church, whether it be to Jew or Gentile, whether it do with Peter or Paul can never be, never be accomplished independently of fellowship with the highest minister of all. The Son of God. He is called a minister in Romans. The Lord Jesus Christ. We take his yoke upon us and learn of him. Now, a yoke in this sense means something which unites you together in service. You put a yoke on the oxen not because you want them to increase their burden, but to share their burden. So it was forbidden in the law that you should yoke together ox and an ass because of the difference in their weight and their size.

[00:39:00] That we are yoked together with a Son of God who stoops to our limitations and we serve with him linked together. And he says, I am meek and lowly in heart. And you see, if we go on in, Timothy, the servant of the Lord must not strive, but be gentle unto all men. Patient apt to teach with long suffering and meekness. With regard to those who oppose themselves. You see, there are all qualifications. And if you are likely to lose your temper every time somebody calls you a bad name or resists something, hesitate a bit friends, because that doesn't commend the gospel. Not so easy, is it, after all? Well, then, finally, and this we should have to take up a bit more seriously as another subject. Our relationship to the Ministry of Paul and our witness is found in one Corinthians three. We'll touch upon it. We may have to enlarge upon it as a separate study. He says. Of course there was this tendency to magnify a person. He says in verse five. Who then is Paul? Who is Apollos, but ministers by whom ye believed, even as the Lord gave to every man. It's the Lord that gave Paul his ability. It's the Lord who called Apollos. So then neither is he that planteth anything that is to say of himself. Neither he that watereth of himself, but God who gives the increase. And then he changes the figure. Verse ten.

[00:40:40] I have laid a foundation and another buildeth thereon. So there's our relationship. Paul is the master builder. That's the Greek word architect. And the

architect of the plans. And we mustn't go outside them. Otherwise it will be a bad building and false. Those of us who succeed in any sense, however humble it may be. Are building upon the one foundation which has been laid. And then we are told that that building, which is our service, will be tested. And there are consequences attached to it. So in another one of these studies, I don't know which one we shall return to one Corinthians Chapter three for a more careful examination of the relationship of the present day teacher to the originator. So far as we speak humanly, whether it be the planting or the watering or the building or other figures that the Lord may lead us to consider. I commend to you these studies and these suggestions that we may. Be better fitted, better qualified as the days go by, as we see the perilous tides gathering round us that Timothy speaks of, that we heed the word, preach the word, be instant in season, out of season, and whatever the consequences may be. May it be that when at last we stand in His presence, we shall be able to say in some degree, I have kept the faith with no other qualification that can go beyond that. I have kept the faith, he says. Henceforth is laid up for me a crown, not for me only, but all those who have loved his appearing.