

Bible Text: 2 Timothy 2:20-22
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All right, let's take our Bibles and go back to 2 Timothy, the expositions of 1 and 2 Timothy I've entitled "Beautifying the Bride." Once again, Paul at this case for sure in 2 Timothy writing from prison. His death is imminent by execution and he's guiding Timothy in how to function as a local church and the fashion, the structure of the local church, and he's given him lots of instruction but a whole lot of what he says is to Timothy directly although there are applications for all of us as we strive to be what God's called us to be, being his children and members of his church.

2 Timothy 2, beginning in verse 20 and let's go through verse 22. Paul writes,

20 Now in a large house there are not only gold and silver vessels, but also vessels of wood and of earthenware, and some to honor and some to dishonor. 21 Therefore, if anyone cleanses himself from these things, he will be a vessel for honor, sanctified, useful to the Master, prepared for every good work. 22 Now flee from youthful lusts and pursue righteousness, faith, love and peace, with those who call on the Lord from a pure heart.

I've entitled the unpacking of this text "Legacy House." Legacy house. I, I'm talking about our ancestry, where we go back to, who we connect to, our people's values and their positions and their convictions, but now bigger than your personal family, I'm talking about God's family. You see, a key to view and understanding Christianity is that it is a legacy. In other words, something's been handed down to us. We've been placed in a new lineage, a new household, and we have a new legacy. You've heard people say, "Well, it's a family tradition." Well, often when they say that they're covering for some vice or from some sin. They'll say, "Well, my dad did it, my granddaddy did it, it's a family tradition." Well, that speaks to the point even though we wouldn't encourage that, but Christians as believers in Christ, we are saved from a legacy of error and wickedness and saved unto to become a part of this legacy of truth and righteousness. Let me say that again: we're saved out of, brought out of a legacy of error and its corresponding wickedness, and we are saved to be placed into the lineage, the ancestry, the legacy of truth and righteousness.

Our God, our Father, is the God of truth and righteousness so we must be also. Brothers and sisters, that's your legacy, that's who you are. You bear his name. You're of his house. You're his ancestor. The God of truth and righteousness is our God. You know, over in Britain they'll talk about the House of Windsor, in France the House of Hapsburg, but we are the House of God. That's our legacy. 1 Timothy 3 reminds us that we are the household of God and he's talking about a local church here. So let's unpack it together and let's think about this and wrap it all together hopefully at the end.

I. God's house and vessels defined. God's house and vessels defined. First of all, A) God's house/the local church. That's what he's talking about here when he starts out in verse 20, "Now in a large house." The phrase "a large house," I think most of what Paul's getting across there is there's such a lot of parts to it, there's a lot of members to it. Now in this day, a large house would have several members and servants and slaves, and also many vessels. Now the New American Standard translators translated the word "vessels," you and I would say utensils or even dishes. There are many items we use in our households and many members of those households.

Now some scholars would say that, um, the household here means all of professing Christendom. I wouldn't reject that but Paul is writing to one church and one pastor about he's, how he's to deal with those things in that one church. So it would behoove us to stay with the immediate context here and view it as a single local church, though they, the truths apply to all Christians everywhere, of course, but we think in terms of our household here, God's local church.

Um, now he's talking about in this house, this church, this family of God that we are, he said there's, there are vessels of, uh, gold and silver. They're honorable vessels. Then he says there are vessels of wood and earthenware that are dishonorable. They're not useful for what the master of the household wants to get accomplished. Only the gold and silver utensils, dishes if you will, items, are useful for the honorable use of the master. Now maybe in today's language we would, uh, think of a, an heirloom. I, I think my wife, matter of act, I know my wife has some china that my mother had and so it's special. That's a treasured thing. That's, that's a gold and silver thing in our house. But then, uh, every, every once in a while we eat on paper plates. Do you eat on paper plates every once in a while? Well, you just throw them away. They're not good for much. Well, they get the job done but you know what I mean. They're not a treasured really valuable vessel of our household. Now your wives may say, "I treasure those a little more than you think, Pastor." Well, you get the point though. We're gonna talk about that a little bit more in just a moment.

So the large house is the local church and it has these vessels in it, some for honorable use, some for dishonorable. Now B) God's vessels, that points to the true believers and true teachers. Now let me say this at this point. Um, I would lean toward most of the scholars who say that the dishonorable vessels that he's going to mention here are false teachers but it does not exclude false believers. But, um, nevertheless, just keep that in mind as we go forward but the, the true vessels, the honorable vessels, are God's vessels here are true believers and true teachers. He calls them gold and silver vessels, vessels of

honor. Again, this represents true godly teachers which Timothy was, and true Christian believers, not false professors.

An interesting backdrop here, if you would for a moment, um, these will be on your screen, Romans 9:21 tells us that the sovereignty of God is behind all of this where God writes there through the Apostle Paul, "does not the potter," that's representing God as the potter, "have a right over the clay," that's the substance that he made mankind out of, the potter, God, have the right over the clay, mankind, "to make from the same lump one vessel for honorable use and another for common use?" Paul's writing to the Romans and he's saying God in his sovereignty ordains some to be of his household for good and useful service, and some that would not be of good and useful service. "Pastor, how do you explain that?" I don't try to explain God, I just preach God. You can't explain him. He's beyond finding out. His ways are higher than our ways. His thoughts are higher than our thoughts. He's just greater than us.

Now a key insight, though, for us I think that's a great encouragement is 2 Corinthians 4:7 as we think about getting, being God's vessels being used, utilized for his use. 2 Corinthians 4:7, "But we have this treasure," that's the new birth, the Spirit of God and the truths of the word of God, we have these treasures, you could say, "in earthen vessels, so that the surpassing greatness of the power will be of God and not from ourselves." An, an earthen vessel is just a phrase they used in this day because so much of what they used in their households were utensils made of clay, just came out of the earth, so an earthen vessel. So he says here all of us Christians are just regular old clay pots. That's what we are. One scholar said a good way to view this is you're just an ordinary peanut butter jar. That's a good way to think of it today. He said but God has changed you, God has redeemed you, God has come to live in you in the person of the Holy Spirit so there's a treasure in you, though you, humanly speaking, are just a peanut butter jar.

Oh, but there's treasure in there that God put in there. 1 Corinthians 1:28, "and the base things of the world," that's just the ordinary non-special stuff that we're made of, the base things of the world "and the despised God has chosen, the things that are not, so that He may nullify the things that are." God generally saves for use in his household those that the world looks at and says, "There's just not much to you. You're not the brightest, you're not the smartest, you're not the most skilled, you're not the wealthiest." Now God saves a few of those along but most of us are just ordinary peanut butter jars but there's a treasure in us. So humanly speaking we're very ordinary but in God's eyes you're a gold and silver vessel, special unto him; compared to the world, not much but God put his treasure in you.

1 Corinthians 12:15 and 16 speaks to how, uh, we're all not much humanly speaking but we have equal importance in the church. "If the foot says," using the metaphor of a body here, a lot of metaphors in this, by the way, houses, vessels, now we're talking about a body. "If the foot says, 'Because I am not a hand, I am not a part of the body,' it is not for this reason any the less a part of the body. And if the ear says, 'Because I am not an eye, I am not a part of the body,' it is not for this reason any the less a part of the body." In other

words, every part of the household in God's eyes – listen to me now – is gold and silver to God. You're gold and silver to God, useful for his great work in his great household.

I, I was reminded afresh, um, I know that those of you who came, uh, heard Virgil and Darryl and heard their sessions on the issues in the culture today and how it's bleeding over into the church and, well, I can't remember which one but one of the brothers said to me as he was leaving, "We just love being here. We're gonna tell others about your ministry." He said, "But, Pastor, it's your people, your people that impressed us." And it reminded me afresh that that's the testament of any pastor is his people. Do the people look like ordinary peanut butter jars but ordinary peanut butter jars with the treasure of God in them? That's what impacts people. And so I praise the Lord for your faithfulness to be that kind of household, that people didn't come to me saying, "You know, this guy's got this great business. Have you seen the car one of your church members drives? It's a great car." Nothing wrong with that necessarily but what they were talking about is. "We see God's treasure, Christ in them." That makes you gold and silver.

So in any professing church there are genuine believers, God's gold and God's silver, and genuine teachers and preachers, God's gold and silver, true children of God and serving God with the right motives. Can I just throw this out as a side point? The right motive for serving God in the church and being gold and silver, useful for God, is number 1, have as your motive the glory of God, second to that your motive is the good of the brethren, the church, and third your motive is the good for myself as God sees fit. The glory of God first, the good of the church, then whatever good it brings me as God sees fit. If you have that motive, you can't lose, you can't miss it.

Well, thirdly as we're talking about the house defined and the vessels defined, we come to vessels of dishonor, the, the vessels of dishonor which that's false believers and false professors. It's not on the outline, you might want to write it in if you're an outline taker. But here's the false believers and false teachers. Now in keeping with the metaphor, the analogy Paul gives, for us today we might say there's some paper plates gotten into the kitchen. There, there's some, some things in there that are not very useful in a, in a special and, and unique way, they're just common, and these are the false believers, these are the false teachers that get into the church. And you might say, "Pastor, the, the text brings this up over and over." And it does over and over and over. The New Testament epistles especially warn us, uh, requiring us as church pastors and elders to guard the church from false doctrine and false teachers. It's gonna ever be prevalent. So you might say, "Well, how did they get in?" Well, Jude says they crept in unaware. They're creeps. They, they crept in unaware and, um, one thing is for certain and we have a lot of church pastors out there who are younger men and, uh, guys who are planting churches, one thing that's hard for them to grasp is the amount of difficulty and warfare they're gonna be in for those first several years as Satan makes sure that some false teachers creep in unaware. And it's heartbreaking and it's difficult because many of these look so wonderful and you're so glad to get new people in your new church plant, or whatever it may be, only to realize as time goes by some of these are not with us, they're not of us. They are, in Paul's metaphor here, dishonorable utensils in the house, vessels of dishonor.

None are more grievous or damaging to the church than false teachers. Jesus said in John 10, they're hirelings. What he meant by that is they don't love the sheep. They're just hired to do a job, they check out and they forget the sheep ever existed. They're just there for themselves. They want their pay. They don't care for the sheep. Well, that's what a pastor must have. And by the way, if you're a sheep, you must have that for the other sheep. You're to love the other sheep so much you'd lay down your life for them. How can you do that? Because God's put a treasure in you and in that treasure is this prominent part that is the love of the brethren. You may be a common ordinary jar but you're gold and silver to God and you have a special role in God's church. You're not of the hireling and I'm not of the hireling but the Bible warns us, Jesus warns us, Paul warns us, you gotta be aware of these dishonorable vessels within the household and I've got good news: so far, it's 41 years worth but so far as a body of Christ matures they can become more and more effective at repelling the false brethren, the false teachers. It's real prominent in the early days and, by the way, this is the early days for this church so it was very prominent, but as a body matures, there's just, I've just watched it, I've seen it, I've compared notes with other pastors, there is a repellent to that becoming any kind of, let's say a foothold in God's church.

All right, II. We've talked about, uh, God's house and God's vessels defined, maybe we've laid that out well enough. Now II: becoming a useful vessel for the Master and that's a good way to put it because that's what he's gonna tell, uh, Timothy here, becoming a useful vessel for the Master. He says in verse 21, "Therefore, if anyone cleanses himself from these things, he will be a vessel for honor, sanctification, sanctified rather, useful to the Master, prepared for every good work." If you do these things, Timothy, and if the members of your church walk in these truths, Timothy, then you'll be an effective tool in God's house for God's glory.

A. Cleansing away false teachers and false brethren. Cleansing away these false brethren and false teachers, either way you want to put it as far as which one comes first, doesn't matter to me. He says in verse 1, "Therefore," in other words, what I've said in verse 21 being understood that there are honorable vessels, gold and silver, there are dishonorable vessels, wood and earthenware, now verse 21, "Now if you do what I'm about to tell you, then you'll be effective for God's work in the church."

Verse 21, "Therefore, if anyone cleanses himself." Now he says cleanses himself "from these things." There's only one thing this could possibly be and that's the dishonorable vessels of the previous verse. "Timothy, you can't accommodate these guys." You know, he said earlier, "Don't be wrangling with words with these guys. Don't give them an audience. Don't give them a foothold in the church. Don't let the wolves come in and devour the sheep, Timothy. If you'll cleanse away these things, Timothy, then you, yourself, will be useful." Because eventually you see what, here's what Satan wants you to do in the church, Satan wants you to accommodate the open-minded and listen, be compassionate. Look, I don't know about you but if a ravenous wolf is attacking my house, I'm not kind or compassionate, I'm shooting my gun. That's what I do.

I was out in the deer woods with my oldest grandson two years ago and I heard a commotion. I was about 30 yards ahead of him on a logging road, an old logging road, and three dogs with their hair raised on their back were growling and barking and running at him. Well, I had a pistol and I unloaded the clip of my pistol, did the best I could to kill all three of them. Well, good news for you animal lovers, I missed all of them. The only purpose for a .380 pistol is shooting something two foot in front of you, after that it, it's just not accurate but and I'm not that accurate anyway. But anyway I, I did scare those dogs and they ran away. I didn't want to stop and sit down with the dogs and talk about this and, seriously, had they gotten to him before I got there, I don't know what would've happened. I was gonna say something else but I'll hold that back, all right? Don't want the sheriff in Wayne county to know about these things sometimes. Sometimes a man's gotta do what a man's gotta do. Can I get an amen? All right.

But that's the picture here. "Timothy, Timothy, these things." Folks, we get this Caspar Milquetoast, backbone like a jellyfish idea about God's pastor. God's pastor's gotta be a man. There's times when he's gotta be a man and that includes the elders and that includes all the men of the church, and I'm a blessed pastor because I have an army of men just like that. When they see something, now they're not going to jump to conclusions and [unintelligible]. When they see something that's wrong, they'll just firm up and say, "We don't do that here. That, that, we don't do that here." That's what Paul's telling Timothy, cleanse that stuff away.

Well, we know, again, let me just give you some supporting evidence. He's already talking in verse 17 about Hymenaeus and Philetus that came in as false teachers and began teaching the resurrection had already occurred, and, uh, is that what they said, verse 17? Um, already taken place, yes. Got that mixed up with some other guys in the gospels. So that was a false teaching that, that they had to deal with. Then he talked in verse 14 about those who want to wrangle with words. They'll come in with their word salads and their oratory is so impressive and people be drawn in. "Timothy, don't wrangle with them. If they're false, cleanse them out." And then, um, verse, uh, 19 he said we have to, uh, stay away from those who participate in wickedness. That's the kind of bunch he's talking about, if you will, all right?

So we're talking about cleansing away these false teachers and false teaching. Then he says if anyone cleanses himself, if you strive to be noncontaminated and, by the way, it's an aorist tense which means to cleanse out, means identify it, remove it, be done with it. Get it done and let it continue in the state of being done. Then he says now, now, verse 21, you'll be a vessel for honor. You'll be a vessel for honor, valuable to the Lord in building his church. Uh, Proverbs 13:20 reminds us that "the companion of fools will suffer harm." So we must purge from ourselves both the error of the false teachers and the evil of the false teaching and in their lifestyles, by the way, because once again as we talked about last week, uh, unsound doctrine always runs parallel with unsound morals. False doctrine and sexual immorality particularly seem to always run together. And by the way, I think the immorality usually is the leading one because a person's morality dictates his theology. Did you hear that? A person's morality tends to dictate his theology.

If he's caught up in strongholds of sin, he begins to massage his doctrine until he gets it to accommodate his sin and this kind of stuff always runs together.

So we are to, to, to, uh, remove falsehood from our minds and the wickedness they bring in from our lives then we're a vessel for honor, building the Lord's church. Uh, just to get a balance here. 1 Corinthians 5:9-13. Notice what Paul says here, "I wrote you in my letter not to associate with immoral people; I did not at all mean with the immoral people of this world, or with the covetous and swindlers, or with idolaters, for then you would have to go out of the world." You can't leave the world. You're gonna have to go to school with some people who are these things. You're gonna have to buy groceries from a man perhaps that runs the store who does these things and on and on we could go. To be in the world there is the, the, the intercourse with in society people who are ungodly. Paul said, "You can't avoid all of that." He said, "But," verse 11, "actually, I wrote to you not to associate with any so-called brother if he is an immoral person, or covetous, or an idolater, or a reviler, or a drunkard, or a swindler not even to eat with such a one." He said, "Now wait a minute, if they claim to be a part of my local church and they're actively openly living in this sin, those are the ones that come in and that's the false teacher and the false brethren that needs to be dealt with." Now if they repent and return, then they're God's sheep.

So he's, he's being very strong here about cleansing the household of God. He said then you'll be a vessel of honor and then later on in, in verse 21 he said sanctified, and, and that's a beautiful picture because we know sanctified means set apart; you cleans those people out and you and the church are now set apart for God's work without the pollution and the corruption of the false teaching and the false brethren. Uh, then the third one, he says you'll be useful for the Master. The word "Master" here is not only in the sense of being under someone's power and authority but it's being of the Master and that's we are. We're not just under God's authority, we are of God. We are his children. We are in his family. Something's bad wrong with you if you've professed to be a Christian and there's not a, a driving desire in your heart that says, "I want to be useful to my Master." Paul tells Timothy, "If you want that to happen, Timothy, you want to be useful, you want your people to be useful, then make sure you cleanse out the false teacher and the false brethren."

Now in balance I know that through church history there's been a lot of rashness and, uh, ugly spiritedness and mistreating of people under the, the, the guise of church discipline. We're not talking about that. Matter of fact, when we exercise discipline here, it's a long, compassionate, very very private, amen, loving, helpful administration of trying to get a sheep back on track. I may need that next week. You may need it next week. That's what the church does for each other. But one who is open and obstinate and becomes a reviler and will not try to even work on the wickedness in their life, then those are the ones that have to be cleansed out. That's what Paul is telling Timothy.

1 Corinthians 9:19 and 20, "Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and that you are not your own? For you have been bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body." Serve God, not

wickedness. And the companion of fools will suffer harm. You can't hang with that stuff, especially in the church house and it not corrupt the church. We can go all over Evangelicalism today and I'm not talking, I'm not talking about perfection, no church reaches perfection but I can show you the overwhelming majority of churches that are accommodating wicked, wickedness, not even trying to cleanse it out and no wonder the power of God is not there, no wonder they look to worldly gimmicks and circus acts and entertainments to keep people coming because God's not there. They have to bring the world in because they want worldly people to be comfortable in the church.

Well, he continues on in verse 21, you'll be prepared for every good work. Let's, let's look at that list again. "If you do what I told you to do, Timothy, about cleansing, then he'll be a vessel for honor, sanctified, useful for to the Master," last phrase, "prepared for every good work." This is the idea of a state of readiness. I think one of the points here is that whatever God has for you, you can't miss it. You're ready now. Some people want God to, "God, show me Your will and speak to me and guide me." What God wants you to do is clean up. He wants you to be something more than he wants you to do something. "Clean up and then you'll be prepared for the work I have for you to do." If you're about the continued task of purging falsehood from your church and from your individual mind and the impurity from your life, then you are a vessel prepared for honorable use and what Paul says here, for every good work.

Y'all with me? Do you know how, if you had any idea of how I've wrestled with this text this week. It has been so difficult. I've been doing this 41 years, this shouldn't be hard but it's just been difficult. Okay, I'm done with that.

3. I mean, just it was. 3. Live out your legacy. He's gonna say here, "This is who you are. This, you're God's now. This is who you are now live it out." I think there's a powerful encouragement here. In verse, um, uh, verse 22a, first of all, he says there are some things to run from. If you're gonna live out your legacy, you've gotta run from some things. If you're an honorable descendant of a great legacy of a great man and he had certain virtues and character traits, well, you're gonna have to say no to some things, run from some things to maintain his legacy. That's what he's saying here, "You're of God's legacy." So he says to Timothy here, "You're gonna have to feel youthful lusts," verse 22. Flee youthful lust. Now it can include sexual lust, I know, but I agree with the scholars who say that's likely not what he's talking about in this case. By the way, that's a, that's a good exhortation. Can I say this about sexual lust and sexual impurities? You don't fight them, you flee them. You stay away from the opportunity. You don't give it a chance. You're not strong enough to overcome it. You'd better get away from it. That's what God's saying. Flee. Flee.

Well, that's a side note because I don't think that's the direct thing Paul's talking about here. I think it's more probable that he's dealing with the things that a youthful pastor struggles with more than maybe an older pastor. Arrogance. Self-assertion. Being headstrong. It, it, it's these kind, pride, these kind of things can creep into a pastor's heart when he hadn't been pastoring long enough or well enough that God's broken him through troubles and trials. He hasn't been down the road long enough to have the gospel

humility and the maturity to be balanced and more tempered in some things. I've tasted some of that myself and I thank God that he grows pastors just like he grows sheep. Amen? He, he, he starts us at a place and we think we got it made, we think, I thought I understood Christianity six months after I was saved and God said, "You're stupid." He didn't really, it was stronger than that. I mean, we're just that way. We're just that way. "Timothy, run from those things. Flee the things that a typical young pastor can have in his life and get in his way and if you, if you don't run from it, you're gonna fail in living out the legacy of the godliness of your holy heavenly Father."

Flee is the idea of escaping by running. Let's, let's develop this out a little bit. Again, you never stand and fight it, you flee from it. If you can't run from it then, of course, you fight it. It's the same idea as, as 1 Corinthians 6:18, flee immorality, run from it. It's the idea of, of Moses fleeing the wrath of the Pharaoh. It's, it's Joseph and Mary taking baby Jesus and fleeing the wrath of Herod, getting away from it when Herod was going to kill all the, the babies two years and under. It's Joseph when he was a servant in Potiphar's household and Potiphar's wife tries to take advantage of Joseph and have immoralities with Joseph and Joseph didn't say, "Now Mrs. Potiphar, let's sit down and let's talk about this. I know, I know, I know, I know you've got needs and I know... No. No. Wickedness." The moment she came to Joseph he ran and she even pulled his outer cloak off as he ran away. Flee. That's a perfect picture of what Paul's saying here. It's a present active imperative which means it's a command and it's something you have to do as a Christian continually. You never get good enough at it, you have to keep running from certain things.

Now again, balance. The Bible tells us there are evil things and evil people we have to be around because we're in an evil world but especially in the household of God, the church house absolutely must not be a place where you're helped to sin. This should be an oasis of sanity and holiness. This should be the one place you can come to if you've had a difficult week struggling with your own lust, struggling with your own weakness, sin in your life, and you think, "At least I can go to church and get a good dose of cleansing and holiness on Sunday." God help pastors building so-called churches where there's as much, uh, indulgence and sinfulness in the church house as in the world. The sheep need a place to get cleaned up.

We're to be fleeing these things. How are you doing on your fleeing? How are you doing on the running from? It's not a one-time thing again. You know, when I was a new Christian, I, I kept hearing that repentance was just something you did, you repented and believed on Christ and I was just frustrated about it until I, I began to understand the biblical text and you didn't just repent, you became a repentor. You didn't just have faith, you became a faither. You didn't just flee from sin one time, you became a fleer. And that's what we are. That's why Paul says it, "Do this continually."

Well, there's things to run from, secondly, there are things to run to. This is the opposite. He says, "Flee from some things, Timothy. For you particularly, youthful lust, and then pursue righteousness, faith, love and peace." The word "pursue" here is right the opposite, it means "to run after something." There are those things we flee from and there

are those things we follow after. There are those things we run from and there are those things we run after. Uh, that's the double duty of every Christian, fleeing, following after.

This, uh, pursuing is the, the idea or the word concept that we see in Galatians 1:13 where Paul says reciting his testimony that at one time he persecuted "the church of God beyond measure." He's pursuing, he was pursuing that. It's, it's hotly pursuing. So he's saying, "Timothy, flee some things but I want you to hotly pursue some other things." Then he lists those things: righteousness, faith, love, peace.

John R. Stott has in his commentary this thought. I want to read it to you. "This is the consistent reiterated teaching of Scripture, we are to deny ourselves and follow Christ. We are to put off what belongs to our old life and put on what belongs to our new life. We are to put to death our earthly members and set out minds on heavenly things. We are to crucify the flesh and walk in the Spirit." And listen to this sentence, "It is the ruthless rejection of the one in combination with the relentless pursuit of the other." Now, now listen, listen to that again: it's the ruthless rejection of the one, fleeing, in combination with the relentless pursuit of the other, the other being righteousness, faith, love and peace.

Now let's unpack them real quickly. Righteousness. You're to be hotly pursuing righteousness. This is the opposite of wickedness, that was up in verse 19. Uh, how does he say it there? Um, "The Lord knows those that are His," I'm back in verse 19 now and, "Everyone who names the name of the Lord is to abstain from wickedness." Now righteousness here is, is, is rightly defined as doing right, doing what's right and living right according to the precepts of God's word. And once again, let's remind ourselves that false teachers and doing wrong or living unrighteously go together. I don't know how the woman preacher, uh, became so prominent in the Trump administration because Trump hadn't got the spirituality of a tadpole, and, and he has this woman adviser who's been married three times and her doctrine is atrociously false. So it's no wonder she's been married three times if her doctrine is unsound biblically speaking. They always go together. But the, the child of God is not to pursue that kind of approach, he's to pursue a right kind of life, a righteousness in life.

Then he says faith, hotly pursue faith in the context here is the idea of faithfulness. It's the same word that's used in the, in the fruit of the Spirit: love, joy, peace, kindness, goodness, faithfulness. Um, it's the idea of being counted on. Let me ask you something: can your church count on you? Can the house of God, the legacy of God on earth, can it count on you? "I'll be there, Pastor. My tithes or offerings are coming. I'll show up. I'll be in my small group and try to help somebody. Do you know why? I've been born into a legacy. That's the way my Father is, my heavenly Father. My heavenly Father would only do what's righteous and my heavenly Father," we sang it a while ago, "He is always faithful." Hotly pursue faithfulness to God in and through his local church.

Then he says love, that's again the Greek agape. I believe that's the key to all of it. God comes in and changes us. The Spirit of God lives in us and that agape love is in us that gives us a desire for God's word, for God himself, and for God's people, God's church.

Pursue that. Walk in it. Live it out. And can I say, brother and sisters, it means sometimes you do what you're supposed to do even though you don't feel good about it. I ain't gonna go into any details but I got sick in the night last night. Just got sick, then I got well. But I would guess humanly speaking I didn't want to come up here and pour all my energy out this morning but you do what God's called you to do. You strive to be faithful. Now there are times when you can't, I certainly understand that, especially as I get older. But child of God, hotly pursue righteousness and faithfulness and love for the brethren.

And then he says peace. Now the Bible exhorts us as far as it is possible be at peace with all men as best we can, but you can't be at peace with the world, not unless you're a horrible compromiser. I mean, we're, we're to be kind, we can be kind, our tone can be good. We can be humble in the world but we can't line up with the world and have peace with the world. The world's wicked. But now in God's house we have peace and, once again, that, that's, uh, a real challenge in, in immature churches and these church plants and these pastors taking over new churches that have, haven't been led properly. They're, they, they have a lot of things other than peace sometimes. But as a body matures, the saints of God learn to just not worry about things that don't matter. The things that really matter are right we're okay with the color of the carpet or the way they mow the yard or whatever else it might be. Peace. Pursue peace.

Now C in our outline, the legacy continues because one thing that, that, that several Greek scholars pointed out was that in the last phrase of verse 22 there is no comma after the word "peace." So he's not saying, uh, deal righteously with those who call on the name of the Lord, uh, have faithfulness with those who call on the name of the Lord, love those who are called on the name of the Lord, have peace with those who call on the name of the Lord. Those are true, that's Bible truth, we're to do that but that's not what he's saying here. He's saying is that's what those who call on the Lord are like. That's their legacy. That, that's characteristic of all of those who are the true saved ones, the true callers on the name of the Lord. "So Timothy, that's just who we are. That's what we are. That defines us. We are people of righteousness. We are people of faithfulness. We are people of love. We are people of peace, biblically defined. So Timothy, let's live out what we are."

Are you living out your legacy because that's who your Father is. He started this family. He begot this household and that's what we do, we continue living out but we're gonna have to do the things Paul told Timothy to keep doing to make sure we're fulfilling our legacy. It's our heritage, if you will, righteousness, faithfulness, love, peace, and listen, in context of we cleansed out those who would come in and rob us of those things. We cleanse out the teaching that would come in and undermine those things.

I received this text two hours before the service started this morning and I just thought I would share it with you. I, I don't think it's a coincidence that I received this. You guys got it? There it is. One of our pastors who we've been mentoring for many years said, he just wrote this in a text, "May God save your descendants and show His glory to and through the people of Grace Life. I am forever grateful for you and the body at Grace Life." You know what he's talking about? He's talking about you guys have a legacy and

I want your descendants to have the same legacy because our forefathers had this legacy of faithfulness all the way back to our God the Father. That's who he is. So your legacy effects another and another and another if you live it out. So here's a pastor who was just moved upon this morning to show his gratitude for what you are but let's not be swelled up with pride and let's not think we've arrived because we absolutely have not but let's, let's live our legacy. Let's be what the word of God calls us to be and be useful, profitable for the Master's use in his household.