

Contemplation on Divine Salvation Cultivates Motivation to Stay Faithful to the End

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By Jeff Noblit

Bible Text: 2 Timothy 1:9-11
Preached on: Sunday, May 23, 2021

Anchored in Truth Ministries

1915 Avalon Ave.
Muscle Shoals, AL 35661

Website: www.anchoredintruth.org
Online Sermons: www.sermonaudio.com/anchoredintruth

Go to 2 Timothy 1 as we continue going through this New Testament epistle of the Apostle Paul, actually writing this letter to Timothy from prison and, again, his death is imminent as far as it's very clear from the text that he's aware that his execution is just ahead. So he's writing to Timothy and in this particular context he's writing to encourage and charge Timothy to stay faithful to the finish and, uh, he's doing that in various ways and what a powerful way he uses today to do that.

Look at, if you will, 2 Timothy 1, beginning in verse 9, going through verse 12. He writes,

9 who has saved us and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace which was granted us in Christ Jesus from all eternity, 10 but now has been revealed by the appearing of our Savior Christ Jesus, who abolished death and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel, 11 for which I was appointed a preacher and an apostle and a teacher. 12 For this reason I also suffer these things, but I am not ashamed; for I know whom I have believed and I am convinced that He is able to guard what I have entrusted to Him until that day.

Kind of a, a long title to this exposition, "Contemplation on Divine Salvation Cultivates Motivation to Stay Faithful to the End." Contemplating divine salvation cultivates a motivation to stay faithful to the end. One of the great errors of modern evangelicalism is that we sometimes say the gospel is this little simple thing that you can get across in three minutes, and once you get that done and somebody jumps through a hoop, says a prayer, whatever, that that's kind of, you're sort of finished because, well, everybody knows that's the gospel. Now the rest of your Christian life, you just try to figure out for the Bible how to live your best life now or something like that. That's so wrong. It's so upside down.

First of all, the preach the wholeness of the gospel would take eternity. There's so much to it. If you started in the edicts of God from eternity past about him saving for himself a church through all the glories of the Old Testament types and shadows and pictures of Christ in the gospel, Christ coming in the gospel narratives and then all the epistles that

are written to the local churches that apply for all the ages, if you take all the truths, all the dynamic, precept upon precept, line upon line, truth upon truth, you'd never get through preaching the totality of the gospel. Now, yes, you can get the nutshell of it in a few words but my point is this, you and I as believers must continually hear, contemplate, which means to study, think on hard, all the glorious truths of our salvation, i.e. the gospel because that's what will hold us and keep us and motivate us faithful to the finish.

And that's what Paul does here, so we have as Paul writes this in verses 9 through 12, it's something of Paul's testimony of what he believes and what he's about as God's apostle, and also it's a testimony with an exhortation to Timothy. So he's saying, "Timothy, this is what I stand on. Timothy, this is where I'm going to stay. And Timothy, these are the things, the truths that hold me. So Timothy, this is where you must stand. Timothy, this is where you must stay. And Timothy, these truths must hold you so that you likewise, Timothy, will go faithfully serving God to the end."

Um, uh, I can't tell you the exact number of years because I can't calculate it in my head right now, but years ago I was in South Africa and, um, you know, the leading golden, diamond mines in the world are in South Africa and it came to my attention that you could buy a diamond in South Africa for a fraction of the cost you could buy it in America. So my 10 year wedding anniversary was coming up and I picked out Pam a 36 carat diamond. No, I didn't, but it was a lot bigger than the one I gave her originally. And I, it wasn't in the budget but I knew my anniversary was coming up and I knew the church has a policy to give all the staff a certain financial gift on certain anniversaries but I didn't know what mine was gonna be because I'm excluded from that policy. The policy says the senior pastor, the elders will determine what he gets. So I didn't know exactly what I would get, so I was in Africa, I was contemplating buying her this diamond, it wasn't in the budge so I asked one of the elders, "Can I buy this on faith that that gift's gonna be pretty good?" He said, "You're gonna be okay." So I went and bought her that diamond and I kinda hid it in a place so that she discovered it by surprise, and happy 10th Anniversary, and she was so excited. And uh, one of the reasons guys do that, one of the reasons we give our ladies precious gems and jewelry is because, now there are other reasons but it's because we want them to think, "If he'll do this, he's a keeper. I think I'll keep him. I, I, I think, I think I'll just finish out with this guy right here if he would, if he would do this for me." But even beyond that, of course, it's the love that, that represents from your heart that means the most.

Well, that's a little parallel, not a perfect one, of what I think Paul is doing here for Timothy. He's bringing out one precious gem at a time, if you will, and laying it before Timothy and saying, "Timothy, contemplate this. Timothy, marvel over this precious treasure, this jewel, this gem of salvation truth. And Timothy, if you'll contemplate it," now listen to me, church, you don't come to church to get through this sermon and go do something else, you come to church to think hard on the glories of our salvation because that will cultivate in you a motivation to stay faithful all the way to the finish.

So let's look at it as, as I will unpack this kind of theological truth after theological truth of precious gem that Paul, in effect, shows Timothy as to why he, Paul, is going to stay faithful to the finish and why Timothy must also stay faithful to the finish.

First of all, I, notice the gem of the divine prerogative concerning salvation. One of the things Paul tells Timothy is our salvation came from the heart and mind of God and he did it his way and for his own purposes. He didn't consult a committee. He didn't call a church business meeting. Just the council of the Godhead came up with this glorious salvation. It's his prerogative, that means because of his rank, his, because of who he is, he has the right to do that. In verse 9 he simply says, "not according to our works, but according to His own purpose." His purpose involves both the reason he saved us and his purpose involves the way or the means or method of saving us.

You know, salvation is not at all what natural man would expect it to be. That's why he has the phrase connected to this phrase, "not according to works," because that's just totally natural to man, works salvation. The Bible refers to works salvation as the elementary principles of the earth. It's just you can go to any man anywhere on the earth in any age and talk about religion, he will immediately think in terms of, "Okay, I have to join this, perform these rituals, carry out these religious ceremonies, morally, ethically clean up my life." Works, works, works, works. That's just natural to a man but God didn't do it that way, Paul is saying. He did it according to his own purposes.

I like what one scholar said, he said literally you could translate this "His private purpose." God has his own private purpose for what he does and when we're converted, we are then enabled to begin understanding and glorying in and treasuring some of these glorious ways God does what he does. So this would be a good time to remind ourselves that there is the perfect and high and holy purposes and wisdom of God, and then there is the lowly, corrupt, unsound and unfaithful wisdom and purposes of man.

Talking about man's wisdom without God's help, James 3:15 reminds us, "This wisdom is that which comes down from above, or not that which comes down from above but is earthly, and natural, and demonic." That's the way works salvation is. Works salvation comes out of the earth that's been polluted by sin. It comes out of that natural realm that is now accursed and polluted by sin. It comes from that realm of reality that is overseen by Satan the Bible says is god of this world. So we don't want to trust the thinking and purposes and wisdom of man. We want to go beyond that.

Paul says, "Timothy, one of the great gems we have is God's prerogative that He ordained salvation according to His own pleasure, the way He wanted it to be, and we get to get in on that." Psalm 115:3 reminds us, "But our God is in the heavens; He does whatever He pleases." Boy, I love that verse. Ephesians 1:11 as the apostle is putting precept upon precept of the glories of sovereign grace in our great divine salvation, he says this in verse 11 of Ephesians 1, "also we have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined according to His purpose." Pastor, I, I don't know about this thing of electing and predestinating and foreknowing of people before they're born." Well, what you gonna do with the Bible, then? My point is God did this his way and it may rattle your cage a little

bit, it may upset the apple cart, but Paul tells Timothy, "Aren't you glad we get in on the glorious treasure, the gem of this divine prerogative that God did it according to His own wisdom and for His own purposes?"

So let's, let's more deeply focus in on that purpose of God in saving man, stepping back and getting a full, getting a full orb'd view of it, what is the purpose of God for time and for eternity? It's very simple. Ephesians 3:21, "to Him be the glory in the church and in Christ Jesus to all generations forever and ever. Amen." The grand broad purpose of God – now listen to your pastor – for everything that's ever existed, exists and functions and unfolded to this one end, that God would get glory through his church and his Son Christ Jesus for both time and for all eternity. That's it. That's why you give your best for the church and you know you're in league with what God wants.

So God the Father's purpose is to glorify himself through his Son and his Son's work of saving and securing the church. I'm gonna say that again because that, that's kind of the, the core of all that matters for time and eternity. God's purpose, the Father's purpose for both time and eternity is to glorify himself through his Son and his Son's work of saving and securing the church. You see, that's biblical theology. If you get that down, everything else fits and makes sense. If you don't get that as the foundation stone, nothing else is worth looking at.

And I just couldn't resist focusing afresh this morning on this divine prerogative that God can do it the way he wants, according to his purpose, and how it's all going to culminate in glorious fashion. Now don't just, just belabor these verses but just get the gist of these verses. 1 Corinthians 15:24 and 25, "and then comes the end, when He hands over the kingdom to the God and Father, when He has established all rule and all authority and power. For He must reign until He has put all His enemies under His feet." Jesus is going to do his work the Father sent him to do. He's going to conquer all the enemies of God. He's going to secure his church and then he's going to yield it up to the Father and say, "Father, You sent Me to do this job and here they are, your saved ones, Your church. I'm presenting them to You perfectly." It's going to come, that's God's purpose through his Son Jesus Christ. Do I need to remind you that Jesus never fails? He never fails.

Revelation 21:1 through 5, "Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth passed away." Can I stop right there and belabor that just for a moment? A lot in this social justice movement and all this stuff that's going on and it's getting into the church and people are trying to mix up critical race theory and all this wicked vile teaching with church theology, it does not fit. It does, it's not part of the church. The, the gospel is not the cure for this world. The gospel is to build his church in the world which is the best thing we can do for the world. The gospel is not gonna fix the world, it's gonna build his church in the world and then when he comes, he's going to preserve his church and he's going to destroy the rest of the world. Are you with me? Let's be God-centered about this. The gospel is not here to fix America. It's the best fix for America that's not why it's here. The gospel was given to us to preach to build his churches and that's the best thing we can do for America but to say the gospel is for America and fixes all our problems, it's not true. Matter of fact, there's going to be so

many sinful problems when Jesus returns, he is gonna get rid of all the old heaven and old earth and all those on it who don't know him. Are you grasping this? I'm sorry, I'll never get through with this sermon if you make me stop and explain those things every half verse I come to.

Okay, the first heaven, that's the one that exists now, the first earth, that's the earth you and I walk on right now is passed away and there is no longer any sea. "Then I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem," I believe that's the church, "coming down out of heaven from God, made ready as a bride adorned for heaven." Look at, just think, think about the, the imagery here, the glory of it. Holy city. Bride adorned for her husband. That's what, that's how this thing is gonna conclude, you and I.

"And I heard a loud voice from the throne, saying, 'Behold, the tabernacle of God is among men.' Well, that's gotta be the church. "And He will dwell among them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself will be among them, and He will wipe away every tear from their eyes." Some of you this morning, there's tears in your eyes if not tears in your heart because this life's hard but one day it's going to be glorious. "No longer any mourning or crying, or pain," that's all been taken away, "the first things have passed away. And He who sits on the throne said, 'Behold, I am making all things new.'" By the way, he's already making all things new but at this point he'll complete the making of all things new. You're part of the new things, and then he's going to make everything brand-new and then we'll fit it perfectly then because we'll even lose our old flesh sin nature. "Write, for these words are faithful and true."

Revelation 21:9, "Then one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls full of the seven last plagues came and spoke with me, saying, 'Come here, I will show you the bride, the wife of the Lamb.'" That's the church. That's the glorious culmination everything is coming to. That's the purpose of God and he's gonna – listen to me – he's gonna build it, put it together, secure it, and then this day he's pointing to and glorify it all according to his own purpose, the way he wants to do it and for the reasons he wants to do it. Now we live in a world that hates the purposes of God, hates the wisdom of God. The rulers and the wise men of this world ignore these truths. They, they pass them away as dreamy thinking. They hate God. They hate his holy purposes and they hate is holy Son Jesus Christ. You think, okay, all of this radical secularization is happening. You and I used to live in a, in a country that had a Christian consensus. Generally men, though not all of them were saved, would agree that biblical truths and Christian values were best for our country. That's no longer true. We've become secularized. We've pushed away every divine truth. Objective truth is gone. Now the only truth that is left is how you feel today. You might feel differently tomorrow. That's why we have this bizarre vile teaching that you might be a man today, a woman the next day, a half man and half woman the next day, and there's many other genders you might pick the next week. Why? Because you are your own God. Everything is subjective. It's just up to you and how you feel. I'm gonna tell you, it is about how someone feels, it's about how God feels. He does what he pleases. He does according to his purposes. And by the way, everybody that doesn't line up with that is not gonna make it through glorification. Their end will be the judgment.

So what's God think when this whole world is raising itself up, shaking its fist, asserting its great authority and wisdom and might to rule and have its own say, and all of it's against God's purposes and against God's wisdom? What does God say? Here's what he says, Psalm 2:4, "He who sits in the heavens laughs." Look at the context of that verse sometimes, that's exactly what it's talking about. God sees the whole earth going its own way and rebelling against him, and he laughs in derision at the blind fools.

Well, first of all, Paul writes to Timothy and says, "Timothy, think about this, contemplate this jewel, this, this gem of truth that God saved us according to His own purposes and not according to our approach which, which always includes works." Now gem number 2. Paul says, "Timothy, think about the divine agent of our salvation." Of course, that's Jesus Christ. An agent is one responsible for a specific task on behalf of another. The Bible teaches very clearly that God the Father offered salvation and God the Son procured, carried out, accomplished the salvation. He is the divine agent. Jesus acted on the earth in a saving us on behalf of the Father's will and the Father's purposes. John 6:38, Jesus said, "For I have come down from heaven, not to do My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me." He makes it very clear. Now Jesus is equal God with God the Father, but in their functioning in salvation, God the Father is the author and overseeing everything, and God the Son is carrying out the dictate, the will, the purposes of God the Father.

He says in verse 9 of our text here that this glorious divine salvation, notice the phrase, "is granted us," verse 9, "is granted us in Christ Jesus." This is the last part of the verse, "granted us in Christ Jesus." The word "granted" means, uh, "given." It's been given to us, listen, through the means of through the agency of Jesus, who he is and what he's performed on our behalf. Now this is expanded in verse 10, the agent of our salvation is and Paul says, "Let's look at Him a little bit more. Now contemplate this," Paul is telling Timothy. Contemplate this, Grace Life Church. Think on it, let it, let it do something to you. Verse 10, "but now has been revealed," Jesus has been revealed, "by the appearing of our Savior Christ Jesus, who abolished death and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel." That last two words there at the end of the verse, he's brought it to light. The point is it's been now revealed how specifically how God would save the children. He's brought it light now. We can clearly see now. Formerly through the Old Testament era, we could only see Christ and the salvation brought by Christ in types and in shadows and in figures or illustrations, but now he himself has come. The Old Testament told us there was a coming Savior but a lot of it was foggy to us, but now he is come, the lights are on, we can see who he is and can, we can see just what he has done and is now doing to save us and keep us saved. So he is the perfect Christ. He fulfilled the office of Christ our Savior perfectly. He's God's agent to perform this. Paul says, "Timothy, marvel over this, contemplate that afresh." Now remind yourself, none of these truths are new it's just that we need to hear them over and over and over again so that when you walk out the door this morning, there's a new resolve of termination because you've contemplated more richly this divine salvation God's given you, and so there's a new determination and motivation to be faithful to him this next week. That's why we keep preaching it. That's why Paul keeps telling Timothy about it and we all need that help.

Christ is, following up on the agent illustration, he is the perfect agent who performed the task. Look at verse 10 again, he performed the task of abolishing death on behalf of the children. Death is past for us. Now we may enter into death during this physical life down here but we don't stay there. We pass on to a glorious presence with God. He's abolished death and he's brought life, that includes eternal life, a new type of life but also an eternal life, a life that never ends, and immortality. Same idea, it has eternality in it. No, no corruption of sin is going to claim us and destroy us. We're gonna pass through death and into eternal life. That's what this perfect agent acting on behalf of God the Father has accomplished for us.

Jesus just cannot fail. Lamentations 3:22 with an ultimate reflection on Christ says, "The LORD'S lovingkindnesses indeed never cease, For His compassions never fail." God the Father sent Jesus to earth. He zooms down from the glories of the holy heavens and he comes down to earth and he was from the baby in that manger all the way through the death, burial and resurrection totally enthralled with compassions to save the children. "Timothy, think on that again. Contemplate that afresh, Timothy." And so must you, Grace Life Church.

Isaiah 53:10 through 12, a prophecy of our Christ and notice how he never fails. "But the LORD was pleased To crush Him," God the Father was pleased to crush God the Son on the cross, "putting Him to grief; If He would render Himself as a guilt offering," which he did, but what's gonna be the result? "He will see His offspring," that's us, that's the church. "He will prolong His days," he didn't end at the grave and we will not end with him at the grave. "And the good pleasure of the LORD will prosper in His hand." The good purposes or pleasure of God is going to be fulfilled through the agent Jesus Christ. Verse 20, verse 11 rather, "As a result of the anguish of His soul, He will see it and be satisfied." See what? See what he is effectually accomplishing. Effectually means perfectly, you achieve the end for which you started out to perform. He will see it through, Christ will, and he'll be satisfied by the results of his death on our behalf. "By His knowledge the Righteous One, My Servant, will justify the many, As He will bear their iniquities." So what, what's the Father gonna do? Verse 12, "Therefore, I will allot Him a portion with the great." The world said he's done with. The world said he's ashamed. The world said he's, he's a derision. He's the out-scourings of the earth, we'll nail him to a cross. But God said, "You've missed it. My purposes was to use My Son to redeem the children and I'm gonna give My Son a portion with the great." A picture of Christ. "And He will divide the booty," that's the spoils. He, he came and conquered and he has the spoils which is his church. Powerful, powerful truth about the divine agent of our salvation. He performed it. He got it done. He finished the task. Paul says, "Timothy, marvel over this a little while. Let this work on you a little more."

3. Not only does Paul say, "Look at the gem, the jewel of the prerogatives of God the Father concerning our salvation, Timothy, contemplate afresh the agent of our salvation, Jesus Christ and all He has accomplished, but thirdly, I want you to look at the gem of the divine nature of our salvation." The divine nature of it. Look at it there in verse 9 again, he has called us, this is the phrase I want to look at, first part, he "saved us and called us

with a holy calling." Now called is the effectual call but when he says holy calling, I disagree with a lot of interpreters here when they say that only means we're called to live a holy life. Well, of course we are. That is what we're called to do, called to live lives set apart to God. But I think it encompasses that but it's bigger than that. I think what he's saying here, "Timothy, grasp afresh the nature, the uniqueness of God's calling to salvation. It's not like anything else you've ever seen or heard or men discuss or teach on the earth. It has such a unique character. It is of God, that is, it is a holy calling. God, this holy One ordained the nature of salvation. God, this holy One, initiated the actions of salvation. And God, this holy One, is, assures or ensures the efficacy, the success of this salvation. Timothy, marvel afresh the holiness, radical uniqueness of our salvation." It, it's not of the earth. You know, there's the holy, the true and sinless, uncorrupted by sin things of God. That's the holy, and then there's the profane, the things of this fallen sinful earth that are unclean and debased and defiled and destined for to perish. He says, "Timothy our salvation is not of any of that. It's a holy calling. God thought it up and God brought it to pass."

We are opposed to that religion that comes out of this profane world, and there's so much of it out there and there always has been. There's so much under the name of Christianity that comes more from the profane earth than it does from the holy God. That's why the Apostle Paul said in 2 Corinthians 10:5, "We are destroying," notice the strong word, not just we're teaching against, not that we oppose, "destroying speculations and every lofty thing raised up." What he means by that is it's not really a lofty thing but they are taking this old profane, base, sin-corrupted world's wisdom and they're raising it up as if it's a good and holy thing, and Paul said, "I'll tell you what I'm doing to it, boom, I'm destroying it." Did that get your attention? "I'm destroying it. I'm bringing it down and showing what it really is because our God gives us a salvation that is of His very being and nature. It's a holy calling unto God."

You know what the job of the pastor/teacher of the church is? To be a fellow worker with Paul and continually "destroy speculations and every lofty thing raised up against the knowledge of God and take every thought captive to the obedience of Christ." You say, "Pastor, you really get on some people sometimes. You'll talk about the charismatics and you'll talk about the Baptists and you'll talk about the Roman Catholics." Do you know what I'm doing? I'm destroying speculations and every lofty thing raised up against this holy purpose of God to save us his way and for his purposes.

"Well, our divine salvation, Timothy, is a holy calling." Now he expands on this unique nature, the divine nature of our salvation by using that phrase "and grace." You see, he didn't just call us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace. Well, again, grace means favor. Listen to this expression, this statement, "By His choice, we are the objects of God's delight and favorable regard." By his choice, in other words, contrast that to the other phrase here, not according to works but by grace, that somehow in the eternal infinite heart and mind of God – now listen to your pastor – he saw you and not you generally, you specifically, and focused his heart of favor and good regard on you. Paul said, "That's the kind of salvation you and I have, Timothy. Contemplate that afresh." "Pastor, but you don't know what a sinner I am." I

don't need to know because I know what a Savior he is. I know what he can do with wretches like you and me.

It's grace. Romans 11:6 tells us, "But if it is by grace, it is no longer on the basis of works, otherwise grace is no longer grace." "Well, Timothy, we, we marvel over the prerequisites of our salvation, the divine prerequisite that God the Father did it according to His purposes and He has the right, He has the pre, prerogative to do that. Timothy, we marvel over the gem of our divine salvation because we marvel over the agent of salvation. God didn't send an angel and God didn't send a, a prophet, and God didn't send a preacher, He sent His Son. That's the agent of our salvation. And Timothy, we marvel afresh over something of the nature of our divine salvation. It's holy. It's of grace."

Now number 4. "Timothy, I want to bring another gem out of my bag for you to think about this morning as I'm writing this letter to you from prison. Timothy, marvel over the divine order of salvation." Now listen, there is an order of the way God saves us, now listen, that extends back through eternity past, occurs through time, and extends forward into eternity future. You know, I, I always look at eternity future to my right and eternity past to my left. Do you notice that? The only way I can re, reverse that is do this. I can't, I can't get eternity future over here for some reason. That's, that's always the left over there is eternity past and over here is always eternity future.

Four quick points here. A. Salvation ordained before eternity past. Now look, you can't go idle on me in your brain right now. You've gotta think. The phrase here in verse, uh, 9, look at it there, the last three words in the New American Standard, "from all eternity." That's an interesting grouping of Greek words. It doesn't just mean from eternity. Notice how, how they translate it, "from all eternity." Wuest, the esteemed Greek scholar says this literally means "before eternity." It's the idea you take the most remote conceivable idea, gotta go to my left, the remote conceivable idea in your imagination of where eternity began and you gotta get before that. If that wall is eternity, you gotta get before that wall. But really the text is such an emphasis that it's so early on, not only do you go before eternity, you need to go on down to Bojangles and on to Cherokee and Memphis and Dallas and Albuquerque and Los Angeles, the Hawaiian Islands, and blast off from there and sail through the terrestrial heavens, up through the outer regions of our solar system, through the vast unknown regions of billions of other solar systems, go back into the premises of eternal God and bust through the back side of that. That's where God said, "I ordained My salvation for you." Woo! That's saved. That's saved right there. I'm telling you, I'm just this close to busting through that door and I'm just gonna keep going because way back there is where God ordained our salvation. The scholar says Paul intentionally wrote before eternity God ordained you specifically to be the object of his grace and receive his salvation. "Timothy, marvel over that gem for just a little while." This stuff just gets all over me. I'm so deficient in my capacity to reveal to you the glories of these things. I'm just deficient but the Holy Spirit's not.

Then verse 10, Christ appears, Paul says here. So we come out of back, back, back, back before eternity began God ordained your salvation, now in time and space history, Christ succumbs. He procures your salvation, dies on the cross, buried in the grave, raised for

your justification, enters heaven, intercedes faithfully for you. In time, C., in space and time history, God calls you to salvation. Called with a holy call. Called is the effectual call, that moment in time when through the presentation of the gospel the Holy Spirit quickens your heart and you come to repentance and faith in Jesus Christ. God's doing all this. Then last part of verse 10, brings life and immortality through the gospel. Immortality includes eternity future, so it goes all the way into eternity future.

"Timothy, contemplate that gem for a while." Think hard. Your brain's not for trigonometry, not primarily. It's not for chemistry or physics, not primarily. Get my counting in this thing, it's not for counting primarily. But don't mess my, my tax stuff, okay? It's not for English primarily. Your brain is to think on these things. Contemplate.

Number 4, Paul says think on the divine gem of the prerogative of God to save us the way he wants to and for his own purposes. Think on the divine agent of salvation, our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Think on the divine nature of salvation, it's a holy calling, it's all of grace. Think on the divine order of salvation, back before eternity he chose his elect and worked it out through time and secures you all the way into eternity future.

V. "Now Timothy, marvel over the divine means to individual salvation." The divine means. I'll just do this quickly. Paul gets very practical now. He's been, he's been just, can I say wallowing? Wallowing in the unreachable glories and the wonders of our divine salvation. Then he says, "for which I was appointed a preacher and an apostle and a teacher." Very practical, Paul says, "Timothy, I, I of all people was called to this work, to spread this glorious truth." Appointed, the word "appointed" here in verse 11 means "to set in place." To be God's minister, you must be set in that place. The word "appointed" can mean "to lay a foundation." God's foundation he laid for the building of his church is appointing men to be his apostles, then when that era passed, then appointing men to be his pastor/teachers.

"He set me," Paul said. 1 Corinthians 9:16, "For if I preach the gospel, I have nothing to boast of, for I am under compulsion; for woe is me if I do not preach the gospel." You couldn't pay God, Paul enough money to preach. You couldn't punish him in prison long enough to keep him from preaching. "Woe is me if I do not preach the gospel." I know some, I'm no Apostle Paul but I know something of that weight.

You know, the elders have given me this fabulous time away from the church and the pulpit. They, they said, "Now you're not to preach for others. You're not to study hard. You're, this is, this is away." What in heaven's name am I gonna do? This is what I do. It's a fire in my bones. But I, I do perceive that it will be good for us and me long term to take some time away. I do perceive that and I have too much pride to admit that sometimes but it's just the truth.

Paul, Paul is saying that God's means of procuring these individuals for salvation occurs through him appointing men. For himself, it's the office of apostle. Today that translates over to pastor/teachers, there are no more apostles. Then he said a preacher. He uses three terms here. A preacher is one of the terms. Now the preacher here means a herald. It was

commonly used in this day when the emperor would send a spokesman to a town, the emperor, the spokesman would come in heralding, heralding the emperor's edict and, and the point was when the emperor's herald comes to town, it's formal, it's fully authoritative, and you'd better hear it. That's the word Paul uses for the preacher. It's very humbling to me because I know preachers are just sinners like you but that's God's method. So we marvel over the divine means he's chosen to get people saved.

He throws in the word "teacher." Teach here, teacher means "to learn." He, he therefore he is a herald, a preacher who instructs so that we can learn the truths of God. Paul is telling Timothy here, "Timothy, all of this I want you to contemplate so that it might cultivate in you a deeper new determination to finish out faithful." Some of you sitting in this room this morning came to church this morning about halfway thinking you gonna fall out on me. No, you're not. If you don't belong to God, that's fine, but if you belong to God, you're not falling out on me. Uh-uh. I'll come knocking on your door. [knocking] "Where you been?" Not really. I probably won't but the point is how can you contemplate this and walk out the door and say, "I'm in pastor. Sign me up. That's too good to walk away from. Count me onboard. Let's keep going. Let's finish out faithful."

Now we have this strong word of testimony in verse 12 and we're done. Paul says, "Timothy," verse 12, "For this reason all the glorious truths we've just tried to unpack for you, for this reason I also suffer these things," what things? Well, right now in prison, in squalor awaiting his execution. "But I am not ashamed." We talked about that, didn't we, in a message or two ago, the fact that there's a right things to shame and there's right things to honor. Paul said, "I'm not gonna get that backwards. I'm gonna keep honoring the things that are honorable, my Lord and His gospel and true salvation. I'm gonna keep putting to shame the things that are shameful, this world, the Roman government and everything that's not of God. Now very position, I'm honoring God but by my very position I'm shaming what ought to be shamed." He said, "I'm not ashamed of Christ. I'm gonna keep honoring Him for I know whom I have believed and I am convinced," Paul says, "I know Him by faith, you know, because as a Christian believing is seeing, He is the all-powerful God who saved me through this glorious divine salvation and He will not and He cannot retract this everlasting covenant He made with me before eternity started and secured for me through His agent who came and died on the cross and all of those who are His." He said, "I, I'm convinced He's gonna do every bit of that and He has done all of that and gonna keep doing it."

Then the next phrase in verse 12 and "He is able to guard," protect, keep, that which "I have entrusted to Him." The word "entrusted to Him" actually is the exact same word you would use in this day when you made a deposit down at the bank. You go down to the bank, you put your money in there, you deposit it. Why? Because you are, you have, you're convinced it's safe. Paul said, "I've made my deposit of everything I am in the bank of God the Father and God the Son Jesus Christ. I'm leaving it to Him, my life, my body, my wealth, my well-being, my eternal future. All, I'm, I'm depositing it all right there." Where is your deposit?

Verse 12, he says the last three verses, "until that day." "That day" is the final day of this era and the beginning of the eternal glorified state. "I, I, I'm, I'm fully trusting, I've fully deposited all my hope and confidence that He's gonna keep me now, He's gonna get me all the way into eternity future and to glorification." Paul's writing to Timothy, "Now Timothy, this is the track that you're on. I just want to bring some of these gems out so that you and I could marvel over them again. Timothy, this is the track that you're on. Now stay the course and finish faithful to the finish. Finish faithful to the finish." I think that's a good word for Grace Life Church of the Shoals. We've come this far, now let's finish out. Where we gonna get the motivation? From contemplation on this. That's where we're gonna get it.