

## 2 Timothy 2

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[ 0 : 0 0 ] We'll just look again at the portion of Scripture that we read in 2 Timothy chapter 2. And at verse 19, 2 Timothy chapter 2 at verse 19.

Nevertheless, the solid foundation of God stands. Having this seal, the Lord knows those who have this.

And let everyone who names the name of Christ depart from iniquity. This evening we can look at the foundation of God.

What is it? What is the foundation of God that stands sure and steadfast? And what is true about this foundation?

What is true about the foundation is that it has a double seal. A double seal. It is sealed from heaven. The Lord knows those who are his.

[ 1 : 1 4 ] And it is also sealed from earth, as it were, or earthwards. Let everyone who names the name of Christ depart from iniquity.

The double seal of the foundation of God. This is a remarkable and deeply significant letter.

Paul is preparing Timothy to be a preacher of the gospel. He's encouraging him. For that time when Paul would depart.

Here he is locked in prison. Once again coming under severe persecution. From those who would seek to oppose the gospel of Jesus Christ.

And Paul knew that his time was short. And he was concerned, of course, for the church. He was concerned for the individual believers.

[ 2 : 3 3 ] But he was concerned for the church. And he's writing to Timothy here. To encourage, to influence, and to advise Timothy.

And this letter is written in such a way that he's presenting Timothy with a warning.

And several warnings against the kind of situation that was developing in that day. He was encouraging Timothy to make sure that he must have courage as a preacher of the gospel.

Never to be ashamed of the gospel. To rightly divide the word of truth. He says to him in verse 15, Be diligent to present yourself approved to God.

A worker who does not need to be ashamed. Rightly dividing the word of truth. The word that's used here and the image that is presented here is like cutting.

[ 3 : 4 2 ] And it's not cutting as a joiner perhaps would cut a bit of wood. Or a butcher would cut a bit of meat. But it's about if you're going from one place to the other place.

From A to B. And you're making a road from A to B. You're cutting through, as it were, the landscape. To make a road. You have to make that road as straight as possible.

And as perfect as possible. So that it would be easy for you to get from where you're starting to where you're going. And to avoid at all costs swinging that way and swinging this way and swinging every other way.

He's warning him. He's encouraging him. And he's warning him. And he's warning him of something that we spoke about and touched on briefly in the morning. He's warning him.

That there is a much shaking going on. It's almost as if there's a mild kind of earthquake. A rumbling. And the houses are shaking.

[ 5 : 22 ] It's as if the ground is shaking. And the houses are shaking. And the people are shaking. And the communities of believers are shaking.

people are straying from the gospel even chapter 1 as you follow through chapter 1 you see the emphasis that Paul is putting on idle words in this particular second letter he talks specifically there of turning away in chapter 1 and verse 15 that you know that all those in Asia who have turned away from me among whom are Phrygelus and Hermione they were following him they were his disciples and they strayed from the truth because of idle words because of vain babblings because they were entangling themselves in the things of this world in the affairs of this world and he's specifically warning Timothy, Timothy a soldier called to be a soldier must engage in warfare and not entangle himself in the affairs of this world you must endure hardship as a good soldier of Jesus Christ and he makes another picture for him and he presents a picture of an athlete an athlete who is competing in athletics the winter Olympics that on just now and of course all those competitors from all over the world are gathered together and if they flow to the rules they're going to be eliminated from the competition you cannot flow to the rules in an Olympic competition and God is saying to Timothy the same is true in following Christ you cannot flow out the rules you cannot suddenly push back the boundaries that God has set and say to God yes God but I'm going to set my own boundaries

I don't have to be bound by your word I can really do my own thing and I can create these boundaries for myself and I can live within them and Paul is saying to Timothy whatever you do don't flout the rules don't push God's boundaries back have you not seen what's happened here to Hermioneus and Philemonus they are of this sort they've strayed concerning the truth and there are false teachers here and there and they are ruining people's profession and it's spreading like cancer like spreading like gangrene throughout the community and as it were throughout the church and the faith of some and the profession of some have been turned upside down and it's as if the whole thing is shaking and that's the picture that he's presenting there's a shaking here there's a shaking going on and it's a gloomy picture and he's saying the devil's at work too the devil is at work and he's always at work of course trying to oppose the work of the gospel and the name of Jesus

Christ is he not saying to them at the end of chapter 2 those who who have strayed from the truth may the Lord grant them repentance that they may know the truth and they may come to their senses come to your senses you people he's saying to them and he's saying to Timothy you must teach these people and tell them to come to their senses and they must escape the snare of the devil having been taken captive by him to do his will it's almost as if the whole fabric of the Christian church is falling about his ears the ground the church people are shaking and then he turns and he says but there is one house that stands for him and sure and that is the church of Jesus Christ the church of Jesus

Christ who is the church of Jesus Christ what is the church of Jesus Christ it's more appropriate to say who because the church of Jesus Christ is made up of sinners who have been saved sinners who have been saved and this foundation foundation this foundation stands sure but everything else seems to be falling away this foundation which is founded and built on the rock which is the son of God and which has been which has been joined together as it were and brought together by God the Holy

[ 11 : 03 ] Spirit according to the purpose of God the Father God the Father it's remarkable how these epistles always begin with Paul an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God according to the promise of life which is in Christ Jesus grace mercy and peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Lord and of course while you have the Father and the Son you always have the Holy Spirit this foundation this foundation has a particular warrant and it's a threefold warrant from Father Son and Holy Spirit I will build my church Jesus says I will build my church I am building my foundation and the gates of hell will not prevail against it and this foundation has a double seal a double seal the

Lord knows those who are his against all the shaking against all the backsliding and against all the apostasy and falling away against all the temptations and the trials and the false teachers and the false doctrine the Christian must stand the Christian must stand sealed the building is sealed in two directions heaven words as it were the Lord knows them that are his what do these words present to you they present to you first and foremost love divine love

God's knowing God's knowing is God's and the Bible's way of presenting to us not only his sovereignty of course in terms of his omniscience all knowing as God and he is omniscient as he is omnipotent and as he is omnipresent and in all his attributes these characteristics if we might call them that are true of God as he is God but the Lord knows them that are his it gives us a particular window into divine love divine foreknowledge and divine love the Lord knows them that are his it tells us that these are his they belong to him it provides us with the reality of ownership they belong to God the Lord knows them that are his they are his and the

Bible teaches us of course that election divine election we are elect in Christ in Christ we were given by the Father to the Son to the Son I pray for them Jesus said in the great high peace prayer in John 17 I pray for them I don't pray for the world I pray for them those whom the Father has given me he says in another place those that the Father has given me I will in no wise cast out I will save them this is electing love it is divine and sovereign ownership we belong to God and we belong to Jesus Christ and the apostle says in another place you are not your own you are not your own you don't belong to yourself you belong to me you are not your own you are bought with a price the Lord knows them that are his they belong to him he knows them and they were redeemed by him redeemed by him

I know my sheep my sheep hear my voice I lay down my life for my sheep he has all these in his heart and in his mind he had them in his heart and in his mind from all eternity and most surely he had them in his heart and in his mind as he walked on this earth and as he made his way to Calvary and most assuredly he had them in his heart and in his mind as he was hanging on that tree the sinless one the innocent one declared to be guilty declared to be guilty but he was wounded for our transgressions bruised for our iniquities and on him the chastisement of our peace was laid laid and by his stripes he has healed us from our stripes as he hung on that tree he knew them every single one of them and he suffered and died for them the

[ 17 : 53 ] Lord knows them that are his they are owned by him they are redeemed by him and the Lord knows them that are his by the Holy Spirit's work in them the Holy Spirit's work in them Jesus himself says this about the Holy Spirit he shall take of mine and show it unto you these are sealed also by the Holy Spirit the guarantee of the Holy Spirit a guarantee an eternal guarantee with which they are stamped as it were by the Holy Spirit an indelible irrevocable stamp on those that are his who make up the church of the living God who are part of this kingdom this kingdom and the

Holy Holy Spirit renews Christ to them and the Holy Spirit renews them and the Holy Spirit transforms them and the Holy Spirit leads them and if you read Romans 8 you read there the great course if you like that is set out for the Christian and God says in that remarkable epistle and in that remarkable chapter I'm giving you somebody I'm giving you a companion to help you live as you are to live and that companion is the Holy Spirit the Holy Spirit in us he pours the Holy Spirit into our hearts we receive the spirit of adoption by which we cry Abba Father Abba Father and the church down through the ages down through the Old

Testament and even at the time of Timothy looking back as they were over the scripts of the Old Testament time and time again God was reminding them of these things just as Paul is telling Timothy to remind them remind them of these things how often the scriptures speak of reminding us of things why is that well it's because we need to be reminded of these things we need to be reminded of these things because we still have sin in us we know that we spoke about that in the morning we still have sin in us and that sin in us is fighting and doing all it can to oppose the work of the spirit of the holy spirit the flesh is warring against the spirit but praise be to

God that the spirit wars against the flesh and it is the spirit of Christ who wars against the flesh and the spirit of Christ is the spirit of victory over sin and death and the grave and that's the spirit that enables us through the power of his resurrection to overcome sin that's why he's reminding them here he's telling them here of false teachers who were denying the resurrection saying that the resurrection is already past but he's saying to them this is a faithful saying at verse 11 for if we died with him we shall also live with him if we endure we shall also reign with him and of course it comes with its warning about denying him and being faithless and of course in his first letter and in the first chapter in the first chapter he reminds them rather in the second in this particular second letter in the first chapter he reminds them of all these things at verse 9 to 14 he says 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 given to us in

Christ Jesus before time began but has now been revealed by the appearing of our saviour Jesus Christ who has abolished death and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel he's saying to Timothy remind them of these things the Lord knows those who are his he knows them by ownership he knows them because he has redeemed them he has saved them he knows them by the work of the Holy Spirit in them and the Lord knows those who are his by our interest in him our interest in him by our trusting him by our believing him by our loving him by the service we do for him the service we do for him and in the service we do for him the service we do for each other and the cup of cold water that we give to this person and that person whoever they may be when did we do that

[ 24:17 ] Lord when did we give that cup of cold water to these people in as much as you did it unto the least of my brethren you did it unto me out a said earlier in roughly dividing the word of truth there are so many other words out there so many vain words vain babblings idle talk profane words Timothy all your focus must be on the word of God the Lord knows those who are his and the second seal is this and this is the seal that is as it were earthward let everyone who names the name of Christ depart from iniquity these two things, the two seals go together you can never separate them and separating them leads to all sorts of issues you cannot follow the Lord Jesus Christ and not depart from iniquity it is impossible you cannot follow the Lord Jesus Christ and follow your own path your own will your own way departing from iniquity and the order of these seals is very important departing from iniquity comes after not before the seal of the Lord knows then that it is and not only that but it demolishes the argument that I cannot come as I am to Christ that I cannot come as I am to Christ it doesn't say well depart from iniquity and then I'll go and believe in Jesus it doesn't say that at all it says the Lord knows those who are his and those that are his who name the name of Christ and it's just another way of saying who believe in the Lord Jesus Christ who love Christ more than anything else in the world that these depart from iniquity and this text is saying to each one of us that you will never make yourself fit for the kingdom by your own efforts you might as well be waiting for the ocean to dry up you might as well be waiting for ever if such a thing was possible we know that's impossible but it will never happen because

Christ has done it all Christ has done it all he says to them at Versace remember that Jesus Christ of the seed of David was raised from the dead according to my gospel remember what Christ has done remember that he died of sinners he died to save sinners remember that he was raised from the dead to save sinners remember that he lives forevermore and they live because he lives because he lives what is the first step in departing from iniquity what is the first step in departing from iniquity it is departing from your alienation from God if you're not a Christian the first step in departing from iniquity is departing from your alienation from God the alienation that that every human being is in before God we are in a state of sin and misery alienated by your sin and the first step is to depart from that alienation and to embrace reconciliation departing from iniquity this great seal is a command it's an imperative it's a duty naming the name the departing from iniquity are one and the same

Zechariah presents it so beautifully in chapter 12 looking on him whom they have pierced and mourning for sin regarding him as pierced for me bearing my sin bearing it away gazing on his agony and apprehending my share my share in its cause and its root it was because of my sin that he went to Calvary and it was because of my sin that the sinless sin bearer came to save it was my sin and I look on him whom my sin has caused to hang on that tree and to suffer and die to cause to be forsaken even by his father and to die the cursed death of the cross and it should make us abhor sin and it should make us abhor the sin in us and looking on Christ naming the name of Christ looking on him loving him following him reading about him has to make us depart from iniquity depart from me

Lord said Peter for I am a sinful man when he saw who Christ really was depart from me Lord I am a sinful man and you know these other great examples that we have in the scriptures the great prophet who said woe is me for I am undone when he saw the king of glory when he saw Christ the king woe is me for I am undone I am a man of unclean lips and I dwell amongst a people of unclean lips what did Job what did Job say when God confronted him when God confronted him and said to him and if you read these words in these great chapters in chapter 38 and 39 who are you God says to Job who are you and where were you when I lay the foundations of this world do you not know who I am

God says to him and God continues down in that chapter 38 and 39 and how does God respond after God has finished speaking how does Job respond to God Job says to him I am vile I am vile that was Job's response to God the Lord knows those who are his and that everyone who names the name of Christ depart from iniquity and departing from iniquity is only possible through naming the name of Christ and it's a continued departing it's a fleeing it's a running it's a continual turning our back on sin it's a continual fleeing the word is contained in the in the message that Paul is telling

[ 33 : 46 ] Timothy when he says to him flee also youthful lusts that pursue righteousness righteousness faith love peace with those who call on the Lord out of a pure heart flee this continual departing from sin the question for us of course is what is true of us do we have this seal this double seal and are both these seals true of us there were those in this company in this company that Paul is speaking about here in the time of Timothy and they were they were claiming that they knew claiming to follow claiming

Christ as their Savior following the teachings of Paul but they were not departing from iniquity they were not departing from iniquity and they stayed from the truth they stayed from the truth it's a reality you know that it's remarkable this is just in the passage in the letter of James and I'm sure you're very familiar with the epistle of James and it's a great epistle and it certainly challenges us in terms of how we ought to live the Christian life the epistle of James but very often you see at the end of an epistle at the end of the chapters of that epistle you see a blessing or a doxology a praising of God and a blessing have you ever thought of what's written at the back of at the end of chapter five of

James brethren he says brethren he says listen brethren if anyone among you wanders from the truth don't think it isn't it is we have to guard but praise God he says this brethren if anyone among you wanders from the truth and someone turns him back let him know that he who turns a sinner from the error of his way will save a soul from death and cover a multitude of sins nevertheless the solid foundation of God stands having this seal the Lord the Lord knows those lives and let everyone who names the name of Christ depart from iniquity how is it with you how is it with your soul in terms of that seal that seal that double seal oh may the

Lord grant us grace how we need the grace of God to keep us every day to keep our feet from falling to keep our eyes from tears tears you know the gospel isn't just all sweet and and cuddly and fluffy and frothy it's not that at all the gospel is serious I think I've said this more than once it is remarkable how each of these letters and these epistles refers to sin breaking out in different ways whether it's here in terms of idle words and false teachings and the word of God getting compromised to sexual immorality to lusts of the flesh of the eye of the pride of life you know that the apostle deals with things he gets he gets down and deep into these things and he's doing that because he knows us and of course this is the word of

God this is the God breathed scriptures and of course as you know in that great chapter in 2nd Timothy he ends that third chapter with these great words that all scripture is God breathed he reminds him of the word of God and these things are in the Bible so that we would live and that we would show and demonstrate who we are and what we are and that every one of us examine ourselves examine our lives really ask ourselves what kind of people are we in relation to Christ in relation to each other and help us and help each one of us to pray and to seek God's face and God's faith Amen Be