

Avoid Unwholesome Teachers

Let us turn to our Bibles to 1st Timothy chapter 6. 1st Timothy chapter 6, verses 3 to 5. Let us listen attentively to the word of God. If anyone teaches otherwise and does not consent to wholesome words, even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the doctrine which accords with godliness, he is proud, knowing nothing, but is obsessed with disputes and arguments over words from which come envy, strife, reviling, evil suspicions, useless wranglings of men, corrupt minds and destitute of the truth, who suppose that godliness is a means of gain. From such withdraw yourself.

Let us pray. In these words, Lord God, your spirit has moved the author, Paul, to express a warning and a negative description here, God, of those who would not teach wholesome words, teachers, God, and the church. Naming the name of Jesus, claiming to be believers, and maybe some of them are, I'm very confused, but it seems that a lot of them here in this description are not, but perhaps even wolves in cheap clothing.

Whatever the case, God, we certainly see this description here, Lord, as a warning for us, and these descriptions, Lord, and these particulars, to show us how serious we ought to take it as well, that we should not have a heart soft towards those who would not teach unwholesome, who would not teach wholesome truths, God Almighty, but rather unwholesome lies and deceptions, and even petty things that bring division into the church of Jesus Christ, God Almighty. And from such, we pray, we would learn and stand firm and withdraw from them. Amen.

So here we have, as Paul began his letter with young Timothy, we're concluding here in chapter 6. He began there, chapter 1, verse 3, with a warning against false teachers. And now we are ending the book with a warning against false teachers. There in chapter 1, verse 3, we read, As I urged you when I went into Macedonia, remain in Ephesus, that you may charge some that they teach no other doctrine, nor give heed to fables and endless genealogies, which cause disputes rather than godly edification which is in faith.

It is a good way to present a letter here to a pastor. It's bookend with admonition to stand firm in the faith and reject false teachers. And although written to a minister about other teachers, the applications are clear for us today.

We are called to stand ground against assaults upon the truth, and even to withdraw from people when the situation warns it. So let's dig in here into the details for not only church officers, but for ourselves. So the first point here is not teaching wholesome words.

Teaching Unwholesome Words

They are not teaching wholesome words. This is bad, and they are doing these unwholesome words. It's an awkward way of speaking here, but that's what we have.

The word here, interestingly enough, if anyone teaches otherwise and does not consent to wholesome words, if anyone teaches otherwise, that is one word, teaches otherwise. That is, teaches a different doctrine, something other than the truth, heretical or in error of some

sort. There are, of course, degrees of error and heinousness of sins, false degrees of teachers and teaching doctrines and the like, degrees of untruth.

Paul has something particular in mind apparently here as he unpacks these words. Now note in chapter 1, I'm going to go back to chapter 1 a few times, and here there's nothing specific about the Trinity or Christ or salvation by faith alone and Christ alone and things like that, things that we would consider serious doctrinal errors. Yet it's serious enough that he brings a warning about it.

He describes them as disputes and arguments over words. They were bad enough that they brought problems to Timothy and the churches there. Unnecessary difficulties in these argumentations.

That word, teaching otherwise, is used in chapter 1, verse 3. I urge you, when I went into Macedonia, remain in Ephesus, that you may charge some that they teach no other doctrine, teach no other doctrine, teach nothing else. That's the same idea, same word. Nor give heed to fables and endless genealogy.

So here we have the fables and endless genealogies, nothing explicit about Christ, the Trinity, and salvation as such, but matters that we would consider tertiary, or whatever the other word is after that, the fourth or fifth layer of things to discuss. And he says they shouldn't be doing this because they're apparently causing problems. They're religiously inconsequential topics apparently, and these public teachers are still pushing it.

And so he has issues with them. Stop this. They're blowing these matters out of proportion, and it's causing harm to the body of Christ.

And they bring disputes, verse 3 and 4, rather than godly edification which is in faith. Now, it's an awkward way of speaking there, teach otherwise, that one single word. What? Teach otherwise than what was taught.

The one I'm teaching you here. Up to this point, and certainly the immediate point, verses 1 through 2, about servants submitting to their masters. The entirety of the epistle thus far taught about submission to church officers early on, taught about handling of widows, and other matters as well.

All these things are supposed to be taught and dealt with, and they should not be teaching contrary or otherwise to these things. But more broadly, Paul simply describes the otherwise as and does not consent to wholesome words. The word there, consent, ranges from approach, to associate with, or in a religious context often, to approach a deity, as we see in Hebrews 10.1, to specifically being occupied with a matter, such as a devout, or to a seed to agree with.

So since the matter before Timothy, of course, is of divine origin, with respect to the church, and how we ought to behave and act within the church, as he wrote earlier, clearly here, it is not just consent and the idea of, well, okay, sure, I agree with that, but to embrace it, to be devoted to God and his truth, and being occupied in these matters. Certainly, a pastor ought to be occupied in these matters. That's his job.

This is Timothy's job. You're not going to be occupied in such things, but nevertheless, you should know the book of Timothy, 2 Timothy, and Titus, and learn from it as best you can what is relevant to you as a member of the body of Christ. And support pastors and pray for them in this endeavor, that they would continue not to teach otherwise, but teach the truth, and to consent to wholesome words, as opposed to unwholesome words.

The word there, wholesome, is not as we, at least as I grew up with, you know, that's wholesome and nice family, and a wonderful thing to have. That's certainly true, but more specifically, it means to be sound, healthy, or of course here, correct. It's the truth of the matter.

It's a good thing, and it brings spiritual health and vitality to the listener. So a wholesome family, in that sense, is not a cultural phenomenon, but a moral description in the Bible. Doctrinally sound, spiritually healthy words, not everyday life as such, but certainly things here, as he specifies, the word of God, and the gospel, and how the law of God applies to our life.

These are the words of Jesus, he says. The words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the doctrine which accords with godliness, at the end of verse 3. Now, I don't think I have to tell this group of Christians here, that he's not saying you have to have the exact words of Jesus, and everything you say and do. But you have the substance of the matter, of what he taught and teaches.

And we see that in verse 4 by implication, because he says he is proud and knowing nothing, those who teach unwholesome things, but is obsessed with disputes, he just likes to argue, and arguments over words. Why are we having word game arguments, as opposed to arguing over substance? That's what God is concerned about. That's what Christ is concerned about.

The word there, the words of Jesus, of course, is teaching truth or doctrine. Paul uses all kinds of words to describe doctrine and teaching and the like. What Jesus taught was certainly edifying.

Although what Jesus taught, what? Was accompanied with disputes, arguments over words sometimes, envy, strife, and reviling. But Christ was not the origin of it, was he? That is, he was not intending to bring these kinds of schismatic things, but rather they arose because of sin, and the hearts of the Jews around him did not want to submit to his truth. And that's important to remember, because as we go through verse 4, the next part, it may happen in your life, in the life of the church, that there are strifes and the like, and that does not automatically, as such, mean there's a problem with you.

It could simply be people don't want to hear the truth, just like with Jesus. Now he describes these men in very strong terms in a public manner, although he does not give names, it's quite interesting. Names are given sometimes, he did in chapter 1 of the men he were punished apparently and excommunicated, but here he does not.

They are proud, knowing nothing. It's a statement of the act itself, and from the act and the teaching, by the act I mean the act of teaching, and instructing and declaring before the people of God matters that are inconsequential and blowing them out of proportion and useless wranglings and the like. He simply says they are proud.

Paul does this often. He's not afraid of labeling an ongoing troublemaker as proud, but probably talking of men that were warned beforehand. Unless it's a clearly prideful situation and the like, often what we see, I think, in the New Testament, as I recall, is over time these things have been developed.

Paul talks about the first and second admonition. It takes time to change people's minds, although you're going to have to spend a lot less time when it comes to church officers, which is what we're dealing with here in particular. You don't want to spend too much time because they're going to cause all kinds of problems if they do not change.

Again, depending on what's taught or not taught, as the case may be in particular churches or denominations. But he simply calls them proud, and I say he describes them this way because of what they are doing and continuing to do after several admonitions, I suspect. Knowing nothing.

He's not saying they're stupid and have nothing in their head, but knowing nothing of edification or helpfulness is the implication here. What they are offering are just wranglings or rewards and debates that are useless at the end of the day, not edifying the body of Christ, building them up, helping us to protect and to fight against the world, the flesh, and the devil. So men with knowledge, but not knowledge that is helpful, that is glorifying to God.

So I went back to chapter 1, verses 3 and 4, where he says not for the edification and for godliness. He continues here to describe these proudful, know-nothing men obsessed with disputes and arguments over words. So he's describing more particularly here what they have been doing.

We have a little more detail. Certainly those who deny major doctrines are men who have arguments over words, the words of the Bible, perhaps. So sometimes we use that phrase, arguments over words mean the substance.

I don't think that's his intent here. Again, we saw that in chapter 1. We talked about genealogies and fables. Those aren't matters of who Christ is and the Trinity or is God God and what's salvation, what we think of as chief and important key doctrines, but rather blowing things out of proportion, as I said before.

They're often proud and destitute of the truth, those who attack major doctrines, to be sure. And I don't think we should be afraid of calling them proudful. They're attacking the word of God.

They're attacking Jesus Christ and his honor. We ought to stand against them and warn people against them and say be careful. These are proudful, obsessed men who wish to attack the truth of God's word.

But here it seems to me that they are arguing over petty controversies and trivial disputes. That seems to be the idea here with the word arguments over words and the way it's used. Here are some examples.

We went to chapter 1. Fables, legends, fictions, not historically true, but may perhaps allude to Gnostic teaching at the time which downplayed the physical body and emphasized the soul as being inherently good to some degree and that which is fleshly are the things of the world materially, not just the body, as evil. Endless genealogies, we read there in chapter 1 again. Such speculations were very prevalent in Judaism, we learn, especially amongst Hellenistic Judaism.

Hellenistic Judaism is the Jews living outside of Palestine, especially influenced by the Greek culture, although because of that influence, it's specifically describing Hellenistic, those influenced by the Greek way of thinking. They could have been living in Israel at the time because it's more doctrinal, social, but most of them are living outside of it. We have here one commentator who gives a helpful description of what they meant by endless genealogies.

They may have become involved in some of the fantasies about genealogies found in those who have been influenced by Philo's more extravagant teachings issuing from among the Jews of Alexandria. Among other things, with him the names and the genealogies represent in various conditions of the soul. The names and the genealogies describe different conditions of the soul of man, apparently, it was Philo's teaching.

In Titus 1.14 we read, Not giving heed to Jewish fables and commandments of men who turn from the truth. So here it's more explicit. He calls it Jewish fables and ties genealogies to it.

So in chapter 1 here in 1 Timothy, it's probably the same thing, it's the Jews again. Jewish teaching, the Jewish teaching that went off the rails. We would almost say, I guess, cult teaching because there are obviously additional things not found in the word of God, but in their own traditions.

And again in Titus 3.9 we read, But avoid foolish disputes, genealogies, there it is again, contentions and strivings about the law, for they are unprofitable and useless. Again, trivial matters and issues that are causing problems in the church and just arguing, arguing, arguing, like why are we arguing over genealogies? What's up with that? And fables. There's something wrong with these men.

There's some pride going on there. Some arrogance. I have a modern example of this.

As you recall my research for the origin of Sunday schools, oh was that 15 years ago now? It's been a long time. I ran across this issue because people were arguing in our state and in our presbytery that Sunday schools were of the devil. They're not biblical.

You can't find them in the word of God and therefore they are wrong. They argued vehemently against specifically age-segregated instruction of children. So they're okay, I

guess you threw them all together and taught one-year-olds the same as a 15-year-old, but that's what they argued against.

Age segregation was their specific term. They said it was evolutionary. It comes from the atheists.

But it turned out their leaders actually allowed it. They created, out of this, argument over words. I don't believe in Sunday school, but I really do practice it.

So why are you not believing here? This is an argument over petty things. They created a parallel confession that churches signed and a regional church organization as well. And it's still ongoing to this day that I'm aware of.

It's at the National Center for Family Integrated Churches. So they even put an adjective before church. It has to be a family integrated church as opposed to age segregated church.

Why? I will tell you why. I've met the man who started that movement, one of the leaders. He's proud and knows nothing.

I met him to his face, and he would not argue and deal with the matters before us. He kept playing word games. And I was in a room full of officers who saw it.

But if I said that publicly, this is where we are, and I bring this up as an important point. How am I supposed to guard the flock if I don't tell people, you know, that guy you kind of maybe like or you've read a lot about in homeschooling circles? He's proud and knows nothing. Oh! Well, who are you? I've been listening to this guy for 10 years.

Well, do you go to his church? No. Do you live with the man? No. Then what do you know about him? You just know what he says.

And I'm telling you, I can prove what he says is wrong. He just simply doesn't know his history. I read his book.

I watched his movie, et cetera, et cetera. He knows nothing about this matter. None of what he thought he knew was edifying to the body of Christ.

Rather, it brought division. We lost the church partly over that matter. There is your example.

It happens today, brothers and sisters. And it's very sad. At the same time, we should be zealous to guard and protect the flock as we were.

So there are all worlds over arguments. Some are schooled bad, except when we do it occasionally. What in the world? It results in bad things.

And I already talked about this. This movement resulted in losing churches, not just our presbytery. Other denominations had this problem.

It was an ongoing issue. I ended up writing a lot about that. Calvin describes this section here.

So we are now at the end of verse four. So disputes and arguments over words, from which, so out of this meaningless dispute, flows envy, strife, reviling, evil suspicions, useless wranglings, home in the body of Christ. Calvin writes, he judges of doctrine, that is Paul judges of doctrine, by the fruit.

For everything that does not edify ought to be rejected, although it has no other fault. And everything that is of no avail but for raising contention ought to be doubly condemned. There are matters we can disagree with.

There are small matters, tertiary matters, that we may even discuss. The question is, is it causing schism and problems rise to a public problem? That's what Calvin is talking about. That's what Paul is talking about.

And so people may have concerns about Sunday school. I grant that, especially in evangelical churches. It's just a big play time and other problems going on with it.

Maybe you don't even want your kids at Sunday school class. Our church isn't going to condemn you for it. The question is, are you going to condemn us for it? Are you going to cause schism and say your churches are full of men who follow evolutionary thought? It's literally what those guys were saying.

No. That's a problem. So the way I describe it here is, you can have disputes and arguments over minor matters.

If I use the word dispute and argument, it's simply we're having a discussion, we have disagreements, and we disagree to disagree is the way we put it. And that's okay. There's a time for that, brothers and sisters.

I know you like to hear the Presbyterians were just fighting tooth and nail about every doctrine. We do not. We have not historically.

We have pulled back on a number of issues. And disagreed? Well, we're just going to disagree. That's one reason why we have different denominations.

We're not going to force ourselves this way. We're going to wait for heaven. But meanwhile, we could be cordial and friendly towards one another as different denominations.

But the problem is when those disputes and arguments of minor matters result in sustained and public schism and arguments and wranglings, that's where the problem arises. The very description Paul has here, his idea is not just a solitary matter. I mean, Christians get in a little fight, and they're done with it, and they're done.

It's over with. Here, he's talking about something sustained over time and growing enough of a problem that he has to talk about it publicly and warn the pastor to stop them. Envy is one of the fruits from this.

Wanting what others have. I know sometimes we confuse jealousy with envy. Jealousy is what you have, and you really want to hang on to it.

God is a jealous God. He has you and doesn't want to lose you, and that's a good thing. So in his case, jealousy, that's an old KJV word, by the way.

We don't use it that way anymore. It's a good thing. You want that zeal that Christ has for you.

You ought to have a good zeal for your family, but you can't have too much zeal. That would be called jealousy. Envy is you lusting and going after other things and other people.

And it would tie in to Paul's concern here that those who go down this route of wrangling an argument over petty matters, supposing that godliness is a means of gain. The idea of means of gain is mostly money. Envious.

Strife. Specifically, unnecessary strife. Again, that's why I pointed out Christ.

We know the words of Christ, we know the life of Christ, and there's lots of strife around him. People arguing against him. He was involved in arguments.

Again, I use the word argument in a good sense. He was disputing with them and defending the word of God and teaching them, but they didn't want to hear it. Whose fault was it? Not Jesus, obviously.

It was their fault. But, clearly, one sign, it's not the only sign, is strife. That something was going on here.

Something wrong. We have to investigate these matters. Wailings, or one translation is reviling.

That means abusive speech. Evil speaking. Even slander.

So it's a very broad word. Go back to my other example. You're following evolutionary thought.

Well, then fight words, brothers, when you tell me that. You tell them, conservative Presbyterian, you're following evolutionary thought, that's a fighting word. It's a slander, frankly, because it's not true.

For those of you who don't know, at the end of the day, it turns out there was Sunday school before Thomas Rakes in the 1700s. Scotland had it in the 1600s. Geneva had it.

That was way before evolution. So, that's Wailings. That's reviling.

Abusive speech, of course, is even broader. There's calling us names. You guys are a bunch of meany heads, or whatever.

I'm not going to use the things they call you, or I've been called. But you know what that looks like. It continues here, after reviling, evil suspicions, or evil surmisings.

Oh, you don't study the genealogy? Something's a little wrong with you, isn't there? Hmm. You've all seen that. Sometimes you do that.

That's true. If you're a Christian, and you meet another Christian, and he's like, do you go to church? No. Hmm.

Something's a little wrong here. Why don't you go to church? So, it's okay to have, but it's not evil in that case. Your surmising is not evil.

It's a good surmising. God tells us not to forsake the assembly of saints. So, you may ask, well, is there a reason for this? You're not going to automatically assume, I think, for most of us, that you're not a Christian.

You're going to ask, well, what's going on? Why? Evil surmising is, oh, no, you're obviously not a Christian. You're not taking the genealogy seriously. What's your problem? Or Sunday school class.

Are you liberal? You have Sunday school class? H-sub, you're going to Sunday school class? What's up with you? So, that's what evil suspicions are. It's okay to have suspicions. Be careful they're not evil suspicions without evidence.

That is, evil is wrong in this case. I mean, the evidence of they're evil. You've got to be careful, for example.

Further bad fruits. Useless wranglings are rubbing against, is the root idea, that kind of wrong kind of friction. Where we, iron sharpens iron.

This is the wrong kind of iron. This is iron attacking iron. Right? Constant friction.

Mutual irritation is the idea here. And it fits, naturally, of course, in his further description. The men he calls proud, these are public teachers, who know nothing and obsess with disputes, wrangling over words.

He calls them what? Men of corrupt minds. Destitute people. Destitute of the truth.

Again, strong words by the Apostle Paul. Because there's a time for that in the church. And you pray again, as I reminded you in the past, as I think, to pray for the pastors to give them the bloodless to do that, when it's required.

It's hard in our day and age, because we don't even agree in the ninth commandment when it comes to public defending of the truth. I'll just leave it at that. What that looks like.

Now, he gets a little more particular here. He describes them and says, suppose that godliness is a means of gain. This is interesting.

So the destitute of the truth, that means it's empty. They don't know what they need to know. That's obvious.

Corrupt minds, that's pretty clear. But who suppose these men, that godliness is a means of gain. It's a path.

It's an instrument to advantage for themselves, is the idea here. As opposed to the advantage of the body of Christ. To gain an advantage, especially financial advantage, although it doesn't have to be that only, Not all wranglings are about money, that's true.

Not all schisms in the body of Christ are about money, that's true. But it's still there. Some kind of gain, something to their advantage.

Perhaps the gain of prestige, of the public limelight. We forget that lofty sounding arguments, which I no doubt they've had back then. Aren't you serious about being a Christian? You better learn the genealogies.

You're tied to Christianity. It sounds kind of lofty and important. Can hide base lusts like this.

Just simply wanting money or prestige or the influence that comes with the public office. It still goes on today. That's why we've seen a number of scandals in the Presbyterian and Protestant churches over several years.

These men showed themselves as those. Perhaps they didn't have wrangling, but they didn't take the gospel seriously and they were there, apparently, partly for the money and the prestige. In sum, false teachers are judged by their teaching and the fruit of their teaching.

Here Paul emphasizes the fruit of their teaching. Envy, strife, reviling, evil suspicions, useless wranglings is over and over again. Nobody is growing in the faith and the love of the Lord, Savior, Jesus Christ and becoming more obedient in fighting sin, but going and being distracted down tertiary issues way too much.

Again, you can have little discussions about these things, but here these people are just driving them out of the path of holiness and they're arguing and arguing. The teaching, sometimes, may be technically correct, such as, I don't know, the genealogies are there in the Old Testament. You preach the Old Testament, you're going to run across genealogy.

You read the genealogies, you're going to read a commentary about it. It's got to be there, so you say they're technically correct, they're going over these matters. It's relevant so far as it's there in the Bible and you ask yourself, why is it there? What can we learn from this? They're going beyond that, clearly.

The genealogies and their way of teaching the genealogies ends up causing divisions and bringing in new doctrines, perhaps even new practices that the church had never seen or heard before. It turns into never-ending debates. That's the description here of the constant strife and the obsessed, that's the word, obsessed with disputes.

You never have enough. This guy just wants to keep arguing over this matter. Withdraw, he concludes here.

Withdraw yourselves from them. Withdraw from unwholesome teachers. Have no fellowship with darkness.

There's a similar idea in chapter one. Paul charges Timothy to deal with this matter. That you may charge some that they may teach no other doctrine but their charge is strong.

This reminds him of his office, the moral authority he has, and that would include church discipline. Withdrawing may be Paul's way of describing Timothy's power to discipline them, or it could simply mean to stay away from them. They're not part of your church.

We don't know the particulars here. He's warning Timothy, stay away from these guys. They're no good.

Of course, for you, if the pastor is supposed to stay away from them, whether that means excommunicating them or not, whatever that looks like in particular, you certainly must. Compare their teachings to the word of God, and of course, compare their fruits so you can see that the spirit of God is within them, and stay away from them when you see that they have unwholesome words, words that do not promote godliness and the truth of God's word. And, not just teachers, but other Christians, people who name themselves as Christians, that you may be friends with, co-workers, in a club in your neighborhood, if they keep having disputes like this.

I mean, obviously, if a pastor does this, there's a problem. And the same is true for non-pastors. This isn't just like, well, it's okay, I'm not a pastor, I can be obsessed with disputes and arguments over words.

Sure, why not? You know better than that. It's still applicable to you. Be wary, in other words, be careful of these things.

And of course, you yourself are called not to fall down this path. Don't be sucked into these kind of things. And lastly here, the second point, this is all very negative, so I'm going to give you some positive.

Teaching Wholesome Words

Can't say the Presbyterians are never positive. What are wholesome words? Teach wholesome words. Don't teach unwholesome words.

Rather, teach wholesome words. The law of Christ, we are taught to teach. Paul points to a better use of the law, but we know that the law is good.

If one uses it lawfully, we read in the prior chapter of 1 Timothy, knowing this, that the law is not made for a righteous person. Paul is correcting the false teachers by explaining one important use of the law of God. To bring conviction of sin.

The law is made for sinners, given and directed by power of the Holy Spirit to bring conviction. False teachers, apparently, here in Timothy's time, had forgotten that. They had misused the law.

Just as they had misused the genealogies, for example. The use of the law, as you know, are first, it restrains sin. Second, it rebukes sin.

And third, it regulates the Christian life, our sanctification, or it's our guide of holiness. Not just the law, but the gospel of Christ. That's a wholesome word.

A wholesome truth. A sound truth. The gospel teaching is two-fold.

Broadly, anything related to New Testament teaching. And so here, when Paul says, if anyone teaches otherwise and does not consent to wholesome words, even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, you recognize that's the gospel. But the gospel, the word gospel, is sometimes used more broadly to mean anything with respect to Christ and His work.

The histories of it in the Bible, the teachings that are related to it, but more narrowly and firmly, the gospel is the good news of Jesus Christ. And that's especially what we need to hear to grow as Christians and be protected from useless wranglings. Paul's point there, in the earlier chapters of Timothy, implied in this point, because he knows you read the whole book in one sitting, that pastors avoid teaching strange doctrines but rather teach the law and the gospel and what is received by the church there in the word of God.

And lastly, the application of the word of Christ. When he talks about teaching here, if anyone teaches otherwise and does not consent to wholesome words, even the words of Jesus Christ, those words of Jesus Christ must be words applied to the person's life, to the life of the church. Isaiah 50, verse 4, The Lord God has given me the tongue of the learned that I should know how to speak a word and season to him who is weary.

The positive part of teaching wholesome words is not just teaching the bare doctrine. Jesus is God. Then you go, okay, great, I believe that.

Now what? Well, since Jesus is God, therefore, dot, dot, dot. Follow him with all your heart, soul, mind, and strength. I've been baptized in the Christ.

Great, Romans 6.1, right? Sentence of the class. So what? Therefore, yield your members unto righteousness. Dot, dot, dot, dot.

It's the application of the words of Christ that Paul is concerned about as he shows by example in the book of Timothy that he applies the truth of Jesus to the life of the church through the pastor, Timothy. A word and season that is relevant to the current Christian and their situation to edify, therefore, the body of Christ to help them. Brothers and sisters, examine yourselves to avoid focusing on the miters.

And pray for them to hold back troublemakers who wish to do that and drag the church into schism. And pray that the spirit of God would sustain godly teachers with wholesome words according to godliness and to truth. Amen, let us pray.

Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, glorious God above, we're thankful for your word, for your truth, and we pray and implore you, God Almighty, that you would help us put things in perspective to avoid useless disputes and arguments over words, but rather, God, to consent to the wholesome truth, the sound words of our Lord Jesus Christ, both the law and the gospel, found in the word of God, and strengthen your pastors, especially God Almighty, to do these things, to protect the flock, and to feed them the truth of Jesus Christ and the gospel of our Lord and Savior. Amen. Let us stand together.