

Pastors Should Warn and Work

2 Timothy 2, verses 14 and following, let us listen attentively to the word of God. Remind them of these things, charging them before the Lord not to strive about words to no profit, to the ruin of the hearers. Be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.

But shun profane and idle babblings, for they will increase to more ungodliness, and their message will spread like cancer. Amens and Philippites are of this sort, who have strayed concerning the truth, saying that the resurrection is already past, and the overthrow of the faith of some. Let us pray.

Here in these words, as we read them, God, we see the concern of the apostle, may it be our concern as well, that there would not be God striving about with words to no profit, and the various ways in which that brings trouble upon the hearers and to the church of God. And so, Lord, help us, we pray, to this end, so that we would do our part to be encouraged in this end, as well as to pray in support for the pastors, that they would continue to remind the church, and to stand firm upon your truth, and to diligently present themselves as those who rightly divide, or point in the right way of the word of truth of God, and petition it out for the people, so that they could stand firm and shun profane and idle babblings, God, and be drawn unto Christ, we pray. Amen.

So we find in these verses, the theme began in 1 Timothy, the dangers of vain babbling and arguing over distracting or harmful issues. We also read of Timothy's job as a pastor here in the middle, to correct such, and to redirect his people towards edifying teaching. And Paul's direction to the young pastor includes the high calling of presenting himself as a capable and hard-working pastor, or minister.

Thus we learn much about the responsibility of the office, so that we can better pray for and support to move together as the people of God with the ministers of God. Let us therefore look more carefully upon Paul's exhortation.

Warn Against Harmful Debates

And so the first point here, warn against harmful debates, or debates that lead to harm, may not always be obvious at the first, verse 14.

Clearly he thinks this is the job of the pastor, the minister here, to remind Christians of what they learn. Remind them of these things. Keep this before them as needed, is the idea here.

Because we, of course, as God's people, forget things, we get distracted, and the like. And so ministers need to keep things before us that are important. They need to repeat these things, and go over them.

This is needful for us. We should never think that we're beyond this, because age will catch up with us one day, or one time, or another, or other things in life as well. In the immediate context here, describes, I think, what he has in mind.

Remind them of what? These things? Well, perhaps partly here, charging them before the Lord, not to strive about words, but prior before this, he had written here, in verses 6, 7, and following, 8 in particular, remember that Jesus Christ, the seed of David, was raised, for whom I suffered trouble as an evildoer. So the context there is a warning to persevere, as he says in verse 11. This is a faithful saying, for if we die with him, we should also live with him.

If we endure, we should also reign with him. If we deny him, he will also deny us. If we are faithless, he remains faithful.

He cannot deny himself. He thought it was important for them to learn this, and that they should remember this, and not forget this as well, I think. That they would persevere, they would trust the Lord, and follow him, and even to endure for the elect.

The broader context of what they are to be reminded of, of course, I believe, would not exclude all the other important things in the Bible, the law and the gospel, the good things, who Jesus is, to remind people, people of God, of whatever is needful in their particular circumstance. Remind us again, as we go through the letters, or the Bible in general, that they are dealing with their particular pressing issues, which may not always be ours. I am thankful that we don't have to worry about pastors having multiple wives.

It's there, in 1 Timothy 3, describing a bishop, and so we shouldn't read that saying, okay, it's a big concern, let's run around and keep talking about it, because it's there in the Word of God. So we have to have proper understanding and balance of applying the text and not blowing out of proportion. We may not have a particular problem about striving about words to no profit in our circles, and I praise God for that, if that's the case, and I think it is in general.

But it's still something to be reminded of, not to fall into that trap or that temptation. And of course, that you be therefore equipped to help others if perhaps they struggle with that problem, other friends that you know of maybe elsewhere. So there's still always usefulness in going over things that may not be immediately relevant to us, that we can be therefore equipped and therefore useful to one another, to be able to help in time of need.

So a pastor can have all kinds of things to bring up, but always at the end of the day, it comes back to the law and gospel. You need to hear these things, go over the basics every now and then, and that's why you'll hear these things through the sermon, through Sunday school class, and the like, because it's good to go over them, to remind us here, and he seems to blade it into the idea of not just reminding him in a general, nice, encouraging sense, this is helpful, the pastor's here, he wants to remind me of these things, and I need to learn these things anew perhaps, to trust God anew, but here he slides it to something, a stronger language, charging them before the Lord not to strive about words, to no profit. It's a little stronger here, to avoid unnecessary strife.

Now, what does he mean here, over words, to strive about words, it's a single word in the Greek there, you see the word logos in it, as over and against substance, perhaps, right, word or form versus the substance, I'm like, I don't really care what word you use, are we talking about the same thing sometimes, right, we've had these kind of debates with one another, not just theologically, just in everyday life, we're talking about something, and we

don't always have the right words for it, and that happens in debates at times, in circles, they don't touch on the matter at hand, they seem to be dancing around it, perhaps intentionally, we don't know, the substance isn't being dealt with, they keep arguing over words, I don't like the words you use, okay, well, there may be a time for that, but is it really worth having this big debate over it. He may also mean meaningless or insignificant matters, because he says to no profit, strive about words to no profit, that there is, in other words, no substance to the debate, people like sometimes just to sound smart, or have a public display of their knowledge of such things, and there's not really much going on here in this issue. And lastly, of course, he could be referring to, or maybe all three, by using such a broad idea, just striving about words to no profit, to no edification of the body of Christ.

Lastly, he may mean, and probably does mean, doctrinal matters, serious things that go astray, because he mentions that in verse 16, he picks it up again, but shun profane and idle babblings, that sounds something like striving about words to no profit, but then he picks up the idea of what he means by idle and vain babblings in verse 17, their message will spread like cancer, who denied the resurrection, that it already came, that's a pretty serious doctrinal matter. So, the strife, in other words, whatever it is, this strife about words, is the wrong kind of strife about words, at least to no profit, because there will be strife about words. We heard about this in San Ysidro class, going over early church history, where the Aryans are coming along and using the word son of God to mean something different than when we mean son of God.

And you must strive against those kind of words, that is, their misunderstanding and misuse of those words, as they use it as often, heretics and false shepherds and wolves do, as a shield from criticism, by just simply quoting the Bible. See, there is a time for it, in other words, this is not a, as often as the case in the Bible, if you read carefully, not an absolute prohibition about ever striving about words. It's about ever striving about words to no profit, and the profit in the case is defending, in this example, the deity of Christ, that's very profitable, you got to have that belief in the church.

So, pay attention to the qualifier here he gives, to no profit, to no good end, we would say today. It's not helpful, in fact, it's causing problems, and schism, and debates, and so they had the council of Nicaea in 325 to deal with this matter, to shut it down finally, informally. So he says here, without profit, the kind that has no profit, no benefit, either for the things of this life or the life to come.

In contrast, we read elsewhere from Paul, for bodily exercise profits a little, but godliness is profitable for all things, this is what I was referencing, having a promise of life that is now, is, and of that which is to come. They were not progressing in the walk of holiness over these kind of debates that they were dealing with here. Some of it was probably, we would say, just a battle of words, not really significant, it's just distracting, but some of it apparently is very serious, like saying the resurrection has already passed.

Prior, in 1 Timothy 1, verse 4, we read, nor give heed to fables and endless genealogies which cause disputes. Rather than godly, what? Edification, which is in faith, or building up. If we're going to have these discussions and debates, and they will happen in the church of God, they better be to a good end.

Endless genealogies there, which is perhaps what he's referring to here, because, like I said, 1 Timothy 2 and even Titus, he brings up these ideas and these words as similar, even identical words, he talks about babbling for example in 1 Timothy. Endless genealogies in that case in 1 Timothy 1, which certainly falls under here, strive about words to no profit, is probably the speculations that were very prevalent amongst Judaism there, especially Hellenistic Jews at the time. As one commentator points out, among other things, with them the names and the genealogies represented the various conditions of the soul.

So they have this weird, fanciful approach, and that's just a waste of their time. Titus 1.14 is the other reference. They are not giving heed to Jewish fables and commandments of men, which turn from the truth.

So he uses lots of different descriptions. Debates over striving about words, or debates over words, profane or idle babblings, fables, endless genealogies, these are ongoing problems that Timothy had to deal with in the church. Titus 3.9 we read, but avoid foolish disputes.

Does that kind of sound like striving about words to no profit? Genealogies, contentions and strivings about the law, for they are unprofitable and useless. So there it is again, they are to no end. They are actually causing distractions and problems.

So I think he's talking about more than just the resurrection, that's just the highlight of one of the worst ways of having vain babbling and debates to no profit or no goodness or no edification of the body of Christ. There's all kinds of other ways as well. Lesser problems, we would say, but problems nevertheless.

The idea is debates and talks that keep multiplying instead of edifying the body of Christ, putting us more to the truth and grounding us in the word of God. That is, they are unprofitable. They are not helpful.

It becomes us to stand firm to avoid these problems. What is the point of this doctrinal practice is one question you may ask to avoid going into striving about words to no profit. And if something is not clearly in the word of God, that's something you need to be standing firm upon and not using these verses or being beaten over your head with these verses saying, I don't want to debate these things.

Look, this is meaningless. No, it's in the word of God, it's not meaningless. So clearly Paul is talking about these kinds of issues that aren't rooted in the Bible.

But even in some ways may not even be a sin as such. I don't want to give the impression he's saying whenever it's sinful. I think he's simply arguing you're striving, it's becoming an issue, there's contention, he uses that word elsewhere, and it's to no profit.

Then you have a problem. It could be matters that you and I just like, well, I just have a slightly disagreement. What exactly is going on here? I don't know some passages in the Bible we don't always agree about.

That's true. There are, as it were, lesser matters that aren't pressing in our life, even in the word of God. And if they blow out of proportion, there's a problem.

That's what's going on here. Blowing out of proportion. To the ruining of the hearers, to the ruin of the hearers, to no profit specifically, to the ruin of the hearers, of those involved in these kinds of debates.

Meaning they have a worse spiritual condition, stunting it perhaps. Or the worst case scenario, of course, is they're apostatizing, which is perhaps what he's also alluding to because he mentions it explicitly in verse 18. They have strived against the truth, saying the resurrection has passed, and they overthrow the faith of some.

That's a pretty serious matter there. Then you know it's gone beyond just a friendly debate of what about this and what about that. It ruins their lives.

It brings damage to them. And thus the importance of shutting down such harmful debates. He's called to remind them and to charge them.

And by implication, of course, ultimately to shut it down if it spreads too far and becomes too much of a problem. The initiator should be warned. And I think often here, because the examples he gives, are men of prestige.

They have names. They're probably church officers or someone with money and influence. And he names names.

He shuts them down, as of course Paul does. And Timothy was probably involved in this. So this leads us to the second point.

Work at Partitioning Out the Word

The call of the pastor here. He's to warn was the first point. And of course warning and shunning go kind of hand in hand here at the last point.

But the second point is especially about his job as a pastor, as a minister of the word of God. Be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth. He's called to work for God.

Ministers are to apply themselves to the task at hand of preaching, of warning, of exhorting by applying the law and the gospel. But also teaching, which often we perhaps use in our own language is less about application and more about doctrine. Or however you wish to slice the pie, I wish not to argue over words.

Preaching and teaching, all of it together, is important that the minister be involved. That they expound the text of the Bible. Explain what it means and apply it to where we are today as best they can.

To handle God's word, therefore by implication with care. It's before God. Be diligent to present yourself what? Approved to the congregation? To the impressions and desires of the world around us? No, to God.

That's the calling of the minister. And as we'll cover as well, it's your calling in one sense as well. You are called before him.

I cannot answer for your conscience to work out your salvation with fear and trembling and be faithful to his word as well. This too applies to you in that sense. And without shame.

Pastors, Christians, should not be ashamed of the gospel of Jesus Christ. There's something wrong with that, obviously. They should not tremble in fear before a man, a worker, who does not need to be ashamed.

Ashamed of his job, ashamed of his mission, ashamed of the gospel. Perhaps he's referring to what he mentioned in verse 8 and 10. Therefore I endure all things for the sake of the elect.

He's even in chains, but he's not embarrassed. He stands firm, believing in Jesus Christ, because the word of God is not in chains. To boldly declare the whole counsel of God, as Paul does over and over again, we saw in the book of Acts.

And here to Timothy, he's very clear. He's very to the point. This is what you're called to do.

This is your job. And you are to stand firm and not to be afraid of what men think, but to bring the truth to bear as needed to the people of God. This is the calling of pastors.

Not to be popular, not to be big names or whatever. That may come by God's providence, but that should not be their point and their purpose. You shouldn't be thinking in those terms.

You should be thinking about the people of God. As Paul says, I endure all things for the sake of the elect, for the church. Isn't that interesting? What are my actions and how does it affect the church is one way to apply that.

And so here, being approved before God, that is you are doing a good job as a minister. He is doing a good job as a minister who need not be ashamed in his duties before him. He does things of good conscience is the implication here.

Not hiding and pretending to be something he's not. Otherwise, he should be ashamed. So he's saying a lot here in verse 15.

If you think about it, the implications, what's behind it. So these are the three things, right? Be diligent to present yourself approved to God, that is he's done a good work. He's continuing to do good work.

Of course, it's not perfect. No man is perfect except Jesus Christ. A worker who is not ashamed.

So the flip side of that is if you're working hard, you're not going to be ashamed of the fact that you're working hard, even if you stumble. And then thirdly, rightly dividing the word of truth. Depending on your background, my background, as you know, is a dispensationalist.

I read rightly dividing the word of truth and I read, I got to have dispensations cutting across the Bible. Seven dispensations is the classic number. And I have to cut and slice through the book of Acts to find out which one's for the Christian and which one's for the Jews, for example.

And this is the text verse they would use. I remember that very clearly. I kind of took it at face value.

Oh, okay. I have to rightly divide the word of God. Okay.

So these verses are for the Gentiles and these verses are for the Jews. They literally talk that way. And then you read the word.

I'm not going to pronounce the Greek. I'm terrible at pronouncing foreign languages, as you know. I blame the public schools, but I'm also just me.

The word ortho is in there. You hear ortho? Remember what that means? That's the denomination we're in, right? The orthodox Presbyterian church. That is straight teaching.

Here it's a straight course or a straight path to hold a straight course. That's what it means. So therefore what? To teach accurately and truly.

That's what he's saying. And of course he's saying teach it, rightly divide the word of truth. So it's like the way you read it in English, it could come away with the idea I'm supposed to just mean the Bible.

But obviously he means to apply it to his audience because he's supposed to help them shun vain, profane babbles and of course not to strive about to no profit. And that's why at the second point I talked about partitioning out the word of God to play off the English translation of rightly dividing. This is what you need, this is what you need, but we all need to one degree depending on our circumstances.

Sometimes you need conviction, sometimes you need encouragement. It just depends. But in all this it should be a straight teaching without deviation, without human invention in addition to the word of God.

Preachers are to follow the words of Christ carefully, not sloppily. This is what annoys unfortunately too many Christians in my experience in the American scene. You guys are just so picky.

I'm just reading the Bible, I'm trying to be careful about the Bible. Are you picky about your spouse's letters? You just let people just say anything that they want about your spouse and just pretend that she wrote letters she didn't really write? Are you really concerned about

that? Of course you are. How much more for God Almighty? To not deviate therefore to the left or the right, but to go straight down the middle.

He's a straight shooter we say today, right? That's what you want in a minister. Biblical teaching, whatever it is, should be clear from the Bible. From sin to Christ to heaven to come.

And he is a servant therefore, doing the Lord's bidding. That's his job, he's not an innovator. Oh look, I found something exciting, no one's ever seen in the church for 2,000 years.

Red flag, another red flag. Wait, that's three red flags, you're out. The Reformers, if you don't know, were very careful in their argumentation against the Roman Catholic Church in the 1500s to quote the church fathers.

Part of their argument was, we're not making this stuff up out of thin air. It's already been in the church, taught and explained. Not unlike the argument against the Arians in the 300s.

We've already been teaching this, where did you come up with this stuff Arius? Calvin has a book that's not well known on the freedom of the will against Pigius, what a name, a Roman Catholic. Pigius, I think it's Pigius. And wow, he has so many quotes from the church fathers up to like the 600s and 700s.

He knew his history and he was just beating this poor guy down like Luther did. He has strong language there by the way, not unlike Luther in that book. Because he's zealous for the word of God who defended against all lies and oncomers.

In short, pastors are to be working experts in the Bible, faithful heralds of Christ, standing firm and bringing his message to the world and to his people especially. What you'll see here in 1 and 2 Timothy and Titus, which is quite interesting, I think, written to these two young pastors about their job before what? Before the world? Not especially. It's especially before their own church.

They're not evangelists as such, the way we typically think of them, although they may have done it. We don't know a lot of details obviously. But they are the classic paradigm for the church with the pastor with a congregation and how he's supposed to feed and take care and protect the people of God.

That's his focus. The implications of course in this verse here, verse 15, a good summary of the job of a minister, is that the ministry is to be guarded carefully. The ministry should be guarded carefully to examine theology, of course, closely.

That the men believe what they claim to believe. They can defend what they believe. And they know what they believe and they believe the right things.

And let me tell you, the exams are getting longer and longer because more and more issues are popping up. I'm the chair of our candidates credentials. We examine men coming into the ministry.

We examine men coming between churches to be ordained in the church and our presbytery and the like. And we've updated recently to reflect the ongoing issues, debates, striving about words. Sometimes to no profit, sometimes perhaps to profit.

Because this is a high calling. It's important to not be one who plays around with the Word of God, but rather rightly divides, digging straight and forward with the truth. And so you examine their theology.

Examine what they believe and they teach related to the Word of God. But also the character. A lot of characters going on there.

That is character descriptions in 1 Timothy 3 of the bishop or the overseer. That's what that simple translation is. From the Greek you get episcopal out of that word.

You can almost hear the Greek. And they're concerned that this man is above reproach in character as well as in teaching. The two go hand in hand.

And secondly, that the ministry be supported faithfully. Not just in the traditional sense of course that he needs to support his family and so you support him to support his family, but the practice of honoring the office. Lots of Christians, for example, on the flip side, put themselves forward as de facto teachers.

It's easy to do in our independent society where every church and every man is his own leader and he starts his own church. They're charismatic or otherwise enticing. They may even say a lot of good things, but they're not church officers with the task of publicly teaching.

And that's already a red flag in many cases, although sometimes they are of course. But often, it's over and over and over again. They should not be supported, the lowly, quiet man who preaches at his local church.

They should be supported, not the ones who are running around naming themselves pastor, pretending to be something they are not. I know it's not always easy to see and unfortunately people flock to them because they're exciting and they don't like unexciting pastors. It's a variation of being entertaining, frankly.

Thirdly, he is called, and of course we are by implication. It's not like, oh, it's just the pastor has to shun sin. The rest of us, we can get away with it.

Shun Idle Babbling of Ungodliness

It's for all of us. Shun idle babblings of ungodliness. Verses 16 to 18.

But shun profane and idle babblings, for they will increase the more ungodliness. Again, it's another way of saying increase of what? Non or unprofitability. The opposite of that is godliness.

To be profitable is to be godly in the way he's using it here. But he's saying the flip side. The more ungodliness, more lack of profit, unprofitableness.

Shun profane and idle babblings. First Timothy 4.7. First Timothy 4.7 is the other passage I was referencing earlier. But refuse profane and all wise fables, for they exercise themselves thyself rather unto godliness.

Refuse profane and all wise fables, and on the other hand exercise thyself rather unto godliness. It's one or the other. You can't have both.

You must continue to persevere and to be useful in God's kingdom as best you are able by the gifts that God has given you, and to stand firm upon the truth and not have these meaningless or even ultimately harmful debates. First Timothy 6.20. O Timothy, guard what is committed to your trust. Avoid the profane and idle babblings.

There you go. Repeated themselves. And contradictions of what is falsely called knowledge.

It's the same word here as profane and paired with idle babblings. In the First Timothy, at least the errors Paul already corrected about nature, marriage, and eating, I think. That's why he brought them up in First Timothy.

They weren't just there, those issues, right? The woman is saved in childbearing. You've got to have this kind of a pastor. He obviously brought them up because they were a concern.

There was something going on there in the church that Timothy was a part of, that he needed to be reminded. Go back to these kind of basic things. And the family, right? How do you take care of the widows, he explained to him.

Those were pressing issues. And apparently people arguing against that were those who were, what, those who had profane and old wives' fables, those who were profane and had idle babblings. That is, you're teaching error.

It's idle babbling, it seems, in the way Paul is using that language. Error about wives, error about husbands, error about bishops, error about widows. And of course, more serious things like the resurrection.

Second Timothy 4.4, and they will turn their ears away from the truth and be turned aside to fables, lies and half-truths. It's a very big, dangerous thing. We haven't gotten there yet.

Second Timothy 4. First Timothy 6.5, another verse. You see, it's a kind of an important theme he brings up in all these letters. First Timothy 6.5, he talks about, "...useless wranglings of men of corrupt minds and destitute of the truth, who suppose that godliness is a means of gain, from such withdraw yourself." They're making money off these kind of debates.

Keep it going. We like it. "...the babble and idle talk, surely intended for the likes of these as well, men who are wolves, seeking fame and money." Troublemakers, maybe not initially, you don't always see it immediately, but eventually, especially through their fruits.

And one of the fruits here is not being profitable. How are you edifying the body of Christ, protecting them from evil, directing them towards the truth of God's word and Jesus Christ, but rather a means of more ungodliness. "...for they will increase to more ungodliness." This profane and idle babbling going on here, these harmful teachings or, as I said before, perhaps things that weren't harmful that eventually become harmful by debates and the like.

It implies, I think, here when he talks this way, "...for they will increase." That there are various means and instruments and causes that can lead to further trouble down the line, that have a bad end. That it's okay to talk and have discussions about some things and meanings of words. There was a question, for example, at Sunday school class about what exactly does the word psalm mean in the Greek and how does that fit with the Hebrew word.

And if you feel kind of feisty, you may say, well, I don't want to debate about words, Pastor. Okay, well, don't. We're going to talk about it.

It's a nice little discussion, but it got really nowhere and you just kind of stop it after a while, if it does indeed go nowhere. But, he's saying, sometimes these kind of discussions can go somewhere that is the wrong way. Could have gone down south in that discussion in Sunday school class.

Could have broken out into an argument. Like, what's going on here? Usually that means something else is going on. Personal issues or whatnot.

Here, false teachers, they're trying to hide their lies because they don't want to make it obvious that they're up to no good. So, increasing into more ungodliness suggests to me that it's not just always obvious, but the means, causes, and occasions as you were able to avoid those things that lead to increasing into unprofitableness and sin. So, godliness here, as a reminder, means becoming like God that is holy, obedient to His word and thought word and deed, of course, always by the blood of Christ because we will fall short.

It's about following Jesus and growing in the fruit of the Spirit. It does not exclude the things of life like bodily exercise. Paul mentions that earlier.

Sure, you get some profit from bodily exercise, a little bit. But rather, godliness redirects our life towards God in Christ so that even what we eat and when we sleep, we do it to the glory of God. That's what he means by godliness.

Spreading like cancer, which highlights the significance of the matter that he's dealing with here. It's so bad that he's concerned it's going further and further out amongst the people of God like a cancer. It's dangerous.

Whatever the matter may have been, certainly the resurrection issue is a serious matter. So, when you evaluate such things in your life, you can have personal discussions and disagreements, and that's fine. It may even turn into a debate, but then it's over.

It hasn't spread. In which case, again, just leave it local. I don't have to go before the session or anything else like that.

I don't have to make a committee report about it. You're done. That's fine.

Things like that happen. But if you're concerned about it, ask yourself, how is it affecting other Christians? Is it really dragging us down? And how far, indeed, if it's that bad, is it spreading? And if it's not spreading very far and it just kind of snuffs off and dies away, then let it go. You can't deal with everything in life.

You have to live on, as it were. And lastly, there's a reminder here, because he did this in 1 Timothy, who in their message will spread these people who, what, speak of profane and idle babblings, is how he talks about these false teachings. They will increase and their message will spread like these two men, Himanias and Philateas, are of this sort, who have strayed concerning the truth, saying the resurrection is already past.

That was in 1 Timothy 1.18-20. And Alexander, as well as mentioned elsewhere, that these men, we don't know who they are, were clearly dangerous troublemakers, and Paul named them and called them out because it was important for people to, what, avoid them. And there's a time to call out, because they have to be avoided, because they are dangerous, and that's part of the call of the church and the pastor. And naming the names here, especially, of course, in excommunication, where you cast them out of the church, that's why it's done publicly.

You want public trials, you want public discipline so that it's known and above board that everyone sees what's going on. That's why you do that. You don't want a private lynching that is theological speaking.

Well, we're just going to excommunicate. You're out of here. Shouldn't it be behind closed doors, except in extraordinary cases, because they can maybe one or two things or something.

I don't know. Almost 99% of the time it should be public, these matters be dealt with, if need be. Pastors, we are called, must warn the sheep away from striving about useless debates over words.

And pastors, of course, must work to preach and to teach the whole counsel of God, the truth therein, the right doctrine straight down the middle. And they can with your prayers and your support, brothers and sisters. Let us pray.

I thank you, God, for the people and for their desire to learn your words and to grow thereby and to be edified and support the ministry. I pray, God, that you would help us, therefore, in this regard, especially the officers of the church and the ministers in particular for the deacons and the ruling elders, help the body of Christ in their own way and support the pastor even in their own way. And we ask, God, you'd be with all the ministers of your word, wherever they may be across the world, especially here in America, in Colorado, our own backyard, God, that you would give them the backbone they need, give them the courage, give them the fortification.

And Lord, give them the humility as well that they would not be proudful but ever thankful, Lord, to be your servant and to work for your truth. We pray these things by the blood of our Lord and Savior. Amen.