

Flee Sin and Pursue Righteousness

Let us turn to our Bibles to 2 Timothy chapter 2, 2 Timothy chapter 2. So I went over these verses around it, and I'm drilling in here into this particular verse to highlight an important part of the Christian life. Let us listen attentively to the word of God. Flee also youthful lusts, but pursue righteousness, faith, love, peace with those who call on the Lord out of a pure heart, let us pray.

And here in these words we are called as you know God, as you guided by the power of the Holy Spirit, the pen of Paul, the twofold living of the Christian, to flee sin and to embrace righteousness, to pursue it in fact. Help us in this regard to have more conviction as needed, more encouragement Lord, maybe even conviction, whatever each here needs Lord, to continue to grow as believers, being molded and shaped in the image of our Lord and Savior. Amen.

So looking here at this verse, what do we read? You already know part of the answer to this question. It's not about justification. He's not saying flee sins, embrace righteousness and this will justify you, declare you righteous in the law courts of God above, but that is by faith and faith alone.

Rather he is speaking of sanctification, our personal growth and outworking of the work of grace within us. This is about being holy. Paul here writing of the inward change of our heart and the mind by the power of the Spirit of God.

We pay close attention, we can see the pattern here, the pattern he describes elsewhere in his epistles, the pattern on the one hand to flee, to put off the old man and to put on the new. Here it's described as fleeing and pursuing righteousness. Same idea, the twofold dynamic of the Christian life.

This important topic is often mentioned by the Apostle here in the second letter to Timothy. He is mentioning it again, something significant in the life of the church that he wants the young pastor to remember to tell others, and of course for his own life. It is not an option but part of the vitality of the Christian calling to flee sin, to walk away from transgressions of the holy law of God.

And to walk towards the better path of righteousness. These commands to flee and pursue are for both the pastor and the parishioner, of course. The only difference is that the pastor's case, in addition to practicing in his own life, he's got to tell others about it, exhort them, encourage them, or admonish them as need be.

Now how Timothy did this in particular in his own ministry, we don't know the details of course, but we believe he surely did. But this personal life is under his personal life, just as ours, under the same obligations. Thus the particulars are the same in executing this dynamic, this twofold dynamic.

So looking here into the text more for our encouragement in a day and age of growing temptation and wickedness around us.

Flee Iniquity

Flee iniquity, verse 22. Prior point there, he emphasizes this as well in verse 19.

Nevertheless, the solid foundation of God stands having this seal. The Lord knows those who are His. And let everyone who names the name of Christ depart from iniquity.

Not only the doctrine of election, the infinite knowledge of God, the foreknowledge of God in fact, that He knows His own, He separates them from eternity past and guides them in history and space and time, but also He guides them unto holiness. It's not an abstraction. He works it in our life, the power of the Spirit of God.

Two go hand in hand. You're not saved to do whatever you feel like. You're saved unto holiness, godliness, righteousness.

Paul is earnestly calling all believers to flee, to run away, to avoid wickedness in our lives. This is part of his message of the good news of election, as I pointed out, that part of that eternal plan is that we are determined unto good works. We are predetermined unto good works.

We ought to be personally determined as well and encouraged and motivated by this truth here. Not in a perfectionistic sense, of course. We're going to fall down.

We're going to stumble. Your child learning to walk. We saw our little covenant child here over the last few months.

Late last year, she finally started walking, but she was stumbling and falling around all over the time, all over the place. And we give up on her. We're like, oh, what's your problem, kid? You're hopeless.

Sometimes Christians do that to themselves. I'm hopeless. I'm never going to keep moving.

But you are. You are determined in your heart. You know in your conscience before God, I do not, that you're going to get up and keep walking and try to obey God as best you can, even though you may stumble a lot like a child.

That's all you're called to do. Not perfection, but the direction of your life and desire in your heart. And there will be maturation.

There will be growth. To depart from iniquity. And of course, in particular here in verse 19, and probably again in verse 22, as Calvin thinks so, and I agree with him, that's the youthful lust that is being hot-headed in all the debates.

He mentions arguing over words multiple times in this letter, as well as the other letter as well. But youthful lust includes all kinds of things as well, not just this particular problem. And that's why I wanted to go from verse 22 into the broader idea of these matters for our Christian walk, to flee youthful lust.

That is, those claiming to be followers of our Lord and Savior, who live in a wicked lifestyle, that's a problem. They should be reprimanded for it. They should be embarrassed.

Youthful lust, your lust, of course, means sinful desire. Any kind of sinful desire, more broadly, the word is not anything particular or special in that regard. And because it is with respect to our body that we sin, our mind and the like, it's all of a piece as believers.

Often the Bible, Paul in particular, describes it as the flesh, the flesh, this body. He'll talk about it a few times as well, two different words there, but the same idea. That is, we use our hands for sin.

We use our feet and walk towards sinful circumstances. We use our eyes and see sinful things and our mind and have sinful thoughts. That's what he means by the flesh, the flesh giving in to temptation and the siren call of the world around us.

So when he says lust here, it's all kinds of things. This is Paul's use of that word elsewhere in the New Testament. It's shorthand for actions as well.

I know when we hear the word lust, the first thing we think of, at least I do, is of the heart. It could be just fine with your hands, with your mouth, and you're looking prim and proper and that's good and fine. Keep it up.

But it's in my heart. I'm struggling with these sins in my heart. Yes.

But he doesn't mean just the heart. He means the heart starts there. That's the beginning of our actions.

But everything that flows from lusts, the actions of lusts. Clearly this is the case here because he's talking about what? Words. You strive about words to no profit, he says in verse 14.

So he's not just concerned about the heart only. He doesn't care about the actions. You may think that's kind of strange, but there are Christians who kind of fall into that trap.

They're like, well, as long as my heart's sincere, it doesn't really matter what I do. No, it's both. It's and both.

And here he's talking about words to no profit, to the ruination of the hearers, in fact. Destroying families and Christians and their lives. Even to the point of apostasy, as he mentions in verse 18.

They've strayed and fallen away, denying the resurrection. It's already come to pass, they argue. But Paul does something else here he doesn't often do elsewhere in the New Testament.

He writes about this word lusts. He describes it what? In verse 22. Youthful.

Youthful lusts. What's he getting at here? Now, first of all, of course, it's what his audience needed. What they needed to hear.

You may not need to hear some of this stuff, but other things you may need to hear as well. And so far as you need to hear it, it's at the very minimal to teach others if you already understand it and you're doing the right in your life and fighting these sins and the like. But it's always good, of course, to go over the basics.

But they need it in a serious sense that Paul wanted to emphasize it, as he mentioned at the beginning of the section and here now at the end of the section. That this is an ongoing problem in the church there that Timothy's dealing with. But there are different types of temptation.

And those temptations also differ according to ability and age. Maybe you never thought about that. Temptation or sins, the consequence of getting into temptation, can differ according to ability or age.

And there are some sins that are more common to the younger, to the youthful and the like. Now, which is more likely the case? A hotheaded 75-year-old arguing over words and debating and striving to no profit, or a hotheaded 18-year-old arguing with words, striving to no profit? We all know the answer. If you were to bet on it, you'd bet he was an 18-year-old.

Now, of course, 78-year-olds can do it, but not as often. And so when you speak and write, like he's writing a letter, he doesn't give people's names. Like, you know, you Charlie here, and you youthful people here, better watch out, but you're pretty good, and you older person over here.

No, he speaks in generalities. We all do this often. It's just the nature of being human and talking to large groups of people on large topics.

And so here he says, flee youthful lusts. He has, in particular, these things that are not unique in the sense of never happening, but unique in the sense that they happen more often for young people. Age wears down the body, affecting sin in different ways.

And so if you flip it on the other side, who's going to have more strength and wherewithal and gumption to get something physically done to take care of a poor, sick person, to lift and move their house after a fire and things like that? A young man, obviously, not an old man. So the young man could do righteous acts that an old man can't do. He can just do other righteous acts.

If you flip it on the other side, you can see the same mirror with respect to sin. You can do a lot more physical sins as a young man and as a young woman than you can if you're decrepit and old. This is the nature of being human.

And so from that perspective, you can see then when he talks about youthful lust, that it applies slightly different. That is, the concern is about different things than perhaps some of us may struggle with. We may struggle in other ways, of course.

And so youthful lust in practice, describing some of the ways in which the youth have temptations the rest of us do not have. As we get older, at least the temptation kind of melts away because your body's just like, I just don't have the energy anymore. Whatever.

And you get distracted by other things as well. Children, of course, that which is immediate, impulsive, they're blunt. Not a lot of forethought going on with little kids.

Just boom, there it is. Why are you talking like that? They have no self-control relative to an adult, do they? You're just like, what is your problem, kid? That's why they need parents. That's why it's like I tell my wife and others, that's why babies are so cute.

Because if they weren't cute, you wouldn't take care of them. They're a mess. They're a handful.

And it's true. They need to learn these things, and you're there to help them. So they have, from that perspective, I hope you see youthful lust in a way you do not have.

And so kids, you're encouraged and told to therefore slow down, listen to your parents, listen to the Bible. That's why they bring you to worship. It's a good practice when you're younger.

The kids don't understand, some people argue. It doesn't matter. Get the habits developed.

And as their brain develops, they'll start asking questions. But they already have the habit of coming to church, having prayer time, family worship time, and the like. And when they get older, yeah, you're hopefully mature enough.

You can take questions. Because they'll ask some doozies sometimes. You're like, I don't know where that come from.

But they have the habit. So at least their body and their mind is used to coming to church as opposed to finding it repulsive. Now's the time, kids.

Start listening to the Bible and praying to God, in fact. Now, the next section I was kind of debating, how do I want to break down this classification or category of sins? Teenager or young adult, there's a scale there. As we know, the brain is still developing for teenagers to like 18, 19, and 20, apparently.

They sleep a little longer than we do because their body's still growing. That's acceptable. We get to sleep in on sometimes.

But they still have the problem of being impulsive. Again, relative to a mature adult who's been around a while. You're like, why are you doing this, teenager? What's going on? What's going through your head? What's going through their head is a lot better and more developed than a child.

They can now come up with ad hoc rationalizations on the fly. Well, because of this and that. And I had a hard time.

And this was going on. This thing was broken. And the kid's just like, I don't know because I wanted to.

They're different in the way they express their sins. Isn't that interesting? Because of the ability of their body, they can now think better. About age 12, you can start doing abstract thoughts better, which means you can come up with better explanations for sin.

Excusing transgressions of God's holy law. We've all seen it. Anybody who's grown up yourself, you pay attention to yourself as a kid.

And you raise children, you see sin there and the rationalization of that sin. And thus, as they're getting older into young adulthood, they know more manipulations and ways to get their way. Methods of getting their way of pulling on the heartstrings.

Children may pull on the heartstrings unintentionally insofar as they're just like, I'm already cute. So the older teenager has to become a little more clever with these things. They're still learning to control their emotions often.

It gets out of hand, of course. The lust gets stronger. It becomes a bigger problem.

Some examples of the sins they struggle with would be like sleeping in. I mean, more than what they would need ordinarily. Like, I just, I don't want to.

Kind of being lazy, kid. Get out of bed. You have to stay busy in that case.

To avoid the temptation of being lazy. Other temptations that were called to flee at this young age. In our society, unfortunately, in places like Colorado, it's especially bad.

Drugs. I did not have drug problems. I didn't have to deal with that as a kid.

The worst I had was sixth grade in which some other sixth graders, the other side of Witt Elementary School, they're up in Westminster, Colorado, were caught with a bag. You know, something was inside the bag. It looked like they were probably drinking out of the bag.

That was the biggest scandal I remember in elementary school. Now you have weed. And you have cocaine and other drugs much more readily available in Colorado.

It's not a good thing. It's a strong temptation. The dangers there, of course, are when you hang out with the wrong crowd.

That's another temptation. Not unique in the sense of it's only the teenagers, but unique in the sense of they tend to give in to peer pressure more readily than an adult who's been through the fire and learns, I don't care what other people think. I'm going to do the right thing anyway.

So you must flee the drugs. Flee the bad company. Flee the dangers of the internet.

Just cut it off. Don't give them a smartphone or whatever. You're not missing anything.

I know they think you are, but you're not. There's a lot of bad things. They didn't make the internet for family-friendly consumption, which is a problem.

They should have done that right at the beginning. Just outlawed all the pornography and everything else. It would have been a lot easier.

But no, they had to make it worse. Particular sins to flee, I want to highlight here. As you recall, I've mentioned before, the high fornication rates in the churches.

In the churches, not out in the world, but in the churches. So one of the best ways, of course, to avoid that is to get married. Prepare yourself to get married as a young kid.

Don't look down upon marriage. Your parents, of course, need to help the kids to start thinking in those terms, that it's okay, it's good, in fact, to get married. If you are able to.

This helps us avoid these temptations and problems. It's a big problem, unfortunately. And so these are the kind of youthful temptations, again, that we can struggle with even in adulthood.

But they seem to be especially accentuated amongst the youth. But there's also, to this concern here, to flee also youthful lusts. Implied in this is also a gendered difference.

With respect to temptations and sin. For example, on my way home yesterday, last night, when I came from the store, I think I got gas, that's what I did. Filled up the tank before we go broke.

Coming down the road to my house, the roundabout, I exit the roundabout, all of a sudden, out of nowhere, this black sedan barrels right past my left, my blind spot, cuts me off in the front, and just goes easily 50 miles an hour down to 35. Loud motor and everything else. I was like, what? Now, if you were a betting man, what gender do you think did that? All the girls are like, that's the guys, it's the young men who have all that testosterone, and have, therefore, a unique kind of temptation that women don't have.

Of course, women have other temptations we don't have. Paul isn't admonishing the men to not be overly concerned about your looks. Where is he in 1 Timothy? It's the women.

Which, again, highlights what? Gendered sanctification. A lot of overlap, yes, but there's also distinctions. The church has to remember this.

The church is forgetting this. I mean, even Reformed churches. So there's this gendered direction in which they need to stay busy to get out of trouble.

Keep them working, especially physically. Boys cannot sit behind the desk the way a young girl can. Prim and proper for very, very long.

As you find out, anybody who raised a boy, there's just so much energy. Wait till they get the testosterone going as a teenager. Keep them busy.

This is calling. It's also the temptation we have to be aware of, youthful temptation. As we get older, of course, and more experienced with sin, we have to also flee iniquities and lusts within our hearts and the temptations around us.

To be aware. For all of us, just simply walk away from the bad circumstances, the bad company, the bad influence around us. Avoid places in the mall, whatever the case may be.

Sinful situations and circumstances. Places of sin and debauchery are obvious places. Even if they don't look like they harm other people, you know it's a temptation and a problem for you.

Movies and music and the like. Put it down. Don't buy it.

Simply walk away. This is what we are called to do as believers. To flee sin and iniquity in our life.

The second point then. Not just to flee or walk away or put off the old man, but to put on by pursuing. Not just walking, but being doggedly determined.

I'm going to be holy. I'm going to obey the law of God. I'm going to do the right thing. Even if I fall down six or seven times, by God's grace, I can get up again.

Pursue Righteousness

Verse 22. Pursue righteousness.

On the other hand, pursue righteousness, faith, love, and peace. All of us. This is our calling.

Pastors and non-pastors alike. It doesn't matter. To replace iniquity.

To stop sinning. To do righteously. Because you cannot do one without the other.

It's not ever enough to say, I've not done the bad thing, pastor. I've not gone to the wrong part of town, bought the drugs or whatever the case is. Cut you off in traffic.

I didn't do any of that, pastor. Good. So what have you done? What do you mean? You have to do righteous.

You have to do good things. Do acts of peace and of faith and of love. And of good works towards one another.

They cannot have a moral vacuum. It will be filled with wickedness. It must be filled with righteousness.

That's the idea of putting off and putting on. To pursue righteousness. I'll hit that word last because it's a general word.

Very broad description. Clearly faith, love, and peace are righteous things in our life, but they're more particular than the broad word righteous. So I'm going to hit that word last.

Faith. Growing in our trust in Christ. Pursue faith.

Pursue more love and our knowledge of our Lord and Savior to learn of his ways, to trust more in him, to take him seriously at his word, to walk down the path of holiness with our eyes on Jesus. We must grow our faith and not keep it weak or immature or unknowledgeable of the things of God. And so God has given us the means of grace to that end.

We have not only public worship of praise here and now and the sacraments, but we also have the Bible. The Bible is with us. I can't read it for you.

I'm not going to read it for you unless I guess you're very sick and you need help. But otherwise you're on your own. You need to use what God has given you, the common sense, to set aside a little time here and there to grow your faith.

Growing your faith is not merely an emotional activity, although it's typically described that way when people use that phrase, in my experience, I'm going to grow my faith. But it includes the mind as well. It ought to have the mind.

And the mind ought to move to get the emotions excited about the truth of righteousness, of faith and love, zealous so that you pursue it and not just, ah, half-hearted, I guess, maybe, maybe not. Love, love towards God, love towards our fellow men, love towards God, of course, goes hand in hand with faith in God. If you trust in him, it means you also love him as well.

Follow your heart, soul, mind and strength. And you want to grow that love. You grow that love by learning more of his word and living more of the word.

You can know more about your spouse but do nothing about it. What's the point? They should teach you to have better gifts for them. You understand what they like and what they don't like and what weaknesses they have.

So you compensate for them and help them in their time of need. That's an expression of love and care and consideration we are called to do for one another, loving our fellow Christians, but also God. Now, he has no weakness, of course, but we have to know more about him so we can be more obedient and loving and follow his path and be more like his son, Jesus Christ.

And part of that love is taking care of one another in the body of Christ, the great one another passages that tell us in so many ways. And the church leaders, of course, they too are called to grow in faith and love, love of the saints and love of the people of God that they exercise the power delegated to them by God Almighty through the church for the

good of the saints and not for selfish gain. Peace, faith, love, peace, peace with each other in the body of Christ by the power of the spirits, making an effort as we can to maintain and avoid unnecessary conflicts like striving about to words to no profit, which was a very big concern with Timothy.

I don't think it's especially a big concern for us. So in that sense, yes, it's good to be reminded of these things, but it's not a particular temptation for us here and now in our church, at least to my knowledge that we're just running around just making debates all the time. No, no, no.

Nevertheless, it's still needful to remember these things and to expound upon that idea that other things may not be profitable as well, not just words, but some actions may cause a stumbling stone. And we want to avoid that. And therefore, we need much meekness and humility as believers to maintain peace in the body of Christ.

That may mean sometimes being silent when you wish to speak, stop doing what you did before, something that's not inherently wrong, but perhaps is bothersome or worrisome to other people. Again, it depends on the circumstances. And with a pure heart, peace with those who are called upon the Lord out of a pure heart, not just everyone else with a pure heart, but not yourself, but all of us are called to have a pure heart.

That is a sincere heart, not a heart with hypocrisy, pretending to be something we are not. It's all just a game to us. It's all just superficial.

Putting on a mask here and then taking the mask off, that's the idea of the theater at the time. But out of faith and love and sincerity, that's the picture of a pure heart. Pursue righteousness.

So I put that last to make it the broadest. The idea here of righteousness is not divorced from the law of God. It cannot be divorced from the law of God.

The law of God describes what His moral perfections are and therefore for us as well. Our calling, our high calling of obedience, of perfection, of course, we'll never reach it, but we have reached it and our justification by Christ and Christ alone. He is our justification.

He is our righteousness, brothers and sisters. But Him being our righteousness, being a wonderful doctrine that keeps us in hope and comfort and hope, that God does not see our sins but sees Christ's perfection of the law, does not negate our personal calling to strive and to pursue righteousness, obedience to God's law in thought and word and in deed. And we can because we have the Spirit of God within us.

This broad term righteousness includes all the good moral acts, internal and external. We are sanctified, of course, objectively set aside morally, like through baptism. But here this is more of the, as it were, subjective or personal that changes over time and differs here and there in our life.

As you can imagine, we talk about different kinds of temptations, collectively speaking, of the youth versus the older, but also with respect to sanctification and growth over time. You

have a lot more maturity and more blessings of the Spirit compared to a young man. And that's a good thing.

That's your sanctification. It does change over time, unlike justification, which never changes. It takes work and commitment, of course, determination to pursue, to not give up.

Just turn around and say, this path isn't for me anymore. Why bother? Paul's urging him, young pastor and others, to flee, to continue pursuing righteousness on the other hand, because God hasn't given up on us. We should not give up on God Almighty either.

It is indeed rough to pursue and to work hard, but we're called to keep on regardless, to keep our eyes upon Him and the good that we can do in this life, for He has determined beforehand, Ephesians 2.10, good works for us to walk in. They are there for you to pursue, to find, to seek out in your life the particular opportunities that you have that others do not have and the gifts that you have that others do not have, or if they are the same gifts but different circumstances, whatever the case is, they are there for you, brothers and sisters, to pursue, for the good of the church and for the good of one another. This is our calling as believers.

Even the young kids here are called to pursue, to flee youthful lusts. The best way to flee youthful lusts, children, is to embrace youthful obedience. Obey your parents, pay attention in school, learn your catechisms in your Bible, learn your ABCs and your one, two, threes, and keep praying to God through Jesus Christ our Lord and Savior.

And all this to keep looking to Jesus, to be guided by His Word, convinced by His Spirit, and comforted by His grace. This is our calling. In pursuing the righteousness, what do we read here? And of course, faith and love and peace as well.

With those who call on the Lord out of a pure heart, with those, the pursuit of righteousness in the Christian life, the call of faith and peace and love is not a one-man operation, but a collective work that we do this together as the people of God, with those who call upon and who pursue the Lord God out of a pure heart. We're in this together, brothers and sisters. We're in this together.

This is what he's talking about. Our walk in the church and the family of God. 1 Corinthians 12, as you know, the church is described there as the body of Christ, and the Spirit has given them different gifts.

We're not all hands and feet and heads and eyes, but different parts with different abilities, given our public responsibilities in the body of Christ. We need each other, therefore. And so in practice, that means we help and are called, therefore, to help one another walk the path of holiness, that we are involved not just in our own life or the life of our family, but in each other, again, to different degrees, of course.

One clear example of this is Galatians 6.1. Galatians 6.1, we read here by Paul writing to the churches of Galatia, Brethren, if a man is overtaken in any trespass, you who are spiritual, restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness, considering yourself lest you also be tempted. But Paul urges them, without much explanation, he's not like, well, let me give you an

argument from God's law that you ought to do this. I think he's writing this saying, this is obvious, because we are one body, we have responsibilities towards one another.

No man is an island, no woman is an island, no child is an island. We are called in this together as God's people and our growth as believers, and it involves here, more negatively, to restore such a one who's taken into any trespass or violation of God's holy will, to restore him in a spirit of gentleness. Gently and firmly, like, of course, we do that with kids, but other times, as we know, Paul is blunt, and we may have to be blunt.

By our example, more broadly, that is how we live, because we are public creatures, we take public matters a little differently than someone who thinks they're just all about themselves. And so we are, therefore, examples to one another, ought to have this positive peer pressure. Peer pressure is not inherently wrong.

We're told it was wrong, I know, when I was growing up, avoid all peer pressure. Why am I listening to you? Aren't you trying to peer pressure me? Or in this case, superior pressure, the teacher to me, or whatever the case is? No, because we're social creatures, we need this to protect us from sin at times. You should be embarrassed, you should be considering about, what other Christians, what would, you know, Johnny think about this? He's a pretty godly man, or woman, Janie, Jane.

That's a good way of thinking, that's helpful, that's what I mean. We are social creatures, and we are, therefore, living by example, or not by giving a good example, as the case might be. And even by our authority, some of us have more authority than others, depending on what it may be, what hat we are wearing, as it were.

And we shouldn't be shy about exercising that authority, protect one another, and to warn one another. Of course, the clear example is parents to children. We're there for them, in that sense, to have more power, both physically, of course, mentally, psychologically.

We can endure much more than a kid can. They're going to cry at the drop of a hat, some of them. And we teach them, we guide them, we mold them.

And we do it because we have the authority of God Almighty, we have care and consideration for them. Use that authority, don't be afraid of that authority. And that goes for pastors, of course, ruling elders and deacons.

They have been given by God, the Holy Spirit, through the church. Public ability and power to do certain responsibilities for the good of the body, collectively speaking. We have to make decisions sometimes that doesn't always satisfy everyone in the group.

That's just the nature of the case. But we must do it nevertheless. And so pastors need prayer.

We all need prayer in this regard. To do the power, use the power that God has given us. That power may be peer pressure, in that sense.

It's just me being a peer, putting a frown on my face about what you're doing may be enough sometimes. Oh, well, stop it. Good.

This is what it means to do it together, our sanctification brothers and sisters. We are called to depart from iniquity, to even flee it, and quickly not take our time. And to pursue, on the other hand, and seek out righteousness in our lives.

And by God's grace and the power of the Holy Spirit, I believe we can and shall continue to do, though, this. And I pray the Spirit of God will sustain us. Let us pray.

Indeed, Spirit of truth and life and power, you who indwell in us, we who are your people, may we grow in our conviction and maintain our obedience to you, God, and even grow therein as well, because our obedience is always wanting. It is lacking something somewhere. May that not discourage us to the point of giving up on our path and our walking, God, but rather motivate us all the more to pursue righteousness.

Give us, we pray, and ask and implore your Spirit. More grace, more power in our time of need, we pray by the blood of our Lord and Savior. Amen.

Amen.