***Timothy the Unique Helper - PH58-01  
  
Advanced Bible Doctrine - Philippians 2:19-21***

Please open your Bibles this evening to Philippians 2:20, as we continue considering the example of the man Timothy. Paul has been exemplifying the mind of Christ in verses 17-18 by his mental attitude of personal sacrifice–whatever it takes in order to make doctrine known to people. Timothy now is exemplifying the mind of Christ by a mental attitude of concern for the spiritual progress of believers. Paul is writing this letter from prison in Rome, and he wants to know about the current spiritual condition of the Philippian Christians.

Therefore, he says in this letter, which he's writing to them, that he hopes to send Timothy to them to survey their spiritual condition. The reason he does this is that Paul is aware of the lust which is in the old sin nature for something new as promising greater spiritual heights and greater religious experience. He remembers what happened to the good churches of Galatia, and he remembers what happened to the churches in Corinth–how both of them fell into fantastic reversionism. Therefore, he knows that there is within the old sin nature of every Christian, no matter how far he's gone on with the Lord, the desire to go out there to find where it's at. He has the impression that somehow something greater and finer is to be found out there away from where he is.

However, we pointed out to you that a Christian who is under the HICEE technique of instruction by a pastor-teacher who is doing his job is already on the road up the mountain to the summit of the super grace life as the result of developing a spiritual maturity structure in his soul. He's either on his way or he has already arrived at the top of this mountain which we've named Mount Where It's At. That's where it's at. Christians who are looking for where it's at, and looking far afield, are only looking down here into the valley where there is spiritual darkness and spiritual ignorance rather than the blessing of God upon them. So anybody who is at the peak, or moving along toward the summit, who goes negative to teacher, teaching, or technique under the HICEE method is a person who is giving the wanderlust of his old sin nature an opportunity to take over and to send that Christian tumbling back down the mountain into reversionism–into a backslidden condition. The tragedy is that many Christians who are going down think that they are coming closer to God.

Young people who have grown up in a church which has followed the HICEE technique are particularly susceptible to coming to a certain point in their life (if all they have ever known is just that kind of a local church), where the old sin nature begins telling them that they're missing something that's out there. They begin thinking that they're living in a very limited and closed situation.

So what happens to them? Well, they get into the emotional excitement of a charismatic meeting, or the emotional excitement of a body life meeting. They find that that's pretty heady stuff. Sure enough, they begin thinking, "I have been missing something down at that place that I've been going where I've just been listening to Bible doctrine instruction." They think that they have been denied something because they have not been in the charismatic movements or they have not been in the body life movement, and they should be moving forward.

Or they get into some church service out there that has a huge number of people in the service–a prestige church–and they are impressed. It's very impressive to walk into a church where there are a lot of people and there's a lot of activity. The young person will get the impression that he has missed something all these years.

Or he will go out there and he will get to associate with personable, wealthy, important, and maybe even famous people. Then the young person is awed, and they are impressed with these fantastically important people. They say, "Sure enough, I've been missing something all those years when I've been down there at that little place where I've just been taught by the HICEE technique."

Or they get out there and they're asked to lead some operation which puts them in the limelight, and they're flattered. That's a favorite stunt of church pirates. Get somebody who maybe has some talent. Many times I have seen young people who were musical or who were creative or had some kind of ability in some direction, and they got themselves mixed up into some hot shot organization out there, and pretty soon they were in the limelight. They actually thought that while they were up on the mountain summit of spiritual maturity that they'd been missing something. They didn't realize that now they were going back down to reversionism.

Or they get the attention out there of the opposite sex–somebody that really strikes them, and they're exhilarated. I have seen many men go into spiritual darkness because they got themselves tied up with some gal that was beneath them spiritually. Be sure you try to teach your children, whether they listen to you or not, never to marry beneath themselves spiritually. Teach them never to associate themselves in dating with people who are beneath them spiritually because they're going to get hurt. They're going to get burned. There are young people who have always been surrounded by what is genuine and real in spiritual things, and they get out there and somebody strikes an emotional chord in them, and they think, "Oh, I've really been missing something."

Or they get praised by some group out there and they eat it up. The old sin nature loves to be praised. Some churches just do that. But you're flattered. You're just taken up, and you say, "What a lovely Christian group this is." Many a young person eats it up.

Or they see their friends rushing off. They sit in a small group under the HICEE technique, and they see one-by-one, this person and this person of their own peer group moves off to where it's at out there. They then feel that somehow they're being left behind. They fear being left out of where it's really at.

Unless you know that this quality is in your old sin nature, you are going to be tempted, sooner or later, by all of these things. You are going to be tempted to think that the real thing is someplace else other than where you are. You are going to think that somehow the solid teaching of doctrine, and your positive response to it, is not all that God has for you. But I'm here to tell you that it is. That is where it's at. Anything else can only be downhill from there.

Remember that adults are equally susceptible to these subtle appeals of Satan through our old sin nature as are young people. You will fall just as hard, as an adult, from the summit of blessing which has come to you because you are fortunate enough to be taught the Word of God.

**Philippians 2:19**

So we translate verse 19, which we have studied together, in this way: "But I am hoping in the Lord Jesus quickly to send Timothy to you in order that I also may be of good cheer, having come to know of your situation." In verse 18, Paul has told the Philippians to be happy in the Lord's service as he is happy. Part of Paul's experience of rejoicing is from seeing Philippian Christians strong in doctrine. This is the same idea that the other apostles on various occasions also expressed. Because they were communicators of doctrine and because they were pastor-teachers, the ultimate joy for a communicator is to see people going on with the Word of God and finding it functioning in their lives. The apostle John expressed this in 3 John 4 when he said, "I have no greater joy than to hear that my children walk in truth." That meant that the people he taught walked in the doctrine that he had explained to them.

So Paul, as an apostle, is very much concerned that the Philippian Christians are doing this same thing. After all, he founded the church at Philippi, and therefore, he was responsible for it. His mental attitude was one of sacrifice–a personal concern for the Philippian church. That was his expression of the mind of Christ. Whatever it took, he was ready to sacrifice, including his life. Paul and the Philippian Christians had actually experienced a mutual happiness together, because as he taught them doctrine, they responded to it. This is the same thing that a right man experiences with his right woman when she responds to him. So here the apostle Paul was the right pastor-teacher for a right church (a right congregation). As he taught them, they responded. So there was a two-way happiness that they had shared in the past.

Paul has this quality of inner happiness because he has a spiritual maturity structure built in his soul. But freedom from concern about the current status of the Philippians required some current information. A person can have an inner happiness in the midst of great turmoil that is not a pleasant or a happy thing for him to be in. Yet, he is in that in an inner peace, in spite of the fact that at the moment he's experiencing some unpleasant things. So Paul had some unpleasant concerns that he wanted to remove concerning how things were going for the Philippian Christians.

Because Paul had a mind which was oriented to doctrine, he was able to discern the true spiritual status of the Philippians. There are a lot of Christians who think they can evaluate the condition spiritually of other believers who themselves are not oriented to the Word of God, and therefore they miss it. But Paul had the stability spiritually to be able to do this.

If Paul, on the other hand, had been under some emotional domination or some emotional control of his soul, then he would not have been qualified to be able to look at the Philippians and judge their spiritual condition. But because he was not under emotional control, he was not able to be deceived. People who function on their emotions are people who can be deceived. I've heard people who were of the emotional type by temperament who have come to an understanding of doctrine and who have come to an understanding of the Word of God, and their reaction was, "What you have been teaching me makes my emotions feel like they're squelched." They never realized that the thing that was squelching their emotions was doctrine which was giving them direction of God for their emotions, and their emotions up to then had been running wild, taking over in their souls under the control of the old sin nature.

So the apostle Paul had to be something more than an emotional yo-yo if he was going to be able to be helpful to these people. Paul's own spiritual maturity, as a matter of fact, is what caused him to be concerned about the well-being of these believers. Nobody is ever concerned about the well-being of other Christians who himself is not spiritually mature. They're the ones who very urgently see the need to help the ministry dispense doctrine.

Timothy, whom Paul is going to send, also has this kind of discernment. He too has a mind controlled by God's viewpoint. Therefore, he's going to be able to talk to these people; hear what they say; and, make an accurate evaluation to take back to Paul.

**Ephesians 2:20**

So beginning in verse 20, Paul is going to tell us why he's going to send Timothy. He says, "For I have no man like-minded who will naturally care for your state." The word "for" is the Greek word "gar." "Gar" introduces the reason that Paul is going to send Timothy to survey the Philippian church. Please remember that Paul is in the city of Rome. He has contact with many Christians. As we learned earlier in the study of this book, a lot of those Christians are trying to do injury to Paul and to make things hard on him. But there are some Christians who are not trying to do that.

However, the apostle Paul zeros in particularly on Timothy. Why? There was something about Timothy for our guidance which would make the apostle Paul select this man. The word "gar" ordinarily in the Greek sentence stands second. It doesn't come as the first word in the clause. The reason for that is that it stresses the word that comes before it. In this case, the word that comes before it is the Greek word "oudeis" which means "no man." That's why he says, "For I have no man." It stands in front of the word "gar" because it puts an emphasis upon the fact that there was no equal to Timothy in all of Rome. That's almost fantastic to believe. There was no one who was equal to Timothy.

This word "oudeis" has this Greek negative "ou." That is the absolute negative. That's the strongest negative in the Greek language. That means absolutely no one. He wasn't just using a kind of a rhetorical expression, or a kind of a generalized statement. He literally meant, "I've looked over all these Christian men who are in Rome, and there is not one that is comparable to Timothy in certain respects, as he's going to show us.

There is another word in the Greek language which looks very much like "oudeis." It's "medeis." It also means "no one," but it uses this weaker negative, "me," which leaves the door open to possibility. It kind of indicates probably not, but not entirely for sure. In Matthew 8:4 and in Acts 9:7, we have it used in this sense. We have "medeis" used where it leaves the door open. But the word that Paul uses is "oudeis." There is no one like him, and it precedes the word "gar" so that he even points to it and says, "Now I'm emphasizing the fact that there is no one like this in all of Rome. I have no one."

**Like-Minded**

The word "have" is "echo." "Echo" refers to those who are associated with Paul. He has no one among his associates. It is present tense–a constant current situation. It is active–his personal situation relative to the believers in Rome. It is indicative–a statement of fact. What is it that he has no one who is comparable to Timothy in? There is no one who is like-minded: "For I have absolutely no one of the people in Rome who are like-minded."

The word like-minded is the Greek word "isopsuchos." Let's break it down. The first part, "isop" comes from the word "isos" which means "equal." It's not "like," but it means "equal." That is, it means equal in size, equal in number, or equal in quantity. The other part, the "psuchos" comes from, again, a word that you're acquainted with: "psuche," or "soul." So when you put it together, you get the word "like-soul" or more exactly, we should say "equal-souled." Paul says, "There is no one in all of Rome, not one, who is equal to the soul of this man, Timothy." This is called a "hapax legomenon," for those of you who like those terms. That's a grammatical term which means simply that this is the only time this word "isopsuchos" is used in the Greek Bible. The only time it's used is in reference to this man, Timothy. It is a word that God the Holy Spirit only used once in order to give a very distinctive identification of this man Timothy in comparison with everyone else.

Paul and Timothy were alike in their souls in certain respects. They were alike in the mentality of their souls. These two men were alike because they had a mutual knowledge of doctrine. In 2 Timothy 3:10, Paul points out to Timothy, "But you have fully known my doctrine." Timothy knew doctrine; he knew it well; and, he had learned it very accurately from Paul. So in other words, what he is saying is, "You have fully known my doctrine. You have fully possessed this understanding."

Because both these men are positive to doctrine, they shared the same feelings about things; they came to the same decisions relative to their wills; and, they both had the same doctrinal understanding. So it gave them a common mind and it gave them, consequently, a common direction to their emotions, and a common direction to their will. Therefore, they shared a divine viewpoint which guided them. This is what Paul is seeking for all the believers.

Remember back in Philippians 1:27, he calls upon the Philippian Christians to be of one spirit and to be of one soul. They were, through doctrine, to come to one spirit and to one soul; that is, to one expression. So though Timothy did not know all that Paul knew about doctrine, both of them had a spiritual maturity structure in their soul, and both of them had gone on to super grace. So Timothy and Paul had a commonness of thinking. They had a likeness of soul. There was no one that Paul could find that Timothy compared to.

So he says, "I have absolutely no one who is equal-souled who will naturally care for your state. The word "who" is the Greek word "hostis," and it is a word that speaks of quality. It means "who is such as," or we would say, "who is the kind of person" who will "care." The Greek word is "merimnai." "Merimnai" means "to give your thoughts to a matter." It's a word that connotes an anxious concern. In other words, we would say, "to be concerned about." It is in the future tense which means that Timothy is a man who constantly in the future, Paul says, "That I can depend upon him that he will be concerned for your well-being." It is active. It will be his personal attitude. It is indicative–a statement of fact.

In other words, Paul knew he could depend upon Timothy to pursue that which was for the well-being (for the welfare) of the Philippian Christians. He stresses this by using the word "naturally," which naturally does not mean "naturally." It's the Greek word "gnesios," and what it means is "genuinely." In other words, he is saying there is no one who is equal to the soul of Timothy in Rome, who will very genuinely care for your state; who will put himself out; and, who will give thought with concern to your condition. In other words, Timothy is not going to be a professional fake among them.

Timothy could have come in and found some problems. Maybe he could have found the attendance down. Maybe he could have found the Christians a little down in the mouth, or discouraged. So what could he have done? Well, he could have come in with the new fad. He could have come in and said, "We're going to have a sharing meeting. Instead of doctrine in the HICEE business, we're going to sit and we're going to share with each other all of our experiences." So he could have souped-up the Philippian Christians into some kind of excitement. There were any number of ways he could have gotten them all stirred up so they could have felt they had a really wonderful meeting.

This is very easily done. Many years ago, when I first came to this church, we used to meet in that other little auditorium. The man who was there was a pretty good guitar player. He would lead the services with the guitar. He knew how to use the guitar to lead the emotions. They would have some really jumping meetings. I was just a seminary student, and I remember one Sunday morning when things were really jumping, some strong woman (and I noticed they used to have some really dominant women around the place in those days), came up and said, "Didn't you just feel the spirit here this morning?" Well, I smelled a little booze, I thought, on somebody, but that's the only spirits I noticed. "Didn't you just feel the spirit here?" What she had experienced was somebody who was a clever manipulator of emotions, and she felt that she had come close to God because of the singing and all of the praising of the Lord, and all of the sharing. But she was as ignorant of God's thinking at the end of that meeting as she was when she walked in, never realizing that she had been robbed, and that she had been taken advantage of. Instead, she was so pleased, thinking she had gone someplace with the Lord.

Well, Timothy was going to act in genuineness. He was not going to come to Philippi and run some meetings that were emotionally exhausting on people so that they could feel that they had somehow come into touch with God. He's going to be a genuine pastor-teacher. He's going to direct them toward the only thing that will carry a person through life, and that is knowing the Word of God. So that is how he is going to care for them. He is going to do it with full genuineness.

So Paul says. "He will genuinely care for your state." That literally is, "For the things concerning you,"–the things that have to do with their situation. So we can translate verse 20 this way: "For not even one do I have who is equal-souled of such a quality as would genuinely be concerned about your situation." But of Timothy it was true. He would not try to fake them out.

In verse 21, Paul says, "For all seek their own, not the things which are Jesus Christ." This verse, through the centuries has caused theologians a great deal of distress, because it is a verse that is very harsh. It is a verse that is a complete clean-cut condemnation of just about everybody in the city of Rome. You have to remember what the situation is. Here as Paul is writing, he's in prison. He's in Rome. He lives in his own house under guard, but he's in touch with all the Christians and the things that are going on in the Christian community in Rome. So he knows these people. They're free to come to him, to see him, to talk with him. And he makes this kind of a statement that, "I look upon all of these people, and they're a bunch of clowns." They're chasing around after their own things. Oh, yes, they're Christians. They associate with us. They're very interested in the Lord's work, supposedly. But when it all is said and done, they are seeking and pursuing their own things."

Every now and then, the apostle Paul, as a genuine pastor-teacher, takes his club and he knocks a few heads in. This is one of the places that he's doing it. All the sweet Christian pastors find this really hard to take, partly because it condemns their own lack of performance along this line. Again, he begins, with the word "for," and again it is that same Greek particle "gar," indicating again what is being stressed here by looking at the word that comes before "gar." The word that comes before is the Greek word "pas" which means "all." So "for" is now stressing this time "all." In verse 20, the "for" stressed "no one." In verse 21, it stresses "all." Both of these are the same people. They're all the other people in Rome besides Timothy. Paul is now referring to that same group again.

In verse 20, he said, "None of these people are equal to the soul of Timothy." Now in verse 21, he says, "All of them have one thing in common, and that is," he says, "that they all seek something." The word seek is "zeteo" which means striving after something. It is present active indicative. It connotes striving after something and directing your thinking to it. It is a strong desire that is in view here. Present tense means this is the constant pattern of their life. They wake up in the morning, and they're striving after something. They're seeking after something. These are born again believers. It is active voice. Nobody's making them do this. Nobody is making them chase after what they're chasing after. Nobody is making them use their day the way they are using it. They are doing it by choice. The indicative is a statement of fact.

What are the things that they are seeking? What are they so zealously getting up and pursuing by their own volition? "Well," we would like to say, "the things that the Lord." They are in the capital of the greatest empire of the world up to that time. Here it is, the capital city. What happens here influences all the empire. They're about their Father's business. They're out there doing the Lord's work. When they wake up in the morning, the first thing they think about is, "What can I do this day now in my service for the Lord?" That's what we would like to say. But the apostle Paul has already clued us in that nobody is of that kind in Rome among the Christians. That's the kind of a person Timothy is, but the rest do not have that quality of soul.

"Instead," he says, "the things they are seeking are their own things." "Their own" is the Greek word "heautou," and it really means "of themselves." "The things" is the word "the" in the neuter in the Greek. It's the little Greek word "to," here in the plural. So it's the things of themselves that the Greek is saying. These people are getting up in the morning and they are zealously seeking the things of themselves. That is, their own interests dominate their minds.

They get up in the morning, they open the front door, and they grab the Roman Daily News. They turn to the ads, and they right away look down, especially Monday morning (you know, there are lots of ads come Monday morning). "What are the sales? Look at this." So they're rushing right down there. Then they go over to the grocery page. "Let's see. Look at this. There were a couple of steers killed in the Colosseum. There's a special on those today down at the supermarket." Then they rush right down there. Then they say, "Oh, I've got to grease the bearings on my chariot. I'll do that right away today." Their whole day is preoccupied with checking the papers for the buys and for the bargains. Then they got on the phone. How's this deal that they're in going, and that deal that they're in going? And their whole preoccupation all day long is with things of their own interests–things that please themselves. When they run out of that, then they're off to some entertainment or some recreation that they have an interest in.

Does that sound familiar?" Yep. It still happens today. We've got Christians who may smugly sit and say, "What a bunch of crumbs they were in Rome. How nice that at least they had Timothy. But what a bunch of crumbs the rest of them were." Be careful. You better think it through and see what it is that preoccupies our own minds during the day–what interests us, primarily, before you make that judgment. There were a lot of Christians in Rome who were just existing. They got up in the morning; they shoved food in their mouths; they went to work; they earned their money; they came home; they did something in a recreational way; the puttered around the house; and, they went to bed to get rested up so they could go to work tomorrow to buy more food to shove in their mouths–all just to exist. Even for the believers, it never seemed to occur to them that there was more to life than this. This is not why God put you here.

So the apostle Paul is pointing out that there was a group of people, these whom he has described previously as "no one" and "all." There were those in Rome, besides Timothy, who were characterized by the fact that they all sought their own things. Then he buttons it down by adding the word, "not"–"not the things which are Jesus Christ." Again, he uses that strong Greek negative "ou." He said, "And I mean *not* the things of the Lord. They don't pursue the things of the Lord at all.

We looked at the word "Jesus" in the previous session. "Christ" is the Greek word "Christos." The Greek word means "anointed." When it has the definite article "the" in front of it, "the anointed," that refers to Jesus Christ the God Man. The word "Christos" is the name that refers to the messianic ministry of Jesus Christ. He came, first of all, as King of the Jews. He came to this world to fulfill the Abrahamic covenant and all the promises that flowed from the Abrahamic Covenant to the Jewish people. Out of the Abrahamic Covenant came: the Palestinian covenant, the promise of the land; the Davidic Covenant, the promise of a king and a ruler on this earth; and, the New Covenant, the promise of personal regeneration. All of these, if you remember from our dispensation study, flow from the Abrahamic Covenant. Well, Jesus Christ came to fulfill these promises which God had made to the Jewish people. He came to do that as the anointed one. That means He was anointed (destined) to do that. That's why He came. So the Lord came under this title of the Christ, the Messiah, the anointed one.

These people are not serving for the Lord's glory. That's what we're finding. They're seeking not the things of the Lord, not the things of Christ, but the things of their own personal ambition. We have local churches indeed today who are full of the primadonna type. They're serving their own goals. No doubt there were people in Rome who did something for the local church, but they were the type, apparently, that did it with certain personal ambitions in mind. They did it because they wanted to reach certain goals. This is just like people who attend certain churches because it's good business. It gives them an opportunity to rub shoulders with certain people that will enable them to get material gain. Timothy, however, in contrast to all this, did concern himself with the things of the Lord. He did his job without calculating what was good for himself, and whatever the cost was to himself.

Many preachers actually simply use their congregations to pursue their own ambitions. It takes a smart congregation to realize that it has a preacher that's walking across their backs in order to move ahead to fulfill his own ambitions. One of the signs of this is that he floats around from pulpit to pulpit, and from church to church. The preacher is in a pulpit for a few years, and then he goes to another one. That's almost a sure sign that he's walking across the back of a congregation in order to advance his personal professional status. So he keeps chasing pulpits, supposedly under the guise of serving the Lord.

So verse 21 says this: "For all without exception are constantly striving after their own things, not the things of Jesus Christ." It is the mission, I trust you understand now, of a local church ministry to get Bible doctrine in usable form out to people, and then to exhort them to be positive to it. However, you will find that many Christians today are like those in Rome. Where a church is doing that does not necessarily mean that that church will be supported by believers in general. The truth of the matter is that many times Christians will not associate themselves with a HICEE church. If they discover it's a HICEE church, that is enough reason to split off from it and have nothing to do with it. This is because human viewpoint notions control the minds of most believers as to what constitutes the work of the local church, and most of that is wrong.

Therefore, the average Christian, because he is under the control of human viewpoint, will support local church ministries that are not under God's approval, and that do not have God's blessing and His stamp of approval upon it. Yet those are the ones that the average Christian mind gravitates toward as the one that he is to support. They had the same problem in Rome–pursuing their own things, pursuing their own viewpoint. Sometimes people make this decision on the basis of the personality of the communicator. Who the communicator of doctrine is not the point. The fact that a church is communicating sound doctrine, that is the point.

Never forget that you might not like the pastor-teacher personally. As a matter of fact, you might even find reasons why you may legitimately criticize him, but that doesn't affect the true doctrine which he teaches. All pastor-teachers have an old sin nature. That may come as a shock to some of you. It may come as an offensive thought to some of you. Some of you may say, "Well, I like to think of him as a kind of a holy Joe. I just don't like to think of him as having an old sin nature with all the unpleasant things that that could connote that he'd be capable of doing." But the truth is that he does have it. Therefore, he will have weaknesses.

But if you are the kind of Christian (and churches are full of them) who insist that, "No, I want to look at the pastor-teacher as a very holy, wonderful, godly man. I just know he wouldn't do this thing. Baloney. He'll do just about anything that you would if you had the opportunity, unless he has controls on his old sin nature through the Word of God in spiritual maturity. That's the only reason he wouldn't do it, and that's the only reason you wouldn't do it. There is no difference between the pastor-teacher and the sheep in this respect. So a congregation that insists that they're going to have a super holy type of pastor are going to get themselves a con man.

I'll guarantee you that one of the things men in the ministry learned in seminary is how to con the congregation. They have a course in that. It's called Conning 101," it's a required course. They even have television cameras so they take a picture of you while you're up there with your mouthful of teeth smiling and conning. Sometimes they don't call it "Conning 101." They call it Christian Education sometimes, which is how to live with the old sin nature and like it. They teach you how to manipulate all of these old sin natures; how to move around them; and, how to give them the impression that you're just really a wonderful man of God.

Well, the pastor-teacher's spiritual status is God's business, and God will deal with him. He exercises his gift. He has divine authority behind that gift. When he teaches sound doctrine, he is to be listened to, and the doctrine is to be obeyed: whether you like him; whether you admire him or not; whether you can find things to criticize where he is weak; or, whether you can't. But if you insist on coming up with the ignorant notion that you're only going to be taught by someone that you can fully admire, then you are going to get yourself a con artist who will put on the front that you're looking for, and he will make a fool of you in the process.

People who are spiritual rebels love to latch on to the weaknesses of a communicator of doctrine in order to justify their own negative volition. So they wanted to desert a church. So why did they do it? Well, they zeroed in on the pastor-teacher. He's the best excuse for their deserting. They mean that they are seeking to cover up the fact that they are spiritual dodos, and that they are immature believers who cannot sit under HICEE teaching and be objective. That's what's important. You have to be objective. Sooner or later, something is going to be said that hurts your feelings. Something is going to strike you, and you're going to think that somebody is picking on you. But the pastor-teacher is not interested in whether your feelings are hurt or not. As a matter of fact, he is not at all interested in knowing that someone has had his feelings injured, or that someone has been struck by something that he has said. It's only between you and the Lord. So if it's truth, and if God has spoken to you, then welcome it, and act upon it. But that takes objectivity.

This is one nice thing about listening to tapes. People listen to tapes and get their doctrine that way, but they never come into direct contact with the pastor-teacher. Therefore, all of his offensiveness just flows by them. They never come to church and say, "Somebody told him about me. That's why he said that. He's picking on me." They can't say that if they're listening to a tape. However, when they do hear something they don't like, they can also reach over there and shut you off easier too. You may have heard several things here that you didn't like, but unless you get up and walk out, you can't shut me off. But neither does one who listens to tapes have the full advantage (the maximum advantage) of the fellowship in the Word which is face-to-face. That's God's normal order. A tape approach is only secondary. God's normal order for receiving doctrine is face-to-face instruction.

But you could go negative toward the Word of God, and you can turn it off. But our job as communicators of the Word is to tell you the truth. That's the business of the local church. When a local church is doing that, people should rush to support it. They should say, "Thank God. Here's a place that's doing it." We may not do it as well as we should. We need to do it better, but at least we understand our job, and we're doing it. That church is the one I'm going to support. The average Christian does not have the knowhow spiritually to recognize that. So if he is not objective, he will be a rebel toward the truth.

So the evidence is all around us today. We have plenty of people who are in contrast to Timothy, who put on the holy front that the dumb sheep will eat up and not recognize that they're getting public relation treatment. It's a dangerous thing to put pastor-teachers on pedestals. Sooner or later, a congregation is going to get hurt doing that. Then what are they going to do? They're going to blame doctrine that it didn't work. You're going to be disillusioned. There's nothing wrong with doctrine, and there's nothing wrong with what you've been taught. You just didn't recognize the realities of life. So positive volition toward doctrine is the grace way of life. That's the way to reach the richest blessings that God has for us. That's where it's at.

Negative volition will trigger the wanderlust in your old sin nature, or you'll go chasing out after some new thing in a new place and some new church. Negative volition will build calluses on your soul. It will enable your emotions to control your soul. It will produce reversionism, and it will drive you into spiritual insanity so that you will play the fool in spiritual things. You will actually think you're moving toward God when you're moving down the mountain away from Him. Negative volition will lead you to seeking your own things apart from the leadings of the Lord Jesus. It will lead you to give your loyalties to false objects. The whole result will be that you will have wasted your life.

Timothy is a tremendous example, a mental attitude that would be honest with people in telling them the way it is with God, and to deliver to them that which they needed to be able to go up the mountain to the summit of blessing, not down into the valley of darkness.

Dr. John E. Danish, 1973

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