



BELIEVERS CHAPEL

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The Sermons of S. Lewis Johnson

2 Timothy 3:1-17

“The Dark Side of Evangelicalism”

TRANSCRIPT

[Message] The passage of Scripture that I'm reading is 2 Timothy, chapter 3 verse 1 through verse 17. This is really the text that I want to say a few words to you about later on. Beginning with verse 1 the apostle writes,

“But know this, that in the last days perilous times will come: For men will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, unloving, unforgiving, slanderers, without self-control, brutal, despisers of good, traitors, headstrong, haughty, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God, having a form of godliness but denying its power. And from such people turn away! (This is written by the Apostle Paul.) For of this sort are those who creep into households and make captives of gullible women loaded down with sins, led away by various lusts, always learning and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth. Now as Jannes and Jambres resisted Moses, so do these also resist the truth: men of corrupt minds, disapproved concerning the faith; but they will progress no further, for their folly will be manifest to all, as theirs also was. But you have carefully followed my doctrine, manner of life, purpose, faith, longsuffering, love, perseverance, persecutions, afflictions, which

happened to me at Antioch, at Iconium, at Lystra. (Lystra, incidentally, was Timothy’s home town.) At Lystra—what persecutions I endured. And out of them all the Lord delivered me. Yes, and all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution. But evil men and impostors,”

This is an interesting word because it was a word that was used of people who performed sleight of hand tricks, jugglers and entertainers like that. That’s the meaning, the background of the usage of this term translated here in this verse as impostors.

“Evil men and impostors will grow worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived. But you must continue in the things which you have learned and been assured of, knowing from whom you have learned them, and that from childhood you have known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. (In other words, faith in general is not the answer. Faith in general is not a saving instrumentality, but faith in Jesus Christ, that is, of course.) All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.”

May the Lord bless this reading of his word. Let’s bow together in a moment of prayer.

[Prayer] Father we are indeed grateful to Thee for the privilege that is ours. To think we are able to gather together in an auditorium such as this, hear the word of God read to us in a society in which the word of God is largely unknown and reflect upon the great truths that Thou hast made available to us through Jesus Christ our Lord and Savior,

through the ministry of faithful men, the apostles, and the prophets and especially, of course, our Lord himself. We are indeed Lord thankful.

We thank Thee for the word of God. We thank Thee for the providence of God that enables us to gather in an auditorium like this and hear the word of God. We pray that we may not forget the things that we have heard, but by the Holy Spirit, whom Thou hast also given to us in marvelous provision, come to understand them, be taught by him in the things that mean eternal life.

We thank Thee for each one present. We ask Thy blessing upon them and upon their families, upon their loved ones, upon their activities. May Jesus Christ be exalted in the lives of all of us here.

We pray for the sick. We pray especially for those who have requested the members of Believers Chapel to pray for them. We bring them before Thee. Thou knowest them. We pray, Lord, that Thou will give healing in accordance with Thy will.

We pray for our country. We ask Thy blessing upon our President and upon others associated with him in national and local governments. We pray that in our society there may be responsiveness to Jesus Christ and the word of God, and in our government may there be that as well.

Father we are grateful indeed for all of the blessings that are ours through Christ. We thank Thee for the forgiveness of our sins. We thank Thee for a great God who constantly lives within our heart and lives, guides our steps, and takes you certainly through the truths of holy Scripture to our heavenly home with our Lord Jesus Christ himself.

We ask, Lord, Thy blessing upon each one of us. May our lives reflect our profession in faith, and we pray now that through the preaching of the word, we may be enlightened and encouraged and also filled with the desire to serve the more faithfully in our lives, in our ministries, in our work. For Jesus' sake. Amen.

[Message] The Apostle Paul tells us that the duty of the teacher and preacher of the word of God is not only to feed the flock, but also to counsel the flock. That is, to say things to the flock that may not be qualified as feeding but correction. I'm not speaking of you personally. But when Paul wrote Titus, he said essentially that. He said to Titus that Titus was to hold fast the faithful word as he has been taught that he may be able by sound doctrine both to exhort and convict those who contradict. So the work of the teacher of the word of God is not simply to feed.

There comes a time when it's necessary to correct, to convict. And that's especially what the passage that we're talking about does, and what, of course, I would hope that all of us might respond in that way to what the apostle told young Timothy, that we'd not only be feed, but we also would be convicted. I confess that my title which is “The Dark Side of Evangelicalism,” is borrowed. But most of the content and approach is not. It's borrowed from a work by Alister McGrath entitled *Evangelicalism and the Future of Christianity*, an excellent book, has many very useful things within it. Some things you might have questions about. I did, but I loved that expression “The dark side of evangelicalism,” because as I look out over the professing Christian church, and I mean the evangelical church, what I see is not only the bright side, but a dark side also.

I'm concerned about the demise of the love of truth. Yes, the love of truth for the word of God in evangelicalism and therefore of the practice of genuine Christian life in our time, both in the churches and especially in the individuals. It's alarming when someone reads a chapter like the chapter that we have just read and see how many parallels there are between Paul's description of the last days men and the society of which we are a part, and so the exposition is going to center on a few of my concerns as I seek to try to show that what Paul is talking about in principle, we have today in the Christian church, and in the professors of Christianity who are sometimes in us, the evangelical church, and in other ways are influencing us. I am not suggesting that what we see in 2 Timothy, chapter 3 indicates that we are in the days just preceding our Lord's

coming. I can only say this that as far as I can tell what Paul tells us here finds many parallels in our life and society today. And so at least we should, as the early Christians did, live in the possibility of the Lord's return at any moment. So we're going to look at it in that way, and I'm just going to read through the passage and make a few comments about some of the things that are concerns to me.

So the apostle begins by talking about the men of the last days in the first 9 verses. Timothy is reminded of the primitive Christian conviction of a future crisis that would occur before the coming of the Messiah. Now he had learned that from his Jewish background. His mother was a Jewish woman, and as a result of his contact with the Jews and the professing Jews he knew that Jewish theology said that there would be a time of crisis before the coming of the Messiah that would be characterized by a departure from the moral values, the moral principles of the word of God. And so Timothy would have, as he read Paul's statement here, would have reacted in not shock or surprise when Paul wrote these things to him. He would recognize that what Paul is saying is the things that we Jewish people were characteristic of the days before our Lord's coming are still the characteristics of the days before our Lord's second coming as well.

The apostle says, “Know that in the last days perilous times will come,” threatening times. In fact, if you turn over to a passage like Matthew chapter 8 and verse 28 you discover that this word “perilous” is a term that was used to describe one of the demoniacs who came out of the tombs. In verse 28 of Matthew we read, “When He had come to the other side, to the country of the Gergesenes, there met Him two demon-possessed men, coming out of the tombs, exceedingly fierce, so that no one could pass that way.” That's the descriptive term that Paul uses, fierce, perilous. Those types of days are days the apostle promises. “Know this that in the last days perilous times will come.”

Now if you just read on for a few verses, verse 2 through verse 4 and think about what Paul is saying, immediately will come to your mind the fact that he's using one word several times, and evidently that is designed to characterize these days in a special way,

and it's the word “lovers.” Now we're not talking about God is love. The sentiment way in which the world thinks of God is love is not the Christian way to think about it at all. We ought to avoid it whenever Paul or the apostles speak about Christian love; they're talking about the love of the propitiatory sacrifice of the Lord Jesus Christ. This is love, that the Son of God has been sent and has given his life a propitiation for our sins. That defines love, propitiation, the sufferings of the cross, that's love not the sentimental kind of love when you, a young person, fall in love with a young lady, vice versa or the good feelings that people have toward one another in a sentimental type of way. What Paul is talking about, what the apostles speak about, what our Lord speaks about when he uses the term love is preeminently, I don't say that these other things are not there, but preeminently, he's talking about the sacrificial, costly love that is exhibited in the work of Jesus Christ on Calvary's cross.

Notice how that term appears.

“Men will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, unloving, unforgiving, slanderers, without self-control, brutal, despisers of good, traitors, headstrong, haughty, lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God.”

Lovers, lovers of everything, but what's missing? Lovers of God. “Lovers of themselves, lovers of money, lovers of pleasure,” but lovers of God, that's missing. So our age, Paul says, if it's the last days is characterized by love, lovers of everything but God, lovers of money.

Now if you do not think that evangelicalism has been affected by the love of money, then you are living in the dark ages spiritually. What we have today is a market driven evangelical community. And what is so bad about it is that parachurch organizations are in the forefront of this kind of this kind of thing that is affecting every

one of you who has ever given money to a parachurch organization. I'm not against parachurch organizations per say. If they were one-tenth as many as there are, I would be happy, but there are some that have done good works, and I am thankful for them, but parachurch organizations by nature do not have the discipline, do not have the oversight that the church of Jesus Christ and its elders and deacons provides. They are generally independent organizations. They are their own leaders. They are their own owners, and so consequently, how do parachurch organizations think of you? Well you are their customers. You are the ones upon whom they depend, and so why do you get an appeal every month from an organization to whom you have given money? Because you are their customers. This is a market driven activity. You know if you've given money to an institution, you're put on their computer, and every month you are solicited. “Men shall be lovers of money.”

Now I don't suggest in any way that the evangelicals love money as much as the non-evangelicals. I imagine if we looked at the reality of it, they do not, being evangelicals. But the facts, it seems to me, are very plain if you look at the institutions about us today that call themselves evangelicals, they are market driven. I haven't invented that term incidentally. It's commonly used by people on the inside in evangelicalism. They have very frequently said that.

I have a friend who is a professor in a Canadian institution. I'll use this illustration lest someone think I'm talking about the institutions around our city, or Fort Worth. I ask him a few years ago, what's happening in the Canadian evangelical world? He said, “Well, we have become market driven institutions.” So, lovers of money, this is part, in my opinion, of the dark side of evangelicalism.

Do you know why it's so dark? Because the Bible says, “God will meet our needs,” does he not? Does he not say that? Is that not a promise of the word of God, that God will provide our needs? Then shall not our institutions also that profess to be evangelical, shall they not live accordingly? Shall they not look to the Lord for their

needs? Should they look to me? Should they constantly solicit me for their money? Should they too not be characterized by the kind of faith that looks to him? There were institutions, there have been institutions that did not solicit funds, and many of them are still with us. In other words, if we are going to be taught faith, let's live the faith which we proclaim. It's as simple, it seems to me, as that.

“Lovers of money, lovers of themselves,” putting bodies on the campus is the main goal of our institutional heads. I use that term “putting bodies” because that was used in a meeting, in a seminary on which I served as a faculty member, in that body. We were discussing--this is not the Dallas Seminary here. We were discussing a particular course, and some of the faculty members wanted to have this particular course taught in the seminary program. The President was in favor of it. After we discussed it a good bit, then the President said, “This course will put bodies on our campus.” That was his expression, “This course will put bodies on our campus.”

There is a man in this congregation, a Lutheran, in his background, and when I told him that he reacted to me like this, he may not remember it, but he said, “Ugh!” Why? Because his background so plainly had prepared him to not expect that terminology, “It will put bodies on our campus.” I wish I had time to go on, but I'm not going to go on.

George Barner, a sociologist whose books are read very, very much by evangelical theology students and faculty members today, particularly in the practical work department, said that Jesus Christ was a marketing specialist. And so in order to follow Jesus Christ now we too because marketing specialists to build up institutions by begging for money.

I was reading in the *Dallas Morning News* a few months back this year, and one of the letters to the editor--I don't always read these, but some of them are interesting, Leon Levitt of Fort Worth, I don't know the man, commenting on the baseball strike settlement said, “It brings to mind the quote by Eli Wallach as the bandit leader in *The Magnificent*

Seven, ‘If God hadn't intended them to be sheared, he wouldn't have made them sheep.’” Well we are sheep, but I don't want to be sheered by shysters. And I'm afraid that many of those in evangelicalism in our institutions are frankly shysters. We are sheep. I don't know that the apostle said you are sheep and therefore you're going to be sheered. He never said anything like that, but I get the impression that that's kind of the way things are going in evangelicalism, and Achan is in our camp, and the Achan in our camp, if you remember the person who went for the wedge of gold in the Babylonian's garment, is the person within the institution of evangelicalism who is more interested in money than in the preaching of the gospel in the exposition of the word of God in the evangelization of the lost, and the church of Jesus Christ is affected just as Israel was when they lost the battle to Ai because Achan was in the camp.

So, Paul goes on to say, he has a lot to say here. I'm sure that a person who was able to do this better than I could spend an hour on each of these clauses. The apostle goes on to say, “Having a form of godliness but denying its power. And from such turn away! (Verse 6) For of this sort are those who creep into houses and make captives of gullible women loaded down with sins, led away by various lusts.” Well it's easy to talk about the women as a man because we know the failures of some of the women. I'm thankful Martha's not here today. She's out west of Fort Worth. She won't even hear what I'm talking about. She won't be able to check me up. But I want to talk about the men because it says here, “For of this sort are those who creep into households.” Those are the men. The creepers, the creepers are the men. True the women are gullible women, and they're faulty too, but it's the men who are responsible, just as in our professing evangelical institutions. Gullible women, it's the men who would worm their way in and the result is that the moral and spiritual earnestness that should characterize Christians is not found.

The apostle continues, “Always learning and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth.” The truth, what is the truth? The truth is the authentic gospel in its wealth.

I've mentioned David Wells' books. The first one he wrote was *No Place for Truth* in which he underlined this problem. Professor Wells is a Professor of Theology at Gordon Conwell Seminary, a fine evangelical man. *No Place for Truth, Whatever Happened to Evangelical Theology* is the subtitle of the book. Everyone ought to read it who can read. It's a little difficult in spots, but you ought to read it. It will enable you to understand something about our society, evangelical society. The book was so well received that he wrote a second called *God in the Wasteland*. You know where the wasteland is? Among us, in the professing Christian church, the wasteland. You should read that book too.

Today the pulpit is characterized by a lot of pop doctrine, the kinds of things that a psychologist probably could say just as well as a preacher of the word of God so that the characteristic of preaching today is to have a lot of what someone has called mega psyche in order to be posh in the pulpit, but the preaching of the great doctrines of the word of God is not so freely found as you might think it is in evangelicalism. Over and over again, men all over this country and I've traveled a little bit in recent years, I've been in the east, the last couple of years I've been in the east. I've been in the west. I've been in the south. I've been in the north-west, and characteristic of evangelicalism today is just what I'm speaking about. The truth of the gospel, the truth, is not being proclaimed as it should be. The church is interested in lots of other things. It reminds me of Mr. Spurgeon's little article called, "Feeding Sheep or Amusing Goats." What are we doing, feeding sheep or are we amusing goats in the ministry of the word of God with the great emphasis on things other than the word of God.

Now Gary Henderson is not in this particular meeting right now, but I refer to this in the 8:30 service and he was there and he said, "You didn't give me credit." No he really didn't say that, but he said I was the one who gave you that little strip from Doonesbury written by Garry Trudeau. So I'm giving him credit. I told him afterwards I'd give him credit. So I want you to tell him I mentioned Gary Henderson's name, but he gave me this cartoon from Doonesbury. The picture is of a nice little church. It could be

Believers Chapel. It's that kind of church. It's kind of colonial looking, and this is the leader of the church. He's dressed like somebody who is going out for yard work on Saturday. “OK flock, I thought I'd run through this week's activities. This Monday of course we have a lecture on nutrition from Kate Moss' personal chef. Tuesday and Thursday will be our regular 12 step nights.” Someone in the audience says, “Scott, would that be drugs or sex addiction?” “Drugs, sex addiction, we've cut down to 9 steps,” Scott says. “That's on Friday at 6:30 p.m. right after organic coal gardening. Also a special treat, Saturday night will be aerobic male bonding night. So bring your sneaks. Any questions?” “Yes, is there a church service?” “Cancelled, there was a conflict with self-esteem workshop.” That's ridiculous of course isn't it? Well we have something of the same thing in evangelicalism. You look, you just take a good solid look at what is happening in many of our churches, and it's something like that.

Paul continues, “Now as Jannes and Jambres resisted Moses, so do these also resist the truth.” He's just said, “Always learning and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth. Now as Jannes and Jambres resisted Moses, so do these also resist the truth: men of corrupt minds, disapproved concerning the truth.” Jannes and Jambres, they were the magicians. They were the jugglers. They were those who performed the tricks that Moses performed. Moses performed a miracle. They performed the miracle too. And Moses talks about the fact that these individuals performed the same thing according to their enchantments. So the magicians did this work according to their enchantments and did the same thing. This is a beautiful insight in my mind. It's focused on the charismatic movement with its claims for miracles and signs which are not the miracles and signs of the apostles and our Lord who raised people from the dead, performed miracles that everyone recognized were performed by God. No, these are the magicians who work according to their enchantments. They're the jugglers. They're the imposters that Paul talks about here, Jannes and Jambres.

It reminds me of some of the illusions that characterize Christian today. I've talked before during the 1 Corinthians series about the Declaration Evangelicals and Catholics Together in which a number of Catholics evangelicals, so they call themselves and evangelicals on the other hand have together produced a declaration. The declaration is endorsed by Roman Catholic, not only the priests but some of the scholars, and then endorsed by evangelicals. Some that you would recognize, men like Jim Packer. I still don't understand why Jim Packer did this. Although I think I have an insight into what may have caused it, but Bill Bright and others endorsed this document. Now to my mind, no evangelical who understands one of the fundamental things of Christianity could have endorsed that document.

Do you remember that Apostle Paul wrote an epistle called the Epistle to the Galatians? So far as we know, the Galatians false teachers, the Judaizers they are called, who came to Galatia and taught them, believed everything that the apostle taught except one thing. One thing, you must also be circumcised in order to be saved. Everything else they could have been classified as thoroughly evangelical, even Pauline. Wouldn't you like to be called Pauline? If I were called Pauline I would think I had arrived so far as theology is concerned. But anyway, that one thing, just one thing, just one little thing, just one little word actually, “And,” A-N-D, believe in Jesus Christ and be circumcised. What did Paul say about it? Well you have a weakness. There's a failure there. There's a little thing you need correcting. No, Paul said that's a different gospel. That's not another gospel of the same kind. It's a different gospel. And he carefully uses Greek expressions to make it plain. It's not another of the same kind. Here is a pen. If I had another I could say here is another pen. It's another of the same kind. Paul says no, this is, it's not an “alos” pen, another of the same kind, but if I were to pull out another type of pen which was entirely different, I would use a “heteros,” like we say heterodoxy. Paul says that's a “heteros” gospel. That's a different gospel. It's not a gospel at all.

But here are men who sign on to a document which affirms that a Roman Catholic who believes it's necessary to be baptized for the forgiveness of sins is one of us. They're not one of us. They're not one of us. If we believe that we must be justified by faith and baptism, we've fallen into, as Paul goes on to say in Galatians, a gospel of works. Do we get this? Gospel of works, you must do something physical, material, visible in order to be saved. So, Jannes and Jambres are still among us, working their signs and miracles, but they're illusions.

When I was in California recently, we went to Napa Valley to look at how the wine industry had grown and see the vast acres of grape vines, and there was a little shopping area. So we went into the shopping area and there was a store, and we walked by the store, and my, it was impressive looking. Flashing jewelry everywhere, I walked in and on all the counters, things that were inviting. You wanted to buy something yourself and put it on you, then notice the name on it. Illusions. I asked the girl behind the counter, “Is there anything in,” I was looking for an illumination, you understand, “Is there anything in this place you have here in your whole business that's real?” She said, “No not a thing, all illusions.” But they looked like the real thing. That's the gospel that Satan would like to pander to us. It's not the gospel. It's an illusion. It's a false gospel.

Well thankfully the apostle says in verse 9, “But they will progress no further, for their folly will be manifest to all, as theirs (that is, Jannes and Jambres folly) also was (manifest).” This is so important. I'm almost tempted to stop right here and just underline some more of this, but I want to try to at least finish generally. In verse 10 through verse 13 the apostle provides a reminder and an admonition to Timothy, he said, “But you,” that's emphatic in the original text, “But you,” “But you,” Timothy, your conduct is different from that of the heretics. “But you have carefully followed my,” now I think today most of us would like to reverse the order of these next words, “Followed my manner of life, and then of course incidentally, my doctrine,” but no, the apostle is not the

kind of person who will not emphasize that the most important thing about Christianity is its doctrine.

My Christian friend, whenever a person says to you, “I’m not interested in doctrine. I’m interested in life. I’m not interested in doctrine. I’m interested in Christ.” Please remember that Christianity is a doctrine. Christianity is a doctrine. That’s what it is, certain facts about Jesus Christ and his ministry. It’s a doctrine. We should love it, preach it, proclaim it, live it, the doctrine. So, “You have carefully Timothy followed my doctrine, my manner of life.” This is important, “My purpose, my faith, my long suffering, love, perseverance, persecutions, afflictions, which happened to me at Antioch, at Iconium, at Lystra.” Timothy you know that well because you’re from Lystra. “What persecutions I endured. And out of them all the Lord delivered me. Yes, and all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus,” That is following doctrine, and Paul’s manner of life, “Will suffer persecution. But evil men and impostors will grow worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived.” If you want to be deceived, or if you want to try to test your ability to avoid deception, turn on the TV screen. Get the net work that Paul Crouch is the owner of and listen for a while, and you’ll find various manifolds, continuous attempts to deceive the simple hearted Christian who believes the word of God and seeks to follow it. Paul said, “The Lord delivered me out of them all,” and that meant from death brought about possibly by these things.

And then in verse 14 through verse 17 he tells us how you can escape the charlatanism that is characteristic of our age and the charlatanism that has also invaded, unfortunately, evangelicalism, and again emphatic, “But you continue in the things which you have learned and been assured of, knowing from whom you have learned them.” It’s important of course for us to avoid the magicians and the imposters of evangelicalism because there are many of them who act similarly to the old magicians. In the modern healing movement we have a great deal of that.

Now we actually have people now falling on the ground, barking like dogs and attempting to claim that this is the ministry of the Holy Spirit to us, the laughing revival in the church, the Toronto revival, so called, is just out of the evangelical world entirely. When David Wells, incidentally finally decided that he would go to Toronto and see what was really happening, when he came in the people who were running the meeting, a large meeting called the Toronto Blessing in the Vineyard Church there, David was invited to come up and sit on the platform because he explained to them that he was, they ask him who he was, he told them that he was a theological professor, so they brought him up, and so he had a chance to watch first hand right in his presence the things that were happening on the floor. People were doing carpet time. To do carpet time is to get down on the floor, bark like a dog, to laugh constantly. You maybe have seen or heard what happens. This is supposed to be the work of God. David's comment was, “It was nauseating.” Nauseating.

So, Timothy, continue in what you have learned, remembering who has taught you, and Paul mentions of course those who have taught Timothy the things that he has learned, his mother, his grandmother. Those were the ones who had taught him. You know like a young man growing up in a home with a Jewish mother, he would be brought, sat upon his father's knee and his father would teach him the truth of God, not his mother. There's nothing wrong in that of course, but the father, the father was the teacher of the children in Judaism. He was the one with the authority to teach the children, and they were taught by fathers, and thus they learned some things they were supposed to learn.

So, remember Timothy, and remember the things that you have been taught by your own family, and further, and especially Timothy, remember the Scriptures themselves and abide in them, and that from childhood you have known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith,” not general faith, “Through faith which is in Christ Jesus.” This is the truth that he's talking about in verse 7 and verse 8.

Of course the Old Testament only at this time, essentially, plus the things that Timothy or others might have known about Paul. The New Testament had not been collected at this time. As a matter of fact the first time the term New Testament was used was in the year, approximately, 188 A.D. when Irenaeus used the term. New Testament was not known. What was the Bible? The Old Testament Scriptures essentially, and then the letters of the apostles scattered around to which an individual might have had some access. This is the truth, and Paul goes on to say, about the Scriptures themselves that, “All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable.” Ah, there’s that word again, “Is profitable,” first of all, “For doctrine.” For doctrine, for theology, “For reproof, for correction,” that’s what I’m trying to do today, “For correction,” as an instrumentality, “For instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.”

J. Gresham Machen, who was the founder essentially of Westminster Theological Seminary, been a Professor at Princeton Seminary, said, “Indifference to doctrine makes no heroes of the faith.” Indifference to doctrine,” let’s just change it. Indifference to theology makes no heroes of the faith. That’s why a man can sign the Declaration of Evangelicals and Catholics Together and affirm that a person who believes that you must also be baptized in order to be saved is one of us, a member of our family, thus yielding to the deception, not simply of the human individual, the deception of the great arch enemy of God himself, Satan in heaven.

Even Alister McGrath in the book that I mentioned at a point in the book mentions the fact that an individual comes to Christianity through his faith and baptism. Isn't that interesting? So easy for us to move away from a salvation by grace to a salvation by works, so easy, that’s the first step. That’s the first confusion that the imposters and the deceivers would like to bring to pass in our lives. Scripture is the power for Christian living, the guide for Christian living and the sufficiency of Scripture is a doctrine that we need to revisit over and over and over again.

I'm going to close with just a comment about the Epistle to the Philippians because today we have all kinds of attempts on the part of the charlatans to lead us astray. Money is one. Psychology is another. The Bible has psychology in it, so we're not saying that all psychology is bad. All truth about life, about human life, may not be found in the Bible, all truth. I'm not wise enough to know, but I do know this, that the Bible promises sufficiency for all of our needs.

The Apostle Paul in Philippians chapter 4 says to the Christians to whom he was writing, after saying the Lord was at hand he said, “Be anxious for nothing,” isn't that a marvelous promise? “Be anxious for nothing.” If I'm looking to the Lord, I don't have need for anxiety. “Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God.” This is what I would say to our marketing society. “Be anxious for nothing.” I know you've got a staff and you're trying to do the Lord's work. I know you're responsible for them but don't be anxious about it. Take it to the Lord in prayer. “Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God.”

I love this next word, “And,” “And.” See we're justified by faith and baptism, so Roman Catholics say. We're justified by faith and works that means theologically. That's a big “And.” That's the only difference between an evangelical Catholic and an evangelical Protestant, the one word, “And,” “And.” But now this “And” I like. Let the Lord know about your needs. “Let your requests be made known to God; and,” perhaps? No perhaps, possibly? No, no possibly. “And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.” So, “Be anxious for nothing.” Let your petitions come up to the Lord God in heaven as he sits on his throne. He's the sovereign of this universe. His promise is, Father your promise is, “And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard my heart and minds through Christ Jesus our Lord.”

“The Dark Side of Evangelicalism” by S. Lewis Johnson
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My Christian friends, we are the recipients of the greatest blessings that a human being could possibly have. Our needs are completely met by a loving Father in heaven who is no imposter, who is no charlatan, who always, every time, unfrustrateable in his dealings with men, carries out his will.

May the Lord God help us, all of us to lean upon him. Let's stand for the benediction.

[Prayer] Father, how can we thank Thee for these marvelous things that are ours through Jesus Christ our Lord? We thank Thee for him. We thank Thee for every moment of his life in our midst in which he faithfully carried out the task that meant that those of us in this auditorium who are believers...

[RECORDING ENDS ABRUPTLY]