

Weekly Memory Verse

*“Now may our Lord Jesus Christ Himself, and our God and Father,
who has loved us and given us everlasting consolation and good hope by grace,
comfort your hearts and establish you in every good word and work.” 2 Thess 2:16-17*

Hymn of the Week: O God, Our Help in Ages Past

O God, our help in ages past,
Our hope for years to come,
Our shelter from the stormy blast,
And our eternal home!

A thousand ages in Thy sight,
Are like an evening gone;
Short as the watch that ends the night,
Before the rising sun.

Under the shadow of Thy throne
Still may we dwell secure;
Sufficient is Thine arm alone,
And our defense is sure.

Time, like an ever-rolling stream,
Bears all its sons away;
They fly forgotten, as a dream
Dies at the op'ning day.

Before the hills in order stood,
Or earth received her frame,
From everlasting Thou art God,
To endless years the same.

O God, our help in ages past,
Our hope for years to come,
Be Thou our guide while life shall last,
And our eternal home.

*Use your smartphone to
hear this hymn's tune:*



What is the fear of the Lord (Proverbs 1:7)?

The Fear of the Lord is a *reverent faith* in *Jesus Christ*,
exclusively *loving, obeying, and worshiping* he whom I will give an *account* to.

Monday, May 16

Proverb for the Day: "A quick-tempered man acts foolishly, and a man of wicked intentions is hated." 14:17

1 Timothy 5

Paul continues to give Timothy, his representative to the church in Ephesus, specific instructions for "how you ought to conduct yourself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth" (3:15). While there *is* organization to the church, it is not merely *an* organization. The church is a body of baptized believers who covenant together to love, learn from, and labor for Jesus Christ.

There will be times when believers must be rebuked, so in God's household they must be treated as family members, with love, honor, and respect (vv. 1-2). Widows without family support should receive care from the church if she is of godly character and sufficient age (vv. 3-16). Note that believers who have widows must care for their needy family members (v. 16); failing to do so shows no love for the Lord and His saints (v. 8). Pastors should work hard, fear sin, and be impartial in their relationships (vv. 17-25).

Truths to Nail Down and Meditate On

1. Churches must care for members who are widows. Because of various government programs it is easy to think widows' needs are supplied. While such programs are a help, churches must be sure that their widows' needs are met. There are more than just financial needs!
2. The "elders who rule well...especially those who labor in the word and doctrine" refers to the same office, not two different offices (some point to this passage as supporting two offices, *ruling* and *teaching* elders). All elders must carry out their responsibilities well and all elders must be able to teach (3:2). This passage (vv. 17-18) teaches that pastors should be financially supported (1 Cor 9:7-15; Gal 6:6). Pray for your pastor that he will "rule well" and "labor in the word and doctrine"!

Items for Prayer

- Tom, Stephanie, Daniela, Nino, Angelo & Gabriella Boehm, Italy—Pray with us that the work would begin (and be completed) on our apartment building.
- Satan and wicked spiritual forces, Mark 4:15; 2 Cor 4:4; Eph 2:2; 6:12, 18
- Sinful hearts of the lost, Rom 3:10–18; 2 Cor 4:3–4; Eph 4:18–19
- Our own struggles with sin, Matt 26:41; Rom 7:13–25

Saturday, May 21

Proverb for the Day: "Do they not go astray who devise evil? But mercy and truth belong to those who devise good." 14:22

Pastor will text the passage he will be preaching from tomorrow on Friday!

Items for Prayer

- Tim, Cristina, Andres, Ruth, and Patricia Goossen, Argentina—Pray for boldness and receptive hearts as we and our church family pass out tracts during the country's anniversary celebration on the 25th.
- False teachers spreading error in the name of Christ, 1 Tim 4:1–3; 2 John 7
- Selfless, sacrificial love for all Christians, Acts 6:1
- Tendency to be "now" oriented rather than Christ and eternity, Matt 6:33; 2 Tim 4:1

The Lord's Day, May 22

Proverb for the Day: "In all labor there is profit, but idle chatter leads only to poverty. 14:23

Think back on God's truth you heard or read this past week, and how you could use that to minister to the saints today as the church gathers.

Items for Prayer

- Daniel, Rosamma, Dany, Merlin, and David Kumar, India—Pray for Pastor Mariyadas and Family. Pray that the church will grow spiritually and numerically.
- Christ-likeness at home and "work," Col 3:18–4:1
- Not judge by externals, Jas 2:1; 2 Cor 5:16
- Persevering faithfulness in perilous times, Revelation 2–3; 21:7

Friday, May 20

Proverb for the Day: "He who despises his neighbor sins; but he who has mercy on the poor, happy is he." 14:21

Titus 3

Titus must also exhort Christian slaves to be controlled by the Holy Spirit (vv. 1-2; the fruits of the Spirit are evident in these verses, showing one to be controlled by the Spirit). The basis—again—for such living is the grace of God. The same grace that saves is the basis, reason, and means for Christ-like living (vv. 3-7). In order for the church at Crete to be properly ordered Titus must continually teach and insist on Christian living (v. 8).

Having told Titus what he *must* continually teach, Paul then tells Titus what he *must not* give any time to whatsoever (v. 9). If there are any in the church who insist on teaching what is wrong and useless, they must be warned twice and then put out from the church if they refuse to repent (v. 10), having proven by their non-repentance and commitment to sin that they are unbelievers (v. 11).

Truths to Nail Down and Meditate On

1. Salvation is entirely of the Lord, from start to finish (vv. 3-7). Consider Christian what you were like before you were saved (v. 3); did you deserve God's kindness and mercy? What did you deserve from him? And yet what did the Lord do? Why? How? To what end?
2. Christian living *is* Christian doctrine. Merely "believing" Christian truths without such bringing about a real and evident change in life is not true faith. Examine your life: how does it compare with Jesus' truth about how you *should* live? Is your life "out of order?"
3. Those whom Christ saves are justified and have the certainty of eternal life (v. 7). Despite many groups that teach salvation is by grace *and* works, or teach that Christians *could* lose their salvation, such beliefs are rooted *sinner's* earning salvation, not what *God* has done in Christ Jesus.

Items for Prayer

- Charlie and Bo Frink, New Zealand—Pray that we will meet more people we can share the Gospel with.
- Always increasing Christ-likeness of Christians, Col 1:9–11; Heb 5:12–14; 2 Pet 1:5–11
- Governing authorities, Acts 5:29; 1 Tim 2:1–6
- Christians' worship, 1 Cor 14:24–25

Tuesday, May 17

Proverb for the Day: "The simple inherit folly, but the prudent are crowned with knowledge." 14:18

1 Timothy 6

The last group of church members Paul addresses are slaves (vv. 1-2). Slaves must be taught to honor God's Word by honoring their masters, even if those masters are Christians!

Paul warns Timothy of false teachers, for they twist God's truth, divide God's people, and are religious mercenaries who are materially minded (vv. 3-10). Paul then urged Timothy to live in light of Christ's return (vv. 11-16) by fleeing everything associated with false teaching, following after Christian character, fighting for truth, and looking for Christ.

Lastly, wealthy Christians should use their wealth for ministry (vv. 17-19) and Timothy must guard the truth and resist false teaching (vv. 20-21).

Truths to Nail Down and Meditate On

1. False teaching affects the entire church. From the beginning of 1 Timothy to its end, false teaching has been addressed and warned against. From 1 Timothy we have seen that false teaching destroys lives, warps worship, twists Christian truth, creates controversy, denies God's good gifts, leads souls astray, prevents needy Christians from receiving help, corrupts church leadership, and leads to hell. Remember 4:16!
2. Being content with the basics of life is essential to living a Christ-like life (vv. 3-10). When professing believers focus more on physical, material things than spiritual things, their souls start to drown and eventually die. The world and its lusts are passing away, but "he who does the will of God abides forever" (1 John 2:17). Keep a "loose grip" on this world and a "tight grip" on Christ!
3. Jesus is coming again (v. 14)! No one knows the day of his coming ("which He will manifest in His own time," v. 15), so until then it is always time to live and serve Christ faithfully.

Items for Prayer

- Brian, Erin, Isabel, Emmett, Arthur, Owen, and Walter Bollon, Taiwan—Pray for lasting fruit in the lives of the young people at Cornerstone, our partner church.
- Boldness in the face of opposition and resistance, Acts 4:29; Eph 6:19
- Fear of and love for Christ, 2 Cor 5:11, 14
- Selflessness, Luke 9:23–26

Wednesday, May 18

Proverb for the Day: "The evil will bow before the good, and the wicked at the gates of the righteous." 14:19

Titus 1

Titus was a Gentile convert (Gal 2:3) and co-laborer (2 Cor 2:13; 8:23) of the apostle Paul's. Like Timothy, Titus was not the *pastor* of the Cretan church, but was Paul's representative there. Paul had other plans for Titus (3:12). Cretans had a notoriously and proverbially low moral character (1:12). The Greek verb *keritazein* means "to act as a Cretan" meaning the same thing as "to play the liar." This was the heritage of the Christians whom Titus ministered to.

The church needed qualified spiritual leadership (1:5-9), had false teachers among them (1:10-16; 3:9-11), and struggled with unchristian behavior (2:1-3:8, 14). Thus Paul wrote this letter to help Titus put the church in good order by appointing godly pastors (1:5-9), rebuking false teaching (1:10-16), and encouraging godly living (chaps. 2-3).

Truths to Nail Down and Meditate On

1. Pastors must have godly, Christ-like character to faithfully teach truth and rebuke error (vv. 5-9). Sadly, pastors frequently evaluate themselves and are evaluated by external standards such as being culturally "with it." While there is no virtue in being "culturally backward," Jesus Christ demands pastors to be thoroughly Christian, not worldly, so that truth is faithfully ministered.
2. Jesus' command for straying believers and teachers in a local church is sharp rebuke (v. 13). Such must be given with great love (Gal 6:1), trusting the Lord to bring them to repentance (2 Tim 2:24-26). The end and goal is not to win an argument but so "that they may be sound in the faith" (Titus 1:13).
3. False teaching hardens minds and consciences in sin (vv. 15-16). There is no such thing as "neutral" thinking. Everything must be seen from the Triune God's perspective.

Items for Prayer

- Mike and Marie Brunk, South Africa—Pray for the building project for our meeting house. Pray for finances, wisdom, and grace in the eyes of government officials.
- We will always be "going," Matt 28:19; Mark 16:15; Luke 24:47-49; John 20:21; Acts 1:8
- Salvation of souls, 2 Thess 3:1
- Faithfulness, 1 Cor 1:18

Thursday, May 19

Proverb for the Day: "The poor man is hated even by his own neighbor, but the rich has many friends." 14:20

Titus 2

In contrast to what false teachers say, Titus must "speak the things which are proper for sound doctrine" (v. 1), namely how Christians of different life situations must live as Christians (vv. 2-10). The foundation for living this way is the grace of God that saves all kinds of lost souls (v. 11) and teaches those saved how they should and shouldn't live (vv. 12-14).

Because these things are "proper for sound doctrine" (v. 1) they must be spoken, and Christians must be accordingly urged and corrected. Regardless of what people may say or how they respond, truth must be spoken (v. 15). It is through Jesus' truth that souls are freed (John 8:32) and made holy (John 17:17). It should not be surprising that sinners don't like to hear such truth! (John 3:19-20)

Truths to Nail Down and Meditate On

1. The only hope of salvation from sin is the grace of God (v. 11). Whether man or woman, old or young, married or single, salvation is by grace alone. What—who—are you relying on for salvation?
2. The same grace that saves (v. 11) is the same grace that sanctifies (vv. 12-14). God's salvation results in holy living. Christian, you *must not* live a God-ignoring, craving-oriented, sinful life any longer, and you *must* live a self-controlled, righteous, God-focused life. What is your life characterized by?

Items for Prayer

- Jeremy, Caroline, Isobel, William, Priscilla, and Hudson Dion, Papua New Guinea—Pray that believers will not participate in the corruption that accompanies elections here.
- Open doors, Col 4:3
- Spirit-led, dependent, and empowered (tendency to follow our sin natures), Gal 5:16
- Always content in Christ, Phil 4:11-13