

# A Declaration of Those Things Which Are Most Surely Believed Among Us

## An Expository Study of **The Gospel According to Luke** **Chapter 6- Luke 6:6-11**

### 75- Divine Truth Versus Human Tradition- Part 1

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June 6, 2010

#### **Luke 6:6-11**

The other day I was driving along in my car and I wanted to catch up on the news, so I flipped on the car radio just in time to hear one of the radio commentators say, *"We have one goal in our program,"* he said, *"I am here to present my truth to you."* He said, *"I know I'm unique and nobody else can do what I can do. You see, we don't give you anybody else's truth, we give you our truth."*

What a bizarre statement that is. And that bizarre statement is the mantra of a post-modern culture that has lost all definition of words. Now maybe you have never heard of the term "post-modernism" before- so let me help you understand what that term means.

When I was little and we played baseball- a ball was a ball and a strike was a strike. If you got four balls- you were allowed to go to first base, but if you got three strikes- you were out. That is what I call "normal"- a ball is a ball and strike is a strike.

Post-modernism is abnormal, and it says that a ball might not really be a ball at all, and, in fact- under certain circumstances- a ball might even be a strike because in post-modernism there is no Absolute Truth, and there is nothing on which to stand and base your life on that is solid and unmovable and constant and eternal, and so to a post-modernist- to call a pitch that is outside the strike zone a "ball" is hopelessly naïve and subject to all kinds of hand wringing and debate and perhaps even re-evaluation.

"Normal" says that words mean things and you don't have the right to monkey around with words to make them mean something that they don't mean.

So when I was a young boy- "gay" meant "happy" and "bad" meant "bad". But in a post-modern culture- "gay" means perverted, and "bad" means, well, "bad" actually means "good".

And the result of post-modernism taking over our culture is that you have *your* "truth" and I have *my* "truth", and the people over there have *their* "truth", and all the various "truths" out there are all different- and they all contradict each other and they don't agree with each other- but somehow they are all still true.

Today there is no Absolute Authority, no single Standard, and no eternal Foundation for anything- not even in the Church. And the result of this confusion is that today- "Truth" is not a set of objective unmovable and eternal facts, but today "truth" is whatever anybody *wants* it to be. In other words- our own personal opinions have been elevated into being "truth", and the Divine Truth of Scripture has been devalued to being nothing more than personal opinion.

That is why you can read the Bible out loud and somebody will hear what the Words of the Scriptures are actually saying, and the first thing out of their mouths is, "*Well that's just your opinion*", or "*That's your interpretation*". No it isn't- it is what God Almighty revealed in inspired Scripture.

And make no mistake about this, dear friends, post-modernism will shape the human heart to the point where the most vicious, evil, and wicked behavior can be carried out without a blink while at the same time- the holy Words of an eternal God will be viewed as being hate speech and divisive.

You see, when you remove "right" and "wrong" from a people all you have left in that vacuum is a fallen and depraved nature. When you take away the ability of people to carefully discern between that which is holy and that which is profane- you will always, and in all cases, have only the profane.

So when you remove Biblical morality from a culture- you automatically replace that time tested and proven morality that works with somebody else's morality that is far less workable and far less moral, like the morality of Confucius, or Mao, or Hitler.

Now we see the signs all around us that the lie of post-modernism has radically altered our culture- and we grieve over that. But sadly- this same lie has also entered into the Church, and what saddens me is that the very tenets of post-modernism that allows everybody to do

what is right in their own eyes and put their own private interpretation on the Words of God have been not only welcomed with open arms by the leaders of the modern Church- but in far too many circles this lie of satan has actually been called "the Spirit of God", and has actually promoted as being a good and holy thing. And the result of post-modernism taking charge in the House of God is a disease that I call "ABB"- Anything But the Bible.

The people of the modern Church will read any book and study any teaching just as long as it is *not* the Bible, while the Bible is left to gather dust, and this is so true that today- the Bible is the most owned and the least read Book in the history of the world.

And I have a very simple question to ask the leaders of the Church in the 21st Century: If we are not supposed to live our lives in humble submission to *all* the Words of Holy Scripture- then why would we submit to *any* of them? If we do not trust God to tell us what to believe about say, the origins of life- then why in the world would we trust God to tell us that Jesus died on the Cross for our sins? If we are not going to humbly and graciously submit to the authority of **Titus 2** that says that young women are to be keepers at home and submissive to the authority of their own husbands- then why do we preach **John 3:16** that says that God loved the world? If we are no longer bound by the command of **Hebrews 10:25** that says that believers are not to forsake gathering together on the Lord's Day, then why would we think we are still bound by the command of **Exodus 20** that says "**You shall not steal**"?

If we are free to ignore the requirements for Elders in the House of God that God gave to the Apostle Paul that says if a man cannot rule his own house well he is disqualified from leading in the Church- then why are we not free then to ignore what God gave the Apostle Paul about how lost sinners are made fit for Heaven?

So again I ask a very simple question. If the Church of Jesus is not going to preach and teach and strive to obey *all* that God put in the 66 Books of the Holy Bible- then why do we preach and teach and struggle to obey *any* of it?

So because the "truth" that guides many in the modern Church is post-modernism and not Scripture- the Church has become weak, and ineffective, and effeminate, and tolerant, and compromising- exactly

what the Apostles warned us over and over and over again that the Church of Jesus must never be.

The idea that is so popular in our day that somehow Divine Truth is *not* objective and unbending and unyielding and is *not* absolute and is *not* eternal, and that it does and can change over time, and is a very personal thing, results in the silly and unworkable concept that my "truth" is my truth and your "truth" is your truth, and I'm entitled to my own personal set of truth claims and you are entitled to have your own personal set of truth claims that are different from mine, but which are equally true.

Now there are a lot of ways that I could illustrate this- but one that comes to mind and I prepared this early in the week was that there's a statement I hear Christians make all the time that I really don't like. So please don't say this when I'm around because this is just very, very offensive to me. The statement is when people say, "*I'm going to share my faith.*" That statement really bothers me on a number of levels.

First of all- it's not *your* faith, and secondly you don't have the power to *share* it. Other than those two things- this might be a pretty good statement- but it really has no meaning at all. What do you mean you're going to share "your faith"? What is "your faith"? If you mean you're going to explain the *Christian faith* to somebody who doesn't know it- then, of course, I am all for that because that means that the faith that you are sharing is really not yours- but it is a faith that is already fixed and established, it is a definable objective faith that can be learned and taught from one generation to another, and it contains the very same elements today that it did 2,000 years ago, and those elements that make up the Christian Faith are not up for debate and they are not able to be changed. So the Christian Faith was permanently established by the Lord Jesus Christ Himself, and it is eternal and it is Scriptural and has been settled forever. So if that is what you are trying to explain to your friends- then I am all for it.

But, if by that statement you mean you are explaining your own *personal* "faith"- a "faith" that is unique to you, and a "faith" that is different from everybody else's "faith"- then I reject that and I don't want to hear anything about that faith, and I pray that you don't share that faith with anybody because your own *personal* "faith" doesn't exist- it is a figment of your own imagination and it is highly subjective and it

is not even real, and it sure isn't accurate, and it cannot be Biblical, or else it would not be *your* "faith"- it would be the Christian faith.

So preaching and teaching the Christian faith is objective, while sharing your faith is a subjective statement- because it's not your faith and you can't share it like you can cut off a piece of it and give it to somebody else.

But that's very popular in modern evangelicalism. The leaders of the modern Church promote thousands of little subjective beliefs and faiths that are all personal and they are all unique and they are all different and they are all individual and they all differ from one another and they contradict one another and they oppose one another because none of these personal individual designer faiths came from God. And we need to know that this is not Christianity.

The modern ideal is all about us being individuals and about doing your own thing and about walking to the beat of a different drummer and about worshipping God in our own way, and about displaying and promoting your own spin on life and the issues of life and godliness, and about developing your own take and your own concept of how you want to live your own life. And contrary to popular opinion- this concept of post-modernism is not new- it is ancient- and the Bible calls it, "Doing what is right in your own eyes"

But Christianity is all about millions of sinful and unworthy individuals being drawn together by the Sovereign and Effectual Call of God into the very same Salvation offered only through Jesus Christ, and it is about being adopted into the very same Family, and Christianity is all about us abandoning our own wills and our own agendas and our own ways and our own individualism and about all of us humbly submitting ourselves to the very same Authority of Scripture, and by the Glory of the risen Christ and the Power of the Holy Spirit- we are molded and shaped and conformed to the very same Standard of the Image and Likeness of the Lord Jesus Christ.

So to someone who has bought into the lie of post-modernism- conformity is the enemy, while to a genuine Christian- individualism is the enemy.

And this is a not-so-very subtle overture to the post-modern mentality that says that *my* "faith" is my own personal individual designer "faith", and I certainly would be happy to share that with you because I am quite proud of it because it is mine.

But that's not at all what we want to do. We want to explain THE faith, the Christian faith, Divine Truth, Biblical Christianity. And our model for that- our greatest example for that- is the Lord Jesus Himself Who throughout His entire Ministry presented the Truth, the whole Truth, and nothing but the Truth. Jesus never one time gave us His Opinion. Jesus only presented the Truth- and He did it no matter how painful it might be for those who were hearing it, and He did it no matter how contrary to what they believed it was, and He did it no matter how attacking it might be against error, and He did it no matter what it cost to Him personally was. Jesus presented the Truth anyway.

And that is because Jesus loved the Truth and that is because Jesus is the Truth.

And we're learning- as we continue to journey through the Gospel according to Dr. Luke- that Jesus was relentlessly committed to the Truth. Jesus spoke Absolute Truth without any hesitation into every situation. And either the people accepted the Truth and rejected their own error, or else they held tightly to their own error and began to reject the Truth and reject Jesus because they saw what He was doing as an attack on them. And they were right- it was.

Now to a post-modernist- to even suggest that there is such a thing as Truth- much less Divine Truth is looked on as being arrogant. The post-modernist promotes a bizarre kind of pseudo humility that says that everybody is right and nobody (but Bible believing Christians) is wrong, and whatever you want to believe is fine as long as you believe it with all your heart.

Now, let me give you some facts about physics. It impossible to fill an empty glass with water without also at the same time removing the air that is already in the glass. So as you pour water into the glass- you are automatically *removing* the air that was already in it. Now your goal may not be to remove the air- you may not even care anything at all about the air- your goal may be to simply fill the glass with water so you can drink it- but nevertheless- as you fill the glass with water- you are by default removing the air. The point is that one cannot happen without the other also happening.

This is also true in the Spirit. You cannot fill a person's head and heart with Divine Truth without also- at the same time- removing error and false teaching from him. As you pour in Divine Truth- all false teaching and all man-made doctrine and all incorrect or incomplete

teaching will automatically be exposed for what it is and then removed. And this is automatic. The very same act of teaching and preaching the Divine Truth of God's Word will automatically expose error and false teaching and remove it from the heart and mind of God's people.

Now let me say this again so you get the impact of this. It is impossible to pour in Truth without also at the same time removing error. The insertion of Truth always removes error. So if you are keeping error in your heart- it is because you are not hearing and you are not learning Divine Truth. And everywhere there is error and false teaching in your life- about any subject- it is only because you have either not heard Divine Truth about this subject before, or else you have heard it and you have rejected it.

So it is impossible for a person to possess error and Truth in the same vessel about the same subject at the same time. The human being was designed by God in such a way as to have to accept Truth and reject error, or else he has to hold on to his error and reject the Truth. That is the way God made us.

And this fact of humanity defines the perfect Ministry of the Lord Jesus Christ. Jesus always spoke the Truth, and either you received Him and by receiving Him- you automatically rejected the error that you already had, or you held on to the error that you already had and you automatically rejected Jesus. But you have to do one or the other.

So by default then, Jesus inspired the highest degree of devotion and love with those who received Him and who rejected error, and He, also, at the very same time- by the very same actions and words- also motivated the highest and the greatest degree of hatred in those who held on to their error and rejected Him. But one thing was sure about Jesus- nobody remained neutral. You either hated Him or loved Him- but you never remained neutral.

And what happened eventually is that Jesus' relentless commitment to the Truth and His incendiary inciting of hostility among those who held on to their error resulted ultimately in His execution. Jesus was murdered by people who consciously rejected what He said and Who He was, and purposely held on to the error and false teaching that they already had.

And so the great mystery about Jesus' Ministry was that this great love and devotion found itself manifested in the worst people in the land at that time- the down and outers- and the tax collectors and

the prostitutes and the outcasts. These people eagerly embraced and loved what Jesus said and Who Jesus was- but only because God had Sovereignly graced them with the gift of Faith and the ability to reject their error.

The scribes and Pharisees however despised and hated Jesus with a passion because they were the architects of the error of that day. They loved their lies and they held on to them fiercely, and God chose to allow them to remain in their deception.

And what these men taught was *not* genuine Old Testament Truth but a really sad form of paganism and works/righteousness that was apostate, ungodly, and unScriptural.

The error of that time was a very elaborate system of ceremonies and rituals and works that had absolutely no power to convict anyone of sin and had no power to save one single soul, and we need to know that without exception- all who followed this spiritual error were deceived and lost and doomed to spend eternity in hell.

And so because of that- Jesus never commended these men or complimented them for all their effort and all their sincerity and all their struggle to earn their own righteousness. No, Jesus assaulted that system with all His might by virtue of preaching the Truth.

Now there were other groups in Israel during that time- such as the Sadducees- but they were pretty much political, and it wasn't what Jesus said about Salvation that bothered them so much- it was the potential of a political insurrection that Jesus could have generated against Rome that might cause these guys to lose their positions that got them involved in the issue. The Pharisees were the religious conservatives of their day while the Sadducees were the religious liberals of their day and they could not have cared any less about religious issues- they were only concerned about political and social issues. In our day- the Sadducees would be those who do not preach the Gospel of Salvation to unworthy sinners, but who center on issues like "social justice".

So the architects of the apostate form of Judaism that dominated the common people in the time when Jesus walked the earth were the Pharisees and the scribes. And the Truth of God coming through the teaching of Jesus was a direct assault on their system and consequently they were hostile to it.



You see, unlike any other man who has ever lived- nobody can remain neutral about Jesus. Jesus will force you to love Him and abandon all that you are and all that you have and follow Him, or He will force you to hate Him and reject Him so you can do your own thing- but you must do one or the other.

So here is a statement that you need to know. The Truth of God is the most important thing in all the world. Without Truth- nothing else matters. Without us having and knowing and loving and understanding and believing and obeying the Divine Truth from the Owner and Creator of the Universe- we don't have anything else on this earth and in this life that is valuable.

The Truth of God is the most important thing in the world. It's more important than anything else- because everything else that we have and that we believe and that we value and trust in is based on that Truth.

Now, I know that some of you would want to argue with me that Truth is not as important as Jesus. But if you stop and think about it- without Truth- you don't have Jesus either. None of us were alive when Jesus walked the earth, and so everything that we know about Jesus that is true- we learned from the Bible. Everything that Jesus said and every Quality that Jesus possessed- every Word that He spoke, His Nature and His full Divinity and His full Humanity, every deed that He did: his Death, Burial, and Resurrection, and what all that means to us- is all very meticulously and very carefully recorded in great detail on the pages of the Holy Bible- primarily the four Gospel Accounts, and besides what God chose to reveal to us about Jesus in Holy Scripture- we really don't know anything at all about Jesus.

And so back to my statement- the Divine Truth of God is more important than everything else on earth combined. The Truth of God is the most important thing in the world. And the reason there was conflict in the Life and the Ministry of Jesus is because Jesus *is* the Truth and because Jesus *loved* the Truth and because Jesus *spoke* the Truth.

But Jesus *had* to speak the Truth because the Truth is the most important thing, and the Truth reveals God, and the Truth brings the knowledge of sin, and the Truth brings forth the Message of Forgiveness and Salvation and the hope of eternal life. So Truth must be known and it must be understood and it must be taught and it must

be learned and it must be believed and it must be loved and defend against all attacks by whoever attacks it for as long as it is under attack, and Truth must be spoken and it must be obeyed- no matter what the effects may be.

And it is impossible to know and understand and love and speak and obey the Truth without exposing and confronting error and man-made doctrine and doctrines of devils and false teaching- and the result is that there will always be positive results on the part of those who love and believe the Truth, and there will always be negative results on the part of those who hate and reject the Truth. That's just the way it is. God designed it that way.

And in the mind set of many in the modern Church- it's just not popular to speak the Truth anymore. Truth is maligned today as being offensive and troubling and hard and mean and unloving and legalistic and even unchristian. Please turn with me to a very familiar passage about this very issue found in **2 Timothy 4:1-5**:

**1 In the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who will judge the living and the dead, and in view of his appearing and his kingdom, I give you this charge:**

**2 Preach the word; be prepared in season and out of season; correct, rebuke and encourage—with great patience and careful instruction.**

**3 For the time will come when people will not put up with sound doctrine. Instead, to suit their own desires, they will gather around them a great number of teachers to say what their itching ears want to hear.**

**4 They will turn their ears away from the truth and turn aside to myths.**

**5 But you, keep your head in all situations, endure hardship, do the work of an evangelist, discharge all the duties of your ministry.**

Now here a very powerful and serious "charge", or Apostolic command, is given by the great Apostle Paul to his understudy in ministry- the young pastor of the Church at Ephesus named Timothy. And Paul tells Timothy in verse 1 here that he "charges" him or "commands" him by two very powerful things:

1. He charges him before God Almighty.
2. He charges him before the Lord Jesus Christ- Who is coming back to this earth to judge both the living and the dead at the unveiling of His Kingdom.

And what does verse 2 say that Paul is charging Timothy to do?

**Preach the word...**

Preach God's Word. Now notice that Paul did not command Timothy to, "*Preach your dreams or your visions or your personal revelations or your angelic visitations*". No, Paul gave Timothy a charge to "preach the Word".

Now it is understood here that Timothy can't preach the Word unless he prepares himself to do this. So there is no way that Timothy can preach the Word if he is too busy with the cares of this life or the deceitfulness of riches or the lust of other things to study God's Word and prepare his heart and struggle over the Words of Scripture and labor over the context of the verses and the language of the Bible and the various elements that go into rightly dividing the Word of Truth.

So right off the bat- Timothy cannot be obedient to this Apostolic charge unless and until he is fully yielded to the call of God on his life to submit himself to long hours of study and research and preparation.

So Paul commands Timothy to preach the Word. And then the rest of verse 2 give him a further charge when it says:

**... be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine.**

So this Apostolic charge continues and Paul gives Timothy four separate things that he must do to complement or to go along with his preaching the Word:

1. Timothy must be "instant"- or in other words- Timothy must be ready; he must be prepared to teach and to preach and answer questions and give counsel to God's people from the Holy Scriptures when all is well with him and when all is not well with him- which is in season and out of season.
2. Timothy must reprove or teach the people of God what God expects out of them from the Word of God.
3. Timothy must rebuke or correct those who fail in obeying the Word of God.

4. Timothy must exhort or encourage those who are struggling to obey the Word of God.

Now look carefully at the end of verse 2. The Apostle Paul gave Timothy an Apostolic command to be ready and prepared at a moment's notice to reprove, rebuke and exhort the people of God with two very important qualities:

**... with all longsuffering and doctrine**

- ✓ With all longsuffering or with great patience
- ✓ With all Doctrine or with the correct Biblical Truth or teaching

So this goes back to what I said before. If Timothy does not spend time studying and researching and laboring over God's Word on a consistent basis - there is absolutely no way that he could ever fulfill this Apostolic Command in a million years.

And people today who lead in the Church have this very same charge given to them. And they are kidding themselves, and they are lading the sheep to slaughter, and they are as inadequate and unprepared and unqualified to lead and to rebuke and to exhort and to reprove the people of God unless they have put the time into the Word of God so that they know what it says and understand what it means and are able to lead God's people in the ways of Divine Truth.

Now why in the world do you think that Paul was so urgent in giving Timothy this powerful charge? Because God showed this great Apostle what was coming down the road. Please read verse 3 with me:

**For the time will come when people will not put up with sound doctrine. Instead, to suit their own desires, they will gather around them a great number of teachers to say what their itching ears want to hear.**

Paul says here that the time is coming when "they"... Well, who is "they"? The lost people out in the world? No. The people of the Church. God's people. The Apostle Paul reveals here by the Holy Ghost in infallible Scripture that the day is coming at some point after he writes this verse to young Timothy that the people of the Church, God's people, are going to get to such a place where they will not be able to

"put up", or endure sound doctrine. They will not be able to sit there and listen to sound, Biblical preaching and teaching. They will not be able to enjoy it and they will not be able to even endure it. Now that is real bad- but it gets even worse.

Paul wrote under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit that even though the people of the Church will get to a very sad and scary pale of not being able to endure sound Biblical preaching and teaching - but they won't stop there. At this point- Paul says that the people of the Church do not love the Truth, they do not want the Truth, they don't want to hear the Truth taught and explained anymore, and they don't want to even think about the Truth- so they will go get something to take the place of the Truth- look what verse 3 says:

**... to suit their own desires, they will gather around them a great number of teachers to say what their itching ears**

The Apostle Paul said that the day is coming when the people of God will no longer be able to even endure sound Biblical Teaching so much so that their lust for entertainment will be so great that they will heap to themselves, or in other words, they will go get in abundance teachers who will feed their lusts; these teachers will give them what they want, these "pillow prophets" will prophesy comfortable words to the people of God and tell them how great they are and how spiritual they are and how many great things they are going to do in earth so it will build up the pride and arrogance of Man and make much out of Man.

These teachers do not call the people of God to repent, they do not call them to grieve over their sins, they do not promote a culture of repentance, they do not emphasize Biblical holiness, and they would never in a million years talk about the inherent wickedness of Man and the Sovereignty of God because to do so would make the people of God sad. So they preach what is easy and that which makes no demands on their lives and that which requires no death of a sinless Lamb and that which requires no supernatural Resurrection.

And, my dear friends, make no mistake about it- that is why the modern Church is filled with entertainment and with hours of singing and a de-emphasis on preaching and a reduction of teaching the Word of God. These people cannot stand to even endure sound Biblical

preaching and teaching, but their ears literally itch to hear politics or social justice or even stories that are not even true taught them by teachers who are for hire to the highest bidder. All because the majority of the people of the modern Church have contacted ABB and they will do anything and have anything except the only thing that Paul commanded Timothy to do here and that is to preach the Word.

But this kind of blatant sin in the Church and this blatant disregard about God's Word does not go unnoticed by the Almighty and God is highly offended at His people not loving Truth, and so God brings great Judgment on a people who openly and proudly disregard the Word of God. Please read verse 4 with me:

**They will turn their ears away from the truth and turn aside to myths. And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables.**

Now this verse is another example when the tense of the verbs means everything. The first verb in this verse, "turn", means that this is something that the people of God voluntarily do. Paul says that the day is coming when the people of the Christian Church will so little value the Word of God that they will not be able to even endure it being taught or explained in their church. And so they will voluntarily heap to themselves hirelings who will not call them to repentance and a return to the Word of God, but these pillow prophets will give the people of God what they want- smooth sounding words that build up their self-esteem while their souls perish in more and more sin.

So the day is coming, Paul tells Timothy some 2,000 years ago- that the people of God will willfully and voluntarily turn away their own ears from the Divine Truth of God's Word. And that is real bad. But what is even *more* frightening is the second verb in verse 4- the second use of "turn", or "turned" in the KJV, because that is something that is *not* voluntary. This is something that God does to these people in response to what they did for themselves.

Paul says here that the people of God "turn", or "*shall be* turned" in the KJV, or in other words the Judgment of God will come upon a people who show no regard for God's Word and who cannot endure sound doctrine and who fill their minds and hearts with entertainment rather than holy edification and so in response to this sin- God will

"turn" the ears of his own people toward fables and myths and things that are not even true. Now read verse 5:

**But you, keep your head in all situations, endure hardship, do the work of an evangelist, discharge all the duties of your ministry.**

Now Paul is addressing Timothy, and by extension all leaders in the House of God, both then and now, and Paul tells us to do four things:

1. Keep your head in all situations
2. Endure hardship
3. Do the Work of an Evangelist
4. Discharge all the duties of your ministry

Leaders in the House of God can never slumber, we can never let our guard down, we can never close our eyes, we can never turn our head and pretend that we do not see, we can never pretend that everything is okay- but we must keep their heads in all situations, we must stay alert, we must not sleep on the job, we must not ever be weary of well doing, we must constantly guard the souls of the sheep, we must preach and teach God's Word relentlessly just like Jesus, and we must exhort and rebuke and reprove and we must do all of this in season and out of season- when it is convenient an when it isn't.

And we must endure hardships. We must suffer reproach because if you are faithful about preaching the Word of God- make no mistake about it- you will be attacked and you will be fought and you will be maligned and hindered and people will seek to discourage you and resist you. And you are wasting your time bellyaching about it or murmuring about it- because that isn't enduring it. You are to buck up and face your afflictions with joy and grace- knowing in Whom you have believed.

Now to do the work of an evangelist is an interesting phrase. Literally in the Greek it means to: *preach the Evangel* or *to preach the Evan galeon*- which is the Good News of the Gospel. So here again Paul is not telling Timothy to stand on street corner and evangelize in that sense- but to simply preach the Word of God- the Gospel or the Evangel.

And finally Paul tells Timothy to discharge all the duties of your ministry. And this means that you have the ability and the opportunity to make your ministry whatever you want it to be. Prove that those who condemn you are wrong. Prove that those who attack you are wrong. Prove that those who say you are unloving and unkind and unmerciful and that you preach false doctrine are wrong.

Don't get mad at them, don't try to get back at them- just prove them wrong- perform all of your duties day in and day out when you are rewarded and when you are not rewarded, when you feel good about it and when you don't. Just continue to plug along studying and preaching God's Word and calling men to repent and be saved and teaching Divine Truth and enduring afflictions as a good soldier of Jesus Christ and feeding God's people and shepherding the sheep and being faithful to what God said to do and let the potsherds strive with the potsherds of the earth.

I tell you that we live in the time that Paul spoke about here, and God's people do not want to hear God's truth in God's House anymore, and God's people do not spend time in God's Word anymore, and God's people do not spend time with God in prayer anymore, and God's people do not spend time in fellowship with God's people anymore.

And the result is that God's people no longer know God's people, and God's people no longer know God's Word, and God's people no longer know God. Speaking the Truth and confronting error is just not something that you do in polite company any more.

But we must double our efforts and ratchet this thing up a higher notch, and we must preach and teach and study and learn and know and proclaim and believe and love and obey God's Word like we have never before done- precisely because so few people do it anymore, and precisely because it is so hard, and precisely because there is so much opposition to it in our day because we must be found faithful to our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

Let's come and pray.

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The Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit. Amen. Be watchful and quicken your pace. Soli Deo Gloria. For the Glory of God alone.