

**WCCC 1991**  
**Brother Kaung**  
**Commit to Faithful Men (3)**

*II Timothy 3: 10 – 17.*

*But you have been thoroughly acquainted with my teaching, conduct, purpose, faith, longsuffering, love, endurance, persecutions, sufferings; what sufferings happened to me in Antioch, in Iconium, in Lystra; what persecutions I endured; and the Lord delivered me out of all. And all indeed who desire to live piously in Christ Jesus will be persecuted. But wicked men and juggling impostors shall advance in evil, leading and being led astray. But you, abide in those things which you have learned, and of which you have been fully persuaded, knowing of whom you have learned them: and that from a child you have known the sacred letters, which are able to make you wise unto salvation, through faith which is in Christ Jesus. Every scripture is divinely inspired, and profitable for teaching, for conviction, for correction, for instruction in righteousness; that the man of God may be complete, fully fitted to every good work.*

**Be Strong in The Lord and Be Faithful to The Lord's  
Testimony**

We have already mentioned in the two previous messages that the Lord has special words for us in this end time. Through the Book of II Timothy, we hope we can hear what the Lord has to say to us. Apostle Paul wrote II Timothy when he was in prison. Paul knew he would soon leave the world. He wrote this letter to his beloved son, Timothy. He knew his days were numbered. But he was very concerned about the testimony of the Lord. He knew that he could pass away. But the testimony of the Lord has to be maintained and cannot pass away. God will raise up people to carry on this testimony. Paul deeply felt that Timothy was one of these people. He wanted to give Timothy some encouragements before he passed away. He told Timothy he had to become strong in the grace which is in Christ. This situation was similar to the situation at the time of Moses. God took Moses away. But He raised up Joshua. In the Book of Joshua 1, we see that God told Joshua many times to 'be strong and courageous'.

Today, we see that the world is going towards that end. There are pressures on all sides. There are lots of difficulties in the church – some of these difficulties we would not even dream of happening. Under such shock, the young people can easily be discouraged. Maybe even a lot of older brothers and sisters are under such negative pressures. Our natural tendency is to withdraw to save

ourselves in such situations. We want to hide or even compromise. But in fact, what we need most is to be strong in the grace of the Lord.

The testimony of the Lord has to be maintained on earth. The testimony of the Lord has never been halted, regardless of the environment or condition of the church. There are always people who stood up to maintain the testimony of the Lord and to testify that Jesus is Lord. And that He is the Lord of all. He is not only our Lord; He is also the Lord of the church. In our life, apart from Him, we do not have a Lord. In the church, there is no Lord apart from Him. This is our testimony. If we are faithful to maintain this testimony, then we will see that our Lord will be the Lord of this earth and Lord of the entire universe. Thus, this testimony is very important.

There have been many conflicts on earth because of this testimony. We know that in the spiritual realm, there is a war throughout the ages because of this testimony. God's will is that our Lord Jesus Christ be the Lord of all. But the enemy is not willing because he wants to be lord himself. Therefore, he uses every kind of scheme to attack this testimony. As long as this testimony is present, regardless of where it is, regardless in what organization or in a person's life, the enemy will be there to disrupt. The enemy knows that if this testimony is established, he and his kingdom will be destroyed. In II Timothy, when Paul was going to be martyred, he told Timothy not to be afraid and not to be ashamed of the testimony or of Paul's imprisonment. Rather, he should stand along with Paul to suffer for this testimony.

Today, God is looking for people who are faithful to the Lord Himself. But it is not easy to find such people. Even when there are faithful people, their faithfulness is placed in the wrong place. They might be faithful to a person, a doctrine, a system or an organization but not to the Lord. This kind of faithfulness is indeed a foolish one. We need to be faithful to the Lord Himself and to His testimony. We need to forsake our own self and be faithful to the Lord. Not only are we to be faithful to the Lord, but we also need to teach those who are competent to instruct others so the testimony will continue and not be disrupted.

### **Rightly Dividing the Word of God**

Whatever we received from our Lord, we need not only to hold onto them but also instruct others too. Nowadays, there are all kinds of strange teachings. Thus, Paul told Timothy in II Timothy 2: 15 'to show.... rightly dividing the word of truth' (KJV). In Darby's translation it said 'cutting in a straight line the word of truth'. It is just like a farmer planting in a straight line with the plough. Or like a priest with the offering, cutting the sacrifice neatly. The word of God is the boundary of this testimony. I will use the wheels of a car as an example. There is an axle in the middle of the wheel. Spokes extend from the axle. Outside is the rim. God's word is like that. There is a center in God's word. This center is Christ Himself. If we are to accurately divide God's word, then we need to grab

onto the center. The center is Jesus Christ. The spokes are the different truths. All these truths come from the center and extend to the rim. The rim is the church. We need to remember the church is not the center. Even though the church is very precious in the will of God, yet it is not the center. It is the rim. There is only one center and that is our Lord Jesus. If we can hold onto Christ as our head and let Him be our Lord, then we can see that all the truths come from Him. All these truths are equal – each has its own ground. We cannot take just one truth as the center. We cannot just emphasize one truth and ignore the other truths. All the truths must be balanced. The church is the vessel that receives all these truths. The church cannot just pick certain teachings and reject the rest of the truths. The church has to accept all the truths that come from Christ because all truths go back to Christ. That is why we need to rightly divide the word of God. Then we will not be moved by the heresies. We have mentioned in the last message that in abnormal condition, the church is like a big house. From the outside, it can look very big, yet it is not pure inside because there are not only gold and silver vessels but also wood and earthen vessels. Some of these are to honor and some to dishonor.

### **What the Lord Wants to Restore is the Spiritual Reality, Not the Outward Form**

Brothers and sisters, do you know what kind of generation we are in today? In the Old Testament, when Judah was taken captive, there was a remnant which returned to Jerusalem to rebuild the temple. They were very discouraged when they first started to rebuild. They saw that even after it was rebuilt, it could never be compared at all to the temple built by Solomon. When Solomon built the temple, he used so many people and so much material. It was indeed glorious and brilliant. The remnant that returned consisted of only a handful of people. Not only the labor was not enough, but money and materials were scarce too. Their power was limited. So, the temple they built was small. It seemed like nothing in man's eyes. You can see in the book of the prophets that this remnant was discouraged. They wondered why bother to build when the temple could never be compared to the previous temple. They deeply wished that they could build a glorious temple just like the old one. Even though most of them had not seen the previous temple, yet there were some older people who had seen the previous temple. In these older people's heart, they wished to rebuild the previous one that had been destroyed. But there was no way they could do that. And so they were discouraged. Thus God told them through the prophets: now is the day of small things. Do not wish to do some big things. (Haggai 2: 3 – 4; Zachariah 4: 10). If you insisted on doing big, you would still be disappointed because on the outside, even if you were able to do it, yet the glory of God would not be in the inside.

Dear brothers and sisters, God wants us to break away from the thought of doing great things. God wants us to break away from the things of the past and not let them dominate us. God wants us to humble ourselves before Him and to

see that these are the days for small things – small but real. Even though it amounts to nothing on the outside, yet there is the spiritual reality inside. Thus, God told them through the prophet Haggai, ‘The latter glory of this house shall be greater than the former.’ (Haggai 2: 9). God wants to gain people from the big house like the gold and silver vessels. And because these vessels are gold and silver, there will not be a lot of them. Today, do not wish to be big or numerous. Rather, wish to be true and practical. We need to wish that it comes from our Lord and from His salvation. We need to wish that it comes from the life and nature of our Lord.

From God’s word, we see that He no longer pays attention to the greatness or the outward form in His recovery work. He wants to recover the spiritual reality on the inside. In man’s eyes, spiritual reality is small and scant. But thank God, this is what the Lord originally wants. Gold and silver are suitable for His use and can be vessels of His testimony. We need to see that this is the way the Lord put before us. We should not feel sad or discouraged for the past because that was not God’s way. His way is in the spiritual reality. God’s way is in Christ. We need to pursue the Lord with those who pray with a pure heart.

### **The Difficult Times in the Last Days**

The ‘last days’ are mentioned both in the Old Testament and the New Testament. In II Timothy 3: 1, Paul told Timothy, ‘But this know, that in the last days difficult times shall be there.’ In another word, it is not that we do not know what today is. Today is the last days. The term ‘last days’ has special meaning in the bible. The term has appeared also in the Old Testament. For example, in Genesis 49: 1, before Jacob died, he called his twelve sons and said, ‘gather yourselves together, and I will tell you what will befall you at the end of days’. In Numbers 24: 14, Balaam prophesied to Balak, ‘... I will admonish you what this people will do to your people at the end of the days’. In the original language, ‘the end of the days’ in both of the above verses mean ‘the last days’. Isaiah 2: 2 said, ‘And it shall come to pass in the end of the days, the mountain of Jehovah’s house shall be established on the top of the mountains, and shall be lifted up above the hills; and all the nations shall flow into it’. The phrase ‘in the end of the days’ also appeared many times in other prophecies. When it comes to the New Testament, in Acts 2: 17, Paul quoted Joel from the Old Testament. ‘And it shall be in the last days, said God, that I will pour of My Spirit upon all flesh....’ In Hebrews 1:2, it said, ‘at the end of these days has spoken to us in the person of the Son...’ I Peter 1:5 said, ‘... salvation ready to be revealed in the last time’. I John 2: 18 tells us, ‘little children, it is the last hour’. There are many verses about the last days in the bible.

## **The Meaning of ‘the Last Days’ is the Day of Messiah**

‘The last days’ is a special term used in the bible. It refers to the Day of the Messiah. The Messiah came and the law stopped there. The day of the Messiah is the last days. The prophets in the Old Testament did not know how long ‘the Day of the Messiah’ is. They did not know there will be the second coming of the Messiah apart from the first coming. Today, we know from the New Testament that the day of the Messiah covers a long period of time. It started from the first coming of the Lord and ends with His second coming again.

### **Perilous Time – Only Having a Form of Piety but Denying the Power of It**

It was also the ‘last days’ during the time of the apostles. The spirit of anti-Christ was already there. In II Peter 3:3, it said, ‘...there shall come at close of the days mockers with mocking...’ If in the days of the apostles, they already referred to the last days, how about the present time? Today, we are approaching the end of the last days – the last period before the end of the last days. Paul said in his days ‘...that in the last days difficult times shall be there’. Thus today, we are in the times where the days are more difficult. Why is it so difficult? It is because these verses here were used most of the time to describe the people in this world. They are lovers of self, lovers of money, boastful, arrogant, evil speaking, disobedient to parents, ungrateful, profane, have no love for what is good, lovers of pleasure and do not love God. This indeed is the world and these things describe the world so accurately. But reading in context, the apostle was not talking about the world. Rather, he was talking about the big house, the church. What kind of condition do you see in a big house? Originally, the church was separated from the world. But now the condition of the church and that of the world is the same. We know it is talking about the big house because in the following verse, it said ‘having a form of piety but denying the power of it’. The world does not have any form of piety, so it is not hypocritical. Only in the so called ‘church’ is there a form of piety. The outside has to maintain its form, regardless of how it is inside. And what was it like to only have the form of piety and no reality inside? It was like the scribes and the Pharisees. Is not such a state very dangerous?

### **The Quality of the Church Changed**

When Jesus was on earth, there was a group of people called scribes and Pharisees. When did the term ‘scribes and Pharisees’ come about? According to Jewish history, the term ‘scribes and Pharisees’ was used after the Israelites were taken into captivity in Babylon. During that time, to preserve the word of God, a group of people started to copy and to study the word of God. And they became scribes and Pharisees. They seemed to be a group who loved God and loved the word of God. So they copied, studied, researched and interpreted the word of

God. This went on for a long time and it became the so-called traditions of men. And this then became Judaism. For example, the law said 'keep the sabbath and hallow it'. Then the scribes and Pharisees interpreted what work they could do or could not do on Sabbath. You remember one time Jesus went through a cornfield with His disciples. The disciples were hungry. They plucked the ears of the corn and ate. The Pharisees said, 'you did what was not lawful on Sabbath Day. You should not do any work on Sabbath. Maybe plucking the ears might not be considered unlawful. But when you take off the husk, you did some work and it is unlawful to work on Sabbath'. This was how the scribes and Pharisees were. They would not eat if they did not wash their hands. If they returned home from outside, I am afraid they would not eat unless they first bathe. They hang the words of the Bible on their heads. Even today, they are like that in Israel. How pious they look on the outside! Many people seem to pray fervently at the 'wailing wall'. But inside there is no real piety. They stole the properties of the widows. And they prayed long prayers in pretense. Our Lord especially hated hypocrites when He was on earth. He loved sinners and He was friend of the sinners. But He would not give in to hypocrites. He reprimanded them, saying 'woe unto you, hypocrites, scribes and Pharisees'. (Matthew 23).

Today, the church has changed into a great house. There is a flag of piety on the outside of this great house. But inside there is no piety. Piety is to be like God. It is the manifestation of God's life and His character. At that time people could only see scribes and Pharisees. They could not see God. Today it is the same. People see us well behaved on the outside, very pious; but can they see the Lord inside? Remember today is a perilous time.

What is the most perilous thing? Hypocrisy is the most perilous thing because others will think it is real. People will not fall for it if they know it is not true. The most perilous thing is when the untrue seems to be true. Today we are in this perilous time. And men do not love God in this time. It is natural that the people in this world do not love God. But it is unnatural if the children of God do not love God.

Dear brothers and sisters, we all have tasted the grace of God. We all know the love of Christ. He loves us so much that He gave up His life for us. He redeemed us with His blood. For us who have been touched by the love of Christ to not love our Lord, then we really 'should be cursed' as Paul said. But in this perilous time, the love for our Lord in the believers' heart gradually grows cold because of all the seduction of the world. The Lord said to the church in Ephesus, 'I have this against you, that you lost your first love'. Even though they had other strengths and maintained a good appearance, yet our Lord was against them because they had lost their first love. The bible tells us when the times are perilous, the love of most will gradually grows cold. Thus in this perilous time, our love for God grows cold.

We do not love God, but we love ourselves. Thus Paul said, 'lovers of self'. We plan everything only for ourselves. Our Lord said, 'Deny yourself, take up

your cross daily and follow me' (Luke 9: 23). This is the call of our Lord. But today, men do not listen to our Lord's call. Our Lord said, deny yourself. Instead, men love themselves. This is because we do not love God.

What does it mean by having no love for what is good? In the bible, good refers to the will of God. Only the will of God is good. No matter how good it looks on the outside, if it is not God's will, it is not righteous. Take Genesis 4 as an example. Both Cain and Abel offered sacrifices to God. Cain brought the best fruits as offerings to God. In man's eyes, this was good. But God did not look upon Cain's offerings because this is not according to God's will. Cain did not see the need for the blood of the sacrificial lamb. Today, the church on earth does many seemingly good things. But do we ever ask whether all these are God's will? If these are not God's will, then they are not good. Men do not love God or wait upon the will of God. They just do according to what they themselves want. And this is the condition of the church today. What is the result of a man who does not love what is good? He will love the world and will become a lover of the world. He will love the world's pleasure and frequently go to those places. He will love money. Christians should not value money. Our Lord said one cannot serve both God and mammon. But in this great house, many are serving mammon instead of serving God. These are the things you can find in the church today. People are vain, jealous and contentious.

Brothers and sisters, how can we stand firm in this perilous time? How can we maintain the testimony of the Lord? Ephesians 4: 14 said, 'In order that we may be no longer babes, tossed and carried about by every wind of that teaching which is in the sleight of men'. Today there are all kinds of different teachings in the so-called Christianity, just like a blowing of the wind. These teachings are all from men themselves. They are organized into doctrines for teaching others. They tossed the children of God away. After a while, this doctrine dies down. But then another doctrine comes up and again tossed the children of God to and fro. Under such situations, how can we maintain the testimony of the Lord? The secret is that we need to grow up in the Lord. The bible tells us we need to be rooted in the Lord. We need to build in Christ. Today, many of God's children are not rooted in the Lord even though they are saved. They do not build themselves up in Christ. So when dangers come along, they cannot stand firm and cannot testify for the Lord.

Paul particularly mentioned two things. Through these two things, we can stand firm and testify for our Lord in these perilous days. What are these two things? They are mentioned in Verse 14. 'The things which you have learned, and of which you have been fully persuaded.' The things learned are of Christ and the things fully persuaded are the truth of Christ. These two things allowed us to root deeply in Christ and to build in Christ.

## **The Things Which Timothy had Learned.**

### **Teaching.**

The apostle received directly from the Lord. In II Timothy 3: 10, Paul said to Timothy, 'But you have been thoroughly acquainted with my teaching'. Paul told Timothy he had been thoroughly acquainted with eight things from him. Thoroughly acquainted means followed closely or understood completely. It is not just superficial understanding but understand completely. It is not only that Timothy had heard it but it became a part of Timothy's life.

What are the teachings of Paul? Paul did not say 'his own teaching'. Rather whatever he taught, he received it from the Lord. (Refer to Gal 1: 11 – 12). In another word, Paul did not have his own teaching. Paul received all his teachings from the Lord. Acts 2: 42 recorded the group of believers 'persevered in the teaching and fellowship of the apostles.' Here the word 'apostles' is in plural, whereas the word 'teaching' is singular. There were many apostles. But the teaching not only Peter's or John's but of all the apostles. They all taught, but the teaching was just one.

Up till today, we thought that Paul had his own teaching and James had his own teaching. Martin Luther liked Paul's teaching. The Book of Galatians was his doctrine for the battle. He said Galatians was his Catherine (wife). It was because he used Galatians to fight his battle of Justification by Faith. But when he read the Book of James, he considered it to be like straw which could not be used in battle. In his mind, the teaching of Paul was useful but the teaching of James was not useful. I am afraid a lot of people have this mind set too. We know the teaching of Paul is justification by faith. James' teaching is justification by work. Then which one are we to follow? No wonder some said 'I am of Paul' and others said 'I am of James'. What should we do? But we thank and praise God. There can be many apostles, but there is only one teaching. God through His Spirit revealed the mystery of His will to the apostles and prophets. Thus there could be many apostles but they all had just one teaching. Whether it be Paul, Peter or James, they all said they were not preaching about themselves but only about Jesus Christ. The fullness of our Lord is too abundant. It could not be taught by one apostle. It could only be taught by all the apostles together.

Paul said you have obeyed my teaching because my teaching is the Lord's teaching and not mine. Today, we should not follow any teaching that is of a person, even though that person may call himself an apostle. You know today in Christianity, there are many people who call themselves apostles. So each of them has his own teaching. But brothers and sisters, whether he is an apostle or angel, if his teaching is not the Lord's teaching, then we should not follow. And as Paul said, 'this should be cursed'. We only obey the teaching of the Lord. If it is the Lord's teaching, we not only need to listen but to accept it, so the teaching of the Lord can take effect in us.

### **Conduct: Living Out Christ.**

That is why Paul went on to mention conduct. Conduct is our daily living. If what we receive is the teaching of the Lord, then our daily life will be the life of our Lord. Teaching and living cannot be separated. The kind of daily living in our life is the result of the teaching. Just like good trees bear good fruits and bad trees bear bad fruits. If what we receive is the Lord's teaching, then how can we be that we cannot live out Christ? If Christ cannot live out in you, then there have to be some problems in the teaching that you receive. Maybe the teaching is not according to the bible. Or even if it is according to the bible, the teaching will just be words to you if it is not preached in the Spirit. Thus it cannot reach into your spirit and it cannot change your life. Paul said, 'For, for me to live is Christ' (Philippians 1:21). It was because he lived out the Christ that he received. So it was not Paul who lived but Christ. Brothers and sisters, not only should we receive the Lord's teaching, we need also to live out Christ.

### **Purpose: In Life or In Death, Be Pleasing to the Lord**

Then it is purpose which Paul mentioned following conduct. Everyone has to have a purpose. Some people think before we believe in the Lord, we are those with great ambitions. This is especially so with young people who like to dream. They think without dreams, they do not have any directions. But now that we believe in the Lord, we need to forsake our ambitions. Brothers and sisters, can we have ambitions? In II Corinthians 5: 9 Paul said, 'we also have as our ambition...' (NASB translation) (The Chinese translation is 'I have made an intent'). Maybe the translator thought Christians should not have ambition because we are just sojourners in this world. We will just let each day passes by. Why do we need ambitions? But Paul said he had an ambition. In the original language, it should read as 'therefore we also have as our ambition, whether at home or absent, to be pleasing to Him' (NASB translation). So as believers, we should have an ambition. It is not to aspire greatness for ourselves, but to be always pleasing to the Lord. In Philippians 3, Paul also showed similar ambition. He said he had to gain Christ regardless of how much he had to suffer or what price he had to pay. He counted all things to be loss for the surpassing value of knowing Christ Jesus. He forsook all things and counted them as rubbish. We need to have this kind of ambition. If the young people have this kind of ambition, they can become vessels of honor in God's hands and will be fit for His use. Sadly, most Christians do not have this kind of ambition. They just let each day slip by.

### **Faith: Believe That He Is and That He is The Rewarder of Them Who Seek Him**

What follows is faith. This faith is not speaking of the faith we had when we first believed. This is talking about from faith to faith. We not only believe in the Lord, but our faith before God needs to be firm and we live by faith each day. Paul said he 'lives by faith'; he 'stands firm in the faith' and he 'walks by faith'.

Paul lived his whole life by faith. Living by faith does not depend on sight because by faith Paul saw the Lord that cannot be seen. Today our problem is that we lack this kind of faith. Hebrews 11: 6 said, 'but without faith it is impossible to please Him. For he that draws near to God must believe that He is'. The Chinese translated into 'must believe there is a God'. These Hebrews already knew there is a God. The original language is 'must believe that God is'. 'God is' is a name of God, meaning 'I AM Me' or 'I Am'. Whatever you need, that is what I am. I am all these. This is what we believe. We not only believe that He is. We also believe that He is a rewarder of those who seek Him. Dear brothers and sisters, our Lord will reward all those who seek Him. This kind of faith enables us to do what God wants us to do in this world. This kind of faith will give us revelations. And this kind of faith enables us to finish the work that God wants us to finish. Not only do we testify for God, but He also testifies for us.

### **Long Suffering: Long Suffering for The Body Life**

Then it comes long suffering. This points especially to people. We need to have long suffering among us. I Corinthians 13 is a chapter on love. And it says 'love has long patience' (Darby Translation). This is a very beautiful chapter. But sometimes reality is lost in beauty. In the original language it is 'love is long suffering'. I think no one will think long suffering is love. People said, 'love is sweet, love satisfies'. But the bible said 'love is long suffering'. Why? I Corinthians 13 on love is between chapters 12 and 14. Chapter 12 talks about the body of Christ. We all are members of the body of Christ. Chapter 14 talks about the function of the body. It talks about how each member of the body uses gifts to edify each other. In context with chapters 12 and 14, what does this chapter 13 want us to know about love? It is the love in the body of Christ. What is the love in the member in the body of Christ?

The most important is long suffering. We always think that it is like in heaven when we are with brothers and sisters in the church. We think the world is like hell. We suffer so much in the world. And we think because we are Christians, we have to silently take the sufferings. And it will be so nice in the church because we love one another. But brothers and sisters, I am afraid there is no other places on earth that need long suffering more than in the church and in the body. It is because members in the body are very close to each other and cannot be separated. For most people, if they cannot get along, they go back their own ways. Thus when trailers first came out in the United States, a lot of people liked them. If one did not like his neighbor, he could move his trailer somewhere else. Some Christians are like that too. If they do not like their neighbor, they move to another neighborhood. They move all over many places. They never settle down and they never learn their lesson. Brothers and sisters, God put us together even though we are totally different from each other. We have only one common factor. And that is, we have one Lord. Thus our life is the same. Our God is the same and our Spirit is the same. Praise and thank

God that He gives us the unity as one in the Spirit. And because we are so close in one body, there will be sufferings at times. Maybe your brother or sister misunderstands you or talks behind your back. Maybe the brother or sister opposes your idea, or oppresses you. What do you do then? If you eat too fast, you can easily bite your tongue. Your tongue will say, 'you always bite me. I cannot stand it any longer. Now I am going to leave'. Can the tongue do that? No, and so the tongue can only bear the long suffering.

And this long suffering is love. If there is love, you can suffer long. Maybe the more you suffer, the more you love. Is it so? Thus we see in the house of God, if we love one another, we will have tolerance for one another. Ephesians 4: 2 said, '... forbearing one another in love'. Colossians 3: 13 also said, 'forbearing one another and forgiving one another...even as Christ has forgiven you, so also do you'. Today there are a lot of misgivings among Christians. But here it tells us that we need to submit to Christ's forbearings.

### **Love – The Eternal Love of God**

Then following is love. Of course, this is God's love. There is always God's love. And this love is a never-ending love.

### **Endurance – Bear the Sufferings to The End**

Then came endurance. This endurance is talking about matters. When we maintain the Lord's testimony and follow Him, there will be lots of difficulties and misunderstandings. And we need to have endurance for these. The Lord said those who endure to the end will be saved.

### **Sufferings – There will be Sufferings in This World If We Lead a Godly life**

Then following is suffering. Paul endured much sufferings for the testimony of the Lord when he was on earth. Towards the end of his life, he reflected on his early days. He did suffer a lot. He thought of the days when he was in Lystra – how he was dragged outside the city to be stoned to death. The saints around him thought he was dead. But he rose up, sustained by the resurrection power of the Lord. Someone said it was at that time he was taken up to the third heaven. He was caught up to paradise and heard things said which man was not allowed to utter. He particularly thought of that time because Timothy was also present. Brothers and sisters, do not hope that everything in this world goes smoothly for us. The bible said there will be persecutions for those in Christ who leads a godly life on earth. Do not be surprised by the persecutions. If we truly practice godliness before our Lord and the life of Christ grows in you, then we will not be deceived and will not join in the defilement. We will then be able to testify for the Lord. This is one aspect.

## **Fully Persuaded – Firmly Rooted in the Word of God**

Another aspect is what Paul said ‘fully persuaded’ (Darby translation). You know whom you have believed because you know the bible since you were a child. This bible is able to make one wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ. In this difficult time, there is one thing which is very important. And that is one needs to be firmly rooted in God’s words. We need to know whom we have believed. When I first came to the States, I saw there were many Christians. But then I realized one thing. What the Christians believed was from hearing and not from reading. They did not spend time on God’s word. Thus they could be deceived easily. The word of God is our foundation. If we want to truly know whom we believe, we cannot just depend on what we hear. We need to know according to the word of God. If we do not understand the bible, how can we confirm and compare what we have heard? We will just follow blindly what others said. We can easily be swayed by the wind if we do not know what we heard are God’s words or not. Thus the children of God need to work on God’s word. It is better to read God’s word than the commentaries because the bible is the divinely inspired word of God, revealed by God Himself. It is the life and the Spirit of God. We come to know the life of God and the Spirit from the word of God. Then the man of God can be fully fitted to every good work. This is being faithful to the will of God.

I especially hope that the young brothers and sisters will read God’s words, memorize them, meditate on them when their memories are still good. Go before God and ask the Spirit to reveal God’s word in us. Always return back to the word of God. Confirm what you heard with the word of God because God’s word is the foundation. And today if we continue to learn Christ as the bible said and also learn God’s word, then we will not be deceived. Then we can stand firm and testify for the Lord in this difficult time.

### **Prayer:**

Our Lord and our God, hear our one cry before You. Please keep us in this difficult time. Make us truly learn Christ. Help us to understand Your word so we can be vessels for your testimony. Please hear our prayer. In Jesus name we pray. Amen.