

7,2,26 Introduction to 1st Timothy

NOTE: In the study tonight you're going to hear a lot about "home groups" and their importance. I want to make sure everyone knows that this was *not* a push for some kind of house-church movement. I could tell from some of the questions/comments following the study that a few people may have gotten that impression, but that wasn't my intent or goal.

This was what I was really trying to say – that it's essential for Christians to have connections in some way with other Christians beyond a Sunday morning service; connections that allow for us to minister to others and others to minister to us. The "group" could be two people meeting in a coffee shop, or nine people in a home, or anything at whatever frequency the Lord sets us that brings two or more like-minded people together. Jesus said that where two or more meet, He is there in the midst, etc. He will accomplish something spiritual in even the smallest corporate setting if we're willing to share our lives with others.

"Don't forsake the assembling together ", doesn't mean you have to be, or have to *not* be, in a mega-church or in an official church-organized home group, it just means if possible in whatever church you're in, whatever your circumstances, don't isolate from other believers; we need each other and we need what the Lord will give us through each other.

In reality, 'small groups' wasn't even intended to be a major point of the study. Sometimes my tangents can get a little carried away. What I really wanted to communicate was the importance of understanding the unique characteristics of the dispensation we are in and how church leadership fits into that, so we can know God's purpose for us.

Ok, with that in mind, hopefully the study is helpful.

As we work our way through Paul's letter to Timothy, we'll see the specifics of what those in leadership are expected to be and do, but my *personal* motivation to do this study is *not* to do some kind of critique of contemporary pastors, we can all make our own applications of what we learn based on our individual circumstances

and I will occasionally throw in some applications to our time that I see, but there is another goal that I have in mind that is more important.

The advantage for all of us is what I'm hoping will surface related to the fact that these letters are Paul's last letters. When someone reaches a certain age and especially if that person has learned a great deal over the years of his life, and if he wants someone very close to him to know the most important things about this life, it will be those things he includes in his final letters.

So, as I said, there may be applications to current church leadership that we will see, but what I'm hoping to discover more than that is what Paul believed were the things he wanted Timothy to know before Paul left this world. These are letters from Paul "the aged" (as he calls himself) to his beloved son in the faith; they were designed to further equip Timothy to fulfill the calling God had given him. And thanks to the Holy Spirit's preservation over the centuries of what Paul wrote, we have the benefit of learning what Paul felt was extremely important to leave with Timothy.

Now, by way of introduction to Paul's 'pastoral epistles', these letters were written later than his prison epistles (Ephesians, Philippians and Colossians), which were written around 60 A.D. The reason that's important is because by the time Paul wrote his letters to Timothy, he had been a Christian for a long time and had learned a great deal about what Christianity is meant to be. His prison epistles contain the deepest and fullest disclosure of God's plan for our Age of any writings in the Bible. So, when he wrote to Timothy and Titus, Paul was crystal clear on what matters most when it comes to communicating those vital truths of this Age to God's people.

Paul is to the Church Age what Moses was to the Age of the Law. For those wanting to understand and be obedient to the Lord in the dispensation of the Law, there was no better place to look than to the writings of Moses. And since the Church Age was a hidden mystery prior to the advent of the Holy Spirit, if we want to understand and be obedient to the Lord's purpose for *our* Age, there is no better place to look than at Paul's instructions to those who were called to take what the Lord revealed to Paul and bring that revelation to us as members of Christ's body.

There are significant differences between the instructions Moses gave to Israel and the instructions Paul gave to those who would be educating the Church about the Age we're living in. Those differences aren't contradictions; they have to do with the unique covenants made by the Lord to His people that were meant to govern them during their dispensation. Israel's was a covenant of Law; ours is a covenant of Grace.

I'll briefly share something I shared a couple months ago in a different context to give you the overview of this – we will need to have this in our minds when we start to interpret and apply Paul's insights regarding the Church Age.

There was marked out by God a period, a dispensation, in this world's history when God would not be doing something as belonging to this present world or related to this present earth. Up till that time it was otherwise. He was dealing with the nations in relation to a nation among them (Israel). That nation was His chief concern, and everything was of an earthly order, finding God intervening swiftly and along temporal lines in the affairs of that nation. Then a future time will come when He will have something on the earth again- a kingdom of this world. But between these two economies there is this special one in which God's object is to take out of the nations a people for His Name, a people of a heavenly birth, a heavenly life, a heavenly sustenance, a heavenly vocation, a heavenly warfare, and a heavenly consummation. Thus, in this present age, God is not occupied with this earth and the setting up of something here. The deepest reality of the Church is that it is not of this world or fixed to this earth. Now the whole tendency of man is to set up and have something here; to see, handle, run, establish, organize, constitute, and build, as on this earth. This has been the one most positive cause of loss of spiritual power and effectiveness.

As I mentioned before, this new dispensation had always been in God's plan from before the creation of the world; but it was hidden until it was time to reveal that plan and put it in action.

Here's what I mean by "hidden";

(Col. 1:25-29) I became a minister according to the stewardship from God which was given to me for you, to fulfill the word of God, the mystery which has been hidden from ages and from generations, but now has been revealed to His saints. To them God willed to make known what are the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles: [which is Christ in you, the hope of glory]. Him we preach, warning every man and teaching every man in all wisdom, that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus. To this end I also labor, striving according to His working which works in me mightily.

(Eph. 3:2-5) . . . if indeed you have heard of the dispensation of the grace of God which was given to me for you, how that by revelation He made known to me the mystery (as I have briefly written already, by which, when you read, you may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ), which in other ages was not made known to the sons of men, as it has now been revealed by the Spirit to His holy apostles and prophets.

As we've seen in other studies, most contemporary approaches to instructing God's people about the Church Age has become a mixture of Law and Grace, which of course lessens the freedom and power that has come in the Age of Grace. This admixture of Law and Grace began early and both Galatians and Hebrews were written to address this. For example;

(Gal. 5:1) Stand fast therefore in the liberty by which Christ has made us free, and do not be entangled again with a yoke of bondage (to the Law).

(Heb. 8:1 & 13) For if that first covenant had been faultless, then no place would have been sought for a second . . . In that He says, "A new covenant," He has made the first obsolete. Now what is becoming obsolete and growing old is ready to vanish away.

Men (with the enemy's help) are trying to hold on to a combination of these covenants, but God is very insistent that these covenants or dispensations remain separate. Each of them has a specific purpose in the overall plan of God and each was to remain unique, pure and undiluted.

The Christian life is not the Lord telling us what to do and then us doing it; in that scenario, what people see when they watch us, is us doing what we believe is the will of God; they don't see Christ. The only way others can see a true expression of the Lord Himself is if it's Him doing it. The Holy Spirit desires to bring the life of Christ to, and through, us.

(2 Cor. 4:11) For we who live are always delivered to death for Jesus' sake, that the *life of Jesus* may be manifested through our mortal flesh.

Put off the old man, put on the new man. Christ within us is to be the Source and the empowerment of our life; and the image of Christ we are being conformed to in terms of character and nature, will become the visible expression or manifestation of that Source. The Church is meant to be the outward manifestation of the indwelling Christ – no more, no less.

Just as with the Old Testament priests and prophets, the Church Age pastors and teachers have the responsibility to make this dispensation, this Life, as clear as possible so that all those living in our Age will understand what God's purpose is for us, which is why Paul wrote this in Acts 20:26-27;

I testify to you this day that I am innocent of the blood of all men. For I have not shunned to declare to you the whole counsel of God.

Paul's use of the phrase "innocent of the blood of all men" was drawn from Ezek. 3:17-19;

Son of man, I have made you a watchman for the people of Israel; so, hear the word I speak and give them warning from me. When I say to a wicked person, 'You will surely die,' and you do not warn them or speak out to dissuade them from their evil ways in order to save their life, that wicked person will die for their sin, and I will hold you accountable for their blood. But if you do warn the wicked person and they do not turn from their wickedness or from their evil ways, they will die for their sin; but you will have delivered yourself.

The responsibility of Church leadership, in terms of communicating the Truth, can't be overstated. To fail to clarify the purpose and function of God's people in the

Church Age, is to incur the judgment of God upon those who are *not* “innocent of the blood of all men”. Pastors and teachers are responsible to deliver the “full counsel” of God so that all who belong to Christ will be able to understand and act according to God’s purpose for us in this dispensation.

(Heb. 13:7, 17) Remember those who exercise spiritual authority over you, those who have taught the word of God to you . . . Obey those who have authority over you, and be submissive, for they watch out for your souls, as those who must give account. Let them do so with joy and not with grief.

This, of course, is why James wrote Jas. 3:1; “My brethren, let not many of you become teachers, knowing that we shall receive a more strict judgment.”

That’s why I said that the responsibility of those in church leadership, especially those in the pulpit, is a very serious responsibility which will eventually involve an equally serious accountability. For some, that accountability will include “joy”; for others it will be “grief”, and it all comes down to whether or not the teacher provided what the people needed to move from spiritual infancy to spiritual maturity; from milk to solid food – or as Paul put it, did they teach “the full counsel of God” for this dispensation?

What the 10 commandments were as the essential core of the Mosaic covenant, the once-hidden mystery of the Body of Christ is to the Church Age. I’ve heard the 10 commandments taught, but whenever I hear someone try to explain the “mystery” Paul wrote about, it’s usually not even close to what Paul meant. And yet, the knowledge of *this* revelation that came to Paul is the very definition of the Church, both as to substance and to testimony.

(Eph. 2:20) . . . having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief cornerstone.

The mystery of the Church is the one foundation of all God intends to build in our dispensation. If that foundation is clear and solid, the structure built on it will be solid. If that foundation is missing or distorted, the building will be dysfunctional. That spiritual reality, revealed to Paul, is not simply one of many important

doctrines the Church needs to know; it's the single most important, most essential, and unfortunately, least taught doctrine of this Age.

The principle underlying this runs throughout the Bible. There are prophecies scattered throughout the both Old and New Testaments describing the spiritual condition of God's people at the end of each dispensation. Here's a few examples;

(Amos 8:11) "The days are coming," declares the Sovereign LORD, "when I will send a famine through the land— not a famine of food or a thirst for water, but a famine of hearing the words of the LORD."

(Hos. 4:6) "My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge."

(2 Tim. 4:2-4 & 3:7); Be ready in season and out of season. Convince, rebuke, exhort, with all longsuffering and teaching. For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine, but according to their own desires, because they have itching ears, they will draw to themselves teachers; and they will turn their ears away from the truth . . . always learning and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth.

In Gal. 1:11-12 Paul told the Galatians how he received the knowledge he had regarding the Church Age;

I make known to you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached by me is not according to man. For I neither received it from man, nor was I taught it, but it came through the revelation of Jesus Christ.

When we studied Romans, we saw that the word "gospel" simply means "good news" and it includes all that is involved in our Salvation and Sanctification. And that "good news" is that following the ascension of Christ, God initiated an entirely new creation to be made up of members of the spiritual body of Christ. If any man is in Christ, he is a new creative act of God. A completely new species of human that has never existed before. And the personal understanding of what that means and what it implies, can only come by revelation of the Spirit. If the pastor is teaching this truth, the Spirit will use the pastor's communication of this truth to unveil it's meaning to us personally, so we can understand and live in the light of what we are learning.

(Lk. 24:44-45) These are the words which I spoke to you while I was still with you, that all things must be fulfilled which were written in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms concerning Me. And He opened their understanding, that they might comprehend the Scriptures.

We can hear all about this hidden mystery, but until the Spirit of Truth opens our understanding so we can comprehend what we're hearing, we won't see the importance and urgency of having this knowledge; it will just be academic for us, it won't be the incredible spiritual reality that it is.

I want to briefly share part of something we looked at in another context about what this "good news" is that was hidden from past generations but is now revealed to us. This is from Strombeck;

God's purpose in the lives of His children while here on earth is to create, develop, strengthen, and refine that complete dependence on Him which must be found in those who, throughout all eternity, are to be the very closest to Him and share His glory . . . That is why God places so great an emphasis upon the trial of faith. He is preparing for Himself, within a new creation in Christ Jesus, those who will be in complete voluntary dependence upon Him and in living subjection to Him . . . This is the consummation of grace. All who in this age of grace (the dispensation of the Church) believe on the Son and are willing to share in the fellowship of the sufferings of Christ shall receive the glory which was given to Christ by the Father.

Literally everything Christ is doing in our lives is designed to qualify His Eternal Companion for entering into full partnership with her Lord in the governance of the universe (Israel is to govern the earth, the Church is to govern all creation) . . . As the bride of the Eternal Son, she is to share with Him universal sovereignty. . . Here is a completely new, unique, and exclusive order of beings which may be called a new species. There is nothing like it in all the kingdoms of infinity. This is the order of beings which God envisioned when He spoke the worlds into being. This is the order of beings which Paul called, 'the New Man' (Eph 2:15) destined through the new birth (partaking of the divine nature) to be the aristocracy of the universe. . . we are to be

princes of the heavenly realm. . . Christ will administrate and govern His eternal kingdom through those within His body, the Church, who have moved from children in the faith to mature disciples; vessels fit for the Master's use; and Satan shall be displaced by the bride of the Son of God.

Now, let's spend a few minutes looking at the local expressions of the Church Paul was a part of. As we see when we read how the Holy Spirit laid the foundation of the Church in the book of Acts, no matter how big the city or how many people were saved, the Spirit made sure that the gatherings of those people would be in homes, and that each house would contain gifted Christians learning the purpose of God for this age and having their own ministries more clearly defined as time went on.

And in each house, there would be at least one teaching elder using his gift to communicate, under the governance of the Holy Spirit, what the members of that fellowship would need to know to move toward the fulfillment of God's purpose, both corporately and individually.

The people learned more and more about what God's purpose was, and how it was to be achieved, and the intimate setting of a home was the structure that would be necessary in a practical way to achieve both individual as well as corporate spiritual advance. It's the structure and atmosphere of a family, not an organization. It was deepening relationships as well as personalized instruction of all who were involved, so that together, as a family, the children of God could minister one to another. Each believer could do their part to contribute to the final outcome of maturity and increased value to the Lord in relation to the ultimate purpose of why we are here.

(Eph. 4:11-16) He gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the building up and strengthening of the body of Christ, until we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ; so that we would no longer be children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, in the cunning

craftiness of deceitful plotting, but, speaking the truth in love, may grow up in all things into Him who is the head—Christ— from whom the whole body, joined and knit together by what every joint supplies, according to the effective working by which every part does its share, causes growth of the body for the edifying of itself in love.

The structure of small groups meeting in homes is what gave expression to everything we see historically presented to us in the book of Acts. And it was in that context that the world was turned upside down. It all came out of this interrelatedness between the members of the body of Christ and her Head, the Lord working through the Holy Spirit.

It wasn't the structure itself that accomplished all of this, of course; it was the Holy Spirit, and the Spirit knew that this would be the setting which would provide the best opportunity for every member of the body of Christ to be and to do what they were meant to be and do.

As we will see in Timothy, in the passages that are prophetic and point to *our* generation, we're told that the majority of the church will not clearly understand God's purpose, they will not realize who we are, or what it really means to be members of a new humanity, a new creation. Instead, the scriptures tell us that they will be characterized, not so much by seeking and digging deep for the truth and seeing this Age through God's eyes, but they will be motivated by more of an itching-ear desire for inspiration and entertainment, and the bigger the better.

It has taken the enemy 2000 years to gradually move the thinking of those who belong to Christ away from the simplicity, purity and depth of what God was revealing and accomplishing in the beginning into something that is an alternative, and is not able to move people to maturity, let alone create the kind of unity and relationships in the body of Christ where the members are like-minded, where they understand and have a vision of what the church is and what it's intended to do. If they did, we wouldn't see denominations and divisions all around us, we would see a globally unified, deep-felt commitment with clarity, to who we are and why we're here; and we would all be moving in that direction helping one another in any way we can to go as *far* as we can. That's what we see in the book of Acts.

I know that in a growing number of Third World Countries home churches are the only safe place to be, but for those of us who live in the western world, we're probably involved in a church that holds a great deal more people that would fit in a home, and that's not a problem, at least for the churches whose leadership know the importance of relationships that allow people the opportunity to meet the needs of others, and have their own needs met through the ministry of others, so normally small group settings are offered.

This is normal and has been developing this way for centuries. It's just important that somehow all of us find an opportunity to be a part of what the Lord called the smallest denominator of what a church is in his viewpoint, which is wherever two or more are gathered, He is there in the midst, because like we've seen, the church is a family and families are not meant to be isolated, and Christianity is not meant to be a spectator sport.

But regardless of the current setting we find ourselves in, our responsibility on a personal level is simply to do what we can to develop relationships with like-minded believers and to take in sound doctrine as often as possible, especially those instructions related to Paul's revelation of the Body of Christ. Christians who do these things are the ones being faithful to God's calling in our generation.

As I mentioned before, our focus in these studies is going to be on learning from Paul's conversations with Timothy and Titus what leadership in the church is meant to be and to do, in order to sustain, or in our case, *recover*, God's original intent for the body of Christ.

There are basically two major spiritual developments that Church leadership is called to provide for those under their care. We saw these laid out in Eph. 4.

The first was providing the instruction necessary to move each member from spiritual infancy to spiritual maturity in order to avoid being tossed to and fro by every wind of doctrine. The second was to help each individual believer become personally equipped to serve the Lord and His people based on the gift and the life-experiences God takes us through, so that we can do our part in the building up of the Body of Christ.

So, practically speaking – regardless of what church you are personally in now, you can hopefully find a small group for relationship-building and if needed, you can supplement your teaching with someone who is bringing you the “full counsel”; someone who is making this dispensation and the mystery that defined Paul’s ministry clear, so that your prayers and personal pursuit align with the Lord’s purpose for us.

One of the most important exhortations that we will see in all of these letters are instructions that deal with the presence or absence of “spiritual reality”. I’m sure you remember all the times in the gospels that we are given a picture of Christlikeness in what some would probably call the small or seemingly insignificant events of life. But God is just as focused on, and interested in, the one sparrow as in the feeding of 5000 people.

So, let’s take that and move it to the Church, keeping in mind that in Lk. 16:15 Jesus said “You are those who vindicate yourselves before men, but God knows your hearts. For what is highly esteemed among men is an abomination in the sight of God.”

Success or failure as a teacher has nothing to do with the size of the church or the popularity of the pastor as a teacher or an author – it’s the measure of Christ formed in him and in his people.

So, there’s nothing wrong with having a “mega-church” as long as the leadership understands the indispensable need and value of the small group setting. And what matters most to the Lord is the kind of Christlikeness which is not always demonstrated in the pulpit, but in the home, when no one but God is watching.

Just as one example, if men are to love their wives as Christ loved the Church (Eph. 5:25), that means that other than Christ, a man’s wife (his “bride”) is to be his highest priority and he will allow nothing to prevent him from doing all he can, even unto death if necessary, to honor her, protect her spiritually, physically, emotionally and circumstantially, and demonstrate 24/7 that she is, in truth, his highest priority.

As Ian Thomas once said, “The reality is this: No matter what our current standards of evaluation may be, a man is worth only as much as can be seen of Christ in Him.”

Now, as related to the ministry itself, even though pastors can, and should, be involved in missions, prayer and counseling, their highest priority is ensuring the spiritual growth of their people in order for the church to understand the purpose of God.

As we saw from Ezekiel and Acts 20, the pastor is not accountable for the *response* of his congregation to his instructions; he is, however, accountable to ensure that they receive teaching that covers the full spectrum of the essential doctrines of the Church Age at a level that begins with milk and moves steadily to solid food. We will see Paul emphasize this to Timothy several times in his letter to him. One place is 2 Tim. 4:2; “Teach the word! Be ready in season and out of season. Convince, rebuke, exhort, with all longsuffering and teaching . . .”

Something else that also runs throughout the Old and New Testament is the historical portrayal of what God does with someone that He plans to have represent Him to His people. As important as knowledge of the scriptures is, it’s also important that the man himself be an embodiment of the message he is to give to others.

We won’t take time now; we could literally spend hours looking at the testing and breaking that men had to go through under God’s hand before they were able to do more than simply share information *about* God with His people. These bond-servants had to be chiseled and shaped into men who understood God’s message at a deep personal level, so that when they spoke, if God was crying over the condition of His people, so were His messengers. If the Lord was angry, so were His prophets.

When these servants of the Lord stood up to proclaim God’s message, they had already been shaped into men who felt, as well as understood, the necessity of what they were proclaiming. And that didn’t come easy.

I’ll share one overview of this so we can understand at least part of the reason the Lord has to be so seemingly extreme in His dealings with those He plans to use as

His representatives. And as I read this, keep in mind that God does this to some extent with all of us regardless of our calling, it just happens to be more severe for those who face a more strict accountability. Men like Moses, Joseph, Ezekiel, Isaiah, Paul (as we saw in 2 Corinthians) and countless others, all represent the real-life relationship between the Potter and the Clay. Listen to this author's explanation;

What is the sin of the world? It is pride. You may not think so; you may not see it: but I would ask you to consider again and see if all that is called sin cannot be traced to this, if it is not this in some form of expression. For what is the root of pride? What is pride? It is selfhood risen up and active – that is the root of pride; and the branches and the fruit – how many they are! – jealousy, covetousness, wrath, and all the rest. How is wrath pride? Well, wrath, if it is not holy, purified, blood-purged wrath like the wrath of the Lamb, if it is wrath which is actuated by ourselves and our interests, is the wrath of selfhood. So often our anger is our self-preservation, our reaction to some threat to our interests or our likes. Rebellion, stubbornness, prejudice, and much of our fear, are all traceable to pride. What are we afraid of? What are we fearing? If we examined our fears, why are we afraid? If we were utterly severed from the personal interest – that is, if we could hand entirely over to the Lord and get out of the picture ourselves – would not a lot of our fear go?

So may this be a word of interpretation as to why the Lord is dealing with us as He has and does – on the one hand, overcoming this evil thing called pride, breaking, emptying, grinding to powder, until there is nothing of us left in the matter of self-sufficiency; on the other hand, giving Himself, increasing Himself. Now this is not a word, perhaps, of great inspiration, but I feel it to be a word of very great importance. This must be true of us. This is the way along which the Lord will commit Himself. He will never give us anything to feed our flesh, to enlarge and strengthen our natural life. He will hold us to the way that keeps us safe where that is concerned. How wonderfully the Bible becomes alive when you look at it in this way!

So, because of the power of the flesh and the threat it poses to those in the public eye, pride has to be broken – the man has to be broken before the inner man (Christ in us) can be released. Humility has to replace pride in our hearts if we are to become teachable and usable to the Lord.

There is obviously a great deal more than what we've seen so far in the pastoral epistles of how God prepares His servants and of what they are to become, but we need to wrap things up. So, for now, this has been an introduction to the study we'll move into next week. I will close with one other quote that describes this whole issue of spiritual preparation;

We can take one of two attitudes toward the ways of God with us; we can get bitter, sour, hard; or we can grow through exercise to develop capacity, to bring us into the large place that we may be intelligently His instrument for governing under His Headship in ages to come. We cannot always understand the things that enter into our history, but the explanation which we *can* give is that, whatever there may be as secondary causes, the Lord is Sovereign and He thinks it worthwhile sometimes to allow what the world would call the most terrible thing to overtake us for the time being, it may even seem that His Name and interests suffer through that thing, but through it He brings His people to a place of maturity and they get to know the Lord for themselves. Through these terrible things we find the Lord produces something that is very much more worthy of Himself in the life of His children. That is His justification, His vindication; if He could do it in any other way He would.

In the long run He does get spiritual maturity among His people, where they know Him. He desires to get us to a place where we know the Lord and we have our senses exercised to know Him. May the Lord give us grace to accept all His dealings with us in the light of His great purpose. We must become people the Lord can trust with responsibility.

As we've seen before, the only trustworthy vessel is one which has been broken and reshaped. We may not be able to see this in a pastor with what we observe outwardly, but if our spiritual senses are exercised, then we can "sense" whether

brokenness, or we could say “crucifixion”, has happened- whether humility and teachability, or pride, is governing his character. Without the brokenness of the cross being a reality in his life, no amount of sound doctrine will bring spiritual life to those under his ministry.

There is nothing more repulsive than pride, and nothing more attractive than humility. As our Lord said in Matt. 11:28-29; “Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am meek and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.” And we see this in Paul in 1 Cor. 2:1-3; “When I came to you. . . I determined not to know anything among you except Jesus Christ and Him crucified. I was with you in weakness, in fear, and in much trembling.”

What does a person have to go through, what does the Lord have to do with someone, to create a person who may have been highly intelligent and confident and shape them into someone who approaches everything and everyone “in weakness, fear and much trembling”? Does this help explain some of the things the Lord has done in your life; things you cried “Why Lord!?” about? We walk by faith, not by sight.