The Foundation Of God Standeth Sure

Intro: Let us read 2 Timothy 2:16-21 “16 But shun profane and vain babblings: for they will increase unto more ungodliness. 17 And their word will eat as doth a canker: of whom is Hymenaeus and Philetus; 18 Who concerning the truth have erred, saying that the resurrection is past already; and overthrow the faith of some. 19 Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his. And, Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity. 20 But in a great house there are not only vessels of gold and of silver, but also of wood and of earth; and some to honour, and some to dishonour. 21 If a man therefore purge himself from these, he shall be a vessel unto honour, sanctified, and meet for the master’s use, and prepared unto every good work.” As the aged apostle Paul nears the end of his earthly life, he writes to Timothy to prepare him for what he must face.

I. BACKGROUND.

A. Some will not stand with you and the truth while some will.
   1. Phygellus and Hermogenes; 2 Tim. 1:15 “15 This thou knowest, that all they which are in Asia be turned away from me; of whom are Phygellus and Hermogenes.”
   2. Onesiphorus; 2 Tim. 1:16-18 “16 The Lord give mercy unto the house of Onesiphorus; for he oft refreshed me, and was not ashamed of my chain: 17 But, when he was in Rome, he sought me out very diligently, and found me. 18 The Lord grant unto him that he may find mercy of the Lord in that day: and in how many things he ministered unto me at Ephesus, thou knowest very well.”

B. What Timothy needed to do.
   1. 2 Tim. 1:13-14 “13 Hold fast the form of sound words, which thou hast heard of me, in faith and love which is in Christ Jesus. 14 That good thing which was committed unto thee keep by the Holy Ghost which dwelleth in us.”
   2. 2 Tim. 2:1 “1 Thou therefore, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus.”
   3. Do not forget God’s Word; 2 Tim. 2:15 “15 Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.”

C. In the verses before us (2 Tim. 2:16-21 “16 But shun profane and vain babblings: for they will increase unto more ungodliness. 17 And their word will eat as doth a canker: of whom is Hymenaeus and Philetus; 18 Who concerning the truth have erred, saying that the resurrection is past already; and overthrow the faith of some. 19 Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his. And, Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity. 20 But in a great house there are not only vessels of gold and of silver, but also of wood and of earth; and some to honour, and some to dishonour. 21 If a man therefore purge himself from these, he shall be a vessel unto honour, sanctified, and meet for the master’s use, and prepared unto every good work.”) Paul encourages Timothy.
   1. We will also face difficulties.
   2. The things that will help Timothy will likewise help us.
   3. We must never be moved back into our former state; 2 Pet. 2:20-22 “20 For if after they have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, they are again entangled therein, and overcome, the latter end is worse with them than the beginning. 21 For it had been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than, after they have known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered unto them. 22 But it is happened unto them according to the true proverb, The dog is turned to his own vomit again; and the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire.”
   4. Thus, let us observe three things involved in this encouragement.
II. AN ALERT (WARNING).

A. 2 Timothy 2:16-18 "16 But shun profane and vain babblings: for they will increase unto more ungodliness. 17 And their word will eat as doth a canker: of whom is Hymenaeus and Philetus; 18 Who concerning the truth have erred, saying that the resurrection is past already; and overthrow the faith of some."

B. In Timothy’s time there were dangerous men lurking near.

1. False Teachers (2 Tim. 2:16 "16 But shun profane and vain babblings: for they will increase unto more ungodliness.").
   a. “Profane and vain babblings.”
      (1) Profane is common, unhallowed. It is that which lacks all relationship to God.
      (2) Vain babblings is empty, worthless sounds.
   b. 1 Tim. 6:20 "20 O Timothy, keep that which is committed to thy trust, avoiding profane and vain babblings, and oppositions of science falsely so called."
   c. Titus 1:10 "10 For there are many unruly and vain talkers and deceivers, specially they of the circumcision."

2. Warnings concerning false teachers.
   a. Isa. 32:6 "For the vile person will speak villany, and his heart will work iniquity, to practise hypocrisy, and to utter error against the LORD, to make empty the soul of the hungry, and he will cause the drink of the thirsty to fail."
   b. Mat. 7:15 "15 Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep’s clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves."
   c. Acts 20:29-31 "29 For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. 30 Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them. 31 Therefore watch, and remember, that by the space of three years I ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears."
   d. Col. 2:8 "8 Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ."

3. Description of these false teachers and their doctrines; 2 Tim. 2:17 "17 And their word will eat as doth a canker: of whom is Hymenaeus and Philetus;"
   a. Canker is the Greek word γαʆγγραινα (gangraina).
      (1) It is from a word meaning “to gnaw,” “to devour, corrode, consume, eat away.”
      (2) It is our word “gangrene.”
         (a) Gangrene is the mortification of some part of a living body.
         (b) It is used figuratively of corruption and decay.
   b. False doctrines will destroy, corrupt, and cause death if allowed to continue.

4. Hymenaeus and Philetus had already departed; 2 Tim. 2:17-18 "17 And their word will eat as doth a canker: of whom is Hymenaeus and Philetus; 18 Who concerning the truth have erred, saying that the resurrection is past already; and overthrow the faith of some."
   a. They had left the faith and sought to overthrow the faith of others.
      (1) 1 Tim. 4:1 “Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils;”
      (2) 2 Tim. 4:2-4 "2 Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine. 3 For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; 4 And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables."
b. Many are of that persuasion.

C. **In our day there are those who are like Hymenaeus and Philetus.**
   1. We have our modern-day false teachers (Rubel Shelley, Buddy Bell, Rick Atchley, Jeff Walling, the Deavers, Al Maxey, F. Lagard Smith, John Mark Hicks, those coming out of “our” so-called Christian schools, etc.).
   2. We must not be led away from the truth by false teachers. We must not become like Hymenaeus and Philetus.

### III. An Assurance.

#### A. 2 Timothy 2:19

“19 Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his. And, Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity.”

#### B. The foundation of God standeth sure.

1. We have a sure, tried foundation.
   a. Jesus Christ.
      (1) Isa. 28:16 *Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD, Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner stone, a sure foundation: he that believeth shall not make haste.*
      (2) 1 Pet. 2:6 *Wherefore also it is contained in the scripture, Behold, I lay in Sion a chief corner stone, elect, precious: and he that believeth on him shall not be confounded.*
      (3) Acts 4:11-12 *This is the stone which was set at nought of you builders, which is become the head of the corner. 12 Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.*
      (4) Eph. 2:20 *And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone;*
      (5) 1 Cor. 3:11 *For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ.*
   b. His Word.
      (1) Mat. 24:35 *Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away.*
      (2) 1 Pet. 1:25 *But the word of the Lord endureth for ever. And this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you.*
      (3) Mat. 7:24-29 *Therefore whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock: 25 And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell not: for it was founded upon a rock. 26 And every one that heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand: 27 And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell: and great was the fall of it. 28 And it came to pass, when Jesus had ended these sayings, the people were astonished at his doctrine: 29 For he taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes.*
2. Thus, in spite of false teachers and false doctrines, God’s Word still stands.
   a. We will be judged by it on the last day.
      (1) John 12:48 *He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him: the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day.*
      (2) Rom. 2:16 *In the day when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ according to my gospel.*
(3) Rev. 20:12 “12 And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works.”

b. Poem: John Clifford:
Last eve I passed beside a blacksmith’s door
and heard the anvil ring the vesper chime:
When looking in, I saw upon the floor,
Old hammers worn with beating years of time.

“How many anvils have you had,” said I,
“To wear and batter all these hammers so?”
“Just one,” said he; then said with twinkling eye,
“The anvil wears the hammers out, you know.”

And so, I thought, the anvil of God’s Word
For ages skeptics’ blows have beat upon;
Yet, though the noise of falling blows was heard,
The anvil is unharmed — the hammers gone!

C. The Lord knows them that are His.
1. The Lord knows us.
   a. Nahum 1:7 “7 The LORD is good, a strong hold in the day of trouble; and he knoweth them that trust in him.”
   b. John 10:14, 27 “14 I am the good shepherd, and know my sheep, and am known of mine…. 27 My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me:”
   c. 1 Cor. 8:3 “3 But if any man love God, the same is known of him.”
   d. It is wonderful to have such a great assurance.
2. Those who name the name of Christ; must live in a certain way; depart from iniquity.
   a. 1 John 2:1 “1 My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous:”
   b. Col. 3:5 “5 Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry:”
   c. Thus, the admonition of the next few verses.

IV. An Admonition.

A. 2 Timothy 2:20-21 “20 But in a great house there are not only vessels of gold and of silver, but also of wood and of earth; and some to honour, and some to dishonour. 21 If a man therefore purge himself from these, he shall be a vessel unto honour, sanctified, and meet for the master’s use, and prepared unto every good work.”

B. There is only one great house.
1. That house is the church; 1 Tim. 3:15 “15 But if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth.”
2. There is only one church.
   a. Stated:
      (1) Eph. 4:4 “4 There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling:”
(2) John 10:16  
16 And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd.”

(3) Rom. 12:4-5  
4 For as we have many members in one body, and all members have not the same office: 5 So we, being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another.”

(4) 1 Cor. 12:20  
20 But now are they many members, yet but one body.”

b. Christ established but one church, not many; Mat. 16:18  
18 And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.”

c. Christ has only one bride.
(1) Eph. 5:23  
23 For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and he is the saviour of the body.”

(2) 2 Cor. 11:2  
12 For I am jealous over you with godly jealousy: for I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ.”

3. That great house has Christ as its head.

a. Eph. 1:22-23  
22 And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church, 23 Which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all.”

b. Col. 1:18  
18 And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence.”

C. There are various types of vessels.

1. Different types of people.

a. Some bad, to dishonor.

b. Some good, to honor.

c. The choice is up to the individual. We choose which we will be.
(1) Josh. 24:15  
15 And if it seem evil unto you to serve the LORD, choose you this day whom ye will serve: whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the flood, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land ye dwell: but as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD.”

(2) Acts 2:40  
40 And with many other words did he testify and exhort, saying, Save yourselves from this untoward generation.”

2. Men should seek to be vessels of honor.

a. 2 Tim. 2:21-26  
21 If a man therefore purge himself from these, he shall be a vessel unto honour, sanctified, and meet for the master’s use, and prepared unto every good work. 22 Flee also youthful lusts: but follow righteousness, faith, charity, peace, with them that call on the Lord out of a pure heart. 23 But foolish and unlearned questions avoid, knowing that they do gender strifes. 24 And the servant of the Lord must not strive; but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient, 25 In meekness instructing those that oppose themselves; if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth; 26 And that they may recover themselves out of the snare of the devil, who are taken captive by him at his will.”

(1) Purge is from the Greek word ἐκκαθάρω (ekkathairo) meaning to cleanse out or cleanse thoroughly.

(2) It is used metaphorically to remove completely.

b. Examine self and make necessary changes.
(1) 2 Cor. 13:5  
5 Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves. Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates?”

(2) This is what repentance involves:
(a) Luke 13:3, 5  
3 I tell you, Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish…. 5 I tell you, Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish.”
(b) Acts 17:30 “30 And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men every where to repent:”

(3) This also includes looking at our associations and making appropriate changes.

(a) 1 Cor. 15:33 “33 Be not deceived: evil communications [companionships—ASV] corrupt good manners [morals—ASV].”

(b) 2 Cor. 6:17 “17 Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you,”

(c) Those who teach and practice evil have an effect upon us.

(i) Hymenæus and Philetus had an evil effect upon others in overthrowing their faith.

(ii) If we are not careful, this can happen to us.

Conclusion: Satan will always try to move us away from that “firm foundation” we have in Jesus Christ; 1 Peter 5:8 “8 Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour.” He will use whatever he can to move us; dangers, discouragements, false teachings and teachers, etc. “Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure!” We can all stand upon that sure foundation!