

The Danger Of Doctrinal Error – Part 1

2 Timothy 2:14-18

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In Acts 20, we covered it on Wednesday night, Paul is on his way back to Jerusalem. He stops in a little place called Troas, on the eastern side of the Aegean Sea, about 30 miles west of Ephesus. He called for all the pastors in the city of Ephesus to come to him, and he wanted to minister to and encourage them. As Paul was meeting with them (they knew that they would never see Paul again) it was an emotional time, but Paul said, "For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock," and then he said, "Also of your own selves shall men arise...to draw away disciples after them." He said, "Therefore watch, and remember, that by the space of three years I ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears," and told them to watch and be sober in all things. Timothy was in Ephesus, and Ephesus did have the false teachers that Paul had predicted. Paul, in his epistle trying to encourage and minister to Timothy, now begins to try to encourage Timothy to be standing strong against the doctrines that are false and the false gospel that was being preached.

There's really two main themes running through 2 Timothy. The first is be willing to suffer for the gospel, the second is be willing to stand for the truth of the gospel, so you proclaim the gospel, you stand, you guard, you protect it, and you also suffer for it. You're willing also to defend it against the false teachers. It's not a popular subject today that we don't hear much about, but there are false teachers in the church that are teaching not true to God's Word, not accurately to God's Word, and the Bible is going to tell us tonight that we need to withdraw ourselves from them.

There is an ever-present danger of doctrinal error in the church today and always has been. We saw that there were three pictures given last week about the pastor. He is a soldier (verse 3), he's likened unto an athlete (verse 5), and he is called a farmer in verse 6. The picture of the ministry of the soldier, it's a spiritual war. There is to be discipline and hardship. There's the athlete, there is the training and the rigor. You have to strive according to the rules or you won't get the reward; and the farmer, who has to labor diligently to get the fruit of the land, and then he becomes the first partaker of the fruit. Well, basically, we're going to have three more pictures, so there's a total of six pictures of the pastor or the minister. Tonight we get the three pictures of the workman, the vessel, and of the servant.

The first picture is that of a workman (verses 14-18). Let's read this passage. Paul says to Timothy, "Of these things put them in remembrance," them being the people in the church there of Ephesus, "charging them before the Lord that they strive not about words to no profit, but to the subverting of the hearers. 15 Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman," there's our image, "that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth. 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.”

Paul starts in verse 14 and says, “Of these things put them in remembrance,” what “things” is Paul talking about? Paul’s talking about, backing up to verses 11-13, the faithful saying. That was a hymn that the early church sang, “For if we be dead with him, we shall also live with him: 12 If we suffer, we shall also reign with him: if we deny him, he also will deny us: 13 If we believe not, yet he abideth faithful: he cannot deny himself,” so Paul, in closing this first chapter, tells Timothy, “I want you to remind the people of these things.

You know, one of the necessary things in pastoral ministering and in teaching the Bible is repetition. If you come to this church very long, you’re going to hear me say things that you’ve heard me say before. Sometimes, you’re probably tempted to say, “Oh, doesn’t Pastor Miller ever know anything new,” or “Doesn’t he have anything else to say?” I like what Harry Ironside used to say. He said, “If it’s new, it’s not true; if it’s true, it’s not new.” There’s really nothing new, and I shouldn’t be sharing anything new that isn’t already found in the Scriptures. Now, it may be new to you, but it’s not really new because it’s true, and it’s the truth of God’s Word; but sometimes that repetition, the hearing it again and again and again, I don’t ever tire of hearing these great truths of God’s Word. He’s to warn them, “...put them in remembrance.” That’s what the first thing the workman is to do, the faithful pastor is to do, he’s to warn the people. He’s to warn them about false teachers and false doctrine that has infiltrated the professing church.

Notice Paul charges him, “...charging them before the Lord,” so he’s charging him. That’s a solemn charge like the one used...we’re going to get to in 2 Timothy 4:1, which is my absolute all-time favorite. I got to lecture yesterday at a Bible college, and I spoke on 2 Timothy 4 about preaching the Word, and Paul says, “I charge thee therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ,” and the elect angels, “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. 5 But watch thou,” Timothy, “in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, make full proof,” or fulfill, “of thy ministry.” Again, Paul is charging Timothy with a solemn oath and to charge the people. Notice the charge is before the Lord, and that’s the One whom we should keep in mind—we want to please the Lord, we want to obey the Lord, and what the Lord thinks about us is what’s all important.

The first thing he’s supposed to charge them is “that they strive not about words to no profit, but to the subverting of the hearers.” It’s kind of an interesting statement that Paul makes to Timothy. He’s basically saying, “Don’t get into word arguments with these false teachers.” Now, he’s not trying to indicate that words aren’t important. When I preach, you’ll hear me focus on a word, and I’ll explain and apply the word. Words are important. I believe that all Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and in why I say all Scripture, I mean the very words themselves were God-breathed. But there are false teachers that like to quibble over words and get into funny kind of nonessential debates, quibbles, and arguments. The minister of God is supposed

to say, and I believe even the people of God, “You know, I don’t really have time for that.” I can’t tell you how often people come to me with a question, and I know they just want to debate, argue, get contention going, and I don’t really have time to do that. I’m not going to get involved in that. I’m not going to get distracted with that.

The “subverting of the hearers” we get our word catastrophe from the word translated “subverting” there; the Greek word rendered “subverting,” we get our word catastrophe from it. Be careful that you don’t get distracted in arguing either Scripture or words that aren’t important or aren’t an issue. Don’t get into these side issues. The word “striving” there means wrangling, so it really is talking about silly debates. There are so many silly questions and issues that people like to debate and discuss, but they’re not important, they’re not essentials, they’re not a big deal, so don’t get caught up in arguing silly things that are not essential or important.

This is what you’re supposed to do (verse 15), and I believe that this has application first and foremost to the pastor and then secondly to all the people of the church. “Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.” Now, as I said, we have here this image of the minister being a “workman.” He doesn’t tell us what kind of “workman,” but the idea is that the person is working, he’s laboring. In our modern vernacular it would be a laborer or a worker, maybe a construction worker or something of that nature, a hard-working individual, a blue-collar worker. He doesn’t tell us what kind of worker, though. When he says to him that you are to “study to shew thyself approved...a workman that needeth not to be ashamed,” he uses this term here, “rightly dividing the word of truth.”

Every little phrase in this statement is packed with important truth. This “rightly dividing the word of truth,” the word “rightly dividing” means to cut straight. That’s what the word literally means. We actually get our word orthopedic from it, which means to straighten out; so it means to cut straight. Now, again, I share that with you, I’m going to go back to the beginning of the verse, but he’s a workman that is to cut straight. Some have theorized that maybe the workman is to be a farmer here still, plowing straight furrows in the field. I’m not so sure that’s what he had in mind, but if you’ve ever flown over farmland in an airplane and looked down, how amazingly straight the furrows are. I’m like, “How did they do that?” If I were driving the tractor, they’d be all kind of crooked, you know, and messed up. I just don’t know how they do that.

The other possibility is that it’s a stone mason, and it may be the cutting of the stones. They had to cut the stones straight so that the stones might fit together. I think the best possible theory is, and these are all theories, we don’t really know what kind of workman’s cutting it straight, but it’s an image or an illustration of rightly handling the Word of God. The other image is that Paul was a tentmaker. To make tents, what they used was animal skins. They would actually cut the animal skins and sew them together. It’s kind of like, maybe you ladies like to sew. You get your cloth out and put a pattern on the cloth, pin it, and then take your scissors and cut out the pattern. You have to cut it just right so that when you sew it together the garment fits perfectly, right? When I was a young boy, I used to love to watch my mother sew. I used to be fascinated by the sewing machine, the needles, and the scissors. I’d take the

scissors and chase my sisters around the house with them and stuff like that. I used to watch her put the pattern down, pin the patterns, cut it out, and sew it together. It could be that when Paul was making tents, that he's drawing from this imagery. He was a tentmaker and labored with his hands, but he would have to cut the skin straight so that it fit or that it sewed together. The idea there is that you handle accurately the Word of truth, which is the Word of God.

I like that concept or that idea that the pastor's job is to take the Bible and cut it straight. Amen? He's not to add to it, he's not to take away from it, he's not to substitute it, he's to cut straight the Word of God in the way he preaches, in the way he teaches, in the way he interprets and then applies the text. This is something that I think is so lacking in the church today overall, that a lot of men in the pulpit aren't rightfully handling or cutting straight the Word of God.

When Paul says, "study to shew thyself approved," that's not the best translation in the King James Bible. The word "study" actually means be eager, be zealous, be ready. He's not trying to convey the idea of get your commentaries out, get your Bible dictionary out, get your books out, and study (which I think is a good thing to do, and we should study the Bible, the Word of God). This is not an injunction to study the Bible. This is an injunction in how you interpret, explain, and communicate the Bible. You should be committed and zealous to doing it properly. Do you know you can't play fast and loose with the Bible? You can't make it say what you want it to say. You can take verses out of context and make them mean what God never intended them to mean. None of us likes to be taken out of context. Nobody wants their words twisted to mean something they didn't really mean. Well, neither does God. What he's telling pastors to do, and this is actually one of my passions, that more men in the pulpit would rightfully divide the Word of truth; that in their preaching and in their teaching, they would actually accurately, truthfully, and honestly preach and convey the meaning of the text.

I believe that true preaching or biblical preaching is expository preaching, and by that, the word exposition means explaining. It's reading the text, explaining the text, and then applying the text. What is quite common today is a pastor will read a text, then apply it, but never explain it, and certainly not explain it in its historical, grammatical, or theological context. Real preaching, and this is what I believe we need, is preaching that explains the text in light of the history, the grammar, the theology, and the context—who wrote it? Who'd they write it to? What does it mean? What's the context? It's so very important. He's telling this young protege, Timothy, this pastor, "Be eager, be zealous, be committed to show yourself approved unto God," which, by the way, if a pastor doesn't rightfully preach the Word and accurately interpret it, he's going to have to give an account to God. What you want is to be approved by God. Again, the imagery of a workman. In construction, when you do a construction project, you have to get it inspected and approved. It has to meet code. It has to meet standards, so the pastor's going to have to give an account to God on Judgment Day for how he handled, interpreted, and preached the Word of God. Today, sadly, there are so many that misinterpret the Scriptures in their preaching.

I really encourage you as an individual believer to be discerning about what you listen to in the

way of preaching. When you listen to me preach, you listen to others preach, you listen to audio sermons you maybe watch on television or listen to the radio, you need to search the Scriptures to make sure those things are so. I don't want to get too bogged down, but I wrote down three important ways to cut the Word straight that are indispensable for all of us as believers. First, remember the Bible is the authority, you might say, the final authority. When you read your Bible, when you interpret your Bible, when you apply the Bible, it is the final court of appeal. When God speaks, the debate is over. Amen? When God says something's wrong, "Well, I don't know about that. I'm not sure about that." No. When God speaks, the debate is over. He's the final court of appeal.

Now, this is not as simplistic as it may sound because let me tell you what is not the authority in coming to a knowledge of truth—church tradition. Now, I'm all for tradition, but it's not to be held up as equal in authority with the Word of God. This is one of the mistakes the Roman Catholic church makes. They put tradition on an equal authority with the Scriptures. They actually believe the Bible is the product of the church; therefore, the church has authority over the Scriptures, so they put a lot of emphasis on tradition. "Well, we've always done it this way. I don't care what the Bible says, but this is what my denomination says," and "This is what my church teaches," and "This is the way my grandfather and my grandfather's grandfather believed," and "This is what they taught, so I'm going to hang onto my tradition." A lot of people have a hard time giving up what they were taught growing up that wasn't really biblical. They hang onto it in spite of the fact that the clear teaching of the Bible teaches otherwise. So, tradition is not the authority, the Bible is, and only as the tradition is consistent with the Word of God should we really hang onto it.

Let me tell you what else is not the authority—reason or intellect. Your reason and intellect is not the authority. "Well, I don't know how God can create the heavens and the earth in six literal days, so it must've been billions and billions and billions and billions of years," and so intellectually you want to try to accommodate some long process of evolution so you neglect the literal interpretation of the book of Genesis. It's a scary thing what's going on in the church right now. People are abandoning a literal interpretation of Scripture that "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth," and He did it in six days, that He actually created Adam and Eve, the fall of man, and the need of a Savior, you know, all of our truth of the gospel based on the fall of Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden. If there were no real literal historical Adam and Eve, then there's no need of a Savior. It's so very important. We shouldn't use our minds to try to say, "Well, it doesn't make sense to me, so I don't believe it."

Now, that's not to say you shouldn't use your mind. We're to love God with all of our mind. We're to think, and I think that God helps us to think, but we need to think biblically. The mind must be submitted to biblical authority. The Bible is the authority, not my mind. God is transcendent. God is above what I can comprehend, grasp, or understand. I don't understand how God can be three in one. I believe in the trinity because the Bible teaches it—God the Father, God the Son, God the Holy Spirit; one God, three Persons. You say, "Explain it." I can't explain it. I don't know how Jesus could be God and Man but one Person—fully God, fully Man—but I believe in that. It's marvelous. My mind isn't the authority, the Bible is the authority.

Here's a big one, and this could be a soapbox. I don't know if we'll get through the text tonight. Let me tell you what is not your authority—don't misunderstand me, hear me out—experience. "I saw it! I felt it! I heard a voice!" but your experience is contrary to the Bible. Guess what I'm going to take? The Bible. People come to me all the time with their wild, crazy experiences and want me to explain them. I don't know. Maybe you ate too many Snickers bars before you went to bed. I don't know. It's not my job to explain it. I can tell you what the Bible says, and what the Bible says is, "Whatever happened to you wasn't from God, okay?" "Well, how do you know? You weren't there, and I saw it and I heard it and I felt it! I experienced it!" The basis of truth is not tingles and visions and kind of manifestations, you know. Can God manifest Himself powerfully? Can we have a powerful experience with God? Yes, but here's the principle: Your experience needs to be based on the Scriptures, not the Scriptures on your experience. You don't have an experience and then try to go to the Bible to justify it. You actually justify your experience because the Bible very clearly teaches that thing.

Let me mention something. I'm kind of in a loosey-goosey mood tonight. We do have to get to communion, but this whole concept of being slain in the spirit. Here's a classic example of slain in the spirit—whatever! I don't see that taught in the Bible. Paul didn't teach it. Paul didn't tell the Corinthians, "You guys are so carnal. If you'd just get slain in the spirit you'd be more spiritual." It's not taught. It's never instructed, taught, it's not in the Bible. There are no examples. There are people that fell before the Lord when they saw the Lord, but that's not the same as being slain in the spirit; so you have meetings where people fall over on the floor, but they can't support it from the Bible. I've talked to them, and I've been around it. I know all about it. I'm not new to this thing, but it's like, "Well, you know, it happened to me and I experienced it, and I have felt the Holy Spirit." Well, that's fine, and I can't deny your experience, but all I can say is I don't see it taught in the Bible. Once—listen to me carefully—you start going toward experience that is not explained or biblical or a foundation for the Bible, you've just opened a Pandora's box. There's no way to govern or guide what is of God and what is not of God. Everyone's experience has to become valid, so it's the difference between objective truth in God's Word and the subjective truth of my physical senses or my experience.

Let me tell you the second thing to do when you rightly divide the Word of God; that is, remember to keep it in context. A text out of its context becomes a pretext. If you take a text and you pull it out of its context, then you can make it mean whatever you want it to mean. One time, years ago, I had somebody tell me, "You know, I was reading the Bible, and I found out that if you're not married, you're going to hell." I said, "Really. Where did you see that?" He said, "Oh, it's in 1 Corinthians 7, a man is better to marry than to burn." He quoted the Scripture, "It's better to marry than to burn." Well, you've just taken that verse out of context. It's not saying if you're not married, you're going to go to hell. This guy was freaking out. "I gotta find a wife! I gotta find a wife! I'm on my way to hell!" It doesn't work like that. It's saying it's better to get married than to burn with uncontrollable lust, and he's talking about sexual desires. He's not talking about heaven or hell. Context is all important.

Whenever you interpret a passage, you need to always ask yourself what kind of material am I in? Am I in history? Am I in poetry? Am I in prophecy? What's the genre or the type of

literature? The Bible has different kinds of literature, and it's handled or interpreted in a different way. You need to ask yourself who wrote it and who's it written to, what's the background or the setting. Read verses before and read the verses after and ask yourself, "What's the subject?"

I have heard entire sermons preached on a verse that completely misinterpreted the verse because they didn't take it in context. They actually imposed its own meaning. As a matter of fact, if you go on Christian television, you'll hear hundreds of sermons preached out of context. It is perhaps the most common error that preachers make today, especially when they start quoting verses other places and they're using it kind of like to support their ideas rather than to take it in its text and develop it in its historical, grammatical, and theological context. That's just a basic rule of Bible interpretation. The text is supposed to be taken in context.

The third thing to remember...remember the Bible is the authority, remember the context, and thirdly, remember that the text of Scripture has only one meaning and should be interpreted literally. Foundationally, when you approach the Bible, you approach it with what's called a literal method of interpreting. Now, that's not to say that you don't take into consideration, again, the genre, the type of material, the literature you're in—maybe it's poetry, maybe it's prophecy. The Bible uses allegory. The Bible uses similes. The Bible uses metaphors. The Bible uses parables. Just about every figure of speech known to man is found in the Bible. We use figures of speech in our language. We say, "It's raining cats and dogs." Can you imagine somebody that took that literal? "It is?!" Travel to Australia quite a bit, and they have all kinds of bizarre figures of speech that can really get you in trouble if you don't know how to talk over there, but can you imagine one of our Aussie friends coming to us, "It's raining cats and dogs." "Wow? I didn't know that happened in America?" Quite often critics of the Bible take a figure of speech and mock it saying, "See how stupid the Bible is? It's unscientific. It doesn't know what it's talking about." It's a figure of speech, Knucklehead. They're common, and we need to understand that and take that into consideration.

Basically, we are to approach the Scripture in a literal, historical, grammatical sense as we interpret it. God meant what He said, and said what He meant. Don't spiritualize or allegorize the Scriptures. A lot of preachers will do that. They'll read an Old Testament story, especially a lot of the new modern hip young preachers that are on the scene today, with their big megachurches. They preach from narrative passages of the Old Testament quite a bit, and they don't set the story in its historical context and draw principles from the story. They spiritualize or allegorize the text, and you miss the real meaning of what the Bible is actually supposed to be saying there. Be careful how you divide the Word. Make sure you do it accurately. Make sure you cut it straight. True biblical preaching is preaching the Word—nothing more, nothing less—and using sound principles of interpreting the Scripture in your preaching and in your teaching.

Notice (verses 16-18) Paul gives us the reason or the rationale behind why, "rightly dividing the word of truth," is important. By the way, the "word of truth" there is a reference to God's Word, Holy Scripture, the apostolic doctrine, the faith that we are to defend. Why should we earnestly

contend for the faith? Why should we rightly divide the “word of truth”? Let me point out the three reasons. First, if you don’t do that, it will dishonor God. False teaching will bring dishonor to God and ungodliness. Verse 16, “But shun profane and vain,” or empty, “babblings: for they will increase unto more ungodliness.” He tells them not to strive about words—don’t get in word arguments—they’re to no profit. They’ll bring catastrophe to the hearers. Divide the Word properly and shun empty babblings or arguments.

Don’t get distracted from the truth of God’s Word and get in arguments with people that aren’t even believers or regenerated or saved. They don’t even know what they’re talking about. The frustration of trying to reason with somebody that doesn’t have the Spirit of God or doesn’t know how to rightfully interpret the Scriptures of God leads to dishonoring God. Notice at the end of verse 16, “for they will increase unto more ungodliness,” which, by the way, is a very important principle, and do you know what it is? That is, sound doctrine leads to sound living; bad doctrine leads to bad living. If your doctrine is wrong, then your living is going to be wrong, so it’s so very important. Some people might say, “Aw, don’t be so picky about right or wrong. None of it really matters. We need to accept and approve of everyone,” but Paul’s telling Timothy that it’s dangerous. It leads to ungodliness. It will dishonor God.

The second danger is in verse 17; that is, it brings the danger like gangrene. The word “canker” in verse 17 is where we get our actual word gangrene. It just will eat like a cancer or gangrene and destroy you. It “will eat as doth a canker: of whom,” and here’s something interesting. He names two false teachers by name, “Hymenaeus and Philetus.” Again, what is so not en vogue today but should be done is a minister is kind of criticized if he names names. Now, we should not ever attack someone personally—call them names—but there is nothing wrong with naming false teachers.

Remember years ago there was that Tylenol issue where Tylenol had been laced with some poison and was being sold on the market? They came on the news and said that Tylenol can be bad so watch out. I mean, and the people that make Tylenol just took a huge hit. They lost thousands and thousands of dollars because people wouldn’t buy Tylenol anymore. Can you imagine if the ad would’ve come on tv and said, “There’s some pain reliever out there that’s got poison on it. Be careful.” You’d go, “Come on! Which kind is it, Man?” How about when there’s a problem with lettuce or food in the market. It’s got salmonella or issues with some food. We want to know what company makes it? What stores sell it? Where is it? Is it in my neighborhood? Should I get rid of my food? We want them to be specific. So, in order to protect people from the damaging doctrine, Paul says, “There’s these two guys,” Hymenaeus is mentioned in 1 Timothy 1:20, and it’s probably the same guy. Paul had excommunicated him, but he’s still up to no good. He’s still promoting his false teaching. He’s still out and about. And, Philetus, we only know him here in 2 Timothy 2, and we know nothing else about him.

There are men out there preaching today that are popular. They’ve written books, they’re on tv, they’re on channel 40, and they’re on TBN. I just recently watched TBN, and... man, I know what you’re saying, “Come on, come on, come on, come on.” I know that if I name somebody that someone will get upset with me, but I was watching Jentezen Franklin, of Free Chapel in

Alabama. I was listening to his sermon, and it was classic Word-Faith, speak prosperity health and wealth doctrine. The verses he was using were out of context and unscriptural. I've listened to Joel Osteen quite a bit on television. Several times when I've listened to him lately—and I try to give him the benefit of the doubt and listened as much as I can—and I'm thinking, Just every verse he's using is out of context and misinterpreted and misapplied. He's saying things that sound good and sound lovely, but it's not biblical. It's not biblical truth.

I've listened to Steven Furtick in Elevation Church, the young pastor that's making such a splash right now, and it's all orchestrated emotion. He's not rightly dividing the Word of truth. I've been around long enough to see Kenneth Hagin, Kenneth Copeland, Fred Price, Charles Capps, and all the Word-Faith teachers and health and wealth preachers. They do not rightly divide the word of truth. Not everything they say is unbiblical, but a lot of what they say is not biblical. They don't use properly the Scripture to communicate what the Word really means by what it says. The list could go on and on. You need to be discerning. It's not to say that there aren't other good preachers out there, but you need to be a Berean to search the Scriptures and say, "Is what he's really teaching biblical? Is it the Word of God? Is it what Paul really meant by what he said?" He mentions these guys. He names them, calls them out.

In verse 18, Paul says (and we're going close here), "Who concerning the truth have erred," that's heartbreaking. That's sad. That's something that should cause us to weep. That isn't something we should rejoice in, but they've taken the truth and they've erred. The word "erred" means they've missed the mark. There's a lot of preaching that's just in error or aberrant. It's not biblical. "Who concerning the truth have erred," they've missed the mark, and he tells them specifically what they had taught. They taught the resurrection was passed already and as a result, they "overthrow the faith of some." To not rightly divide the word of truth is dishonoring to God, it leads to ungodliness; it's dangerous because it eats like a cancer or gangrene; and it's damaging to men's souls, it can damn a person's soul to hell. That's what he means when he says there, "and overthrow the faith of some." The word "overthrow" literally means to turn upside-down, literally just turn the truth upside down. They take the truth and they just turn it upside down, so we need to be discerning. We need to be careful how we handle the Scriptures.

What was this "resurrection is past already; and overthrow the faith of some?" Well, we're not absolutely sure, but I think a good possibility is that they were spiritualizing the physical resurrection of the believer's body. They were actually teaching that when you were born again, you were resurrected, and there is no future literal resurrection of the body. Now, I am fascinated by the fact that there's an entire chapter (if you want to take this down, write it down) in 1 Corinthians 15 in which Paul goes to great length to explain in great detail the importance of faith and belief in the resurrection of Jesus Christ because it's completely totally linked together with the resurrection of the believer's body, "...if Christ be not risen...ye are yet in your sins," there's no hope of our resurrection and no hope of future life, so you can't separate the believer's resurrection and the resurrection of Christ. They are linked together. He is the firstfruit. He's the prototype of those who sleep, so what they were probably doing was, as I said, spiritualizing the doctrine of the resurrection when the Bible actually teaches...

Did you actually know that your body, the one you're in right now, your bad bod, is going to be resurrected? You say, "I don't want this body resurrected." Don't worry! It'll be metamorphosized. It'll be brand spanking new! It'll be amazing! It'll be glorious! It'll be wonderful! It'll be eternal! There won't be any sickness or weakness or disease or pain or sorrow. It'll be a glorious body. You read 1 Corinthians 15, and pray for me. I've been looking at 1 Corinthians 15, and I think I'm going to do it as a series on Sunday mornings, spend several weeks just preaching through 1 Corinthians 15, all about the resurrection. It's such a very important doctrine, and our bodies, when we get our bodies, what our bodies will be like, and what heaven is like. It's so important. These false teachers had caused people to have their faith destroyed because they denied the resurrection of their bodies, probably denying even the resurrection of Jesus Christ, and from such they need to turn away.

Now, I hate to stop there because the passage doesn't stop. He goes on to speak about vessels of honor and vessels of dishonor; and then he talks about how to deal with false teachers in the church, but we'll finish it up next week.