Good morning.

For those of you following along in 2 Timothy, it may seem like the next great verse in this letter is 4:1&2 “ I solemnly charge you… Preach the word!” However, before we get to that admonition, Paul has two leading considerations for us. Both of which, everyone who has children at home and all of us responsible for the education of the church, have come to hold dear.

With apologies to Paul, I will take them backwards. 3:16-17 “All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness; so that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good word,” is one of our chief text on the ultimate significance of the Word of God. First, it came from God. That alone gives it a significance over every other text, thought or idea - ever and at all. That He gave it signifies that Scriptures needs our first attention. It came from the One Who Is. Second it reveals that He considers us significant enough to give us His mind, His thought and laws. It shows that He loves us, just in the giving of this Scriptures.

“You, however, continue in the things you have learned and become convinced of, knowing from whom you have learned *them,* and that from childhood you have known the sacred writings which are able to give you the wisdom that leads to salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.” Before you can understand and appreciate the power of Scriptures, you must learn them. Someone must teach them to you. In this case, Timothy had the tremendous advantage of having his Grandmother and mother teach him the sacred writings [i.e. The Old Testament].

Timothy was the child of a mixed marriage. His father was a Greek of Lystra and he was brought up in that culture (Acts 16:1-3.) I explained the Greek culture a little yesterday’s devotional. So we know that those influences were all around him, tempting him in every direction. His father had considerable control of Timothy’s development. We know this because Timothy was not circumcised; a Jewish requirement.

But he was trained by people of faith, grandmother Lois and mother Eunice. The news of Jesus didn’t come until 15 years after the crucifixion when Paul arrived on his first missionary journey. Lois and Eunice had been training him carefully in the Old Testament. The diligence of these women in his life laid all the ground work so that when the truth of Jesus of Nazareth as the Messiah, the Son of God was presented to Timothy, he responded. And he responded in such a way that the rest of his life was dedicated to presenting that truth to others.

The church is in the business of training people to know the sacred writings. Sacred because they came from God and display His greatness, perfection and His love. They give us wisdom which leads us to salvation by faith in the central figure in these writings: Jesus Christ. Because, “there is salvation in no one else; for there is no other name under heaven that has been given among men by which we must be saved."

The training of Lois and Eunice prepared their child to become a man of God. God took that training and that faith and used it in all of Timothy’s life. So we train, and we wait for God to use us - and them.

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2 Timothy 2:2 The things which you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses, entrust these to faithful men who will be able to teach others also.

We train the young and we train ourselves because the Word is inspired by the God Who Is. We read it because it is words of love to His children. In its pages we can learn, be reproved, encouraged and directed into the paths of the One who loves us.

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Paul gives this just before three warnings. Avoid worldly, empty chatter because it leads to *further* ungodliness. This is not a warning about just random neutral topics. This is worldly in that it is ungodly and so the result of it is more ungodliness.

He also says to refuse to discuss foolish and ignorant speculations which create arguments. This is arguing about things we cannot resolve or prove. Arguing for the sake of arguing, or arguing to win. This only creates factions within the church over personal items for prideful reasons.