

## ***Session 71: The Doctrinal Progression of Paul's Epistles***

(Note: Mike refers to this under the old system as Establishment, Part 10, Session 71).

Last week we began talking about adversity prayer. We learned there are generally two kinds of adversities that we face in our lives: 1) the sufferings of this present time (SoPT) and 2) the sufferings of Christ (SoC). I think you know the difference.

The sufferings of Christ are because of our sonship life and our adherence to Paul's doctrines. These are the attacks designed to make us quit our sonship life. More specifically, they are designed to stop our impact on Satan's heavenly realm – his work in this world. If we quit, these sufferings will cease. These kinds of attacks warrant a particular kind of praying and the effectual working of particular doctrines.

The sufferings of Christ are progressive in that they come in a certain order and increase in degrees of intensity. These attacks are always in accordance with where we are spiritually as saints. More specifically, these attacks are in response to the effectual working of the progressive doctrines of our education as sons.

The attacks of Satan's policy of evil (PoE) come in three phases:

- Phase 1: Attack the Message – purpose: teach the counterfeit
- Phase 2: Attack the Messenger – purpose: stop teaching the truth
- Phase 3: Discredit the Messenger – purpose: keep others from listening

The message which is under attack is the message of grace and all of its accompanying doctrines as set forth in Paul's epistles. As we know, Satan has a perversion of every sonship doctrine. His first objective is to keep us from hearing the doctrines of grace. If that fails, his next objective is to have us reject those doctrines when we hear them.

If we hear, understand, and believe those doctrines, then Phase 1 of his policy of evil goes into action. This is his attempt to remove us from the truth by making us unsure, creating doubt, and offering us his competing doctrine which is designed to be more appealing to our flesh than the truth. This is what happened with the Galatians with respect to the gospel message.

***Galatians 1:6*** *I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel:*

In order for us to appreciate the sufferings of Christ and prayer as it relates to them, I want to show you the progressive nature of those attacks.

If a man is saved, but his understanding is out of the things in Israel's program, there will be no attack by the policy of evil. That man is already cooperating with the counterfeit doctrine. It is a very cleverly designed error in that it makes the adherent believe he is serving God when in fact he is denying the truth.

For example, when a man teaches his class by turning to Deuteronomy and teaches that God blesses us in material ways when we are righteous which he means we live honestly go to church, and give tithes and offerings; then, he is cooperating with the counterfeit doctrine.

***Deuteronomy 28:1** And it shall come to pass, if thou shalt hearken diligently unto the voice of the LORD thy God, to observe and to do all his commandments which I command thee this day, that the LORD thy God will set thee on high above all nations of the earth: <sup>2</sup>And all these blessings shall come on thee, and overtake thee, if thou shalt hearken unto the voice of the LORD thy God.*

But if we do not live righteously, then God will punish us, just as he is punishing America now.

***Deuteronomy 28:15** But it shall come to pass, if thou wilt not hearken unto the voice of the LORD thy God, to observe to do all his commandments and his statutes which I command thee this day; that all these curses shall come upon thee, and overtake thee:*

So, if we have droughts, floods, hurricanes, or tornadoes that is God punishing us.

***Deuteronomy 28:24** The LORD shall make the rain of thy land powder and dust: from heaven shall it come down upon thee, until thou be destroyed.*

I have heard preachers talk about God sending hurricanes because of all the babies that are being aborted in America. I have heard them say the tornadoes that swept through Oklahoma were because we were not being a friend to Israel. To prove it, they quote from Genesis 12.

***Genesis 12:3** And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed.*

Preachers blame natural causes for crop failure on the hand of God.

***Deuteronomy 28:38** Thou shalt carry much seed out into the field, and shalt gather but little in; for the locust shall consume it.*

That was certainly true for Israel under the law, but it not true for farmers living in America during this dispensation of Gentile grace.

Many preachers blame sickness on sin.

**Deuteronomy 28:60** *Moreover he will bring upon thee all the diseases of Egypt, which thou wast afraid of; and they shall cleave unto thee. <sup>61</sup> Also every sickness, and every plague, which is not written in the book of this law, them will the LORD bring upon thee, until thou be destroyed.*

And when they talk about the remedy for sin, they do not talk about the first two elements of our new identity with regard to our sanctification (which is the biblical method for overcoming sin). They point us to 1 John 1:9 so we can confess our sins and then leave us with the best efforts of our own flesh to overcome it in the future, an endeavor which is most likely to fail, and only produces a self-righteousness which God rejects.

**Romans 10:3** *For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God.*

**Philippians 3:9** *And be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith:*

Again, this all comes from failing to rightly divide the word of truth. But a man preaches this because he thinks he is serving God by warning the people to turn from their sin. (After all, that is a good thing is it not?)

He thinks he is holding forth the truth and proclaiming – thus sayeth the Lord. But in reality, as well intentioned as he may be, he is cooperating with Satan by proclaiming the wrong message. Those who think the same way will look at him as a hero of the faith, but there will be no reward for doing the wrong thing, no matter how sincerely it was done.

Let us recall the point in all of this: Satan's counterfeit is designed to either appeal to the flesh (which makes it more attractive and desirable than the truth) or produce belief in a misapplication of scripture (which makes it look true because it comes from scripture).

Therefore, as long as a person is not being established in Paul's doctrines, Satan is fine with church, Bible studies, Christian organizations, prayer meetings, and all manner of spiritual sounding endeavors.

Let us make the point again: if a man is saved in this dispensation of Gentile grace, but his understanding is not in accordance with Paul's doctrine, there will be no attack by the policy of evil.

But, if that same man begins to go through the book of Romans and is being established in the faith, the Phase 1 attack of the policy of evil begins immediately. Why?

## **Romans**

This is the foundational epistle for our godly edifying. This book is designed to establish us in the fundamental doctrines of who we have been made to be in Christ. Romans' doctrine establishes us in the fundamental issue of our new identity in Christ: justification in chapters 1-5, sanctification in chapters 6-8, and in chapters 9-11, we have the introductory doctrine (not the details, yet) that we are exalted unto a special vocational life "in Christ" in God's overall plan and purpose for us – the body of Christ.

Romans 12-16 mainly concerns the various forms of doctrine which are meant to generate the four sonship decision-making skills of wisdom, justice, judgment, and equity. This is the foundation upon which everything that follows will be built.

In response to our establishment as sons, Satan unleashes the first round of attacks, beginning with Phase 1. This is the subject of 1 Corinthians. Remember, this is the initial round of attacks in Phase 1.

In the case of the Corinthian church, the Phase 1 attacks were successful. The remedy for having succumbed to the attacks against our establishment doctrine is found in 1 Corinthians.

You may be wondering if we might be able to skip 1 Corinthians; we cannot, because it contains the warnings concerning the specific attacks that we will encounter. It also contains the doctrinal remedies for those various attacks. We need all of these doctrines working in us or, at some point, we will corrupt the message in our thinking, our living, or our labor.

The only reason we would not need 1 Corinthians is if we were not going to be attacked by Satan's policy of evil.

## **1 Corinthians**

This epistle contains the corrective doctrine for the various forms of ungodly thinking, living, and ungodly labor, which are produced by the preliminary round of the policy of evil's Phase 1 attacks.

- 1 Corinthians 1:1-4:21 gives reproofs, corrections, and instructions in righteousness concerning their ungodly thinking (10 components).
- 1 Corinthians 5:1-10:33 gives reproofs, corrections, and instructions in righteousness concerning their ungodly living (4 components).
- 1 Corinthians 11:1-16:24 gives reproofs corrections, and instructions in righteousness concerning their ungodly labor (5 components).

These attacks are against the foundational edifying produced by the Romans doctrine. In accordance with these kinds of attacks, this epistle works:

- First to reprove the specific ungodliness
- Then the necessary corrective doctrine is applied
- And finally the instruction in righteousness which is meant to cancel the ungodliness and implement godliness in its place.

If the attacks of Phase 1 are not successful, Satan then moves to Phase 2.

That is the subject of 2 Corinthians. Remember, this is the initial round of attacks in Phase 2.

**2 Corinthians:** This epistle provides the remedy for the first round of the policy of evil's Phase 2 sufferings. At this point, the Corinthians are being partakers of the sufferings of Christ.

*2 Corinthians 1:7 And our hope of you is steadfast, knowing, that as ye are partakers of the sufferings, so shall ye be also of the consolation.*

As Paul deals with these attacks, he presents God as the "Father of mercies and the God of all comfort." Through the effectual working of the doctrinal mercies (which produce the life of Jesus Christ in us) we are able to endure the same kind of sufferings Christ endured, and to do so with the same joy and comfort.

2 Corinthians provides the remedy for the first round of the policy of evil's Phase 2 sufferings in 8 categories:

- 2 Corinthians 1:1-11 – gives the introductory issues of the sufferings of Christ in Phase 2.
- 2 Corinthians 1:12-24 – Category 1
- 2 Corinthians 2:1-17 – Category 2  
Categories 1 & 2 are the personal attacks from within the church.
- 2 Corinthians 3:1-18 – Category 3
- 2 Corinthians 4:1-6 – Category 4  
Categories 3 & 4 are personal attacks from outside the church.
- 2 Corinthians 4:7-7:3 – Category 5
- 2 Corinthians 7:4-9:15 – Category 6  
Categories 5 & 6 are ministry attacks from outside the church.
- 2 Corinthians 10:1-18 – Category 7
- 2 Corinthians 11:1-13:14 – Category 8  
Categories 7-8 are ministry attacks from within the church.

While there are 8 categories of suffering dealt with by Paul in this epistle, the final two categories of this first round of attacks by Phase 2 of the policy of evil begin to bleed over into

the discrediting objectives of his Phase 3 attacks. This segues us into the book of Galatians, which deals with Satan's successful implementation of the Phase 3 attacks of his policy of evil.

## **Galatians**

This epistle has in mind the preliminary round of the policy of evil's Phase 3 attack against the saints. By means of distorting the truth of the distinctive doctrine of Paul for this dispensation of Gentile grace, Phase 3 works to accomplish a myriad of wrong responses:

- To blind the saints to the truth of Paul and his doctrine
- To convince them to ignore Paul's doctrine
- To get them to deny the truth of Paul's doctrine in this dispensation of Gentile grace
- To convince those who have previously followed Paul to some degree to depart from him and his doctrine.
- Or at the very least, to fail to cling to Paul alone as God's special apostle and dispenser of the word for this present dispensation of Gentile grace.

Combining Paul's doctrine with a competing doctrine is always dangerous.

These books complete Level 1 of our sonship edification. By this time, we will have had the Romans foundation successfully laid along with its initial godly edifying. We will have dealt with the first round of the three phases of the policy of evil against us by means of the doctrine contained in Romans through Galatians.

**Space for personal reflection and notes**

## ***Session 72: The Doctrinal Progression of Paul's Epistles, Continued***

(Note: Mike refers to this under the old system as Establishment, Part 10, Session 72).

### **Ephesians**

This epistle begins to set forth the doctrines belonging to the Level 2 of our sonship edification. Ephesians contains the *meat doctrines* which can be taught to saints who are spiritually perfect along with the fullness of the doctrine of the third component (exaltation) of our new identity in Christ. These doctrines provide for our advanced, furthered, and perfected godliness in all three aspects (thinking, living and labor). Within all three aspects, our apostle warns us concerning the advanced tactics of Phase 1 of the policy of evil's attacks against us. It is by the Ephesians doctrine that we really begin to make an impact in the heavenly places by making it so that our conversation is in heaven in a real and functional way.

- Ephesians 1:1-3:21 – is the advanced Phase 1 attack against our perfected godly thinking (3 components).
- Ephesians 4:1-5:17 – is the advanced Phase 1 attack against our perfected godly living (5 components).
- Ephesians 5:18-6:24 – is the advanced Phase 1 attack against our perfected godly labor (6 components).

### **Philippians**

While 2 Corinthians dealt with the preliminary tactics of Phase 2 of the policy of evil attacks, Philippians outlines the advanced tactics of Phase 2 of the policy of evil's attacks. The effectual working of the doctrines in Philippians provide the capacity to "rejoice in the Lord always," even to the point of rejoicing with Paul in desiring "the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death."

**Philippians 3:10** That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death;

There are four major divisions in the book of Philippians:

1. Philippians 1:1-11 – Introductory issues of the sufferings of Christ /Phase 2 attacks
2. Philippians 1:12-4:3 – Categories 1-7 of the sufferings of Christ /Phase 2 attacks
3. Philippians 4:4-9 – The main issue of the doctrine
4. Philippians 4:10-23 – Category 8 of the sufferings of Christ /Phase 2 attacks

Philippians gives us 8 categories of attacks. The first 7 categories are in Philippians 1:12-4:3. The 8<sup>th</sup> category is found in 4:10-20.

In between category 7 and 8 are verses 4-9, which contain the doctrine for the patient endurance of these attacks. In other words, when we get into the advanced round of attacks against us in Phase 2, Philippians 4:6-9 is going to talk to us about a specific kind of praying in connection with these ramped up attacks.

There is one more thing to notice about all of this. Just as 2 Corinthians and Philippians are connected in that they both are discussing the Phase 2 – attack the messenger issue, there is also another connection. Paul will make a reference to the things sitting back in 2 Corinthians.

***Philippians 4:8** Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things.*

When it comes to these categories of “things,” which are the remedies, we find them all back in 2 Corinthians.

***Philippians 4:8** Finally, brethren, whosoever things are true,*

There are eight “true” things in 2 Corinthians 1:13-24.

***Philippians 4:8** Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whosoever things are honest,*

There are seven “honest” things found in 2 Corinthians 2:1-17.

***Philippians 4:8** Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whosoever things are just,*

There are five “just” things in 2 Corinthians 3:1-18.

***Philippians 4:8** Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whosoever things are pure,*

There are three “pure” things in 2 Corinthians 4:1-6.

***Philippians 4:8** Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whosoever things are lovely,*

There are 10 “lovely” things in 2 Corinthians 4:7 – 5:21.

**Philippians 4:8** Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report;

2 Corinthians 7:4 – 9:15 contain 11 issues of “good report.”

**Philippians 4:8** Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue,

There are three “virtues” in 2 Corinthians 10:1-18.

**Philippians 4:8** Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise,

There are three issues of “praise” in 2 Corinthians 11:5 – 12:10.

**Philippians 4:8** Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things.

As you can see, the doctrine sitting in 2 Corinthians is going to be necessary when we get over to Philippians, as it will build upon that which we have already encountered.

Once we, like the Colossians, have the effectual working of the Philippians doctrine working in us, then the Adversary is free to attack us with Phase 3 of the advanced tactics of his policy of evil; the advanced discrediting tactics.

## **Colossians**

This epistle contains the remedies for the advanced Phase 3 attacks of the policy of evil. By use of “enticing words,” Satan works to draw away established saints from having ‘their conversation in heaven.’ These are the advanced “beguiling” tactics which target us for defamation and discrediting. This is meant to thwart our influence in the heavenly places which influence is produced by the effectual working of the Ephesians doctrine being “perfected.”

- Colossians 1:1-29 – is the fullness of Paul’s apostleship, gospel, and doctrine for us.
- Colossians 2:1-19 – is the Phase 3 attacks (3 components).
- Colossians 2:20 – 4:18 – is walking uprightly in accordance with our position in Christ (5 components).

## **1 and 2 Thessalonians constitute the 3<sup>rd</sup> and final level of our edification.**

If you keep in mind the progression of the saint and the corresponding attacks of the policy of evil, you will notice as each book's doctrines are presented, they are meant to warn us and equip us against the attacks. That means the mechanics of prayer may be similar, but the particular doctrines we need working in us will change.

### **1 Thessalonians**

- 1 Thessalonians 1:1-10 – is the mature sonship edification, walk, and ensample of the Thessalonians.
- 1 Thessalonians 2:1-3:13 – is Paul's wise counsels concerning the walk of faith.
- 1 Thessalonians 4:1-12 – is Paul's wise counsels concerning the labor of love.
- 1 Thessalonians 4:13-5:11 – is Paul's wise counsels concerning the patience of hope.
- 1 Thessalonians 5:12-28 – is additional wise counsels (6 components).

### **2 Thessalonians:**

- 2 Thessalonians 1:1-4 – is the further ensample of the Thessalonians.
- 2 Thessalonians 1:5-12 – is the calling that comes from possessing "patience and faith."
- 2 Thessalonians 2:1-17 – is a further attack from the policy of evil.
- 2 Thessalonians 3:1-5 - ?
- 2 Thessalonians 3:6-15 – is wise counsels for dealing with those who walk disorderly.
- 2 Thessalonians 3:16-18 – is the effectual working of peace.

It should be apparent that we would be given everything we need to deal with all the sufferings of Christ. Also, we will be given those things at the very time in which we need them. There is no need to panic or get ahead of ourselves.

Before we get away from adversity prayer, as it pertains to the sufferings of Christ, let us look at that passage in Philippians. The passage we are focused on for this type of prayer is found in chapter 4. In this passage, Paul writes about prayer being part of a process whereby the Philippians are not overcome by the sufferings of Christ, but instead, they have the peace of God in their hearts in the midst of those sufferings.

We could say, Paul is teaching them how to pray in the midst of adversity. As you already know, Paul is not instructing them to pray for God to intervene by changing their circumstances. They are "partakers of the sufferings of Christ." The changes will be in their inner man and in their skill to utilize the word as "armor" to keep Satan's attacks from being successful.

While this will give us an example of the kinds of things that true sonship prayer changes, it will, at the same time, teach us to pray in the midst of bad circumstances and situations. For that reason, we could call this adversity praying.

We have already covered the mechanics of how we pray in the midst of adversities. But I do want to identify some important aspects in Philippians 4:6-9.

***Philippians 4:6** Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. <sup>7</sup> And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus. <sup>8</sup> Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things. <sup>9</sup> Those things, which ye have both learned, and received, and heard, and seen in me, do: and the God of peace shall be with you.*

I have already talked a bit about verse 8. We identify those “things” as sitting back over in 2 Corinthians.

Now, let us break the passage down into parts.

**Philippians 4:6** Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God.

This is “careful” in the sense of being full of care: anxious, worried. While the sufferings of Christ are certainly designed to cause us to worry, Paul says not to be.

So, what is Paul’s solution?

***Philippians 4:6** Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God.*

The “every thing” here is in the context of referring to those things which are cause for worry or anxiety. Specifically, Paul is giving this remedy as the Philippians are under the advanced tactics of Phase 2 of the policy of evil.

Paul exhorted the Philippians not to be overcome with worry, but to deal with the adverse effects of those attacks in a very specific way; by means of prayer, supplication and thanksgiving they are to let their requests be made known unto God.

And where do those “requests” come from? Do they come out of our own imagination? Of course not: they come from the word of God!

Our requests to God in prayer are not about things which we dream up; they are to come out of the doctrine. Our requests should echo what God has already said he wants to do; because, the things he wants to do are the things which we need the most! (We think our biggest need is to get rid of the situation but God thinks our biggest need is to have this situation work together for good – producing the life of his Son in us.)

So, it is true that we can pray about any situation at all, but the key is to know what to pray and what not to pray. When Paul wrote, “in every thing by prayer and supplication . . . let your requests be made known unto God,” that is not a blank check to pray contrary to the doctrine. That is not a safety valve whereby if we are really desperate, we have God’s permission to pray for something he is not actually doing today.

This is Paul teaching us to pray properly in every adverse situation. We will be looking at this prayer in some detail in the following sessions.

And what do those requests sound like? Let us say they were under some kind of attack that was mental in nature, what would the request be? (Hint: Think about the pattern of the policy of evil attacks.)

Their requests would be things such as:

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Here are sample requests for the negative impact Satan is seeking:

- That the attack would not make them doubt the doctrine they know (attack the message).
- That the attack would not discourage them into quitting (attack the messenger).

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Here are sample requests for the positive impact God is seeking:

- That they would be more than conquerors (it would increase their ability to weather these kinds of attacks, make them stronger than before the attack).
- That they would put the life of Jesus Christ on display.

Is just saying these things enough? Well, it is not magic, but sometimes all we need is a reminder of what we already know.

And what do we already know?.

- We know that God's grace is sufficient.
- We know that through sufferings, a "glory" is being produced in us (if we respond to it properly). What is that "glory?"

*Colossians 1:27* To whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you, the hope of glory:

That glory is Christ formed in us; that is the "hope of glory." This "hope" is not wishful thinking, but a confident expectation; it is something we are anticipating and looking forward to.

That glory is the glory of being conformed to the image of God's Son; what a glorious thing that is. Just think about what is being offered; we can be transformed to such an extent that Jesus Christ can actually live his life through us. Our thoughts are his thoughts. Our actions are his actions. We are thoroughly capable of laboring with God in the operation he means to accomplish.

- We know that the sufferings are not worthy to even be compared with the glory that is being formed in us.

And how do we get that "glory" revealed in us? The glory is formed in us by Christ being formed in us.

And how is Christ formed in us? Christ is formed in us by his word dwelling in us richly.

*Colossians 3:16* Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.

And how do we get the word of Christ to dwell in us richly? The word dwells in us as we respond positively and properly to the doctrine.

*1 Thessalonians 2:13* For this cause also thank we God without ceasing, because, when ye received the word of God which ye heard of us, ye received it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which effectually worketh also in you that believe.

When they received Paul's instructions as being the actual word of God, then that word began to effectually work in them that believed. The same process works for us. We understand and believe the word to be true. We trust that the word will do what God says it will do.

In the case of Philippians 4, what does God say it will do?

*Philippians 4:6* Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. <sup>7</sup> And

*the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.*

These are some of the “sound words” which the Spirit wants to teach us; the “sound words” which Paul exhorts us to “hold fast” to. “Hold fast” means to cling to them as though your life is at stake; do not let go of them no matter what! Strap yourself to them as the mythical men who strapped themselves to the ship’s mast so that when they heard the Siren’s song they would not sail their ships onto the rocks and sink.

If you do not know what the “Sirens” were:

In Greek mythology, the Sirens were dangerous creatures, which lured nearby sailors with their enchanting music and singing voices to shipwreck on the rocky coast of their island. In order to resist their enchanting and alluring songs, men would tie themselves to the ship’s masts to keep from steering the ship to its destruction.

But do not lose the point: hold fast! To the form of sound words because those are the words which will preserve our souls in times of temptation!

*2 Timothy 1:13 Hold fast the form of sound words, which thou hast heard of me, in faith and love which is in Christ Jesus.*

When we encounter problems of any kind, we will need “sound doctrine” working in our minds so that our minds will be “sound.”

*2 Timothy 1:7 For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind.*

A ‘sound mind’ comes from the “sound doctrine” which is working in our souls.

The promise is not that God will take away the problem, the suffering, or the adversity. Paul tells us these “sound words” are what makes us able to “bear it.”

*1 Corinthians 10:13 There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it.*

**Space for personal reflection and notes**