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# THE BEREANS

ACTS 17:11

**2 Timothy 1:13-18**  
**Lesson #25**  
**Guard and Share**  
**10/15/2023**

1

**As a trustee of the Gospel guard and keep it.**

*2 Timothy 1*

13 **Retain** (keep) the standard (example) of sound words which you have heard from me, in the faith and love which are in Christ Jesus. 14 **Guard** (maintain), through the **Holy Spirit who dwells in us**, the treasure which has been **entrusted** to (banked with) you.”

15 You are aware of the fact that **all who are in Asia turned away from me**, among whom are Phygelus and Hermogenes. 16 The Lord grant mercy to the house of Onesiphorus for he often refreshed me, and was not ashamed of my chains; 17 but when he was in Rome, he eagerly searched for me, and found me —18 the Lord grant to him to find mercy from the Lord on that day—and you know very well what services he rendered at Ephesus.”

2

**Interpretive paraphrase**

*2 Timothy 1:13-18*

“Hold on to the doctrine of the treasure we have **“in Christ”**, that you have learned from me. Know that Christ’s **“Spirit in you”** is enabling you to protect this Gospel. Do this with faith and love realizing that the world resists the Word and Way of the Cross.

You have heard about all those in Asia that have turned away from me and my message because of the shame of Christ that I share. Only one from Ephesus has shown God’s love to me. God bless him. You know how he was a blessing to the believers in Ephesus as well.”

3

**Jesus’ shame**  
*association with losers and suffering*

**The shame of Christian faith**  
*in our culture*



- ✓ Distorted **message**
- ✓ Disrespected **science**
- ✓ Disingenuous **love**
- ✓ Dishonest **testimonies**

4

**How to keep the faith while**  
*sharing it in a hostile environment*

**Understand the faith**  
*Major & minor issues*

**Respect “God’s Image”**  
*Common ground*

**Show agape love**  
*Self-sacrificing care*

**Be authentic**  
*Humility with vulnerability*



5

**Understand the faith - Major & minor issues**

<p><b>The Word</b>  <b>of the Cross</b>  <i>(what God, “in Christ”</i>  <i>has done</i>  <b>FOR us)</b></p> <p><b>Our identity</b>  <i>as children</i>  <b>of God.</b></p>	<p><b>The Way</b>  <b>of the Cross</b>  <i>(what “Christ in us”</i>  <i>is doing</i>  <b>IN &amp; THROUGH us)</b></p> <p><b>Our calling</b>  <i>as disciples</i>  <b>of Christ.</b></p>
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know yourself    accept yourself    get over yourself    give yourself



6

The main thing  
is to keep  
the main thing,  
the main thing.

**The main thing is the Word  
and Way of the Cross.**

7

*Paul's letters often follow this common order.*

	<i>The Word of the Cross</i>	<i>The Way of the Cross</i>
<i>Galatians</i>	<i>ch.1-4</i>	<i>5-6</i>
<i>Ephesians</i>	<i>ch.1-3</i>	<i>4-6</i>
<i>Colossians</i>	<i>ch.1-2</i>	<i>3-4</i>
<i>Romans</i>	<i>ch.1-11</i>	<i>12-16</i>
<i>1 Corinthians</i>	<i>ch.1:1-17</i>	<i>1:18-16:24</i>
	<i>2 Cor., Phil., 1&amp;2 Thess., 1&amp;2 Tim., Philem.</i>	

8

**Respect "God's Image" - Common ground**

*Acts 17*  
 "26 and **He made from one**, every nation of mankind ... 27 **that they should seek God**, if perhaps they might grope for Him and find Him, though He is **not far from each one of us**; 28 for in Him we live and move and exist, as even some of your own poets have said, '**For we also are His offspring.**'"

*Romans 1*  
 "19 because that which is known about God is **evident within them**; for God **made it evident to them**. 20 For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes, His eternal power and divine nature, have been **clearly seen**, being understood through what has been made, so that they are without excuse. "

*Romans 2:15*  
 "... in that they show the work of the Law **written in their hearts**, their **conscience bearing witness**, and their thoughts alternately accusing or else defending them,"

9

Respect and appeal  
to "God's Image"  
in all humans.

**God's image is the basis  
of our common ground.**

10

**The Big Questions that are**  
 - unavoidable to all  
 - answered by Christianity  
 - a puzzle to science

**Mortality** ✓ Why do we die?  
**Meaning** ✓ What do we live for?  
**Morality** ✓ Why do we do good?  
**Management** ✓ Why do we struggle?  
**Majesty** ✓ Why are humans so distinct?

11

"The universe we observe has precisely the properties we should expect if there is, at bottom, no design, no purpose, no evil and no good, nothing but blind pitiless indifference."

**This makes sense until we observe the human soul with its pain, longings, and instincts.**

*Richard Dawkins*  
 (British evolutionary biologist)

12

“There is but one truly serious philosophical problem and that is suicide.”

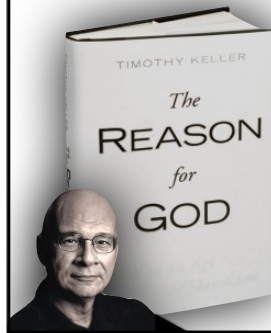


**Why do humans need hope that they can't find in the material world?**

Albert Camus

13

Science raises questions, it can't easily answer and it often leaves clues that direct us to look beyond the material world.





The difference between Science and Christianity is not **reason and faith**.

It is the **breadth of data and faith assumptions**.

We have **Clues & Evidence (not Proofs)**

Proof is a function of a **Faith Commitment**.

14

**From Data to Proof**  

Data  
+Theory  
+Testing  
+Faith commitment

Probability  
**PROOF**

[apittoteach.org](http://apittoteach.org) - Hard questions #36-38

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### SCIENCE and SPIRITUALITY

#### The challenge OF science

It may uncover issues that challenge religious traditions but this should not be feared and must be learned from.

#### The challenge TO science

Its data base is too small and its presuppositions are too narrow to back its claimed “authority” in key areas of life.

16

### Show agape love - Self-sacrificing care

“Love is moving toward another person’s soul with a commitment to help them reach the deepest desire of their heart.” Bell Hooks

which is to be fully human, bearing the image of God and being reconciled to God and man.

- L**isten and learn - personal narratives
- O**bserve and respond - I sense that you ...
- V**alue and affirm - “I like ...” “I agree.”
- E**mpathize and connect - “Me to!”

17

Fishers of men  
bait their hooks with  
agape love.

**Agape love is self-sacrificing (charity).**

18



**Be authentic - Humility with vulnerability**

*"I might be a Christian if it were not for Christians."* Mahatma Gandhi

**This generation will put up with selfish sinners more easily than inauthentic hypocrites.**

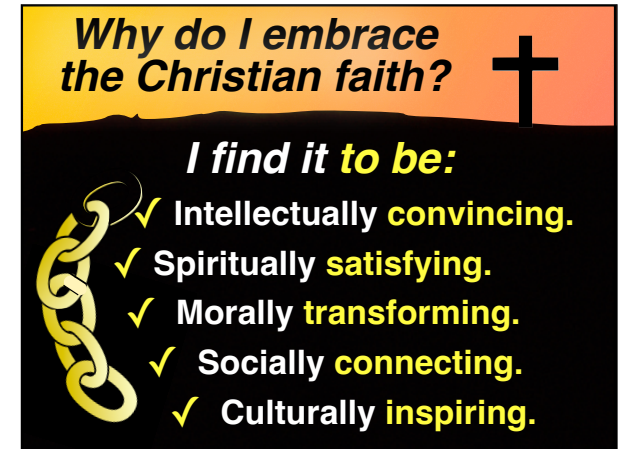
**Authenticity - three key issues**

- ✓ **Honesty** - speaking the truth (message & self)
- ✓ **Vulnerability** - being transparent
- ✓ **Humility** - Knowing, Accepting, Forgetting, Giving SELF

19



20



21

**What does God ask of a person in order to inherit eternal life?**

God simply asks that we be true to ourselves, as humans, bearing the image of God

1. We are not the judge, God is.
2. We assume God will be fair.
3. God does not grade on the curve.
4. The standard - Be true to ourself as created to perfectly reflect God's image in this world.
5. But no one meets that standard - save one.

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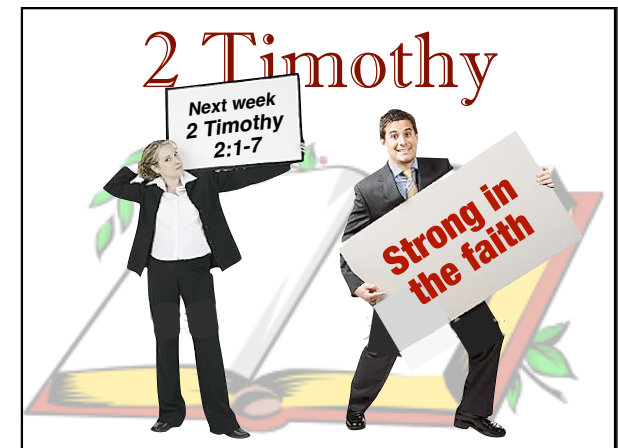
**- but only one person had to.**

***This is the good news of the Gospel.***

6. God has graciously made provision for sinners so that those who are "in Christ" by faith are imputed with Christ's righteousness.
7. No one is forced to trust Christ.
8. We are free to stand before God on the basis of our own merits knowing that He will be fair.

***We don't have to trust Christ, but we do have to face God.***

23



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