



# VILLAGE BIBLE CHURCH

## SUGAR GROVE CAMPUS

## Ready to Go!

Ready: Strength for Today, Hope for Tomorrow | Part 15  
Tim Badal | April 24, 2016 | 2 Thessalonians 2:13–17



Please take God's Word in your hands and turn to the book of 2 Thessalonians. We're finishing up a series over the next couple of weeks that we've entitled "Ready," a look at Paul's two letters to the church in Thessalonica, written in the first century, but the city is still in modern day Greece today. Paul has written these two letters to prepare the people to be ready in all occasions.

The period of time that he's talking about is the same as we find ourselves in today, even though 2,000 years have elapsed. The whole focus of these two letters is to talk about being ready during the period between Christ's resurrection on Easter and the return of Christ sometime in the future. So we find ourselves in this transitional time when God allows people to come to the saving knowledge of Jesus Christ.

As Christ followers, we need a manual on to how we are to live between these two great events, based on what He modeled in His life here on earth.

Looking forward a moment before we get into today's text, in three weeks we will be starting a series that we're calling "Life." It's all about relationships. We're going to spend six or seven weeks looking at different relationships that we have as human beings and what God's Word says about them. What does God's Word say about our marital relationships? What does it have to say about our friendships? What does it say about relationships between parents and their children? What about our relationships at work? Our lives are filled with relationships.

Over the summer we actually will have three different series: this next one on relationships; another regarding prayer; and then we're going to look at the seven deadly sins. This third series will look at what the Old Testament Scripture has to say about sins that we don't think about much, but God wants us to stay away from them nonetheless.

Fast-forwarding to the fall, we'll be looking at the life of Joseph, a man who had all kinds of ups and downs, but God used him in marvelous ways to further His Kingdom. So if you were wondering if the preaching team is doing their homework, we've got plans for the next year and look forward to you being part of our teaching series in the days to come.

But we've got three weeks left in this series titled "Ready." So today, let's look at what Paul has to say about living between the resurrection of Christ and the return of Christ, even when it seems life is becoming more and more difficult for Christians.

Let's look at Paul's words in 2 Thessalonians 2:13–17:

*<sup>13</sup> But we ought always to give thanks to God for you, brothers beloved by the Lord, because God chose you as the firstfruits to be saved, through sanctification by the Spirit and belief in the truth.*

*<sup>14</sup> To this he called you through our gospel, so that you may obtain the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ. <sup>15</sup> So then, brothers, stand firm and hold to the traditions that you were taught by us, either by our spoken word or by our letter.*

*<sup>16</sup> Now may our Lord Jesus Christ himself, and God our Father, who loved us and gave us eternal comfort and good hope through grace, <sup>17</sup> comfort your hearts and establish them in every good work and word.*

I appreciate Pastor Steve for taking on a very hard text and dealing with that very faithfully last week, addressing some of the things that Paul says are going to come and already have come in these last days that we live.

When we talk about last days, we must recognize that we are living in them. The last days are not the months before the return of Christ. In fact, the moment that Jesus Christ ascended into heaven ushered in the last days of this age. So these last days have been 2,000 years long and we don't know, it may be another 2,000 years. It may happen before this message is done. But the Bible makes

it clear that He's coming back and we need to be ready. We need to be prepared. Today's text helps us recognize how we can be faithful in a world that is unfaithful.

This past week I had the opportunity to speak at the Hinckley-Big Rock Middle School for career day. I was asked to speak on the role of being a pastor. Now you would think, "What middle schoolers would want to know about being a pastor?" I had some of the largest groups and was amazed that students wanted to find out what it means to be a pastor. I had a great opportunity to share the privilege and opportunity it is for me to serve you as your pastor. I told them how crazy some of you are. I made it clear that I serve a crazy church.

During the morning assembly, one of the speakers said that during the life of that generation, careers are going to be switched over and over again. Gone are the days of getting a job when you're 18, 19, 20 and having that job until you retire in your 60s. In this new economy, people will switch careers—not just jobs, but careers—many different times. As educators and parents, we need to prepare this next generation to adapt to different situations, scenarios and occupations so they are well prepared. This speaker articulated that it was the vision of the school that the students be ready. That word "ready" reminded me of our series "Ready" so I began thinking about the Thessalonians and today's text.

Paul is articulating to a group of believers that in the last days, Christians must be ready to adapt because things are not going to be the same as they were before. Culture is changing. Times are changing. You are changing and as a result, you need to be ready to go. You need to be prepared for what God is going to bring into your life. To give Him the glory and honor, you need to be prepared to show people Who Jesus Christ is and extend His love to others. Paul is helping those of us who are living between the resurrection of Jesus Christ and the return of Jesus Christ know how to be ready to go as Christ-followers in a world that seemingly has gone mad.

Last week's passage starts with bad news and gets a whole lot worse. Paul doesn't try to clean up the situation by saying, "It won't be as bad as you think." No, it starts out bad and gets worse. As we look at this passage today, we should ask, "How are we as Christ-followers to be ready to go in the last days? Are we prepared to take on the difficult task of being His followers? To be the salt and light He's called us to be in this world of sin?" How do we do that? Paul says we've got to do some things. We've got to remember some things. We need to rely on some things.

## 1. The disappointing situation.

In 2 Thessalonians 2:1b–2, Paul states "*...we ask you, brothers, to be quickly shaken in mind or alarmed...*" Paul acknowledges that these people were undone. Their world was upside down. Similarly, our world is upside down. Almost on a daily basis I go through the news feeds on my phone and see new places where evil seems to be conquering good through new ways of debauchery. The truths, traditions and virtues that once were celebrated as a badge of honor in our country are now called evil, bigotry and hatred.

Paul shares two truths (verses 1–12):

Troubling days are among us. The Thessalonians found themselves in a world that hated them and looked at them with disgust. Instead of being able to stand for truth, they were losing opportunities. They were losing their homes. They were shunned by the people they loved and spent time with regularly.

In verses 1–12, Paul articulated that there will be troubling and difficult days. Oh, there will be good days and there will be fun days, but there will be great disappointment and struggle, too. Paul was reminding them this isn't just happening in northern Greece; it's happening all over the world. And we see that the world is troubled and agitated now. There are all kinds of upheaval. Why? Because people continually seek to live apart from God. Paul says as Christians we're not immune to these troubles and difficult days. The difference is that instead of just going blindly into this kind of world we are to think soberly about how to respond.

So Paul tells us the spirit of antichrist is alive and well. Boy, we see it. The spirit of antichrist is alive when one individual guns down another. The spirit of antichrist is found in the neglect and abandonment of a child. The spirit of antichrist is seen when we cheat on tests and cheat in the workplace. The spirit of antichrist is seen when we say no to what God has ordained for sex within marriage but we go our own way. The spirit of antichrist is found in children who rebel against their parents. The spirit of antichrist is found in churches that deny the truth of the Scriptures and promote the traditions of men. The spirit of antichrist is found when we turn a blind eye to entertainment that is unbecoming for believers to see but watch it anyway. We see the spirit of antichrist when we know what we should be doing and we don't do it. The spirit of antichrist is all around us. And as a result, we live in troubling days.

Tribulation is on the way. As we learned last week, not only are troubling days among us, but tribulation is on its way. It's like Paul is sharing the bad news but the Thessalonians wanted to hear the good news. Okay, here's the good news: the antichrist is coming. That should brighten your day. The greatest personification of evil within a human being is going to come into this troubled culture, but we don't know how nor when he's going to come. We don't even know where it's going to happen. But what we do know is there will be a human being who will come on the scene and will do something so brilliant that the world will stand enamored with him. They will seek to be a part of his team. They will seek to honor and obey him. This guy will say, "I'm going to set myself up as god so that people may worship and adore me." The Bible says people will run headlong into that. They will pursue him thinking they are doing what is right and good.

In verse nine, Paul says the reason they do this is that he's going to do it with powerful signs and wonders. He's going to do it through wicked deception. And the people who are going to follow are people who are perishing, who refuse to love the truth, who are under a strong delusion, who believe that which is false, who are condemned, who do not believe and who take pleasure in unrighteousness. The world will be filled with people who hate God and love themselves.

So the question we have to ask is what is a Christian to do? What are we going to do that will shine a light for Jesus Christ in these days? Now remember, we're in the last days and so these things are happening and will continue to happen in greater fashion until the return of Jesus Christ. So what are we to do?

## 2. The different strategies.

How can we address these issues? First of all, notice the different strategies that we can take in our responses. Notice that these strategies are actually nowhere in our text.

While living in the last days we can run away and hide in fear. The first strategy is, "Okay, life is bad. The world is sinful and is pursuing the things of hell and the devil. What is a Christian to do? I know! I'll run for the hills because trouble is coming." Right? No! But how many of you, in your middle class suburban home, close out the world because it's a scary place and because it might infect your home? How many of you would rather live in a bubble? You live in this world only if you have to. You only do commerce if you have to. You only go to a job to get paid so you can have food for your family, have a house, but there's no spiritual value to your working. You make sure nobody in the neighborhood knows who you are. You make sure that your home never has an unbeliever in it. You make sure none of your acquaintances or friends are with people who don't know Jesus. You quarantine yourself because you're scared of what the world offers and because, of course, Paul exhorts us to live like this. Right?

Nowhere does he say that. The Bible tells us we are to be in the world. The Bible calls us to be the salt of the earth (Matthew 5:13). To be effective as salt means you have to have proximity to that which you are trying to season. So we need to recognize that our natural tendency to a world gone wild is to run away and get out of Dodge as quickly as we can, because nothing of value is going to come from swimming in the sewer. But Paul doesn't say that.

While living in the last days we can rally around a fixer. Notice the second thing Paul doesn't say. He doesn't say run away in fear. Neither does he say to find someone who can fix the problems. It's human nature to think, "We need to vote that certain person into office so he (or she) can change things." So we find someone who's yelling about the culture like we are, who's talking about how evil the culture has become around us. We look for someone who is charismatic and can speak very clearly to the ills of the day. Then we rally around and campaign for this person. We're seeing this happen even today as we enter into what is seemingly an endless election cycle. We begin to think everything will change if this person is presiding in the Oval Office, or if this person is serving us in Congress, or if we can fill this judicial seat. Everything will get fixed and be better then. But here's the thing that I've come to learn: neither Republicans nor Democrats have stemmed the tide of evil in our culture. These are things that go through my mind. I don't want my children to fall into the evils of this world. I want to protect them. I want to keep them close to me. I start listening to people who tell me they can fix it so I start to think we just need a different president. We just need a different Congress. We just need a different Supreme Court. That would fix things.

But notice that nowhere in the text does Paul say, "Trouble is incoming. It's here. Get the campaign posters, set up some campaign stops and find someone who can sit on the Senate in Rome and change things so Christians can be happier about their lives in this world." I don't see Paul say that here either.

While living in the last days we can resist and fight culture. We can run away and hide in fear. We can rally around a fixer. Or we can resist and fight culture. We tend to react based on personality. Those who run away in fear are going to be more timid, more anxious about things. Then there are the fighters. They're the ones who say, "You know what? The way we deal with culture is to fight fire with fire. If our opponents come with a knife, we're bringing a gun. If they put one of us in the hospital, we're putting them in the morgue." We began to think that if the culture is going to fight with us, then we're going to do the same thing. So when our culture speaks in incredibly ungodly, hurtful and harsh ways toward Christians, what do we do? We turn around and do the same in kind. "They demonize us so we'll demonize them. They fight against us, we'll fight against them."

Notice in the text, troubling times are here and tribulation is coming. And notice what Paul says: "Make sure you start boycotting. Make sure everything they hear from you is judgmental and full of protest. Make sure they know you're angry. Make sure they know that you will not stand for this kind of evil and sin in the world." Paul says because of the trouble and the tribulation, get on your Facebook page and unleash a hate-filled response to the world. No. None of these are mentioned. They're all human nature and they might make us feel good, but as Christians Paul does not exhort us to any of these responses.

Just this week, we've heard of troubles in the news that speak to the tribulation that is coming:

- A baseball analyst was fired by ESPN because of views that he has on the idea of gender. And what he holds is a traditional Biblical worldview.

- A bi-vocational Seventh Day Adventist pastor who was preaching at his church was in line to receive a promotion in his other job which was in the Georgia health department, but it was rescinded. It was taken from him because they listened to some of his sermons and concluded that his views were unacceptable.
- We're dealing with boycotts of retail stores because of differing views about who uses which restrooms.

And we wonder what the Christian response should be. As a pastor I've seen the litany of responses that we can have and it comes back to this question: How are we to live during these troubled times and with the knowledge that tribulation is coming? Our natural response is like popcorn popping away when the fire gets hot. We respond but we never stop to ask the question, "What does Scripture say?" I love 2 Thessalonians, because notice what Paul doesn't say: We're not to resist and fight culture. We're not to run away and hide. We're not to rally around a fixer who will fix the problem. But how do we fix it? Well, we don't. God does. The answer is given in verse 13 and I call it the divine solution.

### 3. The divine solution.

Notice in verse 13 Paul starts out with "*but*" —there's a contrast here. Paul is going to contrast that which is going on in the world, that which is going on in the lives of those who are rebellious and fighting against God, pursuing unrighteousness with those who are loved and chosen by God. Notice what he says to the Thessalonians: "*But we ought always to give thanks to God for you, brothers beloved by the Lord...*" Paul says, "Listen, you're part of the family of God and just like us, you Thessalonians have been given a new life in Jesus Christ."

Paul wants us to recognize that if we are going to have the right response to a world of sin, then that solution involves certain things.

One of the ways I prepare a sermon is by writing down the passage of Scripture in my own words first. I read it and go over it and get it into my head, then I sit down and say, "Okay, if someone asked me to tell them in my own words what Paul was saying, here's what I would tell them." So here's what I have written down:

It seems that the world is growing darker by the minute. It's all bad, bad, bad, bad, bad. But there's a verse with good here: Jesus wins! So what is God calling us to? In verses 13 and 14, God is calling us to a steadfast hope and a vibrant faith that enables believers to shine brighter and bolder than ever before. We have hope. We have comfort. We've been given grace. But where does that come from and how does that become a reality?

This divine solution becomes a reality by remembering what we have. Paul says, "*You, brothers beloved by the Lord, because God chose you as the firstfruits to be saved, through sanctification by the Spirit and belief in the truth. To this He called you through our gospel, so that you may obtain the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ.*" Paul does what scholars say is a miniature systematic theology of all that God has done for us.

God, first of all, loves us. Notice it says we are "*beloved by the Lord.*"

One of the greatest things that I can claim is that during this life I have enjoyed the love of an incredible woman, Amanda. I can't tell you how wonderful it is to have that love in my life. But listen to me, that pales in comparison to knowing that the God of the universe put His affection upon me. Notice it says that this love began before I ever loved Him. It says "*...because God chose you as the firstfruits to be saved.*" It's hard to understand why God would love me, why God would put His affection on me. Why would the Creator of the universe see fit to look upon me and shows me love? But He did it before I could ever show Him love back. In fact, the Bible says that while we were sinners Christ died for us (Romans 5:8). He did the most loving thing in the world. He laid down His life for me while I was a sinner.

We will be celebrating Mother's Day here in a couple of weeks, and mothers show us that kind of love as best they can from an earthly perspective. While my wife was pregnant with each of our three boys, she loved those babies before they were born. How do I know? Because she didn't get angry when those babies would kick. She wouldn't get angry when those babies would cause her indigestion or cause her to throw up in the morning. She looked with great anticipation to the moment she was going to watch those babies live out their lives, fully knowing that they were going to disobey her, causing her all kinds of disappointment and struggle. They were going to keep her up at night. The flu season was going to come and the deadbeat dad next to her isn't going to get up. The diapers are going to be filled and he's going to neglect that role as well. And she still showed love.

Moms, you help us to see Who God is, because when God put His love on us sinners, He knew we were going to disobey and disappoint Him. God knew that we were going to create all kinds of issues and struggles, because He knew we would be hypocrites. But God said, "I don't care. I love them regardless and I'm going to pour out My grace and mercy on them."

Why would this be important to remember? Because when our world gets turned upside down, it's wonderful to know that God is on our side. Right? And remember, God is on our side not because of something we've done, but because He made an objective decision that no matter what we do He is going to love us.

This is where the analogy of a mother's love comes to its end. There are moments when even the best of moms struggle to love their children. But God doesn't struggle. He didn't make this decision based on how good we would be or how much we would try. He based this decision on His own character. He is a loving and merciful God Who will fulfill His promises no matter what we do.

Notice that this process starts in eternity past with our salvation. God says later in this text, "Because I started that work back then, I'm going to walk you through your sanctification. Through the ups and downs of becoming like Christ in this world, I'm going to stick with you. Then there is a specific moment in time when I will send my Son Jesus to come in the clouds, and in that moment believers' salvation will be fulfilled and they will experience the full joy and peace as part of the family of God.

So this begs the question what can man do to me? Paul put it this way in one of the greatest chapters of all of Scripture, Romans 8: because of the love of Christ there is nothing that can separate us from the love of God. Life, death, angels, demons, anything in eternity past, anything in eternity future, nothing we can do can separate us from that love of God in Christ Jesus. So when we see the world falling apart, we can know God is at our side.

This divine solution becomes a reality by receiving what God gives. How do we know if we have God's love? Notice verse 15 says, "*So then, brothers, stand firm and hold to the traditions that you were taught by us, either by our spoken word or by our letter.*" You see, there is something we have to do. We can't sit back and say, "Well, I'm going to just enjoy and bathe in the love of God and not do anything to change who I am." No. Being loved by God means showing Him reverence, obeying His Word and trying to please Him in everything we do.

How do we show that we are loved by God? Notice first of all, we believe the truth. Paul says you prove that you are loved by God and are a follower of Jesus Christ by not being like those in verses 1–12. Instead obey the truth when it is preached to you, by believing in God and believing in His Son Jesus Christ.

Notice the phrase, "*so then.*" In light of all that God has done for you, there are two things Paul says you need to do. First of all, "*stand firm.*" This phrase in the Greek literally means to stand solidly in one place, settled in one's mind. In the secular use, this word "*stand firm*" was used to describe the strong back of a horse that is able to endure the weight of the rider without shaking at the knees or becoming feeble. This idea also described a wall that was immovable. Now why would Paul tell us we need to "*stand firm*"? Because the world is going to throw things at us and we need to be ready for them.

This last week, I attended Joshua's baseball practice. If you know anything about baseball, you know they start pitching to the boys when they are nine and ten years old. It's a horrific sight. Okay? Jack, the pitcher, has an arm like a cannon. He can fire the ball like I've never seen a kid that age pitch. Here's the problem: he has no control over where the ball is going once it leaves his hands. And they don't even using those softballs anymore; these are hard balls. So the first batter gets up and he's scared out of his mind already. How do you know a kid's nervous in baseball? He stands four feet away from home plate. "Go ahead and pitch it. Go ahead. I'll get it." First pitch. Wham! Right in the arm. Hayden starts crying. The coach says, "Get back in there. Rub it out." Two pitches later. Wham! Right in the leg. The coach says, "Alright, this is baseball, son."

He kept listening to his coach, probably from a lack of discernment on his part. Good old Jack on the mound thinks, "What will make a pitch go over the plate more than throwing it with all my might as hard as I can?" Wham! Right in the side. Now Hayden takes that bat, throws it down and says, "I never want to play baseball again."

How many of you are feeling that way in this upside down world? You're tired of others telling you you're ignorant for believing the truths of Scripture; telling you that you're wasting your money by giving it to the church; telling you that you're wasting your time following a guy who lived 2,000 years ago. You're tired of hearing culture tell you you're wrong and they're right. You're tired of watching culture turn from truth to pursue lies. Just like little Hayden in the batter's box, you're shaking as you walk into the world.

At the end of that practice last week, Hayden, again not known for discernment, was up to bat, except this time the coach was pitching. I was standing there next to him and heard him say, "I don't want to do it." I said, "This time, the pitcher has better control. Get in there. You've got to learn not to be afraid or you'll never hit the ball." So he got back in there and he hit the ball. So what did he learn? At times, bad things are going to happen and many times you're not going to be able to get out of the way quick enough. But God calls us to get back into the batter's box and be ready to hit the ball. Some of us have given up. Some of us have said, "You know what, I'm taking my Christian bat and going home, never to say a word again."

The Christian life is going to be filled with the marks of being attacked. But quite honestly, we have not seen the worst of it yet. We need to be ready. Being prepared isn't standing behind the fence and never getting in the batter's box. It's not putting on so much gear that you'll never be able to hit the ball. You need to recognize that though the attacks may come, you've got a God Who loves you. You've got a God Who says He'll never leave you nor forsake you. You've got a God Who says we're more than conquerors in Christ Jesus. So stand firm. And when you do, God will give you opportunities and will help you hit the ball when it comes across the plate.

Going back to the text, we see that Paul says, "*stand firm and hold to the traditions.*" That phrase "*hold to*" was a sailing term used of stormy seas. Sailors know when the seas are rocking to and fro that they need to hold onto something. Even the most seasoned of fishermen or seafaring individuals cannot stand or walk on the deck without holding onto something. Why? Because the ship is rocking and the waves are going to toss them around. One of two things will happen: they will fall over all the time, or if they get too close to the side, they're going to get knocked off the ship.

Paul says just like those fishermen and seamen who find themselves on rocky seas, you need to find something to hold onto. You will notice there are a lot of things on a ship's deck to hold onto. Why? Because when stormy seas come you need to hold onto something

that isn't going to come loose. How can you stand firm? If you have nothing to hold onto then you're in trouble, but if there's something firmly attached that you can grab, you can weather the storm.

So Paul says he wants you to "*hold to the traditions that you were taught by us, either by our spoken word or by our letter.*" What's he talking about there? What he's not talking about is just holding onto the things this world says. He's saying hold on to the letters that we're reading, the Holy Scriptures, and the apostolic message. These truths are what we want you to hold onto.

So how do we apply this today? When the world gets difficult, when we're being tossed to and fro, what do we grab onto? First of all, a solid and robust doctrine of Who God is. The moment we forget that God is our Creator and knows more about us than we know about ourselves, we will fall into all sorts of sin. For example, this whole question of gender is not about humanity but about God. If I question whether I'm male or female, my problem isn't with myself. My problem is with my God. God created males and females. "Well, I don't like how You created me, God, so I'm going to identify differently." Well, let me tell you something. The solution is a robust understanding of Who God is. God has created me the way I am. God knit me together in my mother's womb. I must recognize and hold fast to the truth that God knows me. He didn't make a mistake. Because He made me in the way I am, He created me for a purpose. I need to hold onto that. So it's the doctrine of God.

Notice it's also the directives of God. God says, "Listen, trouble's coming and tribulation is on its way, and you need to gather together with likeminded Christians who sit under the teaching and authority of God's Word and hold onto that together."

Some years back there was a very intense movie about tornadoes called "Twister." How many tornadoes can break out in one day? They had something like 47 in this movie. During the last big tornado, the two main characters were running and found themselves needing to find something to hold onto because the storm was coming right at them. In that moment they found this metal well pipe that went down hundreds of feet into the ground. They took harnesses and tied themselves up. Literally, the storm (with all its Hollywood effects) took up everything around them. But because they were holding onto something that was secure, they were not sucked into the tornado.

As Christians, the gathering of God's people for the purpose of worship, fellowship and teaching is what will preserve us as salt and light in a world that's gone wild. In a world that's turned upside down as we have today, we need one another. The world is rocky. The world is tossing us to and fro. What we need to do when we gather together is hold onto one another, saying, "You can do it another week. Go and be salt and light." "But I might lose my job or lose my friend." "That's all right. God is with you. He says good things will happen. He says that when He comes back He will destroy all those who fight against Him, including the antichrist, with one word from His mouth.

This divine solution becomes a reality by relying on God. Be encouraged. Be of good cheer. We need to hold tight. We need to stand firm. Notice we need to rely on Him as we live. Paul finishes with a benediction: "*Now may our Lord Jesus Christ himself, and God our Father, who loved us and gave us eternal comfort and good hope through grace, comfort your hearts and establish them in every good work and word.*"

What do we need in this world when we open our news feeds and we see that the world again finds itself pursuing hell instead of heaven? We need God's comfort. We need God's hope. We need God's grace. But it seems like evil is winning. What do we cling to when we see people pursuing lies instead of truth? When we feel like it's no use? When we ask why we should continue? When we have to stand and be salt and light in the world? When it seems that we're the only ones standing for truth? In those moments we need God's comfort, God's hope and God's grace.

As your pastor, I pray that each and every day you will tap into that comfort, hope and grace. Why? Because when we put our trust in that, notice what God says will take place. We will be established, firmly rooted, immovable, steadfast in every good work and word. That means God says "I'm with you. I'll see you through." Oh, you may get stung by the flaming arrows of the enemy, but they won't take you out.

At the end of that baseball practice I went up to the batter and said, "Hayden, it was a good practice." He said, "It may have been for you, coach." I said, "Hayden, you're going home, aren't you?" He said, "Yeah." I said, "Listen, that's the best Jack could throw your way and you're still standing and you're ready to take on another day." He played yesterday in a ballgame and did just fine. Similarly, we will do just fine when we receive the things that God has given us, when we rely on His good comfort and grace, knowing that God Who calls us is faithful.

Are you ready to go? Are you ready for another week? Oh, the world's going to throw a lot your way, but thanks be to God, you've got His comfort, hope and grace. You can achieve all that He wants for you in every good work and every good word in this week to come.