



*God Gives His Word, His Love
And His Ability To
The Christian Believer*

A Teaching Outline

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A Broken Pocket

By Harold Bollinger

Within my heart, I found a broken pocket.
From hurts, harsh words, and rejection of the past.
New joys I tried to place with in the pocket.
Yet they quickly slipped away and would not last.

To mend the fracture, I tried to reminisce,
I'd check each event in hope to understand.
In my distress, I could not patch this pocket,
While holding on to memories of the past.

Slowly, hopes for a future quickly rose before me
While holding on to past unforgiven deeds.
To change my heart and plan a new beginning,
The memories of the past I choose not to feed.

Bad memories past slipped slowly from my pocket,
Replaced by a new loving, much more fulfilling way.
The mended pocket holds now a new beginning.
Containing space for new memories and new days.

Abide in Christ the vine, and bear fruit.

John 15:5

"I am the vine, you are the branches; he who abides in me and I in him, he bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing.

Because Jesus Christ is Lord and Master, he should call us servants; instead, he calls us friends. How comforting and reassuring to be chosen as Christ's friends! Because he is Lord and Master, we owe him our unqualified obedience, but most of all, Jesus asks us to obey him because we love him.

Our adequacy is from God.

2 Corinthians 3:5

Not that we are adequate in ourselves to consider anything as coming from ourselves, but our adequacy is from God.

Paul was not boasting; he gave God the credit for all his accomplishments. While the false teachers boasted of their own power and success, Paul expressed his humility before God.

No one can claim to be adequate without God's help. No one is competent to carry out the responsibilities of God's calling in his or her own strength.

Without the Holy Spirit's enabling, our natural talent can carry us only so far. As Christ's witnesses, we need the character and special strength that only God gives.



No opponent will be able to resist or refute your wisdom.

Luke 21:15

For I will give you utterance and wisdom which none of your opponents will be able to resist or refute.

Jesus warned that in the coming persecutions his followers would be betrayed by their family members and friends. Christians of every age have had to face this possibility. It is reassuring to know that even when we feel completely abandoned, the Holy Spirit will stay with us.

He will comfort us, protect us, and give us the words we need. This assurance can give us the courage and hope to stand firm for Christ no matter how difficult the situation.

Be filled with God's knowledge, and admonish one another.

Romans 15:14

And concerning you, my brethren, I myself also am convinced that you yourselves are full of goodness, filled with all knowledge and able also to admonish one another.

Paul believed that he had accomplished what God wanted him to do there, and he was looking forward to taking the Good News to new lands west of Rome. When Paul eventually went to Rome, however, it was as a prisoner (see Acts 28). Tradition says that Paul was released for a time and that he used this opportunity to go to Spain to preach the Good News. This journey is not mentioned in the book of Acts.

1 Corinthians 5:5, OSAS, He Is Able

- It is not my ability, but my response to God's ability, that counts. Corrie ten Boom
- 2 Timothy 1:12 ...I know whom I have believed and I am convinced that He is able to guard what I have entrusted to Him until that day.
- Philippians 1:6 For I am confident of this very thing, that He who began a good work in you will perfect it until the day of Christ Jesus.
- Romans 14:4...the Lord is able to make him stand.
- NAU Romans 16:25 Now to Him who is able to establish you...

The fire will qualify each man's work.

1 Corinthians 3:13

Each man's work will become evident; for the day will show it because it is to be revealed with fire, and the fire itself will test the quality of each man's work.

Two sure ways to destroy a building are to tamper with the foundation and to build with inferior materials. The church must be built on Christ, not on any other person or principle. Christ will evaluate each person's contribution to the life of the church, and judgment day will reveal the sincerity of each person's work. God will determine whether or not a person has been faithful to Jesus' instructions. Good work will be rewarded; unfaithful or inferior work will be discounted. "The builder will be saved, but like someone barely escaping through a wall of flames" means that unfaithful workers will be saved, but only by the skin of their teeth. All their accomplishments will count for nothing.

Stand against the devil's attacks with a full armor of God.

Ephesians 6:11

Put on the full armor of God, so that you will be able to stand firm against the schemes of the devil.

In the Christian life we battle against rulers and authorities (the powerful evil forces of fallen angels headed by the devil, who is a vicious fighter, see 1 Peter 5:8). To withstand their attacks, we must depend on God's strength and use every piece of his armor. Paul is not only giving this counsel to the church, the body of Christ, but to all individuals within the church. The whole body needs to be armed.

As you do battle against the "mighty powers in this dark world," fight in the strength of the church, whose power comes from the Holy Spirit.

Hold fast to the faithful word.

Titus 1:9

Holding fast the faithful word which is in accordance with the teaching, so that he will be able both to exhort in sound doctrine and to refute those who contradict.

Paul briefly describes some qualifications that the elders should have. Paul had given Timothy a similar set of instructions for the church in Ephesus (see 1 Timothy 3:1-7; 5:22). Notice that most of the qualifications involve character, not knowledge or skill. A person's lifestyle and relationships provide a window into his or her character.

Consider these qualifications as you evaluate a person for a position of leadership in your church. It is important to have leaders who can effectively preach God's Word; it is even more important to have those who can live out God's Word and be examples for others to follow.

Do not stumble in what you say.

James 3:2

For we all stumble in many ways if anyone does not stumble in what he says, he is a perfect man, able to bridle the whole body as well.

What you say and what you *don't say* are both important.

To use proper speech you must not only say the right words at the right time but also not say what you shouldn't.

Examples of an untamed tongue include gossiping, putting others down, and bragging, manipulating, false teaching, exaggerating, complaining, flattering, and lying. Before you speak, ask, is what I want to say true? Is it necessary? Is it kind?

With God's strength, you can do all things.

Philippians 4:13

I can do all things through Him who strengthens me.

Paul could get along happily because he could see life from God's point of view. He focused on what he was supposed to *do*, not what he felt he should *have*. Paul had his priorities straight, and he was grateful for everything God had given him.

Paul had detached himself from the nonessentials so that he could concentrate on the eternal. Often the desire for more or better possessions is really a longing to fill an empty place in a person's life. To what are you drawn when you feel empty inside? How can you find true contentment? The answer lies in your perspective, your priorities, and your source of power.

Can we really do everything? The power we receive in union with Christ is sufficient to do his will and to face the challenges that arise from our commitment to doing it.

He does not grant us superhuman ability to accomplish anything we can imagine without regard to his interests. As we contend for the faith, we will face troubles, pressures, and trials. As they come, ask Christ to strengthen you.

An invitation is given to open your heart's door to Jesus

Rev. 3:20

Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me.

To ask Jesus to come into your heart, please pray this Prayer:

Dear Lord Jesus, I believe you are the Christ, the Son of the Living God. I ask you to forgive me of my sins and coming into my heart. I accept you as savior and will follow you as Lord. Amen.

References:

Holy Bible: King James Translation

New American Standard Bible

Additional comments and charts are taken from: *Life Application Study Bible*. Illinois: Tyndale House 2007. Print