

Wise for Salvation

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Introduction

Tis the season for denominational conventions. The summer months are usually that time of year when denominations large and small meet to conduct business, share stories, network ministries, play politics, and fight over doctrine. I was just at such a convention in Greensboro, North Carolina, participating with Cedarville University, my employer at the Southern Baptist Convention. The saving grace for me, other than getting to meet interesting people and fellowshiping with those who are of like mind, was that I was there as a journalist and an observer, not as a participant in the convention itself. I was able to witness a debate between two Southern Baptist seminary presidents, Dr. Al Mohler, Jr. and Dr. Paige Patterson, hold a discussion or quasi-debate over the five points of Calvinism and evangelism. During that debate Dr. Mohler, who proclaimed himself a five point Calvinist, made the observation that he was glad that their debate was over the doctrines of grace and not issues that, not so long ago in the Southern Baptist Convention, may have been up for grabs, such as homosexuality and women pastors.

But one look at the dockets on many of the conventions this summer that is precisely the case. Meeting in Grand Rapids this week one of the oldest Reformed Denominations in the United States, the Christian Reformed Church, decide that it would drop the word "male" from the qualifications of elder, opening the way for all ordained offices in the CRC to be made available to women in 2007. At this same convention, which the CRC calls a "Synod", the Christian Reformed Church decided to retain Question and Answer 80 of the Heidelberg Catechism, but to place brackets around the part that denounces the Roman Catholic mass as a "condemnable idolatry". In an overture to the Roman Catholic church, the CRC further explained that these paragraphs do not reflect the official teaching or practice of today's Roman Catholic church and are not confessionally binding on members of the CRC.

America's oldest Presbyterian denomination, the liberal Presbyterian Church USA held open hearings this week at their convention in Birmingham, Alabama on what they call "the Trinity Paper". This paper according to one of its female authors, quote: "denounces oppressive paradigms that may be upheld by the idea of a God that is exclusively male." It goes on to say that "Christian tradition has relied almost exclusively on male images of God, to the point where women and men have asked the church to recover more expansive images which both honor our tradition and more fully reflect the God of Genesis, whose own image is both male and female".

And as some of you know, the liberal Episcopal Church USA has been meeting this week up in Columbus. Today, they were expected to vote on a new leader for their denomination. The continuing controversy in the EC-USA has been the decision in 2003 to ordain an openly homosexual bishop. Many of those conservative Episcopalian churches that had not already left the EC-USA felt compelled to do so. The larger Anglican Communion or Church of England stands at a point of major fracture for the first time in hundreds of years. This week, just a few days before his tenure as Presiding Bishop of the Episcopal Church was due to end, Frank Griswold showed up on the Larry King Show on CNN and declared that the Church since the time of Pentecost has been continually receiving new truth from God to the present day. Griswold told King that God quote: "has been revealing to human investigators within the Church truths concerning the identity, character, will and purposes of Deity for humankind." Unquote. In other words, God has given new revelation to the

church that homosexuality is acceptable. Griswold is using one heresy, that God's revelation continues, to justify another heresy, abominable, sinful behavior (and thoughts) are not sin or violations of God's holiness.

These are just three examples. I could cite many more. These are merely representative of what is "out there" identifying itself as Christian and being anything but. One might be inclined to believe that what I've highlighted here are extremes. Surely none of us would align ourselves with ideas and beliefs that are so obviously contrary to Christ, his work on the cross, and God's will expressed in His inerrant Word.

It is to our benefit to pay attention to these examples for the following reason: there was a day in which these denominations held to the faith once for all delivered to the saints. There was a day in which these denominations believed the gospel. In fact, were one to take these stories and transport them back 200 or 300 years to the forefathers of these denominations they, like us, would be appalled.

When we consider these examples, we must ask ourselves three questions: 1. what went wrong? 2. how does *this* happen? 3. how do we keep this from happening to us? And that last question quite rightly assumes, ever so humbly, that it is possible for this to happen to us. No one, even the most godly and learned of saints or elders, is immune.

Paul's last will and testament

Paul anticipates the kind of falling away from the gospel that is most obvious in the apostate churches we are hearing about in the news. Those quotes from the ECUSA would not surprise him. He not only presumes such apostasy as he writes his last will and testament to Timothy, that apostasy becomes part of the impetus for writing his last will and testament to Timothy.

The three books that we call the pastoral epistles, 1 & 2 Timothy and Titus, flow from the pen of an apostle who knows he is leaving the scene. Paul will soon be gone. He will join His Savior and the saints of history. Allusions are everywhere in these epistles that the enemies of the gospel lurk on the outside and on the inside. These enemies threaten to snuff out the life of the churches that Paul had planted with Timothy and Titus and John Mark and Apollos and Aquila and Priscilla and other co-laborers. These churches had been planted with spilled blood, much sweat, and many tears. What will happen to these churches when Paul is no longer there to protect them? What will happen to the gospel when Paul is no longer there to defend it? And Paul himself knows and seemingly concedes that those enemies who hover over the flock as wolves will succeed in capturing and killing prey. And this leads to another obvious question: How will Timothy respond in the wake of Paul's departure?

As we look at this dilemma and Paul's answer to it let us make one statement that must be made in our Clearcreek Chapel context. All of us affirm that God's will cannot be thwarted. That includes God's plan for salvation in Christ. That includes God's plan for the church united to Christ. Inevitably there are sometimes some who affirm these things as we do who will wonder why consider the threat at all in our understanding of the text. But I would remind us as we consider Paul's word and feel his urgency that these eternal edicts that we affirm also are accomplished, per his eternal edict, in real time and space. Paul can affirm the eternal purposes in Christ Jesus on one hand, and consider the threat posed by Christ's enemies on the other. The threat to the gospel is very real. And the means by which God accomplishes his eternal purposes in preserving the gospel is the church. As we come to the text tonight, we are, in the interest of time, presuming these things.

Turn to 2 Timothy 3. 2 Timothy 3 appears in what many consider to be Paul's last will and testament. Paul is in jail. His friends have deserted him. He is facing his final hours where he expects to be

poured out like a drink offering, he tells Timothy. In the not too distant future, Timothy is going to lose his mentor, his friend, his confidante, his father in the ministry. There will be no one to lean on for advice. And so this is it. Paul is concerned about the future of the gospel. The life of the church is at stake. Timothy is being entrusted with Paul's ministry so that the gospel will continue to move forward and expand from its resurrection and ascension launch-pad. How will the church keep from falling into grievous error and abandoning the gospel with which it has been entrusted? Is the church and Timothy so reliant on Paul that once Paul is gone it will be open season on the sheep for the wolves?

2 Timothy 3:1-9

Here is how Paul continues his last will and testament to Timothy... we begin in 2 Timothy 3:1:

"...in the last days... (don't let this phrase be a hang up. Paul is speaking in the present tense to Timothy... this is an expectation for Timothy in his day)... in the last days there will come times of difficulty. ² For people will be lovers of self, lovers of money, proud, arrogant, abusive, disobedient to their parents, ungrateful, unholy, ³ heartless, unappeasable, slanderous, without self-control, brutal, not loving good, ⁴ treacherous, reckless, swollen with conceit, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God, ⁵ **having the appearance of godliness, but denying its power.** Avoid such people. ⁶ For among them are (notice the present tense)... For among those who are lovers of self... among those who have the appearance of godliness, but deny its power...are those who creep into households and capture weak women, burdened with sins and led astray by various passions, ⁷ always learning and **never able to arrive at a knowledge of the truth.** ⁸ Just as Jannes and Jambres opposed Moses, so **these men also oppose the truth, men corrupted in mind and disqualified regarding the faith.** ⁹ But they will not get very far, for **their folly** will be plain to all, as was that of those two men.

Already there are those who are opposing the gospel, not just from outside of the church, but from within. The opponents have the appearance of godliness, but they deny the power of the gospel. Their behavior betrays a false profession. They relish learning activity but never put what they have learned into practice. They'd rather talk than walk. Not only do they really not know the truth they claim to possess, they oppose the truth. And their actions disqualify them from the faith... these men have no right to call themselves Christians... their behavior proves they do not belong to the household of faith. They are, in fact, imposters who have abandoned the gospel and have disqualified themselves from Christianity in their unbelieving folly.

And as if it were not enough... as Paul describes these opponents of the gospel he throws in one other characteristic meant to grab Timothy's attention. These hypocrites are not content with merely opposing the truth. They have disqualified themselves from the gospel and they will stop at nothing to take others with them. They prey on the weak and the vulnerable. Like slimeball casanovas they creep into households and capture weak women; under the guise of spirituality, these creeps take advantage of women burdened by sin and lead them astray with their passions. And the chilling implication here is that these weren't just your average pew-sitters. These were leaders... elders quite possibly... fellow church planters with Paul.

2 Timothy 3:10-17

Yet, Paul gives hope. He says there is a limit to the damage inflicted by these adversaries. He anticipates their end. They will not get very far. The mask will be pulled off. They will be exposed for who they really are: unbelieving fools without salvation. How will that happen? What will be the undoing of those who oppose the gospel? The answer is given in 2 Tim. 3:10ff:

¹⁰ You, **however**,... (that word however tells us that Paul is contrasting those who oppose the truth with Timothy... You, Timothy, unlike men who have opposed the truth and unlike those who have been disqualified regarding the faith...) have followed my teaching, my conduct, my aim in life, my faith, my patience, my love, my steadfastness, ¹¹ my persecutions and sufferings that happened to me at Antioch, at Iconium, and at Lystra—which persecutions I endured; yet from them all the Lord rescued me. ¹² Indeed, **all who desire to live a godly life** in Christ Jesus will be persecuted, ¹³ while evil people and impostors will go on from bad to worse, deceiving and being deceived. ¹⁴ But as for you, continue in what you have learned and have firmly believed, knowing from whom you learned it ¹⁵ and how from childhood you have been acquainted with the sacred writings (by the way... these sacred writings for Timothy were primarily the OT... not exclusively, but primarily.... this was an eye-popping experience for me when I first understood this some years back. This a-ha moment was one of those key moments in which God was burning down what I thought I understood about interpreting Scripture)... from childhood you have been acquainted with the sacred writings, **which are able to make you wise for salvation** through faith in Christ Jesus. ¹⁶ All Scripture is **breathed out** by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, ¹⁷ that the man of God may be competent, equipped for every good work.

Here is Paul's will and testament for Timothy as Paul prepares to move into the pages of history: Unlike the unbelieving fools who oppose the gospel, Timothy is to continue in what he has learned and firmly believed from the "sacred writings" and then teach (2 Tim. 3:16,17) and preach (2 Tim. 4:1ff) what he has learned and firmly believed to others.

As we consider how Timothy is to continue Paul's ministry of teaching the flock and protecting the flock from error there are some brief considerations... there are too many to cover this evening, but here are just a few for our own purposes.

Timothy will be able to do this because the "sacred writings" that form the substance of what he is to pass along to others flow from the very creative life-breath of God. All scripture is God-breathed. This mention of breath calls to mind the breath of God that breathed life into Adam. This is the same breath that breathed life into Christ in the tomb. This is the same breath that breathed life into the church at Pentecost. This life-breath is being applied to the scriptures here in 2 Timothy 3. Since the scriptures come from the very life giving breath of God, they have the ability to provide saving life. These scriptures not only teach what is true about salvation, they give salvation itself. There is an innate ability of the scriptures, because they flow from the life-breath of God, to provide life. And it is through the God-breathed scriptures that one is regenerated and comes to saving faith in Christ Jesus (a thought that Paul also develops in Romans 10.)

Doctrine and Behavior

Because these sacred writings flow from the very creative life-breath of God they are profitable and accomplish the four things mentioned in verse 15, which can be summarized as doctrine (orthodoxy - the content of belief that is in accord with the scriptures) and behavior (orthopraxy - practice that is in accord with scriptures). Paul's assumption is that right practice is impossible without right doctrine, and both flow from the original, creative life-breath of God.

The fourfold function of Scripture: structure

These four prepositional phrases, are not coincidentally chiasmic in structure:

Scripture:

- (a) instructs in doctrine
- (b) convicts heresy
- (b') corrects improper behavior
- (a') educates in righteous behavior.

2 Timothy 3:16 tells us that Scripture, in giving life, instructs in doctrine and educates in righteous behavior. And Scripture also disputes and rebuts heresy and corrects improper behavior. The life-breath of God that is mediated by His Son through the Spirit and His Word is profitable "for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness".

The fourfold function of Scripture: meaning

What do these terms mean? When Paul speaks of "teaching", he is speaking of "doctrinal formulation". This is not necessarily preaching, although it can include preaching. But this is the teaching and passing along that body of belief, what we call "doctrine", to those who would follow Timothy.

The kind of teaching that is meant to be a rebuttal to Timothy (and Paul's) opponents is called "reproof." This kind of teaching shows listeners and learners just how those opponents are wrong in their belief system. It's not enough to teach what we believe. We must also do the hard work and place ourselves in the hard positions sometimes of teaching what we don't believe. We must be able to show why unbelieving fools are wrong in their doctrine.

And then there's "correction". This is the correcting improper behavior that flows from improper beliefs. As the scriptures show how we must change how we believe about God, Christ, and God's will for us, it also shows us how we must change our behavior and actions.

Finally, there is training in the instruction of guidelines for righteous conduct, a righteous conduct that is grounded in a righteousness that has been imputed to us (Eph. 4:24, Phil. 3:9, 2 Tim. 1:9-10). It is through the scriptures that we are able to "be" what we "are"; the scriptures train those who have been called to a holy calling (2 Tim. 1:9) in holy living. Our conduct is to reflect the purposes of God and His grace that have been given to us in Christ (2 Tim. 1:9).

The fourfold function of Scripture: purpose

Why, then, is important for Timothy and likeminded men to commit their lives to teaching, reproof, correction, training via the Scriptures (as well as its proclamation -- 2 Tim. 4:1ff)? Because "in the last days there will come times of difficulty. 2For people will be lovers of self, lovers of money, proud, arrogant, abusive, disobedient to their parents, ungrateful, unholy, 3 heartless, unappeasable, slanderous, without self-control, brutal, not loving good, 4 treacherous, reckless, swollen with conceit, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God, 5 **having the appearance of godliness, but denying its power.**" (2 Tim. 3:1-5).

Timothy and likeminded men are to "continue in what they have learned and have firmly believed" in order that the man of God, and if we take what Paul tells Timothy elsewhere in this letter by implication, in order that the people of God may be competent, (or proficient) equipped for every good work. Those good works are the practical outworking of our salvation. So after all is said and done, Paul says the Scriptures, the sacred writings, are fully sufficient to provide knowledge of, defense of, and direction for our salvation. The same reproof and correction that equips the believer against those who deny the gospel is at the same time teaching and training that equips the believer to be

wise for salvation. As Stott says, "Scripture is the chief means which God employ to bring 'the man of God' (or the people of God; crb) to maturity." (John R. W. Stott, "The Message of 2 Timothy", p. 103)

The goal: wise for salvation

And while much of what we read about these verses emphasizes being "equipped for every good work" as the goal of the teaching, reproof, correction, and training, I believe this equipping serves a larger purpose that has already been stated in verse 15. The phrase "in order that" points us back to the main point Paul wants Timothy to see... it is the main thrust of Paul's last will and testament. The equipping of the man of God is a means to an end. The goal or the end determines the means to that end. When the end is known, the means for getting to that end is determined. What is Paul's end here in 2 Timothy? **The end is to make us wise for salvation in Christ Jesus as we are thoroughly equipped through teaching, reproof, correction, and training in righteousness via the all-sufficient, life-breathing Scriptures.** In the process, opponents will be exposed, the vulnerable will be spared, and the flock will be saved from ending up as unbelieving fools. This is in keeping with Peter's statement that we have everything we need for life and godliness in these sacred writings (2 Peter 1:3). In the end, it is our salvation that is at stake.

Mission and Vision

What does this mean for Clearcreek Chapel?

Of the various ministries that we consider important and dedicate much time and effort, the ministry that complements Pastor Russ and the pulpit ministry and secondarily Pastor Greg and his counseling ministry is Adult Bible Education. Mission and vision statements that dovetail off of the church's mission and vision statements guide adult Bible Education:

Mission: By God's grace and through His Word, we will cultivate in the hearts of God's people a passion for the supremacy of God magnified in love for Him and manifested in love for one another.

Vision: Our vision is to see minds, affections, and wills transformed by the Word of God so that God is magnified by an obeying faith in every sphere of life.

Objectives and goals

The Pastor for Spiritual Development provides pastoral oversight for Adult Bible Education. The Pastor for Spiritual Development has also established an Adult Bible Education Team, which is also managed by a deacon. The individuals who serve with the elder and the deacon on the Adult Bible Education Team provide insight and support for the program, the teachers and the curriculum for Adult Bible Education. This leadership team includes: Pastor Chad Bresson, Steve Vaughan, who is the diaconal assistant, Mark Schindler, Greg Simmons, Curt Shields, John Ambro. Pastor Dale Evans, who nurtured this group along for the past few years, is still considered part of this team as well. What a joy and a privilege it has been to work with these men. These men spend a lot of time and effort on Adult Bible Education. They care deeply for the church body. They are committed to the kind of teaching, reproof, correction, and training that is described in 2 Tim. 3.

The goals and objectives have been outlined in scripture. Our goal is to help the body be wise for salvation. Our objectives toward reaching that goal are to help and assist fellow members and guests of the chapel to be thoroughly equipped for every good work in teaching doctrine, reproof, correction, and training in righteous living.

What does “wise for salvation” equipping look like at Clearcreek?

The elders have determined that the 9:15 hour more than any other, at this stage of our church’s life span, is that time in which teaching, reproof, correction, and training via the scriptures that are able to make us wise for salvation *happens*. We call that 9:15 hour and its surrounding ministries “Adult Bible Education”.

There are currently four ways or means by which we study scriptures that are able to make us wise for salvation:

- Searching the Scriptures
- The Heart of the Chapel
- Chapel Starters
- Issues and Answers

Searching the Scriptures

Searching the Scriptures is our expositional teaching series in Adult Bible Education. This Bible study is designed to take a book of the Bible and explain it, learn it, apply it, and show how it highlights Christ.

This track is foundational to the Adult Bible Education ministry. This is the main course. This is the teaching series in which we teach through a book expositionally in a more pronounced way than we do on Sunday mornings. It is here in Searching the Scriptures that the main means for Bible Study here at Clearcreek Chapel. Miss the 9:15 hour and you’re missing the main component for Bible Study here at the Chapel. Contrary to the way things may have been done in the past or even elsewhere, the main course for Bible Study is not on Wednesday night. It is at 9:15 on Sunday mornings. Once in a while I’ll hear someone say or intimate that they aren’t getting enough Bible study in our flock groups on Wednesday. Our flocks are not the main channel for Bible Study. It is at 9:15 on Sunday mornings. And when I hear that, I also have made a mental note... that person usually, not always, is not around at 9:15 on Sunday mornings. I think we can encourage them in this way: If your desire is to sink your teeth into the scriptures (and our desire as elders and as an Adult Bible Education Team is this), 9:15 is where it happens.

The Heart of the Chapel

What makes Clearcreek Chapel and its understanding of the scriptures unique? What makes Clearcreek Chapel *Clearcreek Chapel*?

The purpose of the “Heart of the Chapel” teaching series is to explain and teach those doctrines and practices that make Clearcreek Chapel distinct.

Perfect Planning: An Overview of the Bible and Its Message; this class provides an explanation of the redemptive historical preaching and teaching here at the Chapel.

Hearing with the Heart: Reading and understanding the Bible; this class provides tools for reading and understanding the Bible, especially in light of its various literary genres.

Simply Satisfying: Desiring God with Heart and Mind; this class highlights the vision of the Chapel to savor the supremacy of God as we are satisfied in Him. This class provides the backdrop for a big word coined by John Piper called Christian Hedonism. The implications of Desiring God are

displayed on the bulletin and our website: Savoring the Supremacy of God, Studying the Word of God, Shaping the People of God, Spreading the Gospel of God.

Speaking of God: An Overview of Bible Doctrine; this is a class that provides a simple systematic theology, covering basic Bible doctrines.

Pursuing Peace: Biblical Conflict Resolution; this series explains how Clearcreek Chapel understands conflict resolution, primarily using the model developed by the Peacemaker Ministries.

Glorious Grace: An Introduction to the Doctrine of Salvation; this series explains the doctrines of grace which are highly prized at Clearcreek Chapel.

War of Words; this is a video series based on the book "War of Words" by Paul David Tripp. How does my communication reflect my position in Christ as His ambassador?

The Case for Kids; this is a video series by Paul and Tedd Tripp unpacking the heart issues affecting parents, their children, and their teenagers.

Changing Hearts, Changing Lives; this video series by Paul Tripp and David Powlison provides a biblical model of change that shows the connection between our heart (the "root") and our actions (the "fruit") and illustrating how lasting change occurs only through the cross of Jesus Christ, our Savior and Redeemer.

Addictions: A Banquet in the Grave; this video series by Ed Welch reveals the idolatrous nature of the addictions in our lives and the life change that comes through Jesus Christ and a re-orientation of our worship.

Chapel Starters

The purpose of Chapel Starters is to provide guests and regular attenders an overview of what Clearcreek Chapel is about using our Truths we Treasure (the CC statement of faith) as a guide.

Issues and Answers

This series is intended to help us better one-another each other and to provide answers for practical issues of church body life.

I've heard this referred to as the "practical issues series". I wince at that moniker since I believe all Scripture is inherently practical, but I understand it. The counseling ministry is an integral part of thoroughly equipping God's people for good works via the scriptures that make us wise for salvation. And in this series we highlight many of the same issues tackled by our counseling ministry.

How people change: This class is a biblical examination of the heart with a Christ-centered understanding of change.

Helping people change: This class provides a biblical, Christ-centered understanding of our calling as ambassadors of Christ in people's lives.

The Future for Adult Bible Education?

The facilities have limited what we are able to provide. Right now, most of you that show up for the 9:15 hour know full well our spatial limitations. We hear you in the surveys that we take. We know that the split auditorium for two classes is not the most conducive learning environment, especially when Pastor Dale and Pastor Chad are fighting for supremacy to be heard. :-) The dual classes allow us to maximize the space in order to provide both the Heart of the Chapel for those getting their feet wet, and the Searching the Scripture series as the foundational or main adult class. And until we have more classroom space, we will continue to provide dual classes in the auditorium. You have been very patient and very helpful with suggestions on how to make the best of a difficult situation.

What would we do with more classroom space?

1. **Systematic Theology**
2. **Church History**
3. **Hermeneutics 101**
4. **Additional Heart of the Chapel series: Money, Marriage, Decision-making, Community**
5. **Apologetics**

Conclusion

We have spent the last few quarters in the Searching the Scriptures series looking at the Wisdom literature of the Old Testament and Christ as our Wisdom in the New Covenant. The goals and objectives of Adult Bible Education run right to the heart of everything that we have studied. Here in 2 Timothy 3, we have the wise man and the foolish man of Matthew chapter 7. Christ tells us that the wise person is the one who hears Christ's words and keeps them. Hearing Christ's words is the doctrinal content. Keeping Christ's words is the behavior. Why is it that we as elders, as leaders, as an educational team spend so much time on Adult Bible Education? We intentionally spend time and effort and place priority on the ministry of the Word here at the chapel because it is the scriptures that make us wise for salvation. Not just the beginning of salvation. The continuing salvation of being conformed to Christ's image. This thought of being wise for salvation flows from a thought in 2 timothy 2 and it is here we will close. My heart nearly melted when I saw the connection between chapter 2 and chapter 3. Starting with verse 8: Remember Jesus Christ, risen from the dead, the offspring of David, as preached in my gospel,⁹ for which I am suffering, bound with chains as a criminal. But the word of God is not bound!¹⁰ Therefore **I endure everything for the sake of the elect, that they also may obtain the salvation that is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory.**¹¹ The saying is trustworthy, for: If we have died with him, we will also live with him;¹² if we endure, we will also reign with him; if we deny him, he also will deny us;¹³ if we are faithless, he remains faithful—he cannot deny himself.

The stakes are high. Paul is showing Timothy what it will take for the Word to be sustained from one generation to the next. Paul is showing Timothy how to keep the wolves at bay. Paul's last will and testament is for Timothy to do just as Paul has done. And what has Paul done? Paul has done and is doing just as Christ has done. Paul endured everything for the sake of the elect so that they also may obtain the salvation that is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory. We take the word which is not bound and we teach it, we reprove with it, we correct with it, we train the elect in righteous behavior... in order that the elect may be wise for salvation... in order that the elect may obtain the salvation that is in Christ Jesus. This teaching, reproving, correcting and training is a laying down of the life for the elect's sake... if we have died with Christ, we will also live with Christ. It is in the laying down of our lives in Adult Bible Education that we pass along the creative life-breath of God in Christ through His Word for the salvation and life of the elect. How do we keep the gospel denying we see around us in these historic denominations from happening to us? We continue in what we have learned and have firmly believed. We immerse ourselves in the sacred writings, **which are able to make us wise for salvation** through faith in Christ Jesus.