



Ambassadors for Christ: The Essential Skills

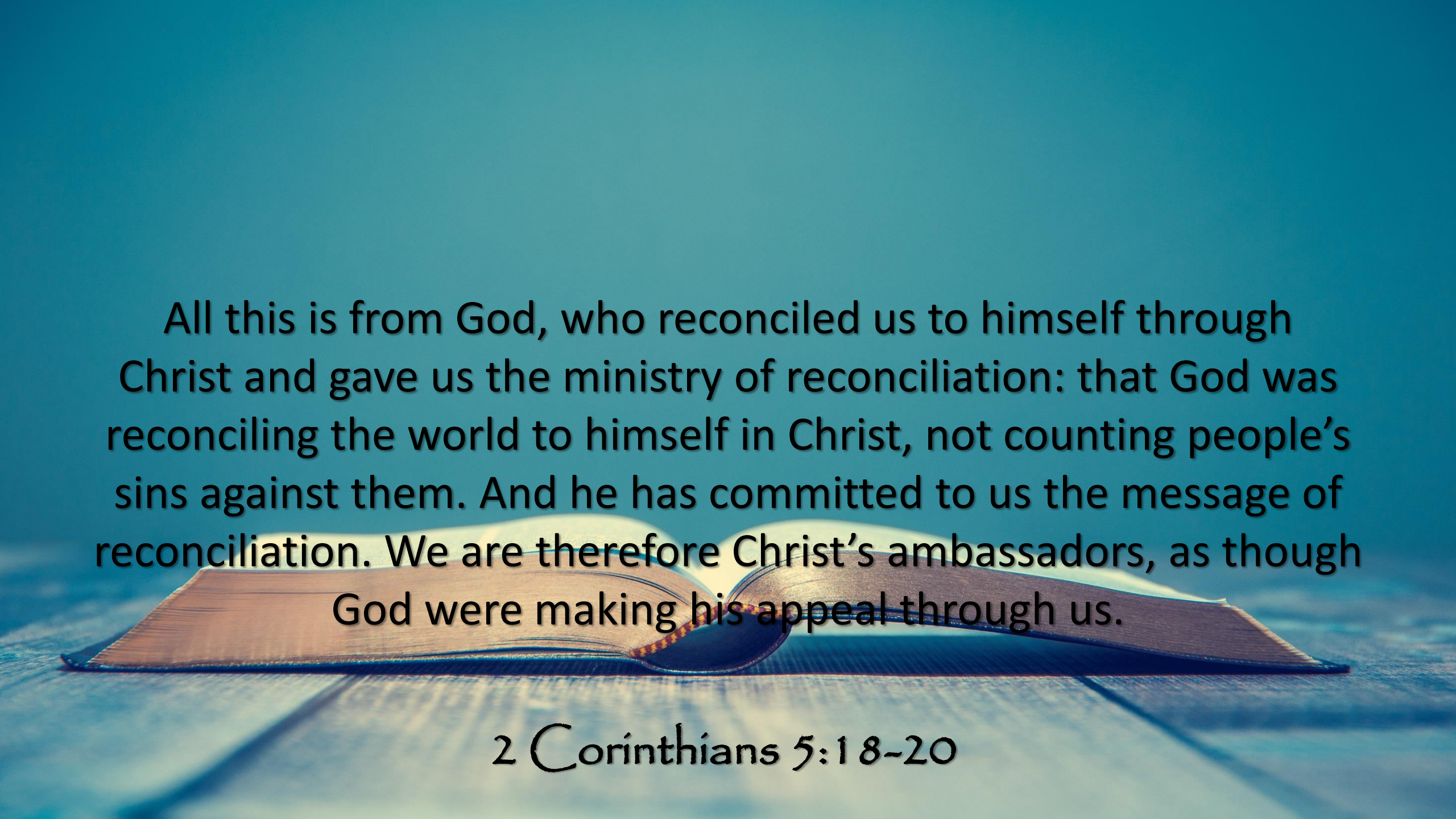
Alan Shlemon

Stand to Reason

www.STR.org

Social: @AlanShlemon






All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation: that God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting people's sins against them. And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation. We are therefore Christ's ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us.

2 Corinthians 5:18-20



You are an ambassador for Christ!



What Are the Qualities of an Effective Ambassador?

1. **Knowledge** – an accurately informed mind
2. **Wisdom** – an artful method
3. **Character** – an attractive manner



Knowledge – *An Accurately Informed Mind*

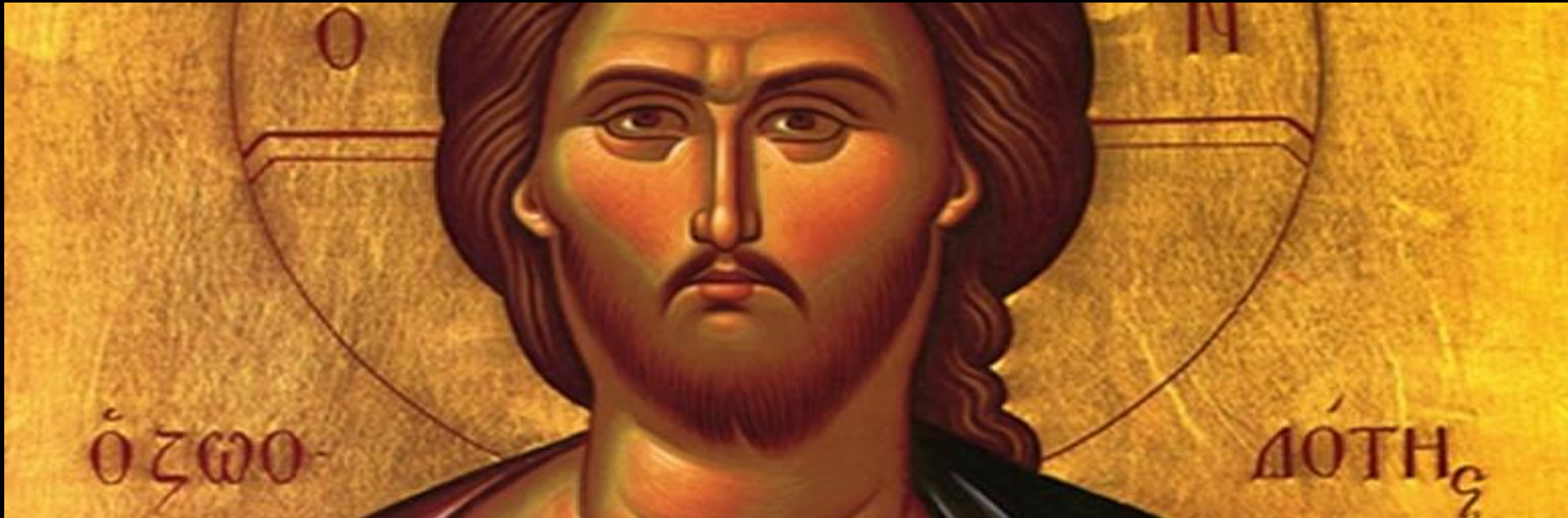
Knowledge
of
the
truth



Knowledge
of
the
error

Knowledge of the Truth

We have to know the King's message



“Retain the standard of sound words which you have heard from me, in the faith and love which are in Christ Jesus.
Guard, through the Holy Spirit who dwells in us, the treasure which has been entrusted to you.”

2 Timothy 1:13-14

**The context, more than anything, determines
the meaning of the smaller unit of text.**

“buck”

“I got a buck”

“While hunting, I got a buck and brought it home in my truck.”

“If you want, I got a buck and can buy that candy bar for you.”

Context

Context



“While hunting, I got a buck and brought it home in my truck.”

“If you want, I got a buck and can buy that candy bar for you.”

When We Ignore Context...

- **Psalm 14:1** “There is no God.”
- **2 Kings 9:20** “He drives like a maniac.”
- **Luke 19:27** [Jesus speaking] “But those enemies of mine who did not want me to be king over them—bring them here and kill them in front of me.”
- **Ecclesiastes 10:19** “Wine makes life merry and money is the answer to everything.”

Follow a simple rule:



Never
read
a
Bible
verse!

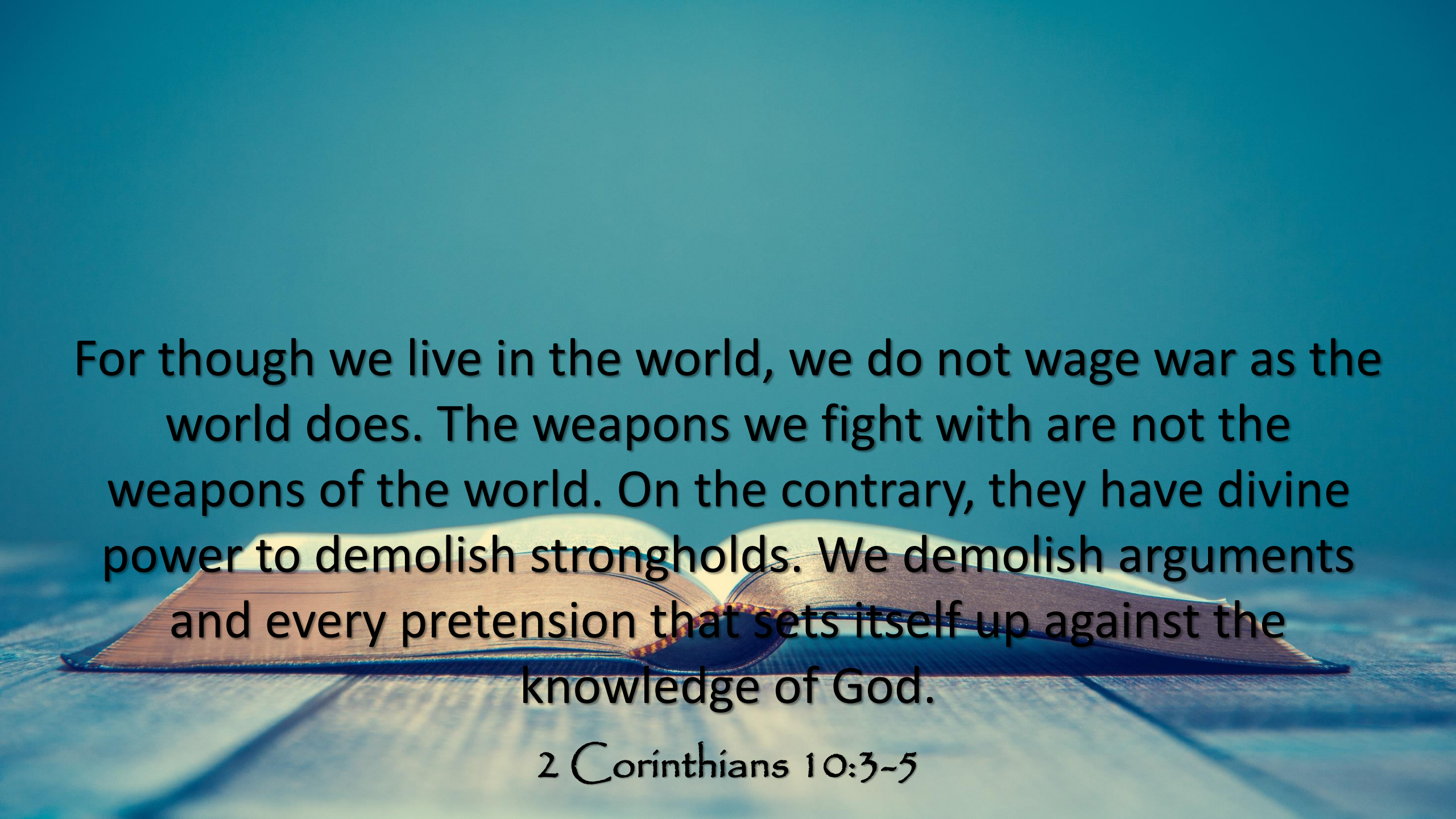
Knowledge of the Error

We must know the false ideas to destroy them.



See to it that no one takes you captive through philosophy and empty deception, according to the tradition of men, according to the elementary principles of the world, rather than according to Christ.

Colossians 2:8



For though we live in the world, we do not wage war as the world does. The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world. On the contrary, they have divine power to demolish strongholds. We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God.

2 Corinthians 10:3-5



J. Gresham Machen

“False ideas are the greatest obstacles to the Gospel. We may preach with all the fervor of a reformer and yet succeed only in winning a straggler here and there, if we permit the whole collective thought of the nation or of the world to be controlled by ideas which...prevent Christianity from being regarded as anything more than a harmless delusion.”

The *Wrong* Approach

1. Ridicule the idea / ignore the idea
2. Throw Bible verses at it (or at people).

This leads to isolation.

The *Right* Approach

1. We should inoculate, not isolate.
2. Teach about false ideas.

This leads to inoculation.

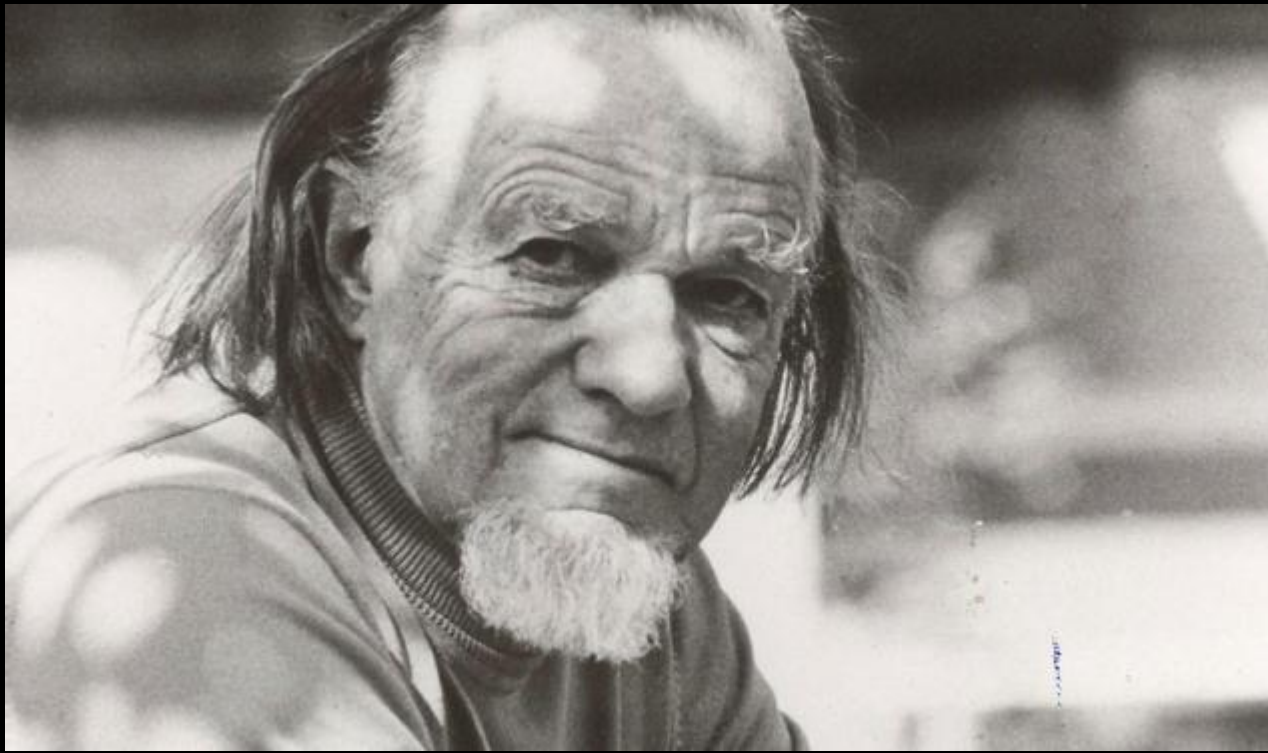


OPPRESSION MATRIX



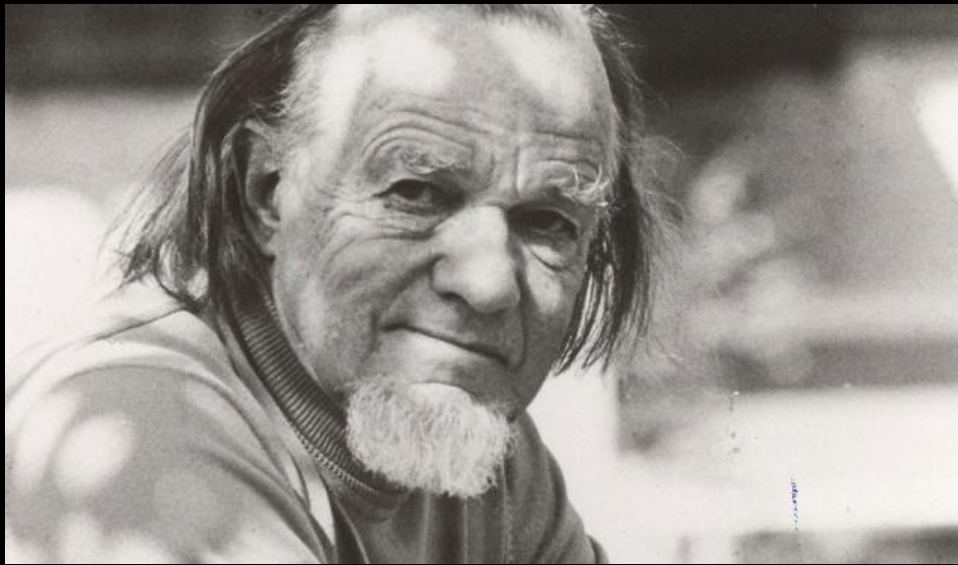
TYPE OF OPPRESSION	PRIVILEGED SOCIAL GROUP	BORDER SOCIAL GROUPS	OPPRESSED SOCIAL GROUPS	SOCIAL IDENTITY CATEGORY
RACISM	White People	Biracial People	Asian, Black, Latina/o, Native People	Race
SEXISM	Biological Men	Transsexual, Intersex People	Biological Women	Sex
TRANSGENDER OPPRESSION	Gender conforming biological men and women	Gender ambiguous biological men and women	Transgender, Genderqueer, Intersex People	Gender
HETEROSEXISM	Heterosexuals	Bisexuals	Lesbians, Gay men	Sexual Orientation
CLASSISM	Rich, Upper Class People	Middle Class People	Working Class, Poor People	Class
ABLEISM	Able-bodied People	People with Temporary Disabilities	Disabled People	Ability/Disability
RELIGIOUS OPPRESSION	Protestants	Roman Catholic (historically)	Jews, Muslims, Hindus, Sikhs	Religion
AGEISM/ADULTISM	Adults	Young Adults	Elders, Young People	Age

	Who are we?	What is the fundamental problem of humans?	What is the solution to that problem?	What is our duty?
Critical theory				
Biblical worldview				



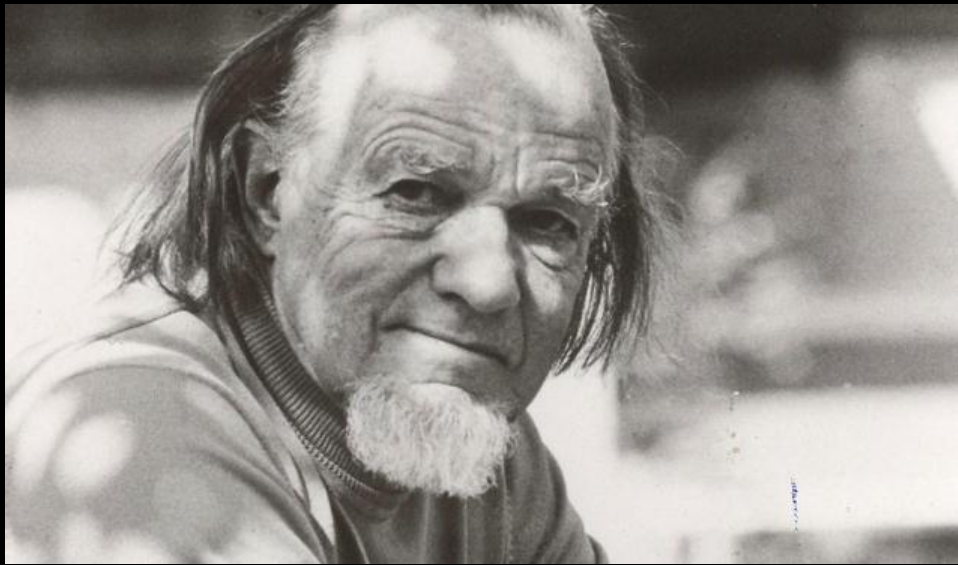
Francis Schaeffer

The basic problem of the Christians in this country in the last eighty years or so, in regard to society and in regard to government, is that they have seen things in bits and pieces instead of totals...



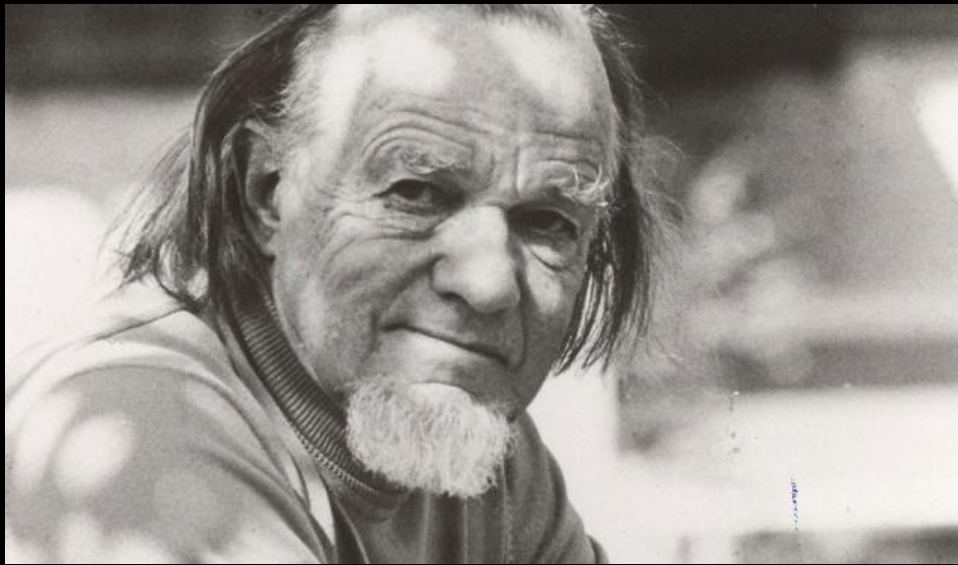
Francis Schaeffer

They have very gradually become disturbed over permissiveness, pornography, the public schools, the breakdown of the family, and finally abortion. But they have not seen this as a totality—each thing being a part, a symptom, of a much larger problem...



Francis Schaeffer

They have failed to see that all of this has come about due to a shift in world view—that is, through a fundamental change in the overall way people think and view the world and life as a whole....

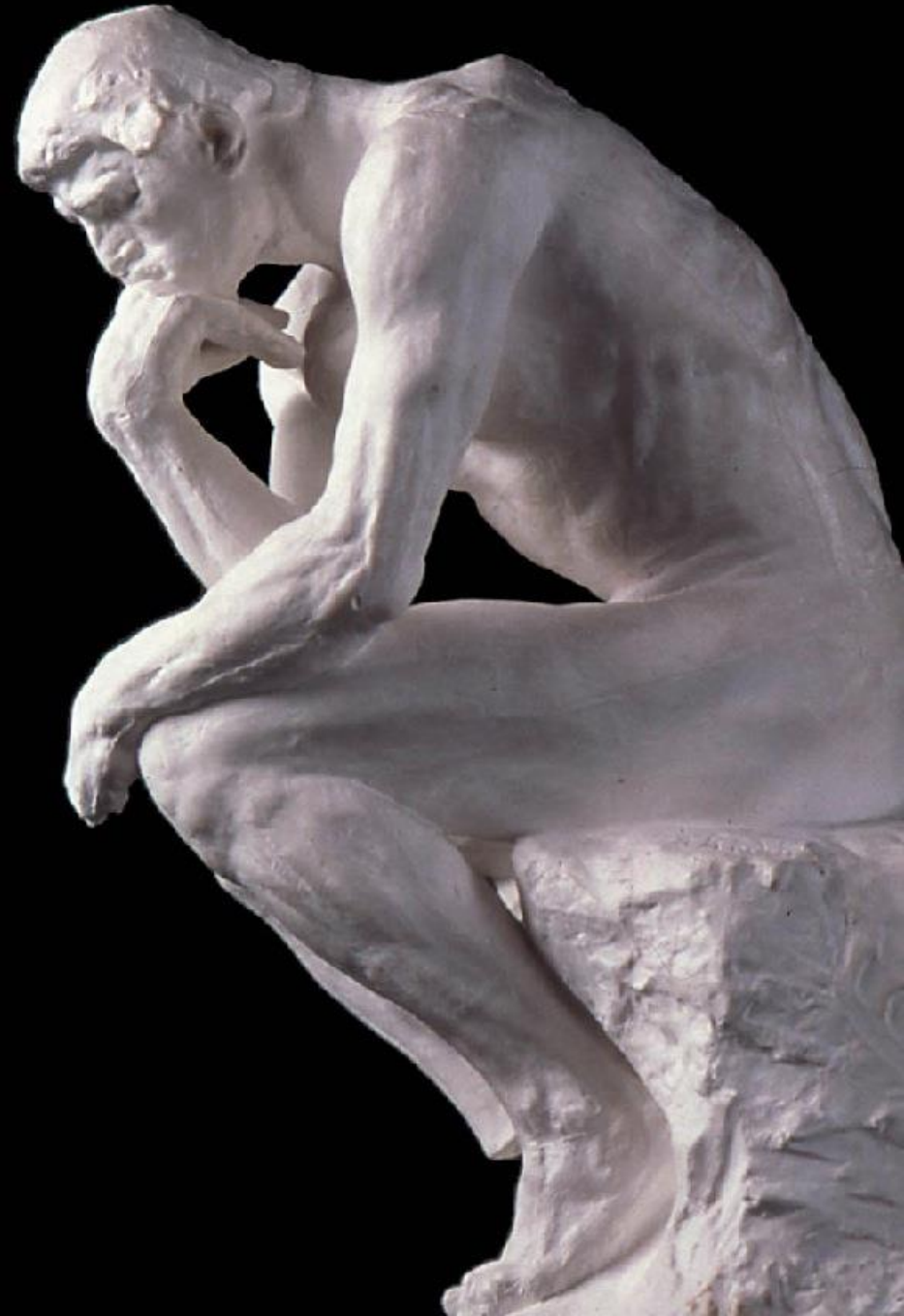


Francis Schaeffer

What we must understand is that...world views really do bring forth with inevitable certainty not only personal differences, but also total differences in regard to society, government, and law.

Wisdom: An Artful Method

1. Conversational tactics
2. Making your message clear



Making Your Message Clear

- Present the truth in a clear and unambiguous way.
- Use terms that are intelligible to the listeners.



“Christian-eeze”



If you believe in Jesus... If you *don't* believe in Jesus...



“Do you believe people who commit moral crimes ought to be punished?”



“Have *you* ever committed a moral crime?”



Character

An Attractive Manner

A mature expression of virtue, warmth, and personal depth

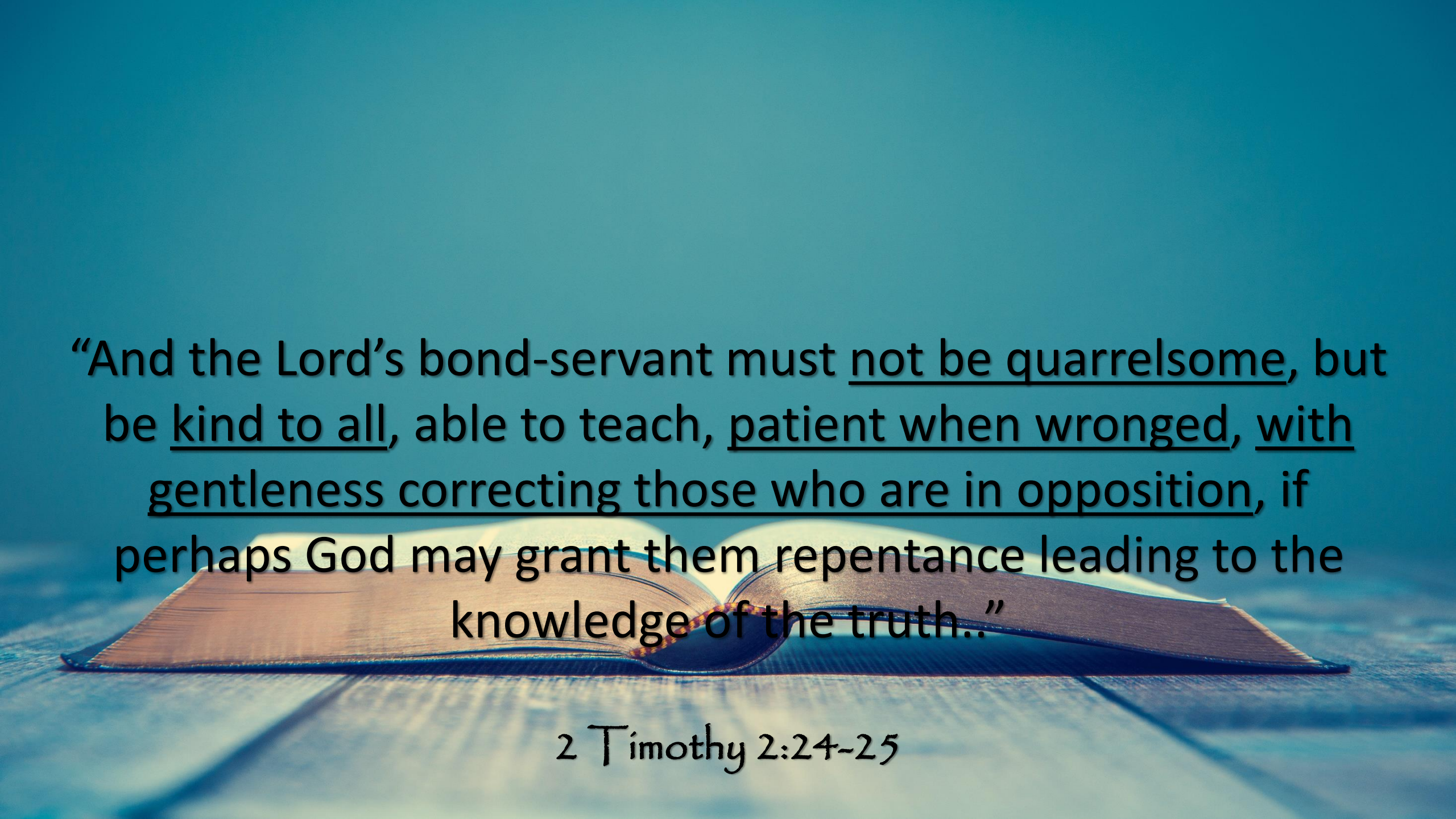
Two extremes to avoid:

1. We're so nice we won't say anything that could possibly offend anyone.



2. We don't care what anyone thinks so we offend everyone.





“And the Lord’s bond-servant must not be quarrelsome, but be kind to all, able to teach, patient when wronged, with gentleness correcting those who are in opposition, if perhaps God may grant them repentance leading to the knowledge of the truth..”

2 Timothy 2:24-25

Character in Conversation

Three Powerful Phrases

1. “I could be wrong.”
2. “I sympathize with your concern.”
3. “That’s a good point (or reasonable objection).”

Character at a Restaurant

Three Rules

1. Learn the server's name and use it.
2. Leave a good tip.
3. Find your server and thank him/her before you leave.



Character When You Disagree

Three Examples to Soften Your Response

1. “I wouldn’t characterize it that way. What about...?”
2. “Let me suggest an alternative and tell me if you think it’s an improvement.”
3. “I’m not sure I agree with the way you put it. Think about it this way...”

A high-contrast, black and white photograph showing the profiles of two women's faces. They are positioned on the left and right sides of the frame, facing each other. The lighting is dramatic, highlighting the contours of their faces against a dark background. In the center, between the two faces, is the text "Character self-assessment activity" in a white, sans-serif font.

Character self-assessment activity



The Gospel is offensive enough.

Don't add any more offense to it.

KEEP LEARNING



@AlanShlemon



READ OUR ARTICLES

STR.ORG



WATCH OUR VIDEOS

youtube.com/STRvideos



LISTEN TO MY PODCAST

"Thinking Out Loud with Alan Shlemon"