

Text: Joshua 1:8.

Timothy Manning confirmation.

May 6, 2018.

God gives us his love through his Word, which proclaims Jesus. Amen.

This was funny. Timothy and Karley came running into my office after a recent Catechism class. They both wanted to choose the same verse for their confirmation. Karley is a little faster runner and made it in before Timothy and she said, "I want Joshua 1:9," just one second before Timothy said, "I want Joshua 1:8,9." Now, Timothy being a fine gentleman, let Karley have Joshua 1:9 and he spoke with me later and said, "Pastor can you preach on Joshua 1:8 for my confirmation?" Sure thing. They are both cool verses. But Timothy I don't think you got the short end of the stick. This is a really cool verse to encourage you, "Don't stop reading God's Word."

You've probably gathered by now that one of the key assignments for Catechism class was daily Bible reading to read through the whole Bible. And I've encouraged many of these young adults to continue doing that. But Timothy, you picked a verse that says it directly from God's Word. Do not let this book of the Law depart from your mouth. The word for law means instruction or teaching. God's Word isn't just a bunch of rules. God's Word provides all kinds of teaching. God wants us to keep saying it in our mouths, keep meditating in our minds, keep saying it out loud, keep doing it in our lives.

Timothy, your sinful nature will say, "You can stop reading your Bible." You're going to Luther Prep. You are going to have religion class every day. Then your sinful nature will say, "You don't have to keep living all of God's Word. Mom and dad aren't around. Tutor won't see if you get the test answers from someone. No one will hear if one of those words slips out of your mouth."

Timothy, Jesus loved you too much for you to live that way. He died to forgive those times you listen to that voice of your sinful nature. Remember why you want to do everything in the Bible? Christ's love compels us. It's not laws that motivate us. It's Christ's love. It's not mom and dad watching over us. It's the love Christ showed us that moves us to do as you did and let others have first choice.

Then and only then, and only then, will you be prosperous and successful. Only when you keep reading your Bible and keep those words on your lips. Only when you make full use of those religion classes at Prep and they are such a blessing to hear God's Word every day, only when you treasure that time in chapel, only then will you be prosperous and successful. Only then, when you keep on reading and reciting and doing God's Word. Amen.