



## 2 Timothy 2:14–26

Remind them of these things, and charge them before God not to quarrel about words, which does no good, but only ruins the hearers. 15 Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a worker who has no need to be ashamed, rightly handling the word of truth. 16 But avoid irreverent babble, for it will lead people into more and more ungodliness, 17 and their talk will spread like gangrene. Among them are Hymenaeus and Philetus, 18 who have swerved from the truth, saying that the resurrection has already happened. They are upsetting the faith of some. 19 But God's firm foundation stands, bearing this seal: "The Lord knows those who are his," and, "Let everyone who names the name of the Lord depart from iniquity."

20 Now in a great house there are not only vessels of gold and silver but also of wood and clay, some for honorable use, some for dishonorable. 21 Therefore, if anyone cleanses himself from what is dishonorable, he will be a vessel for honorable use, set apart as holy, useful to the master of the house, ready for every good work.

22 So flee youthful passions and pursue righteousness, faith, love, and peace, along with those who call on the Lord from a pure heart. 23 Have nothing to do with foolish, ignorant controversies; you know that they breed quarrels. 24 And the Lord's servant must not be quarrelsome but kind to everyone, able to teach, patiently enduring evil, 25 correcting his opponents with gentleness. God may perhaps grant them repentance leading to a knowledge of the truth, 26 and they may come to their senses and escape from the snare of the devil, after being captured by him to do his will.

## sermon reflections

1. Why was quarreling over words so dangerous in Paul's day? What makes it dangerous now?
2. What does it mean to "rightly handle the word of truth"? How can we get that right (and wrong)?
3. The "faithful men" of 2:2 and "an approved worker" of 2:15 stand in stark contrast to those who deal in "foolish ignorant controversies" **[2:23]** and who "swerve from the truth" **[2:18]**. Surely, no one sets out to swerve from the truth. How should we respond to those who have, and how can we guard ourselves?
4. In light of this passage, what are some "snares of the devil" that are evident in our culture today?
5. In what practical ways can we be kind to everyone, teach others gently, and endure evil so that God may lead people to a knowledge of the truth and grant repentance?

# enduring faithfulness

2 TIMOTHY SERIES WEEK 4

## being a faithful worker of God

**2 TIMOTHY 2:14-26**



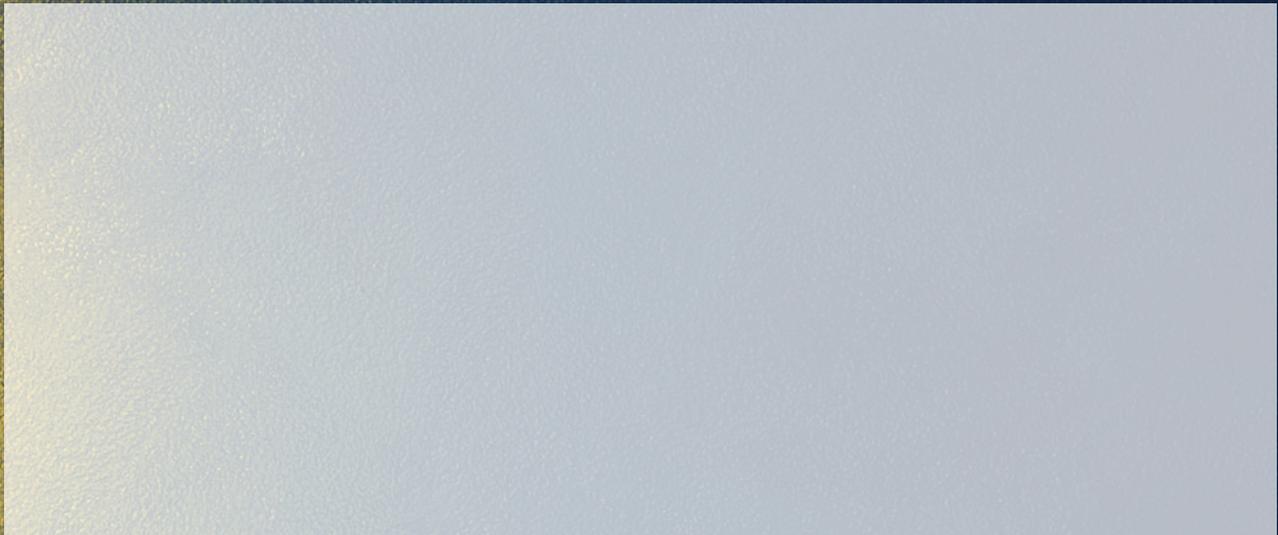
# reading THE letter

Making observations in a passage is the best way to become familiar with it and grasp the basic meaning. One helpful technique is to use a notebook (or separate piece of paper) and make the following observations—

- List any **People/Places**—



- List any important **verbs** (actions), **repeated words/phrases**, or other **theological/special terms**—



# observations

- 1 Verse 14 begins with Paul's instruction for Timothy to "*remind them of these things.*" Who is the "*them*"?

- 2 Make a list of what a worker approved by God does and does not do.

- 3 What is the result of false teaching that Paul is warning about?

## summary sentence

In your own words, summarize this passage in 1–2 sentences—

# paul's encouragement TO timothy



Paul is charging Timothy to remind those in his charge to stay true to biblical, gospel teaching and not to get involved in the false teaching that was happening. The language in this section is clear in what a worker approved by God should look like versus a worker (or false teacher) who is not approved by God. Paul reminds Timothy that the fruit of a false teacher is rot or “gangrene” **[2:17]**. It spreads and makes a big mess of things to all that come in contact. Paul goes on to give Timothy a strong command to flee sinfulness and to “*pursue righteousness, faith, love, and peace, along with those who call on the Lord from a pure heart*” **[2:22]**. This pursuit is holy and righteous—it produces the fruit of bringing people into right fellowship with each other and with the Lord. This righteous pursuit awakens the believer to not be held captive by the devilish schemes of Satan delivered by false teachers and scoffers. Rather, true righteous teaching captivates those who repent to receive the grace of God, to live a righteous life, and to be forever kept by Him **[2:19]**.

# paul's encouragement TO US

We live in a world where we have so much access to nearly every piece of information that we could possibly want...and more! As believers, we're called to be discerning, to be wise, to be prayerful, and to pursue righteousness. When reading this passage in 2 Timothy, it's easy to see that Paul and Timothy could be living in a similar culture. Maybe the ease in which information was passed looked different, but nevertheless, news traveled. Paul is reminding Timothy, and us as modern-day readers, that there is going to be a lot of "talk," but a lot of it is going to be worthless babble—not worth our time or energy to entertain. They're made to stir up trouble, like an infection, ready to destroy all that comes in its path. In fact, Paul implies that if these false teachings are entertained, it not only comes to the destruction of the hearer but has damaging implications to the true gospel. It is good to strive and work for gospel purity, but not to quarrel about irreverent, misapplied teachings. How do we, as believers, make sure we're fleeing evil and pursuing righteousness and evaluate the motive of others who come into our path? A chart looking at what Paul is saying can be helpful.

## a worker approved by God

DOES	DOES NOT
no need to be ashamed <b>(2:14)</b>	quarrel about words <b>(2:14)</b>
rightly handles the word of truth <b>(2:15)</b>	participate in irreverent babble <b>(2:15)</b>
flees from youthful passions (or sinful desires) <b>(2:22)</b>	participate in, or incite foolish, ignorant controversy <b>(2:23)</b>
pursues righteousness, faith, love, and peace with others <b>(2:22)</b>	participate in a quarrelsome activity <b>(2:24)</b>
kind, able to teach, patiently endures evil, corrects with gentleness <b>(2:24, 25)</b>	

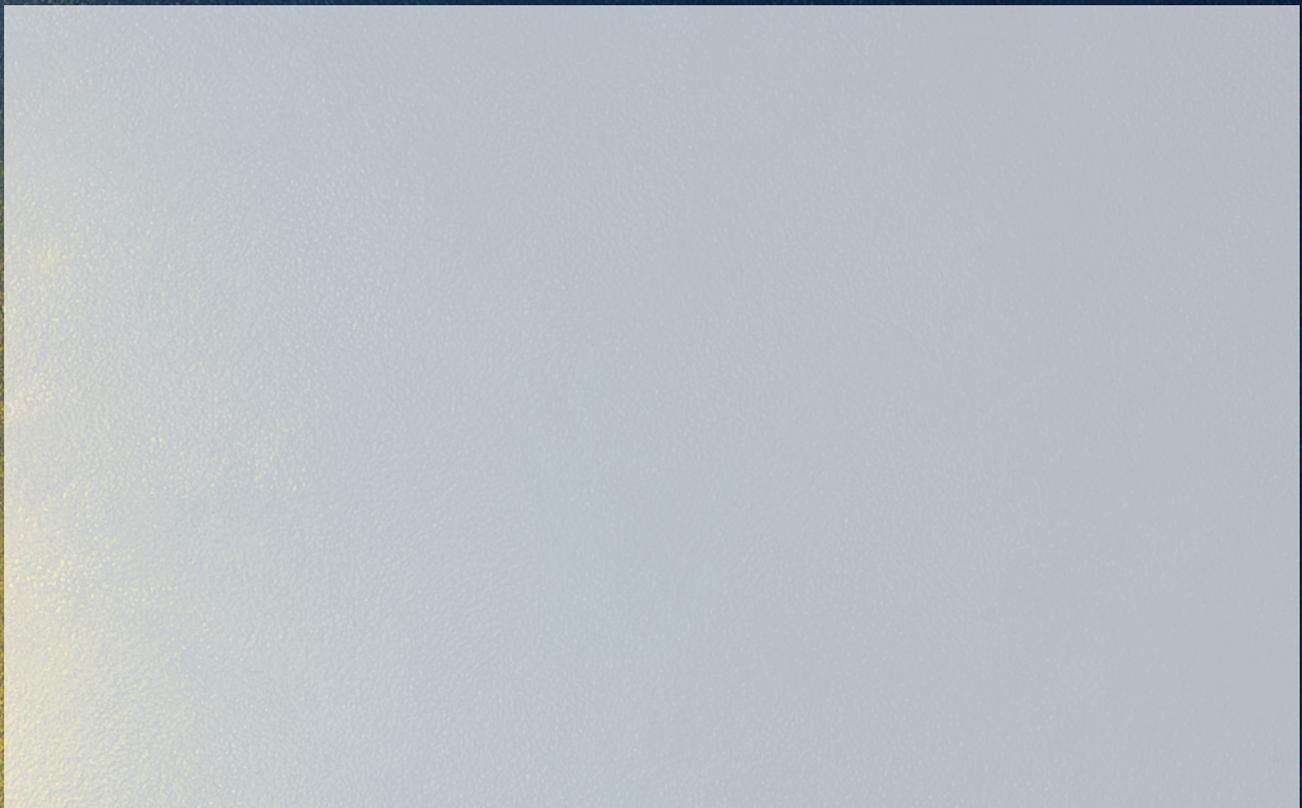
There is only one who has gone before us who has managed to live out a life worthy of full approval of God—our savior Jesus Christ. But, because of His perfect life, which He lived, died, and rose again on our behalf, we have the opportunity and power through the Holy Spirit to pursue a life worthy of this calling. Christ has paved the way for us to heed Paul's word to Timothy to live an honorable life as a servant of God, pursuing and discerning true biblical teaching. In doing so, we will be declared vessels used for honorable use, set apart as holy, useful to [our] master **(2:21)**. By this life of pursuing righteousness, others will come to know Him by His grace. What an honor to be used by our Lord in this way.

# presenting ourselves approved TO THE world

While living a life as a worker approved by God has personal responsibility on our part, there is a community element as well. This is not to be done alone. Paul reminds Timothy of this in verse 22, when he says, “*So flee youthful passions and pursue righteousness, faith, love, and peace, along with those who call on the Lord from a pure heart.*” This life is to be lived along with others who have the same love of the Lord, the same desire to pursue a righteous life. Use the following questions to reflect on this week’s passage.

## responding questions

- 1 What are some ways that false teachings spread in our cultural context today? How are you able to discern what is truth and what is false?



## responding questions

- 2 Why is it important to flee youthful passions (sinful desires) and pursue righteousness in the context of community (i.e., the church, small groups)? Why do you think Paul emphasized that those who do this will call on the Lord with a “*pure heart*”?

