

The Most Excellent Way

Discipleship/Leadership Bible Study Homework

“A Workman Approved By God”

HEART ATTITUDE: Mature Focus

Good workers are not ashamed of their work. Life on earth is not a script which we meaninglessly act out. It is a time of deciding whether or not we will live for God, and then “living out” what we have decided. We should build our lives on God’s Word and build His Word into our lives — it alone tells us how to live for Him and serve Him. God will examine what kind of workers we have been for Him. Christians who ignore the Bible will certainly be ashamed at the judgment. Consistent and diligent study of God’s Word is vital; otherwise we will be lulled into neglecting God and our true purpose for living.

2 TIMOTHY 2:14-26 (NIV)

Keep reminding them of these things. Warn them before God against quarreling about words; it is of no value, and only ruins those who listen. (14)

Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a workman who does not need to be ashamed and who correctly handles the word of truth. (15)

Avoid godless chatter, because those who indulge in it will become more and more ungodly. (16)

Their teaching will spread like gangrene. Among them are Hymenaeus and Philetus, (17)

Who have wandered away from the truth.

They say that the resurrection has already taken place, and they destroy the faith of some. (18)

Nevertheless, God’s solid foundation stands firm, sealed with this inscription:

“The Lord knows those who are his,” and,

“Everyone who confesses the name of the Lord must turn away from wickedness.” (19)

In a large house there are articles not only of gold and silver, but also of wood and clay; some are for noble purposes and some for ignoble. (20)

If a man cleanses himself from the latter, he will be an instrument for noble purposes, made holy, useful to the Master and prepared to do any good work. (21)

Flee the evil desires of youth, and pursue righteousness, faith, love and peace, along with those who call on the Lord out of a pure heart. (22)

Don’t have anything to do with foolish and stupid arguments, because you know they produce quarrels. (23)

And the Lord’s servant must not quarrel; instead, he must be kind to everyone, able to teach, not resentful. (24)

Those who oppose him he must gently instruct, in the hope that God will grant them repentance leading them to a knowledge of the truth, (25)

And that they will come to their senses and escape from the trap of the devil, who has taken them captive to do his will. (26)

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• FOCUSING

1. Whose approval did you seek most as a teenager?
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2. When was the last time you felt thoroughly embarrassed?

3. What was the last really stupid argument you had with someone?

• **STUDYING GOD'S WORD**

4. What results from quarreling about words? (2:14)

5. How did Paul encourage Timothy to present himself before God? (2:15)

6. Why should we avoid godless chatter? (2:16)

We need to follow Paul's advice, and remind others, to not argue over unimportant details or have foolish discussions (*godless chatter*), because such arguments are confusing, useless, and even harmful. We must study and know the Word of God so we can understand what it says and means (*correctly handles the word of truth*).

In important areas, we must carefully work through our disagreements. When we bicker long hours over words and theories that are not central to the Christian faith and life, we only provoke anger and hurt feelings. Even if such "godless chatter" reaches a solution, it gains little ground for the Kingdom. Learning and discussing are useful unless they keep believers constantly focusing on false doctrine and fruitless trivialities. It's a waste of time, time that could be used to work and serve our Lord.

7. What must everyone who confesses the name of the Lord do? (2:19)

False teachers are still spouting wicked lies. Some distort the truth; some dilute it; and some simply delete it by saying it no longer applies. But no matter how many people follow the liars, God's truth never changes, is never shaken, and will never fade.

8. What sort of articles are found in a large house? (2:20)

9. How could someone become an instrument used for noble purposes? (2:21)

10. What was Timothy encouraged to flee? (2:22)

Running away is usually considered cowardly. But wise people realize that removing themselves physically from temptation is often the most courageous action to take. We must flee from any-thing that produces evil thoughts (see 1 Timothy 6:11). Remove yourself physically from the situation. Knowing when to run is as important in spiritual battle as knowing when and how to fight.

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11. What was Timothy encouraged to pursue? (2:22)

12. What produces quarrels? (2:23)

13. What must the Lord's servant do and avoid? (2:24)

14. How should we deal with those who oppose the Lord's servants? Why? (2:25)

15. What did Paul hope would happen to those who opposed the Lord's servant? (2:25-26)

As a teacher, Timothy helped those who were confused about the truth. Paul's advice to him, and to all God's people, is to be humble, patiently and courteously explaining the truth. Good teaching never promotes quarrels or foolish arguments. Whenever you are teaching in a The Most Excellent Way meeting, remember to listen to people's questions and treat them respectfully. At the same time, do not get embroiled in foolish debates.

It is very important to treat the "sheep" lovingly and respectfully. When you talk too much or lord-it-over them, they will be resentful, and they will not grow and reproduce.

• **UNDERSTANDING**

16. About what sorts of things do you get into senseless arguments with other Christians? With non-believers?

17. What does it mean to be approved by God?

18. How can you please God with your work?

19. What circumstances make you feel ashamed or embarrassed?

20. When are you tempted to engage in godless chatter or stupid arguments?

21. What false doctrines have destroyed the faith of someone you know?

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22. How can you cleanse yourself from insignificant pursuits?

23. What evil desires of youth continually tempt you?

24. How do you usually deal with people who oppose you?

25. How should you deal with people who oppose you?

26. In what way have people in society today been taken captive by the devil?

• **DOING THE WORD**

27. How do you need to change in your daily speech to weed out senseless and godless chatter?

28. What can you do to flee temptation?

May God richly bless you as you study His Word!
