



2 Timothy 2:20-26

WORK HARD TO LOVE OTHERS

When he bids the servant of Christ be “gentle,” he demands a virtue which is opposite to the disease of contentions. To the same purpose is what immediately follows, that he be able to teach... **The better a man is qualified for teaching, the more earnestly does he keep aloof from quarrels and disputes...** Those things are connected with each other, gentleness and skill in teaching. The reason is, if a man be fierce and inaccessible, it will never be possible for us to receive instruction from him. He who wishes to be a good teacher must conduct himself with civility, and must have some way of drawing those who come to him, so as to gain their affections; and that cannot be, unless he have that gentleness of which Paul speaks... A man who is quarrelsome and addicted to disputes and contentions is in no degree a servant of God. And why? As servants of God, must we not labor to gain poor ignorant persons? And that cannot be, unless we are mild, unless we hear patiently what they say, unless we bear with their weakness, until little by little they are edified. If we have not that, it is like casting them off.
—John Calvin (1509-64)

In 2 Timothy 2:14-26, Paul makes a slight shift in his exhortations to Timothy. In 1:8-2:13, Paul exhorts Timothy to stand strong as a good soldier of Christ. Now, in 2:14-26, he exhorts Timothy to be patient, gentle, humble, and loving as a pastor and servant in the church.

As a pastor, Timothy would need to be aware of four different types of people who are often a part of, or influencing, a local church:

1. **Word Fighters** (2:14).
2. **False Teachers** (2:16-18).
3. **Defiled Vessels** (2:20-21).
4. **Deceived Critics** (2:25-26).

In each case, Timothy is to respond as a faithful servant of the Lord.

DON'T BE A VESSEL OF DISHONOR—BE A VESSEL OF HONOR!

- **The Analogy.** In a large house, there are vessels of honor and of dishonor—vessels of gold and silver and of wood and clay (2:20)

What is the great house?

Who are the vessels?

- **The Issue.** Some vessels are not useful for great, noble purposes to the master because of their _____.

The apostle compares the church to a great house. We feel sure he is not speaking of the world; it did not occur to him to speak about the world, and it would have been altogether superfluous to tell us that in the world there are all sorts of people—everybody knows that. —Charles H. Spurgeon

The Church, the visible institution, has in it and will always have in it, those who, by their purity and consistency of Christian life, answer to the designation of the gold and the silver, and those who, by their lack of that, fall into the other class, of wooden and earthen vessels. —Alexander MacLaren

The large house represents the professing or visible church. Some who associate with the church are truly born again. Others, such as the false teachers Hymenaeus and Philetus, are probably not... They are the vessels for dishonor. Paul is saying that no one should be a vessel for dishonor. To put it another way, he is saying that God isn't going to use a garbage pail life to serve the pure gospel to a hungry world. —Steve Cole

- **The Solution.** Be a cleansed vessel! (2:21)



It is a _____ decision.

It is a _____ decision.

It is a _____ decision.

- **The Application.**

Now flee from youthful lusts and pursue righteousness, faith, love and peace, with those who call on the Lord from a pure heart. (2:22, NASB)

DON'T GET CAUGHT IN FOOLISH QUARRELS—BE A FAITHFUL SERVANT WHO RESCUES THOSE CAUGHT IN SATAN'S SNARE!

- **The Issue.** Some people who claim to be Christians...

- Love to _____.
- Oppose God's _____.
- Don't realize they are _____.

- **The Solution.** Live and love like a true servant of the Lord.

- Be _____.
- Be _____.
- Be _____.
- Be _____.
- Be a _____ of God's Word.
- Be a _____ of God's Word.
- Be _____.

***If anyone cleanses himself.** This is a 3rd class conditional sentence which implies potential action, but with some degree of contingency as to a person's volitional actions. Believers have a choice in their involvement and usefulness in the Kingdom's work. —Bob Utley*

Scripture almost never gives us a negative command without also giving us a positive command to pursue. If we will concentrate on hotly pursuing the right things, then fleeing the wrong things will take care of themselves.

—Dwight Edwards

We never do much for truth by getting angry about it. Whenever a man debates about the truth, and loses his temper, he has also lost his cause. —Charles H. Spurgeon

There may be greater sins than touchiness but there is none which does greater damage in the Christian church. —William Barclay

Quarrels are the weapons of the weak. —Yiddish Proverb

Gentleness. Greek, *praotes*, "the humble and gentle attitude which expresses itself, in particular, in a patient submissiveness to offense; controlled strength, the ability to bear reproaches and slights without bitterness and resentment; the ability to provide a soothing influence on someone who is in a state of anger." (Rienecker)

Gentle words fall lightly, but they have great weight [Prov. 25:15]. —Derick Bingham

From frivolous, fruitless controversies, good Lord, deliver us! —Martin Luther (1483-1546)