

# Guard the Gospel – 2 Timothy

2 Timothy 2:14-26

“Rightly Handling the Word of Truth” – June 30, 2019



## Introduction

When it comes to our need to communicate, words matter. True words are trustworthy and reliable. False words (pretending to be true) mislead and ruin because they are unreliable. As Timothy pastored the church in Ephesus, false teachers had crept into the church and spread their subtle lies. What was he to do? In our text today, the apostle Paul instructs him (and his church) how to respond.

## Pray

Before you begin, take some time to ask God to help you understand His word, to reveal what needs to change in you, and for the grace to follow Him in response. To help, use [Psalm 119:33-40](#) as a prayer for God to open His word up to you.

## Sermon Outline

- I. The good worker (2:14-19)
- II. The clean vessel (2:20-22)
- III. The Lord's servant (2:23-26)

## Read & Discuss

1. Read [2 Timothy 2:14-19](#)

A good worker is someone who rightly handles God's word, cutting a straight path for it and for those who listen so the listener knows *where* it comes from and is consistent what God is saying. To encourage the church to stay on such a path, a good worker must not quarrel about words – split hairs about secondary issues...not gospel issues. Quarreling about such things distracts the listener from gospel issues and does the hearer no good. Instead of quarreling about words, Timothy is to 'rightly handle the word of truth.' We should labor to make sure that what we believe is not only *biblical*, but faithful to what the author intended when it was written. To guard against mis-reading a text, it's good to read carefully and consider the context – what came before and after the part we're considering. The false teachers Timothy was dealing with had 'swerved from the truth' (v18). The church was to avoid their 'irreverent babble' that went *beyond* what God's word taught and was speculative based on their own thoughts.

Paul has things we're to avoid and things we're to pursue in this section. What does it look like for you to avoid quarreling and godless chatter? Do you find those things tempting? How can you 'do your best' to rightly handle God's word and to fill your mind and heart with His words instead?

Additional Reading: Proverbs 17:14, 26:20

2. Read [2 Timothy 2:20-22](#)

Here, Paul uses the image of a vessel or container to make the point that if we are to be useful to God our Master, we need to cleanse our self from wrong teaching *and* wrong living. Again, Paul presents things to avoid and things to pursue, this time using the word 'flee'. To flee is to seek safety in flight. When there's a sin we repeatedly fall into, it's good to make a battle plan – to think of the triggers (circumstances, people, locations, emotions) that lead to the temptation and then resolve to flee when those warning signs appear. Not only are we to flee youthful passions – we are to *pursue* righteousness (that which is good and right), faith (a vibrant relationship with God), love (a life of serving others) and peace. Are you actively *fleeing*...or are you flirting with the line of sin? Are you actively *pursuing*, running hard after and prioritizing what God our Creator calls you too?

Additional Reading: 1 Corinthians 10:13, 1 Peter 2:11-12, Genesis 39:12

### 3. Read [2 Timothy 2:23-26](#)

After once again telling us what to avoid (v23) so as to not get in the mud and resort to their tactics, Paul lays out what the Lord's servant is to do. When people are opposed to the truths of God's word – truths that we cherish and long for them to embrace, how can we be patient, kind, gentle, and not quarrelsome? Are you?

Additional Reading: Proverbs 15:1

### **Prayer of Response**

1) After hearing God's Word, what sin do I need to *confess*? From what do I need to *repent*?

2) How should my life be lived this week based on what I have heard? What should I *understand*, *believe*, *desire*, or *do*?

Spend time praying together in response to God's word asking for His help and greater faith to follow Him in the week to come.

If you missed the sermon on Sunday or would like to listen again, visit our website at <https://fbcum.org/sermons-new/>

<b>*Next week's sermon text:</b> we turn to <b>2 Timothy 3:1-9</b> "Difficult Days"
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