



Approved Workers
2 Timothy 2:14-21
July 25, 2021
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Introduction

In our passage today, Paul reminds us of God's desire for approved workers not quarrelsome babblers

The Text: 2 Timothy 2:14-21

¹⁴ 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.

- 1) God desires approved workers not quarrelsome babblers (vv. 14-16a).

- 2) Quarrelsome babbling has a gangrenous effect on the Church (vv. 16b -18).

- 3) The Lord knows his workers, and his workers pursue holiness (vv. 19-21).
 - A) The Lord knows his workers (v. 19a).

 - B) His workers pursue holiness (vv. 19b-21).

Response

Present yourself as an approved worker! Avoid quarrelsome babbling and pursue holiness!

Sunday Text Questions for 2 Timothy 2:14-21 (“Entrusted to You” Series)

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- 1) Starter Question: In what ways have you seen or experienced “quarrelling about words” and “irreverent babbling” hurt the Church? What was it over and what was the effect?
- 2) Read the text aloud and discuss together any significant observations or issues needing clarification.
- 3) In v. 14, Paul transitions from the preceding passage (2:1-13) to this passage by exhorting Timothy to remind the church about “these things.” What could be the “these things” Paul has in mind?
- 4) Paul emphasizes God as Timothy’s primary audience (vv. 14-15). How often do you think about God being your primary audience? What impact does this reminder have on you?
- 5) Rightly handling the word of truth includes not only proper understanding of right doctrine (orthodoxy) but also pursuing right living (orthopraxis). In your study of Scripture, which discussions do you tend to gravitate toward—right doctrine or right living? Why? Why might it be important to have a balance between the two as we seek to handle the word of truth rightly?
- 6) While the Church has often had to discuss and debate matters of faith and practice throughout its history and Paul is not promoting a Christian isolationism, the passage offers a reminder about the posture (quarrelling about words) and content (irreverent babble) to be avoided. How are Paul’s words instructive for us Christians today as we seek to navigate issues of faith and practice in the 21st century not only in our engagement with fellow brothers and sisters in Christ but also our non-Christian context?
- 7) In v. 18 Paul explains that Hymenaeus and Philetus are “saying that the resurrection has already happened. Read 1 Corinthians 15:1-34. Why is Hymenaeus and Philetus understanding of the resurrection problematic? Why might it upset the faith of some?
- 8) How does v. 19 offer encouragement and support in response to the material presented in vv. 14-18?
- 9) In v. 19, Paul is likely alluding to Numbers 16. Read Numbers 16:1-35. In what ways does Numbers 16 relate to and help reinforce Paul’s point in this passage?
- 10) While the passage is an important reminder of God’s sovereignty in matters of salvation (election) in v. 19, it also reminds us of our responsibility in the pursuit of holiness. What are areas of your life that require cleansing in response to God’s grace as you pursue holiness?