

19 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."

2TI 2:20 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. 21 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.

2TI 2:22 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. 23 Don't have anything to do with foolish and stupid arguments, because you know they produce quarrels. 24 And the Lord's servant must not quarrel; instead, he must be kind to everyone, able to teach, not resentful. 25 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, 26 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.

Remember last weeks sermon. All about discipleship. We have to put today's passage in context with that. We heard last week about not only doing discipleship but teaching others to do it. We heard that there are some guidelines to help us.

15 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.

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

17 Their teaching will spread like gangrene. Among them are Hymenaeus and Philetus, 18 who have wandered away from the truth. They say that the resurrection has already taken place, and they destroy the faith of some.

And we continue with this in mind. Why didn't we finish this passage last week? I respect your time. I could have gone on for ever, it's a favourite passage of mine but also looking at this bit this week allows us to focus our attentions on something a little bit different.

Firstly, discipleship is an interesting thing.

Question: *When do we start being discipled?*

As I mentioned last week, Some would say after conversion, others would say when we realise the Holy Spirit in our lives.

I think we are being discipled from the moment we are born. That is why this church does Kids Church, and Playtime. Sure those things are packaged with fun and education BUT as a church we have a deep down desire that people know Jesus and Kids get the information they need to know Jesus. They are being discipled. So people who aren't yet Christians are being discipled –

Yep. They just don't know it. They may not even believe the bible yet. That is where this passage comes in.

Even with people not believing the truth of God's word. We need to realise that the bible has credibility.

19 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."

The first week of Jesus the game changer spoke about the bible as being a credible document, one that can be trusted. Mostly it spoke about the parts about Jesus, but the credibility of the documents we have are astounding.

Now we believe that, non Christians of course don't . Notice here it says.

"The Lord knows those who are his," I think we need to be realistic. God knows who is His and He communicates to those who are. Non Christians reading the bible can be convicted but they won't get out of it what we do. Why? The Holy Spirit isn't working in their life in that way. BUT **THE HOLY SPIRIT IS WORKING IN THEIR LIFE IN SOME WAY!**

What we see as proof or confirmation, they don't get.

Just as they don't get why we live a different lifestyle.

That is where this next part comes in.

"Everyone who confesses the name of the Lord must turn away from wickedness."

There is a consequence of belonging to Jesus. If we say we are Christian – we are to live like it. That is why both in last weeks passage and in next weeks and by the way next weeks is really tough stuff.

Timothy is being told there is an expectation not only on him but on those he works with. This is like a Christian identification system. Those who know Jesus won't be wicked.

If not identification a definite expectation.

I love the next verses.

2TI 2:20 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. 21 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.

I suppose we have to ask the question: Are we designed for noble purposes or not so noble? The thing here is: IF you are a Christian, you are designed for God's work, what every you do for God is noble.

Ok, no wickedness, noble purpose, what's next.

Things to aspire to:

2TI 2:22 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

To flee is to run away from. The Greek word is pheugo – which is to seek safety by running away.

To pursue is to chase after. The Greek word here is dioko – which is to chase after something with purpose.

Flee from evil –
run to righteousness, faith, and peace.

Get that – run away from things evil and bad
BUT

Chase after things that bring up our faith, chase after things that help us to love others and chase after ways to make peace.

This is practical stuff.

This is about being useful. This is about doing God's call, this is about being Christian in life and lifestyle.

Notice the little line at the end: ***along with those who call on the Lord out of a pure heart***

In other words – we all are to do this. This is the accepted format of living Christian.

But notice the comment “call on the Lord out of a pure heart.”

What's that about?

What is our motive for ministry?

Is our reason to do Christian like things because of a relationship to God?

Is our reasoning for helping people fair dinkum and honest?

Or are those things because we can look good, or be politically advanced or even to make others look less significant?

Why do what we do? A real basic kind of question but it cuts through doesn't it.

The same with our discussions. Why argue, why disagree?

What's it really about?

Here is a set of standards for us.

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

This is interesting.

Don't have anything to do with stupid arguments. Pretty plain isn't it. Don't let the arguments go from debate to quarrels. In other words don't let your disagreements fester.

Again some practicalities.

24 And the Lord's servant must not quarrel; instead, he must be kind to everyone, able to teach, not resentful. 25 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

Not quarrel, in other words do not maintain the debate when it becomes argument.

Again Paul gives practical's one how to do this.

Be kind

Teach

Don't be resentful.

Let's be realistic, some of this is hard work. Yep just like we said last week, discipling someone is hard work, maintaining our Christian relationships is hard work too.

Present your case gently, teach. Show them truth.

MM, interesting set of ways to put things. In some ways it is like our conflict document.

Practical ways of dealing with conflict. The cool thing about this passage is that it is addressed to Timothy yet also to us thousands of years later. How do we feel about that? What is it that God says to us today? You only have to deal with it for 25 minutes, I have had to look at it for a couple of weeks. What does God say to you? What does God say to me?

God's word gives us a template. Our church documentation give us a template. (After all that document is based on Scripture)

There is an expectation that we will take notice and live accordingly. To be Christian is to not only read the Word of God but to apply it.

There is some food for thought for us this week.