

**Subject: A Faithful Servant of the Lord**

**Scripture: 2 Timothy 2:22-26**

God calls us to be servants, and as servants He calls us not to be successful or popular or impressive. He simply calls us to be faithful. **1 Corinthians 4:2** *Moreover it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful.* As servants we are stewards or managers entrusted with God's treasures. What are the treasures we have from God? He gives each of us a certain amount of time, our opportunities, assignments, spiritual gifts and abilities. He gives us His written Word and the Holy Spirit who inspired it.

**A CALL TO PURITY (vs. 22-23)**

- A call to moral purity

Paul gave a similar charge in **1 Timothy 6:11** *But thou, O man of God, flee these things; and follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness.* This is a constant, ongoing process of fleeing ("keep on fleeing and keep on following"). We get our English word "fugitive" from the word translated flee. What are youthful lusts (desires)? This includes sexual immorality, but also pride, anger, and greed. We have the example of Joseph in Genesis 39. He fled from Potiphar's wife and was God's faithful servant as a young man. We must not only keep on fleeing sin, but we must keep on pursuing godly character (righteousness, faithfulness, love, peace). We must pursue these things with other believers who are pursuing the Lord with a pure heart. How can we keep our heart pure? **Psalms 119:9** *Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way? by taking heed thereto according to thy word.*

We're not in this battle alone. In John Bunyan's classic story, *Pilgrim's Progress*, he describes a believer's journey. Sometimes Christian was hurt by the wrong kind of companions and sometimes he was blessed by the right kind of company. We need to travel with people who are on the narrow road. **Proverbs 13:20** *He that walketh with wise men shall be wise: but a companion of fools shall be destroyed.*

- A call to doctrinal purity

God's servant is to avoid useless arguments with false teachers. Paul already warned about this in vs. 14, 16. Some people want to make a mountain out of a molehill, but the wise servant knows that every hill is not a hill worth dying on.

**A CALL TO PATIENCE (vs. 24-26)**

- Don't argue or fight with people

We need to see Paul's commands in the light of who he was before his conversion, **1 Timothy 1:12-15** <sup>12</sup> *And I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who hath enabled me, for that he counted me faithful, putting me into the ministry;* <sup>13</sup> *Who was before a blasphemer, and a persecutor, and injurious: but I obtained mercy, because I did it ignorantly in unbelief.* <sup>14</sup> *And the grace of our Lord was exceeding abundant with faith and love which is in Christ Jesus.* <sup>15</sup> *This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief.*

Before he was saved Paul described himself as “a persecutor and injurious” which means he was injured people. He was a mean bully who abused people physically and verbally. Yet now we find him charging Timothy and all servants of the Lord not to strive, argue or fight. That’s not of the Lord.

We also need to see Paul’s command in the light of what he wrote in **2 Timothy 1:7** *For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind.* A servant of the Lord is not to be a fighter and he is not to be fearful. He is courageous, but at the same time considerate. He is to earnestly contend for the faith without being contentious. God’s message may offend people, but God’s messenger should not offend. Servants should “adorn the doctrine of God our Savior in all things,” that is, we are to have the kind of life and manner that attracts people to the truth we teach and believe.

- Be gentle (meek) to all

Jesus only described His life in one verse and here’s what He said, **Matthew 11:29** *Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls.* He is our example, and He is meek and lowly in heart (humble). Meekness is a fruit of the Spirit (Gal. 5:22-23). Meekness is not weakness, but it is power under control. A horse is said to be meek when it is trained and able to be controlled. That reminds me of a riding stable that had this sign out front: “We have horses for all people. We have big horses for big folks and little horses for little folks. For people who ride fast we have fast horses. For people who ride slow we have slow horses. And for people who don’t ride horses we have horses that have never been ridden.” I’ve met some people in ministry who are anything but gentle and meek. A faithful servant must have strong convictions that are rooted in Scripture, but a tender compassion for people.

- Teach the Word of God

This is what Jesus did and this is what Paul did. People need to be instructed in the way of the Lord. People need to be corrected and guided by the Word. The pastor must be apt or able to teach (vs. 24; 1 Tim. 3:2). **Titus 1:9** *Holding fast the faithful word as he hath been taught, that he may be able by sound doctrine both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers.* **2 Timothy 4:2** *Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine.* God’s Word is sufficient (*Sola Scriptura*).

- Trust God to work in their lives

Only God can change the heart. Truth comes from God and repentance comes from God as a gift. **Acts 11:18** *When they heard these things, they held their peace, and glorified God, saying, Then hath God also to the Gentiles granted repentance unto life.* The lost person comes to his senses and escapes the snare (trap) of the devil. Lost people are deceived and held in bondage. Satan traps people with deception and lies (Jn. 8:44). Satan’s motive is death and his method is deception. The first Bible reference to Satan in Genesis 3 reveals him as the deceiver, and the last reference to him reveals him in the same way, **Revelation 20:10** *And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever.*

The devil traps lost people with lies and deception, but God's truth sets them free.

**John 8:32** *And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.* Repentance involves a change of thinking, a change of attitude, and a change of behavior.

**1 Thessalonians 1:9** *For they themselves show of us what manner of entering in we had unto you, and how ye turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God.*

God's servant must trust God to work in the lost person's life so they will repent and be rescued. A faithful servant of the Lord is a pure servant and a patient servant. He does what He can do and He depends on God to do what only He can do.