

2 TIMOTHY VERSE BY VERSE

Session 6 | 2 Timothy 2:17-26

2 TIMOTHY 2:17-26 | CHRISTIAN BEHAVIOR

- Verse 17 –
 - When Paul says that **their word will eat as doth a canker** he is not referring to some group of persons, but rather continuing from verse 17: *profane and vain babblings will increase and will eat as a canker.*
 - The first part of this sentence is applicable to our dispensation universally. The second part is specific to Timothy and those in his day, though we could certainly find some like **Hymenaeus and Philetus**.
 - Note that Paul didn't mind naming names. In 1 Timothy 1:20 Hymenaeus is mentioned as a blasphemer.
- Verse 18 –
 - Continuing to speak of **Hymenaeus and Philetus**, Paul says that they **have erred** with a theological error of the greatest importance, **saying that the resurrection is past already**. This error will **overthrow the faith of some**.
 - Since the resurrection of Christ was clearly already past, this is a reference to the resurrection of the dead at the beginning of the Kingdom.
 - Therefore, these two troublemakers were teaching that the Kingdom of God had already begun.
 - This same deviation of Kingdom theology is taught today in the "already/not yet" movement.
 - Since Jesus clearly was not reigning on the throne, these two must have done the same that the "already/not yet" proponent do today: spiritualize the Kingdom."
 - The Kingdom is not "already/not yet" but is future, material, national, and theocratic.
 - As long as Hymenaeus and Philetus taught their deviated version of the Kingdom, some would become confused and, in despair or in error, turn away from Biblical faith.
 - This illustrates the need for the doctrine of separation.
 - The ecumenical movement (and ecumenical activity on the local level) has and will **overthrow the faith of some**.
- Verse 19 –
 - In spite of the fact that there are those whose faith who will be overthrown, God has a sure foundation, He is not shaken.
 - His foundation has this **seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his**.
 - This appears to be a quote from Nahum 1:7.
 - The verse continues with a new sentence, **And...**, then proceeds to give what may be taken as a second part of the seal *or* simply another teaching from Paul, namely, **Let everyone that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity**.
 - This does not appear to be a quote of Scripture.
 - I think there is as much credibility that this sentence is unrelated to the seal as the argument for associating the two together.
 - The truth of this foundation (which is itself a Pauline revelation) would be, it seems, relevant to all dispensations.
- Verse 20 –
 - Paul uses an illustration to show that the foundation is sure but in the house there are various vessels **some to honour, and some to dishonour**.

- Note that **to honour** and **to dishonour** does not speak of their *purpose* but *usage*. *A fork is a fork* but some forks are silver and others plastic.
- Verse 21 –
 - A man should **purge himself from these**, and **these** are the **profane and vain babblings** of verse 16, which is all that has been in context (the pronoun **these** is in the neuter, not masculine, and thus is not speaking of purging from men like **Hymenaeus and Philetus** (v. 13)).
 - By obeying the instruction of verse 15 and avoiding the opposite of that instruction (v. 16), a person can be **meet for the master's use**.
- Verse 22 –
 - Having given several verses on departing from **profane and vain babblings** (v. 16), Paul now adds, **flee also youthful lusts**.
 - It is doubtful that in-depth word-studies and cross-references are needed.
 - One should note that there are *senior lusts* as well as *youthful*, but the context to Timothy makes *youthful* to be in order.
 - Whatever our age, if we will seek things that honor God along **with them that call on the Lord out of a pure heart**, we will be useful to the Master.
- Verse 23 –
 - A **foolish and unlearned** question is presumably one that has no value for the pursuit of knowledge. A teacher may say “there are no stupid questions,” but there are **foolish and unlearned questions**, that do not serve for learning but rather simply to **gender strifes**.
 - Not only does it serve the believer well to **avoid** these questions, but also to recognize these questions when they arise. This takes practice in discernment.
- Verse 24 –
 - The word **servant** is δούλος [doulos] rather than διακονος [diakonos] (as used in 1 Tim. 3:8-13), and is likely more generally used that someone in a recognized church office.
 - The Greek does not contain the definite article, though the use of the definite article should not be given strong consideration in building a theological interpretation since its usage is much broader in Greek than in English.
 - The word **strive** is μάχη [mache], which is *to strive or quarrel*, and from which English derives *macho*.
 - Certainly, a servant of the Lord should *fight the good fight* (see 2 Tim. 4:7), but should not have a *bravado* that calls attention more to self than to truth.
 - Rather than *machismo*, there should be a *gentle, teaching, and patient* spirit by those who serve the Lord.
- Verse 25 –
 - There should be a **meekness** of instruction for those who **oppose themselves**.
 - The word **themselves** is found in the Greek tense of the word **oppose**.
 - The “middle voice” typically means that the action is reflexive (as in “he dressed himself”). However, many Greek verbs only have a middle voice, and therefore must be taken in the active voice, so simply, **those that oppose**.
 - This is done so that God *perhaps* would give them a *change of thinking* to the **acknowledging of the truth**.
- Verse 26 –
 - The *meek instruction* can be used of God to a *change of thinking* that will enable a person to **recover themselves out of the snare of the devil**. These people have been **taken captive by him** [the devil] **at his will**.
 - The appearance here is that the devil *takes captive*. However, a strong argument can be made that it is the **servant of the Lord** (v. 24) that has taken the student captive for the will of God. See *The Companion Bible* note on this passage.