



## river west church

Servants our Lord and Savior Can Use

2 Timothy 2:20-26

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So far in our series in 2 Timothy, we've learned that God accomplishes His purposes in our world when ordinary people step up to the assignments He has given them. Now, the truth is that there is actually a long list of things that keep you and I from stepping up to these assignments—busy schedules, feelings of inadequacy, fears, difficult people—you name it. Timothy dealt with them all. And, in reality, so will we if we say “yes” to the assignments God has given us. However, the good news is that Christ is committed to using every difficult situation we face to make us into servants He can use!

### **Who Christ is Looking For Today: Ready + Willing Vessels**

To drive this point home Paul uses a metaphor of a home filled with “vessels of gold and silver but also of wood and clay, some for honorable use, some for dishonorable” (2:20). Now, it's important to understand what this metaphor is not saying. For one, it is not saying that God uses people who outwardly appear to have their act together. In Jesus' day, the Pharisees prided themselves as being “set apart as holy” (v21). Surely, if there were “vessels of gold and silver” it would have been them. And yet, to everyone's surprise, when Jesus selected His disciples He didn't recruit the religious leaders. Instead, He invited ordinary, imperfect people with unimpressive social standing to follow and serve Him. Secondly, Paul is not saying that some Christians get elected for “honorable” assignments - like preaching and teaching - while others get stuck with “dishonorable” assignments - like scrubbing toilets or changing diapers. Every assignment in God's house is honorable, no matter how insignificant or menial it may feel. The real question is this, are you “ready for every good work” God has in store for you (v21)? Are you willing to ditch the excuses that are keeping you from fully engaging in this assignment? If so, in spite of your inadequacy, today Christ wants to make you into a servant who is “useful to the master of the house” (v21)!

### **What this Calls For: Fleeing + Pursuing**

In order to become servants our Lord and Savior can use, it will necessarily involve two things. First, we must know which things Christ is calling His servants to flee and avoid. In particular, Paul tells Timothy to avoid two things in this passage: self-serving desires and senseless arguments. Many times we dress our self-serving desires in Christian attire. As a result, underneath our seemingly righteous behaviors are often buried rotten desires. This is why the Apostle Paul instructs Timothy to “flee youthful passions” (v22). Selfish ambitions and desires destroy relationships and derail the advancement of the Gospel in our world. Secondly, Paul tells Timothy to avoid “foolish, ignorant controversies” that arise within the church. Sadly, in the body of Christ today there are people who love to “breed quarrels” over the Bible (v23). By and large, people who perpetually quarrel over Scripture are more interested in winning arguments than seeing the Gospel win in our world. Over and against these senseless arguments, Paul offers us a bit of timeless wisdom today: “And the Lord's servant must not be quarrelsome but kind to everyone, able to teach, patiently enduring evil, correcting his opponents with gentleness” (vv24-25). However, in order to become this kind of servant it will take more than knowing which negative things to avoid. This is why Paul also includes a list of positive things for us to pursue: “righteousness, faith, love, and peace, along with those who call on the Lord from a pure heart” (v22). As we earnestly pursue these things, we will grow into servants our Lord and Savior can use in amazing ways!

In the end, the reason we're studying 2 Timothy as a church is because there's so much at stake. If the Gospel is true, then right now many people in our community are held captive by Jesus' greatest enemy - Satan. He ensnares men and women with lies and coerces them to do his will. This is why it matters whether we allow God to make us into servants He can use. Ultimately, we want to see chains fall away as people put their faith in Christ! But, this can only happen as God grants us "repentance leading to a knowledge of the truth" (v25). This truth Paul speaks of is the Gospel of Christ. The Gospel alone has the power to bind up the brokenhearted and set the captives free. However, the way God shares this message to our world today is through broken, imperfect people like you and me. Today, by faith, will you allow our Lord and Savior to make you into someone He can use?