

BIBLE TEXT | 2 TIMOTHY 2:20-26

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.

22 So flee youthful passions and pursue righteousness, faith, love, and peace, along with those who call on the Lord from a pure heart. **23** Have nothing to do with foolish, ignorant controversies; you know that they breed quarrels. **24** And the Lord's servant must not be quarrelsome but kind to everyone, able to teach, patiently enduring evil, **25** correcting his opponents with gentleness. God may perhaps grant them repentance leading to a knowledge of the truth, **26** and they may come to their senses and escape from the snare of the devil, after being captured by him to do his will.

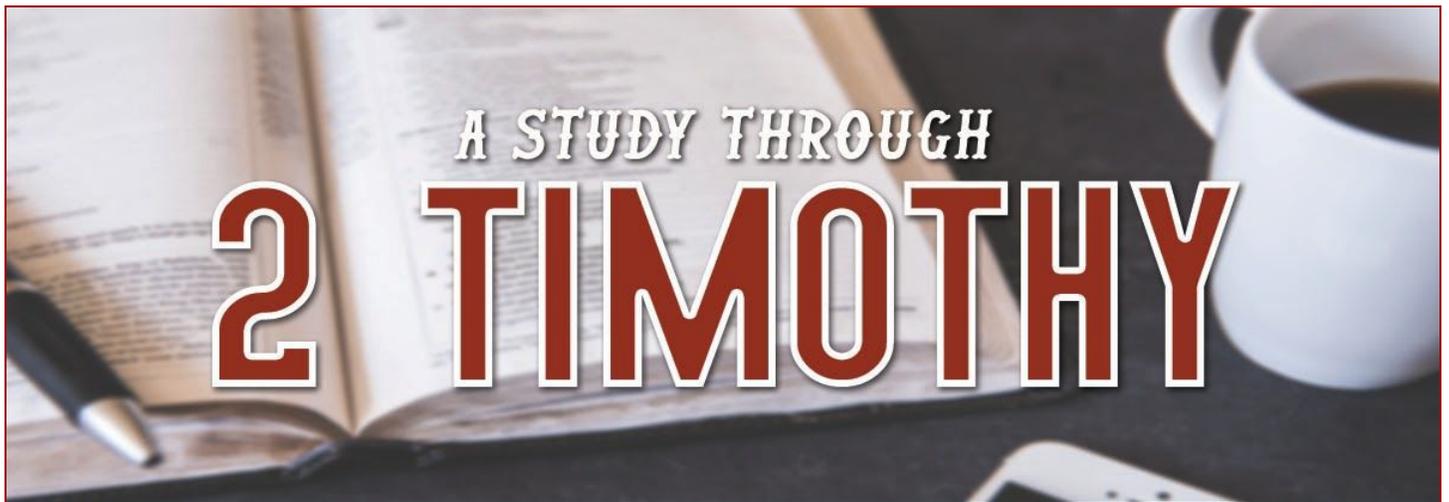
DEVOTIONAL FOR 2 TIMOTHY 2:20-26

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In 2 Timothy 2:20-26, Paul talks of there being honorable and dishonorable vessels in a great house. The house is the Church, built on the solid foundation of Christ, on a grand scale and at a great cost. The vessels within it can be of great value such as gold and silver (fruit of the spirit- Galatians 5:22-23) or of wood and clay (selfishness and youthful lusts of the flesh-Galatians 5:19-21). There are several characteristics of the heart that God desires to change in us in order to become honorable vessels.

As we go through life, we are constantly in need of various tools to repair damage and create new things. We also know that when we look for a tool, it needs to fulfill the purpose for which it was created, and it must do it well. We all have many tools that are frequently used and many that are hardly used at all. The frequency by which each tool is used can greatly determine its value. The more useful the tool, the more that can be accomplished.

God desires to use us as a tool to accomplish his ministry. He desires that we become clean and frequently used tools of magnificent quality (Ephesians 1:4) instead of rusty, dull tools that hang in the shed and serve little purpose



except just being there (James 5:3-6). To be a tool of magnificent quality, we must empty ourselves just as Jesus did for us on the cross; we must also be clean and available.

We empty ourselves by purging our dishonorable self (Galatians 5:24) and giving ourselves to others. We cleanse ourselves by pursuing righteousness and peace (James 4:7-8). And we must make ourselves available to be used by placing God's work at the highest priority. We can do this through God's grace and work through us; we cannot make ourselves useful for His purposes on our own accord (John 15:5-7). We must have self-control and be gentle to those that oppose us (Galatians 5:23) so that others may know the truth. We must abide in Him daily (John 15:4) so that we can be effective in sharing the gospel and avoid meaningless conflict (Titus 3:9) which can hinder our service to Him.

This year has been one of the most challenging years that most of us have ever experienced. Many have fallen away from the Church because of COVID-19, the election results, a corrupt culture and a complete inversion of what's considered "normal". We need, now more than ever, to make ourselves available to Christ for His purposes! The choice is ours – we can present ourselves empty, clean and available to Jesus as a valuable tool that can be used by Him for his work to repair or create new relationships; or we can sit in the shed, unused and gathering rust. What kind of tool are you?

Questions:

1. Read Ephesians 1:1-14. Verse 10 refers to a plan by God to unite all things in Him. How can we change our outlook in current events to be united so that we can be fruitful for God?
2. Which areas of your life need to be "cleansed" through Jesus so that you can present yourself to God as a valuable tool that He can use for any purpose that He desires?
3. How can you re-prioritize your life so that you can abide in Christ daily to be ready to be used as a tool for his Kingdom?