

2 Timothy

Remain Faithful

Handle with Care

Faithfulness to the Truth

2 Timothy 2:14–19

THE IMPORTANCE OF THE TRUTH

In his testimony before Pilate, Jesus said, “For this I have been born, and for this I have come into the world, **to testify to the truth**. Everyone who is of the truth hears My voice” (John 18:37).

To this, Pilate cynically asked, ***“What is truth?”***

THE IMPORTANCE OF THE TRUTH

Those without Christ

2 Thessalonians 2:10

. . . they **did not receive the love of the truth** so as to be saved.

2 Timothy 3:7

…always learning and **never able to come to the knowledge of the truth**.

1 John 2:4

The one who says, "I have come to know Him," and does not keep His commandments, is a liar, and **the truth is not in him**.

Children of God

1 Timothy 2:3–4

This is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior, who desires all men to be saved and to **come to the knowledge of the truth**.

2 Timothy 2:25

with gentleness correcting those who are in opposition, if perhaps God may grant them repentance **leading to the knowledge of the truth**

John 8:32

"…and **you will know the truth**, and the truth will make you free."

FAILURE IN FAITHFULNESS

The letter of 2 Timothy is an appeal from Paul to Timothy to remain faithful.

- ⇨ Failure in faithfulness comes not only from *fear of suffering*.
- ⇨ Failure in faithfulness can also come from *false teaching*.

In 2 Timothy 2: 14-19, we see four safeguards given to Timothy so that the church would cling to the truth and not fall into ruin.

1. Remind the church of the truth v. 14a
2. Reject the disputes over words v. 14b
3. Rightly handle the word of truth v. 15
4. Refrain from talk that leads to ungodliness vv.16-19

2 Timothy 2:14–19

Remind them of these things, and solemnly charge them in the presence of God not to wrangle about words, which is useless and leads to the ruin of the hearers.

Be diligent to present yourself approved to God as a workman who does not need to be ashamed, accurately handling the word of truth.

But avoid worldly and empty chatter, for it will lead to further ungodliness, and their talk will spread like gangrene. Among them are Hymenaeus and Philetus, men who have gone astray from the truth saying that the resurrection has already taken place, and they upset the faith of some. Nevertheless, the firm foundation of God stands, having this seal: “The Lord knows those who are His,” and, “Everyone who names the name of the Lord is to abstain from wickedness.”

1. Remind the Church of the Truth (v. 14a)

2 Timothy 2:14a — Remind them of these things. . .

- This statement looks back at what was just written, especially the trustworthy statement in verses 11–13.
  - Timothy must remind them of these truths so that they will keep suffering in its proper perspective (Romans 8:18).
- This statement also looks forward to the next section.
  - We need to be reminded of truth so that we will not drift into error and ungodliness (Romans 12:2).

⇨ We need these constant reminders of biblical truths so that we will always be ready to bring them to mind (2 Peter 1:12–15).

2. Reject Disputes over Words (v. 14b)

2 Timothy 2:14b — Solemnly charge them in the presence of God not to wrangle about words, which is useless and leads to the ruin of the hearers.

In his letters, Paul has occasionally given a charge to Timothy (1 Timothy 5:21; 6:13-14; 2 Timothy 4:1-2)

- Now Paul is telling Timothy to give a solemn charge to those in Ephesus. This shows that this was a serious matter!

A charge given "in the presence of God" reminds the hearer that God is watching and will hold the person responsible on judgment day

- Pastor MacArthur writes, "**Being specially aware of God's presence adds a measure of healthy fear of the Lord and therefore of increased determination to serve Him faithfully**."

2 Timothy 2:14b — Solemnly charge them in the presence of God not to wrangle about words, which is useless and leads to the ruin of the hearers.

not to wrangle about words – a compound word made of terms “words” and “battles”

LSB	dispute about words
ESV	quarrel about words
HCSB	fight about words

We see there was an ongoing problem it the church in Ephesus:

1 Timothy 1:3-4 …strange doctrines …myths and endless genealogies

1 Timothy 1:6 …fruitless discussion

1 Timothy 4:7 …worldly fables…

1 Timothy 6:3–5 …morbid interest in controversial questions and disputes about words…

1 Timothy 6:20 …worldly and empty chatter and the opposing arguments of what is falsely called “knowledge”

2 Timothy 2:14b — Solemnly charge them in the presence of God not to wrangle about words, which is useless and leads to the ruin of the hearers.

Wrangling about words was not a minor issue!

- It was serious enough that Timothy was to solemnly charge them in God's presence to stop doing this.
- Its seriousness is also seen in the destruction that it causes.
  - useless – good for nothing!
  - leads to the ruin of the hearers – undermining of overturning; catastrophic (2 Pt. 2:6)

⇨ False teaching not only brings judgment on those speaking it but is also catastrophic to those who hear it!

3. Rightly Handle the Word of Truth (v. 15)

2 Timothy 2:15 — Be diligent to present yourself approved to God as a workman who does not need to be ashamed, accurately handling the word of truth.

Be diligent — includes the idea of great urgency and intense exertion (2 Timothy 4:9, 21)

present yourself approved to God — God is observing his actions and he too will stand before God one day to give an account for how he has used his time (Matthew 25:14-30)

workman — a workman is a laborer; the emphasis is on effort

who does not need to be ashamed — at the Bema judgment, we may receive rewards, but we may also shrink away in shame (1 John 2:28)

⇨ **What a motivation to be diligent in our service to the Lord!**

accurately handling the word of truth — literally "cutting it straight;" understanding and communicating God's truth with accuracy

⇨ **Rightly handling God's Word is a sure defense against the onslaught of false teaching**

4. Refrain from Talk That Leads to Ungodliness (vv. 16–19)

2 Timothy 2:16–18 — Avoid worldly and empty chatter, for it will lead to further ungodliness, and their talk will spread like gangrene. Among them are Hymenaeus and Philetus, men who have gone astray from the truth saying that the resurrection has already taken place, and they upset the faith of some.

worldly and empty chatter — speech that is both devoid of content but also despicable

- avoid it—do not participate in it.
  - ⇨ It advances from bad to worse in further ungodliness.
  - ⇨ It spreads like gangrene!

Examples: Hymenaeus and Philetus – men who taught that the only resurrection was a spiritual one, not a physical resurrection

- ⇨ The result was that the faith of some was overturned! Not that anyone lost their salvation, but their professed faith was never truly realized.

2 Timothy 2:19 — Nevertheless, the firm foundation of God stands, having this seal, "The Lord knows those who are His," and, "Everyone who names the name of the Lord is to abstain from wickedness.

the firm foundation of God stands — the foundation refers to the true church or the truth upon which the church stands, the gospel of Jesus Christ

having this seal — seals were a sign of **ownership** and **authenticity**; God has set His seal upon the church

- **Ownership:** The Lord knows those who are His. — Although the faith of some may be overturned, those who belong to the Lord will not fall (Numbers 16:5).
- **Authenticity:** Everyone who names the name of the Lord is to abstain from wickedness. — Those who truly belong to the Lord will demonstrate this by their holy lives (Numbers 16:26).

  ⇨ We can be encouraged that although false teachers will come, true believers will not fall away and pursue wickedness. God's seal is upon them, they are authentic and belong to God!

Application

1) **Do you continually seek to be reminded of the truth?**
   - Continue to seek input of God's truth into your mind.
2) **Do you speak about things that show an awareness that you will stand before God's presence to give an account?**
   - Continue to speak with the knowledge that God will judge every careless word (Matthew 12:36).
3) **Do you work hard in understanding God's Word?**
   - Faithfully study God's Word and do not be taken in by error. Be like the noble Bereans who tested all things by God's Word (Acts 17:11).