

A WORKMAN APPROVED BY GOD! *Text: 2 Timothy 2: 14 - 26*

¹⁴Remind them of these things, and charge them before God not to quarrel about words, which does no good, but only ruins the hearers.¹⁵ Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a worker who has no need to be ashamed, rightly handling the word of truth.¹⁶ But avoid irreverent babble, for it will lead people into more and more ungodliness,¹⁷ and their talk will spread like gangrene. Among them are Hymenaeus and Philetus,¹⁸ who have swerved from the truth, saying that the resurrection has already happened. They are upsetting the faith of some.¹⁹ But God's firm foundation stands, bearing this seal: "The Lord knows those who are his," and, "Let everyone who names the name of the Lord depart from iniquity."

²⁰Now in a great house there are not only vessels of gold and silver but also of wood and clay, some for honourable use, some for dishonorable.²¹ Therefore, if anyone cleanses himself from what is dishonourable, he will be a vessel for honourable use, set apart as holy, useful to the master of the house, ready for every good work.

²²So 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.

The apostle Paul has painted for us a portrait of an ideal Christian worker in the gospel. A variety of words and images were used to impress upon Timothy what it means to be a worker approved by God. A picture is worth a thousand words. We are about to look at 3 powerful images in 2 Timothy 2:14-26:

1. An Unashamed Worker! Verse 14-19

2. A vessel for honourable (noble) use! Verse 20-21

3. A patient & gentle servant of Christ! Verse 22-26

Proverbs 25:15 (NLT) is a verse about the art of **patient delivery**,

"Patience can persuade a prince, and soft speech can crush strong opposition."

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

1. What must you work on in becoming a skilful workman, rightly dividing the truth?
2. What are some areas of "youthful lusts" that you have to flee from?
3. In cultivating a patient & gentle disposition, what is most difficult for you?