

Welcome to Promise Land Bible Church
We're glad you're here!



An open Bible is shown from a low angle, looking up at the pages. The pages are filled with text, and the background is a bright blue sky with wispy white clouds. The text is overlaid in a large, bold, black font.

Getting the Picture

Scripture text: **2 Timothy 2**

GETTING THE PICTURE

Paul represented seven pictures of the Christian minister.

1.) The Steward (2 Tim. 2:1–2)

2.) The Soldier (2 Tim. 2:3–4, 8–13)

A.) He endures hardship

B.) He avoids worldly entanglements (v. 4).

C.) He magnifies Jesus Christ (vv. 8–9).

D.) He thinks of the whole army

E.) He trusts his Commanding Officer (vv. 11–13).

3.) The Athlete (2 Tim. 2:5)

4.) The Farmer (2 Tim. 2:6–7)

5.) The Workman (2 Tim. 2:14–18)

The word study (2 Tim. 2:15) has nothing to do with books and teachers. It means **“to be diligent, be zealous.”** It is translated in this way in 2 Timothy 4:9, 21, and also in Titus 3:12. The emphasis in this paragraph is that **the workman needs to be diligent in his labors so that he will not be ashamed when his work is inspected.** “Rightly dividing” means **“cutting straight”** and can be applied to many different tasks: plowing a straight furrow, cutting a straight board, sewing a straight seam.

The pastor is a workman in God's Word. The Word is a treasure that the steward must guard and invest. **It is the soldier's sword and the farmer's seed.** But it is also the workman's tool for building, measuring, and repairing God's people. The preacher and teacher **who use the Word correctly will build their church** the way **God wants it to be built.** But a sloppy worker will handle God's Word deceitfully in order to make it say what he wants it to say.

2 Corinthians 4:2 But we have renounced disgraceful, underhanded ways. **We refuse to practice cunning or to tamper with God's word, but by the open statement of the truth** we would commend ourselves to everyone's conscience **in the sight of God.**

When God tests our ministries in His local churches, some of it, sad to say, will become ashes.

1 Corinthians 3:10-13 According to the grace of God given to me, like a skilled master builder I laid a foundation, and someone else is building upon it. Let each one take care how he builds upon it. For no one can lay a foundation other than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ. Now if anyone builds on the foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw-- **each one's work will become manifest, for the Day will disclose it, because it will be revealed by fire, and the fire will test what sort of work each one has done.**

An approved worker diligently studies the Word and **seeks to apply it to his own life**. An ashamed worker wastes his time with other “religious duties” and has little or nothing to give his class or congregation. An approved worker does not waste his time arguing about “words to no profit” (2 Tim. 2:14) because he knows that such arguing only undermines God’s work.

An approved workman will shun “godless chatter” (2 Tim. 2:16; and see 1 Tim. 6:20), because he knows it only leads to more ungodliness. **I fear that some “sharing times” do more harm than good as well-meaning people exchange their “spiritual ignorance.”**

2 Timothy 2:14-17 Remind them of these things, and charge them before God not to quarrel about words, **which does no good, but only ruins the hearers.** 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. **But avoid irreverent babble, for it will lead people into more and more ungodliness, and their talk will spread like gangrene.** Among them are Hymenaeus and Philetus,

1 Timothy 6:3-5 If anyone teaches a different doctrine and does not agree with the sound words of our Lord Jesus Christ and the teaching that accords with godliness, he is puffed up with conceit and **understands nothing**. He has an **unhealthy craving for controversy** and for **quarrels about words**, which produce envy, dissension, slander, evil suspicions, and **constant friction among people who are depraved in mind and deprived of the truth, imagining that godliness is a means of gain.**

Titus 3:8-11 The saying is trustworthy, and I want you to insist on these things, so that those who have believed in God may be careful to devote themselves to good works. These things are excellent and profitable for people. **But avoid foolish controversies, genealogies, dissensions, and quarrels about the law, for they are unprofitable and worthless. As for a person who stirs up division, after warning him once and then twice, have nothing more to do with him, knowing that such a person is warped and sinful; he is self-condemned.**

An approved workman knows that false doctrine is dangerous, and he will oppose it.

Paul compared it to gangrene (2 Tim. 2:17).

Much as gangrene spreads, infects, and kills other tissue, so false doctrine spreads and infects the body of believers, the church. This infection must be exposed and removed. Only the “sound [healthy] doctrine” of the Word of God can keep a church healthy and growing.

Paul named two men who were false teachers, and he also identified their error.

It is likely that the Hymenaeus named here (2 Tim. 2:17) is the same man named in 1 Timothy 1:20. We know nothing about his associate, Philetus. Both of them “wandered from the truth” by teaching that the resurrection had already taken place. Perhaps they taught that salvation is resurrection in a spiritual sense, so a believer must not expect a physical resurrection. But **the denial of a physical resurrection is a serious thing** (see 1 Cor. 15:12ff), for it involves the resurrection of Christ and the completion of God’s plan of salvation for His people. **No wonder these false teachers were able to “overthrow the faith of some”** (2 Tim. 2:18). **The Resurrection is a foundational truth of the Gospel.**

1 Corinthians 15:12-17 Now if Christ is proclaimed as raised from the dead, **how can some of you say that there is no resurrection of the dead?** But if there is no resurrection of the dead, then not even Christ has been raised. And **if Christ has not been raised, then our preaching is in vain and your faith is in vain. We are even found to be misrepresenting God,** because we testified about God that he raised Christ, whom he did not raise if it is true that the dead are not raised. For **if the dead are not raised, not even Christ has been raised. And if Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile and you are still in your sins.**

Each of us as God's workman will be either approved or ashamed.

The word approved means "one who has been tested and found acceptable." The word was used for testing and approving metals. **Each trial that we go through forces us to study the Word to find God's will. As we rightly use the Word, we succeed in overcoming our trials, and we are approved by God.**

Martin Luther once said **that prayer, study, and suffering make a pastor**; and this is true. We cannot be approved **unless we are tested.**

What does it mean to be “ashamed”?

Certainly it means that such a workman’s work is below standard and **cannot be accepted. It means loss of reward.**

In fact, in Paul’s day, a **builder was fined if he failed to follow the specifications.**

When the Lord judges our works, **it will be revealed whether we as workmen have handled the Word of God honestly and carefully.** Some who are now first will end up last!

6.) The Vessel (2 Tim. 2:19–22)

In this illustration, Paul described a “great house,” which is the professing church. The foundation of the house is safe and secure because **God’s seal is on it.** (In the Bible, a seal is a mark of ownership and security. No one would dare break a Roman seal.) Paul quoted Moses: “The Lord knows those that are His” (Num. 16:5). This refers to the Godward aspect of the Christian life: God chose us who trust Him as His elect (see 2 Tim. 2:10).

But there is also a manward aspect of the Christian life: *“Let everyone who names the name of the Lord depart from iniquity”* (2 Tim. 2:19). This refers back to Numbers 16:26, **where the Lord warned the people to get away from the tents of Korah and the rebels.** In other words, those who are the elect of God prove it by **living godly lives.** We are chosen in Christ “that we should be holy and without blame” (Eph. 1:4).

This great house not only has a solid foundation that is sealed, but it also has vessels (utensils of various kinds) for performing household functions.

Paul divides the utensils into two categories: **those of honor** (gold and silver) and **those of dishonor** (wood and clay). **He is not distinguishing between kinds of Christians, but rather is making a distinction between true teachers of the Word and the false teachers he described (2 Tim. 2:16–18). A faithful pastor is like a gold or silver vessel that brings honor to Jesus Christ.** The head of a house displays his costliest and most beautiful utensils and gets honor from them.

False teachers are not valuable; they are like wood and clay. They are utensils to dishonor, no matter how popular they may be today. **Wood and clay will not survive the test of fire.** It is worth noting that the name Timothy comes from two Greek words which together mean “**God-honoring.**” Paul was encouraging **Timothy to live up to his name!**

The important thing is that the honorable vessels not be contaminated by the dishonorable ones. The word “these” (2 Tim. 2:21) refers to the vessels of dishonor (2 Tim. 2:20). **Paul is admonishing Timothy to separate himself from false teachers.**

If he does, **then God will honor him, set him apart, and equip him for service.** “Useful to the Master” (2 Tim. 2:21)—**what a tremendous honor that is!** A useful human vessel of honor does not get involved in the popular things of the world, even the “religious world.” **He must remain holy, and this means he must be separated from everything that would defile him.**

This includes the sins of the flesh as well (2 Tim. 2:22). Paul used a similar admonition in 1 Timothy 6:11–12—**“Flee ... follow ... fight.”** True Bible separation is balanced: **we flee sin, but we follow after righteousness.**

If we are not balanced, then we will be isolated instead of separated. In fact, God's man Paul **commands us to fellowship** "with them that **call on the Lord out of a pure heart**" (2 Tim. 2:22). After all, this is the purpose of the ministry of the Word (1 Tim. 1:5). **It is sad when true believers are isolated because of a false view of separation.**

For God to be able to use us as vessels, we must be empty, clean, and available. He will take us and fill us and use us for His glory.

But if we are filled with sin or defiled by disobedience, He will first have to purge us; and **that might not be an enjoyable experience.** In the “great house” of the professing church, there are true believers and false. **We must exercise spiritual discernment** and be careful that we are vessels sanctified unto honor.

The Servant (2 Tim. 2:23–26)

“Servant” (2 Tim. 2:24) is the Greek word *doulos* which means “slave.” So Paul called himself “a slave of Jesus Christ” (Rom. 1:1; Phil. 1:1).

Romans 1:1-4 Paul, a servant of Christ Jesus, called to be an apostle, set apart for the gospel of God, which he promised beforehand through his prophets in the holy Scriptures, concerning his Son, who was descended from David according to the flesh and **was declared to be the Son of God in power** according to the Spirit of holiness **by his resurrection from the dead, Jesus Christ our Lord,**

Philemon 1:1 Paul, a prisoner for Christ Jesus, and Timothy our brother, To Philemon our beloved fellow worker

A slave had no will of his own; he was totally under the command of his master. Once, we Christians were the slaves of sin, but **now we are the slaves of God** (Rom. 6:16ff). Like the servant in Old Testament days, we say, “I love my master ... I will not go out free” (Ex. 21:5).

God’s slave does not have an easy time teaching the Word. Satan opposes him and tries to trap his listeners (2 Tim. 2:26). Also, some people are just naturally difficult to teach. They enjoy “foolish and stupid arguments” (2 Tim. 2:23) and have no desire to feed on the nourishing Word of God.

Until you have experienced it, you have no idea how difficult it is to impart spiritual truth to some people.

How easy it would be to ignore them! But then Satan would get them. Paul admonished Timothy to avoid the arguments that create strifes, but not to ignore the people. **He must not argue or fight. He must be patient and gentle, teaching the Word of God in meekness.** It is not enough just to expose error and refute it; **we must also teach positive truths and establish the saints in faith.**

A servant of God must instruct those who oppose him, for this is the only way he can rescue them from Satan's captivity. Satan is a liar (John 8:44). He captures people by his lying promises, as he did Eve (see Gen. 3; 2 Cor. 11:3).

A servant's purpose is not to win arguments but to win souls. He wants to see deceived persons brought to repentance ("I was wrong—I have changed my mind") and the acknowledging of the truth.

The word recover (2 Tim. 2:26) **describes a man coming out of a drunken stupor.** Satan makes people drunk with his lies, and **the servant's task is to sober them up and rescue them.**

The last phrase in 2 Timothy 2:26 **can be interpreted three ways:** (1) they are delivered from the snare of the devil who took them captive to do his will; (2) they are taken captive by God's servant to do God's will; (3) **they are delivered out of the snare of the devil, who took them captive, to do God's will.** I prefer the third interpretation.

As you survey these seven aspects of the work of the ministry, you can see how important and how demanding a work it is. The ministry is no place for a loafer because it demands discipline and work. It is no place for a shirker because **there are enemies to fight and tasks to be completed.**

Church members need to pray for their pastors and encourage them in the work of the Lord.

Church officers should faithfully do their work so that the pastors can devote themselves to their own ministry (see Acts 6:1–7).

Act 6:2-4 And the twelve summoned the full number of the disciples and said, "**It is not right that we should give up preaching the word of God to serve tables.** Therefore, brothers, pick out from among you seven men of good repute, full of the Spirit and of wisdom, **whom we will appoint to this duty. But we will devote ourselves to prayer and to the ministry of the word.**"

In other words, ministers and members should labor together in the work of the Lord.