



Mentoring Hearts, Changing Lives

AN ATHLETE STUDY OF 2ND TIMOTHY

WEEK 7

NOW IT'S YOUR TURN

The opening lines to a book on statistical mechanics reads, "*Ludwig Boltzmann, who spent much of his life studying statistical mechanics, died in 1906, by his own hand. Paul Ehrenfest, carrying on the work, died similarly in 1933. Now it is your turn to study statistical mechanics.*" The author's warning, though tongue in cheek, points to the caution and grit required to study complex fields like thermodynamics and statistical mechanics.

In today's passage, Paul's message is literally life and death requiring real caution and grit. Timothy had hard work to do—diffusing the time bomb of tensions in conflict and quarrels. We, like Timothy, must enter conflict wisely and well without getting pulled into the muck that often accompanies such conversations.

2 TIMOTHY 2:8–13

¹⁴ Remind 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."

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.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

God is "holy." God calls us to be "holy." Things can be "holy," such as the "Holy Bible." But what does it mean to be "holy"?

Literally holy means to be "set apart." As it applies to people or to utensils such as those prepared for the Temple, holiness implies a special use. The opposite of holiness is that which is common. Something you can use for any ol' purpose.

Scan the QR code for a biblical overview of God's holiness and what that means for you and me.



DISCUSSION

What's the silliest argument you've ever had?

1. What warnings does Paul provide regarding quarrelsome or irreverent speech? (14, 16–17)

2. What positive characteristics (actions and results) does Paul regard as wise words? (15, 19, 24–26)

3. What does Paul say to flee versus what does he say to pursue? (22)

4. When addressing a quarrel or controversy, in your own words describe the way an ignorant, godless person would argue vs. a godly believer.

5. Regarding wise words, what areas are...
...easy for you?

...difficult for you?

ICEBREAKER

OBSERVATION

INTERPRETATION

APPLICATION

The Bible says that the words coming out of our mouth are a reflection of the condition of our heart. If you have questions or want someone to talk to, talk to your Coach today!



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STUDY NOTES

WHO'S YOUR ENEMY

Jesus said in John 18:15, “If the world hates you, know that it has hated me before it hated you.” If you’re in conflict, or discipling someone in conflict, the key to keeping cool is perspective. Remember, that the person in front of you is not your enemy. Your real enemy is sin and Satan. The real question is how much you or the person with whom you’re speaking have given ground to the real enemy.

With this perspective in mind, we will all face times of conflict. Conflict is not a bad thing—in fact it’s a necessary thing, most people don’t do conflict in a godly way. Timothy needed to face down the false teaching he encountered. Paul advised Timothy to deal with it properly.

MENTORING HEARTS REQUIRES A GODLY PERSPECTIVE

George Bernard Shaw said, “Never wrestle with pigs. You both get dirty and the pig likes it.” Timothy had those in his midst that loved to draw people in to heated debates and unproductive conflict over trivial things. Paul warned Timothy to **charge** the church **before God not to quarrel about words, which does no good, but only ruins the hearers.**

It also appears these people engaged in **irreverent babble**, which Paul warned would **will lead people into more and more ungodliness, and their talk will spread like gangrene.** Gangrene is when part of your body dies because blood flow is blocked. To stop the spread of infection, especially before modern medicine, arms or legs would be amputated. Exhibits A and B are **Hymenaeus and Philetus**, men **who have swerved from the truth. They are upsetting the faith of some.**

Timothy had to bring correction, but Paul didn’t want him wrestling with pigs. But how to accomplish that?

First and foremost, Timothy was to remind himself and God’s people of the **things** (the **trustworthy sayings**) we discussed last Week.

Second, although a saved person is completely approved by God, Paul commands Timothy to **do your best to present yourself to God as one approved.** This command isn’t based on standing, it’s about presentation. In other words, show that you’ve been approved as **a worker who has no need to be ashamed, by rightly handling the word of truth.**

Third, Paul reminds Timothy, **in a great house there are not only vessels of gold and silver but also of wood and clay.** In other words, some utensils are **honorable** some are **dishonorable.**

Christ has set us free from sin through salvation, **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.** Holy means “set apart.” Nobody uses their finest china to cook a microwave dinner. Neither should believers soil themselves by being anything less who God made them to be.

Fourth, before engaging in conflict, we must repent of our own sin and **flee youthful passions.** Instead, **pursue righteousness, faith, love, and peace, along with those who call on the Lord from a pure heart.** Not only should we run after those things the Lord values, but we should pursue them with other believers who share those values.

Finally, **have nothing to do with foolish, ignorant controversies** that only **breed quarrels.** Conflict should be purposeful to accomplish good. It should bring solutions rather than spiraling into greater conflict. This is what it means that **the Lord’s servant must not be quarrelsome.** When done properly with **correction and gentleness, God may perhaps grant them repentance leading to a knowledge of the truth.**

A GODLY PERSPECTIVE ENDURES WHEN UNDER ATTACK

In sports, winning means gaining a better score than your opponents. In conflict, winning means turning your adversary into an ally. It’s possible to win an argument and lose the person. It’s not about scoring points, conflict should bring a person **to their senses and escape from the snare of the devil.**

Right now, as student athletes, you’re not in Timothy’s position of guarding a flock of people as a pastor. So when and how do you engage “false teaching”? I think it begins with recognizing that it’s all around us. And, the more you seek to live holy and call others to holiness, you’ll ruffle feathers.

Likewise, seek to win people, not arguments. Many times, engaging in debates about this or that isn’t helpful for anybody. You can’t expect those who don’t know Christ to value God’s Word, God’s authority, or God’s heart. They will say and do things with which you disagree. Don’t focus on the fruit, get at the root. The issue isn’t what they say and do, the issue is that they’re a sinner in need of a Savior. God may use you to bring correction, or even better, conversion.

You’ll never be able to achieve any of this on your own. Everything we’ve discussed is sourced in and empowered by your relationship with the Lord. Only with the Lord’s help can we focus on the eternal consequences of our conflict, rather than winning the fight.