

Thursday, June 22, 2023 • 2Timothy 2:20–22

Questions from the Scripture text: To what kind of house does v20 compare the believer or minister? Of what four materials is its furnishings made in the analogy? What are the gold and silver vessels for? What are the wood and clay vessels for? What should a believer/minister do with those aspects of himself that are "for dishonor" (v21)? What will he then become? What two characteristics would this give him? Toward Whom? Prepared for what? For which good works? What is one dishonorable thing that the believer should flee (v22)? What four things should he pursue instead? Whom do those whom he joins in this call upon? Out of what do such believers call upon the Lord?

How does a believer who loves the Lord advance in usefulness to the Lord? 2Timothy 2:20–22 looks forward to the second serial reading of in morning public worship on the coming Lord's Day. In these three verses of Holy Scripture, the Holy Spirit teaches us that **by rejecting short-sighted cravings and pursuing instead righteousness, faith, love, and peace, believers crave the Lord from single-minded hearts that are thus prepared for every good work.**

There are other dangers to be avoided in Christian life and ministry than the devastating ones in v18 (straying concerning the truth or having one's faith overthrown). The Lord knows Who are His, and His house is the "great house" of v20. But even within the house, there are those who have very little honor. At high feasts, out come the table settings of gold and silver. But for less honored occasions, the wood and the clay will do.

Don't we wish to be fit for the table service of the High King (NKJ translates it "Master" in v21)? Then we will follow the instructions in v19 ("Let everyone who names the Name of Christ depart from iniquity") and v21 ("if anyone cleanses himself from the latter, he will be a vessel for honor").

We wish to do good works for our Redeemer, our King, our Beloved. Do we not?! Alas, O reader, if you do not. But if you do, has it occurred to you that there may be a prerequisite cleansing in order to be "prepared for every good work"?

Here is an even greater motivation unto sanctification than merely having a happier conscience on earth or being fit for heaven: sanctification prepares us to be "holy and useful for the High King." What an exquisitely happy description of the state of growing in holiness!!

So, we pay careful attention to v22, as it gives one of the Bible's helpful summaries for what sanctification looks like. There is mortification: "flee youthful lusts." Don't be childish, unable to think long-term or exercise self-control for that which is best, unable to make the wise choices between "good" and "best." No! Flee those youthful lusts. Even pagans know better to some degree and "outgrow" giving in to every desire that presents itself (though they cannot live out of desire for God). Whatever desires in your heart are for sin itself, or even just untamed desires for what is otherwise good, run away! Flee those lusts!

In the v22 summary of sanctification there is also vivification: that life of Christ in us which we are to pursue. Pursue righteousness; learn what God's law requires, calculate how to do it, put it into action. Pursue faith; this is the first thing we must have in order to give God any true obedience; without faith, it is impossible to please God (cf. Rom 8:7–8, Heb 11:6), and whatever does not proceed from faith is sin (cf. Rom 14:23). So we must always be setting Christ and His work before us for our hearts to lay hold of, rest upon, and rejoice over. He Himself has given us mornings and evenings every day, and a full day on the Lord's Day in which to do so. Let us bring Him, His righteousness, His sacrifice into the constant stream of our thought life at other times as well.

Pursue also love; love is the keeping of the law (cf. Rom 13:10)—love for God with all the heart (cf. Mt 22:37–38), love for the brother as Christ has loved us (cf. Jn 13:34), and love for neighbor as ourself (cf. Mt 22:39). It is especially in the love of the brethren that we will develop our love for God: "pursue peace with those who call on the Lord out of a pure heart" (cf. 1Jn 4:19–5:3).

Aren't we eager now, to flee cravings and pursue holiness in Christ? May the Spirit write this passage's truth on our hearts so that we will satisfy the desire to be useful in the service of the High King.

What desires do you tend to fulfill despite the consequences or better things that should have had a higher priority? How are you going about setting Christ before yourself for the pursuit of faith? How are you pursuing love? What is one change that you can make to have a happier answer to these questions?

Sample prayer: Lord, we thank You that You have made us vessels in Your great house. Forgive us for how little we have desired to be holy vessels that have been cleansed to be fit for the use of the High King. Cleanse us from all our unrighteousness, and grant that Your Spirit would grow us by the grace of Christ and by the knowing of Christ, we ask in His Name, AMEN!

Suggested songs: ARP24 "The Earth and the Riches" or TPH466 "My Faith Looks Up to Thee"

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(The following is a machine-generated transcription. PLEASE BE AWARE of—and patient with—transcribing errors. If there is something confusing or obviously erroneous, you are invited to listen to the audio recording via hopewellarp.org)

Second, Timothy 2 verse 20 through 22. These are God's words. But in a great house there are not only vessels of gold and silver. But also avoid and clay. Some for honor and some for dishonor. Therefore, if anyone cleanses himself from the latter, he will be a vessel for honor.

Sanctified and useful for the master prepared for every good work. Flea also useful, lusts. But pursue righteousness, faith. Love. Peace with those who call on the lord. Out of a pure heart. So far the reading of gods inspired and to narrant worked. So paul has warned Timothy for Timothy's, own sake, and for those elders as ministers, whom Timothy is supposed to be identifying and training and ordaining and installing He's warned him about making an end for yourself or being innovative with theology and trying to sound like your theologically clever.

And the dangers so far have been very great. He's pointed out, how jameneaus, and filetus in trying to be something and trying to sound. Theologically clever, ended up straying concerning the truth themselves and straying so far that they've lost the whole of christianity. They're no longer looking for christ to savior to return and a resurrection from the dead.

Uh, you know parts that are. So, as parts of christianity, they're so essential. That paul said in first Corinthians 15, Um, if the resurrection of the body isn't true, then we among men are most to be pitted. They have not only lost their salvation, but they, Or they not only have exposed themselves as never having been saved, but they they are parishing But the same has happened with their hearers.

Some of them at least. They've overthrown the faith of some and so here's one reason to stick to good to stick to good doctrine, biblical doctrine and to depart from iniquity, let everyone who names the name of christ depart from a nicotine. He said, verse 19, Um, That if If we don't, Maintain rights, doctrine and practice.

We will find that the reason that we didn't or couldn't, is. As the lord, Jesus will say to many in the last day. According to Matthew 7. Depart from me, I never knew you, you workers of lawlessness and so they used his name. But, they didn't have a proper theology of Christ.

And therefore, they did not live in obedience to Christ. And we know, of course, that the reason those things go together is because ultimately it's the Holy Spirit who gives us understanding and conviction to agree with the Bible to have proper theology of Christ and it's the Holy Spirit who produces in us.

The fruit of departing from. Inequity. So that was one, great danger. Um, for those. Who want to be?

Trying to think of another word than libertine.

One. Great danger for those who are Uh, wanting to live, however, they wish. Or want to be clever with theological ideas, instead of following and understanding the Bible. Is that they might not be saved at all. Uh, but now we have another great danger. And that is perhaps they are saved.

Um, without right. Uh, thoughts of and ideas of Christ. In this case, it's specifically talking about sanctification and the And the pursuit of holiness. And one great danger of not pursuing holiness. Is that we would not get to do works for our King. That we wouldn't be fit for his service.

We have our high King. It has redeemed us, he has come to our own world taken on our own nature. The living God in order that he might be our righteousness. That he might be our sacrifice. And now he has raised us up with himself to union with himself through faith, so that we are made right with God in him and adopted by God and him.

And the, the one who's genuinely been saved has in his heart, from the Holy Spirit, the desire to bring honor to the Lord Jesus, to, please him to praise him to be used by him. And for not only for the glory of his name. But for the encouragement of the saints, And for saving, and for bringing others.

To faith in Christ as well. We want to be useful for as Verse 21 says, Every good work. The problem is, And a great house. When the high King visits. This great and noble house or when, you know this is the house of the King. Really the picture here is of the church as the as the house of Christ.

When the King comes into his banqueting hall, they don't run and get the wooden and clay. Plates and pots and and flatware. No, what do they get? Then they go get to the gold and the silver. Uh, chalices and plates and And flight where And so that's the picture in verse 20 and a great house.

They're not only vessels of gold and silver. Which of course are the things that are for the King and are fit for the service of the of the King. But also wooden clay, some for honor and some for dishonored. The wooden clay ones. Never come off the shelf for the King.

Therefore, if anyone cleanses himself from the latter, you will be a vessel. For honor sanctified and useful. For the master. The word master here. Is not the ordinary word for master from which we. And, there's several words that are translated master the New Testament most often. Uh, it's either a word for Uh, Rabbi like teacher master.

Or. Usually if it's a desk allows, they use teacher. Or sometimes the word for for Lord to use for master. This is a word that transliterated into English is despite it is the great and King. It's what Simeon calls God after he and his old age, Has. Held the, the baby Jesus has seen the baby Jesus and he says, oh, and many translations say sovereign master, But it is the high King, the highest of Kings.

The great and glorious King. Um, That we want to be fit for his service. We want him to select to use us. For the things that he is going to honor servants, with doing in this world, he doesn't even need servants. So, how a King he is, he can accomplish things just by this year, exercise of his will And yet.

He is pleased to use servants. But not all servants are fit. For all of the good works that he has first servants to do. And so we want to be sanctified, holy and useful. For the high King prepared that For every good work. And so what must we do?

We must pursue. We must pursue sanctification. Both by mortification killing sin. And vivification. Fostering growing in that new life that we have in Christ. Towards God and towards others. So, let's see that in verse 22, flee also youthful lusts.

How embarrassing for believers? That many of them when they are forgiven of their sins in Jesus Christ, Uh, give in so much to the remaining. Fleshliness that, they think that that's an excuse to live for themselves and the court And according to whatever they desire in the moment. Even pagans.

Know that living according to whatever you desire in, the moment is a stupid idea. For even in service of themselves. And to accomplish their own goals, their own purposes living for themselves. They have learned that if you fulfill every desire in the moment that you have it, Uh, you will hinder yourself in many ways.

That basic maturity and self-control. Basic maturity requires self-control. To say, I'm going to have more of a long-term view. I'm gonna have an order of priority in what's most important in my life and I'm not just going to do the things I desire, whatever they're available. Sometimes I'm going to desire to do something, but something else will be more important.

I'm going to do that. So he's he's by saying youthful lusts. He's reminding us that even the unbeliever and service of himself grows out of these things. How can it be? That believers use the gospel. As an excuse for being immature. Childish. Adolescent. For the rest of their earthly lives.

That of course, is Exactly. The opposite of what the gospel does. Praise God. We're in the middle. Of Roman six and seven, which teaches The same thing. We don't have to spend much more time on that but flee useful lusts, flee. The, the cravings for things that would get in the way of pursuing, holiness of prioritizing God, a prioritizing other believers, a prioritizing service to our neighbor.

And even a prioritizing our own spiritual physical mental, emotional. Health. By making good use wise, use of God's world. And so you don't try and figure out how to fit your desires in. Now, we are told to resist the devil. But with cravings with desires that, that threaten us, we're told to flee them.

And so, if we have things that are unhealthy and self-serving. Instead of healthy and God serving and other serving, we should learn how to get rid of them. So, the mortification for most of all, of course, not even those things which are unhealthy and out of proportion, but especially Those things that are sinful.

So that's the one thing. There are things. We have to kill. There are things we have to stop there. Things, we have to flee from In the Christian life to be fit. Vessels for the use of the King. But then there's vivification not just stuff, we put off, but stuff we put on And in vivification we most of all put on Christ.

So pursue Righteousness, faith. Love peace. Peace with those who call in the Lord out of up your heart. So, pursue righteousness. That we cannot do righteousness until we are righteous. Now, you pursue righteousness. You pursue righteousness by faith. Without faith. It is impossible to please God Hebrews. 11, verse 6, whatever is not from faith as sin.

Romans 14, the carnal, man. The the man who is still apart from Jesus Christ. Not in the spirit, the unbeliever does not, please God, nor can he. Is impossible for the fleshly man to to please God opening verses of evidence. I would say that. And so, a great part of what's being said here, is to constantly being be laying, hold

of, who Jesus is, and what Jesus has done for us.

To trust in him and his righteousness and his sacrifice. A little interesting. He's he's telling Timothy pursue faith. He's telling Timothy to teach those who have been identified and are being trained for the eldership. Pursue faith. Faith is not something that in which the Christian life, merely begins. Faith in Jesus Christ, as the heart of the whole walking with God in the Christian life, that you always be remembering Jesus and trusting in Jesus, knowing that it is his righteousness, his life, his goodness.

And that is going to be the way. That you are able to walk with God. And so you're not just putting off sin. Um, the question life is Is just as much, if not more about putting on Christ. In fact, there is no putting off sin without putting on Christ.

So of course, as to be more about that. So you pursue righteousness, pursue faith, pursue love. Why? Because all true obedience comes from love. Love the Lord, your God, with all your heart, soul, mind and strength that first great commandment. And the first four of the ten commandments flow out of it.

In fact, all the ten commandments, blow out of it Love your neighbor as yourself. The second great. Commandment The summary. Of commandments five through 10. So when Paul is affirming, the necessity to keep the law. Um, In Romans 13, he says, the most important thing is that you love Because love does no harm to a neighbor.

Love keeps. All of the commandments of God concerning our neighbors. And then, Um, the one and a half great commandment. Uh, love one. Another love. Believers. Not just as we love ourselves, but as Christ has loved us. And therefore, especially here at the end of verse 22, peace with those who call.

On the Lord out of a peer heart. And so Christian ought to be someone who And dependence upon Christ through faith. Out of love for God. Are seeking to keep all his holy law. And love to him and loved the neighbor. Love to brother. So that When there's a good work, the king.

Uh, the king is going to employ, one of his vessels and service. That we will be that cleansed silver or gold. That the king reaches for. And uses. In in his glorious service. He uses for a good work. It may not be a work that is impressive to men.

But it isn't work. That is important to God. And he chooses. Those honorable vessels. That have been prepared that have been fit for that service. And we want to be those. And so the Lord help us to live this life. Of fleeing youthful lusts. Having Christ always. Before us so that we may pursue righteousness faith.

Life. And of recognizing those who are joined to Christ. So also pursuing peace. With those who call in the Lord, Out of a pure heart. And then, let's pray. Father, please help me. My wife my children. To live this way before you laying hold of you in Christ, laying hold of him by faith.

Loving you walking with you. Desiring that we would be fit for service to the King. That we would be cleansed vessels prepared. Ready for every good work. We pray that your word would be. Living in active in us. As it has been breathed out by you and it's useful.

For preparing the man of God for Every good work. So sanctifies, we pray by the use of your word. And prepare us for every good work. We ask in Jesus name Amen.