

“WORD: Rightly Handling the Word of God” (2 Timothy 3:1-9)

For the week of February 19, 2017

**Remembering the Spiritual Disciplines**

Applying God's Word is a spiritual discipline. The Bible promises the blessings of God on those who apply the Word of God to their lives. Read James 1:22-25. Discuss the meaning of this passage in your group. True or false: God's will is to be a doer of the Word so you can be confident that He wants you to find an application whenever you look at the Word of God.

**Big Picture of the Passage**

After looking at the past and addressing the present circumstances, Paul urges Timothy to face the future. He is clear that tough times will come. The end is known where God will prevail, but the days between today and that victory will be filled with increasing evil. Victory will occur, but prepare for the battle.

1. Big Question: Imagine that you are at the end of your life. You only have one shot to leave a final bit of wisdom to the people who are important to you such as your family, close friends, your church family or all of the above. What would you say to them? What do they need to hear most?

**Verse 1**

2. The “last days” mentioned (read Acts 2:17) started with Pentecost and will continue until Christ's return. Paul mentions that there “will come times of difficulty.” Difficulty is an understatement. The term means “harsh, hard to bear, vicious, dangerous, menacing.” What examples of difficulties do you see in our world today? List them. When you face some of these difficulties that you just listed, what means do you use to combat them? What has been the most effective?

Disobedient to their parents  
Ungrateful  
Unholy  
Heartless/unloving  
Unappeasable/irreconcilable  
Slanderous/malicious gossips  
Without self-control  
Brutal  
Not loving good  
Treacherous  
Reckless  
Swollen with conceit  
Lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God

- a. Of this list, in your opinion, which are the “Top 5” negative behaviors seen in our world today? Describe why you selected each one. Discuss in your group.

**Verses 2-4**

3. As you will see below, the problem is not natural disaster, pollution, poverty, politics...it is people. Here is the list:

Lovers of self  
Lovers of money  
Proud/boastful  
Arrogant  
Abusive

- b. This list of vices begins and ends with references to misplaced love – people who are lovers of self, lovers of money, and lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God. Why is it wrong to be a lover of self, money and

pleasure? Can you have proper balance between self/money/pleasure and God? Why or why not?

- c. True or false: Whenever love for self is raised, love for God and the things of God are lowered (see John 5:20, 16:27, 20:2).
  
- d. It is widely claimed that a person cannot love God and other people rightly unless and until he/she loves himself/herself rightly. Agree or disagree? Read Matthew 22:37-39 for insight.
  
- e. Scenario: You are in a discipleship relationship and your disciplee doesn't comprehend the meaning of Matthew 22:37-39. Specifically, they don't see how you could possibly love your neighbor as yourself. How would you respond to them? Discuss in your group.

verses 6-7? Is the teacher the problem (see 2 Timothy 2:24)? Or the student? Or both? Discuss in your group.

### **Verses 8-9**

- 5. Counterfeit faith is a tactic used by false teachers. In the book of Exodus we read that Moses was sent to Pharaoh's court and Aaron did some miraculous signs in order to impress Pharaoh that he was dealing with the Living God. Magicians in Pharaoh's court (Jannes and Jambres mentioned here although not named in the Old Testament) also did miracles but they did it by sleight of hand.
  - a. Read Exodus 7:1-13. What happened in verse 12? What does this say about counterfeit faith?
  
  - b. How does God's Word and God's love provide long-term satisfaction whereas anything else only gives fleeting enjoyment/satisfaction?

### **Verses 5-7**

- 4. In these verses Paul's point is not to speak ill of women, but to show how false teachers can worm their way in and influence others. Paul exposes the characteristics of these teachers and their easily influenced students. These students are always involved in "spiritual studies," much of it Christian, yet they never believe in the simple gospel of salvation by grace through faith in Jesus Christ. Read 1 Timothy 2:4. If God desires all to coming to saving faith, what is the cause of the problem in

### **Pray**

"Lord, thank you for how accurately you describe what happens in our world. Thank you also that there is something we can do about it. We can be real, not phony; we can be genuine, not hypocritical; we can allow the Word to change us from the heart outward, and not dress up the outside to merely impress others. We pray in Jesus' name, Amen."