



The following is the summary of the Sunday sermon that is sent to the body at Steadfast in an email called "The Weekly"

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## 2 Timothy 2:11-26

### Faithful in the Fire: Part 2

A person who is serious about following Jesus will at some point face challenges, difficulty, and even suffering. Ministry can be filled with discouragement, difficulty, and opposition. There is opposition from Satan and his allies because he does not want the truth of God proclaimed. Satan does not want people set free. He wants to keep people out of heaven and in bondage to sin. Many times the opposition comes from within (those who appear as "servants of righteousness"). Standing for Jesus in the midst of suffering, persecution, and challenges is the context of 2 Timothy 2. Paul's in prison about to be executed. While he is in prison, he has made clear that the Word of God is not imprisoned. Timothy is in Ephesus and is facing intense opposition from false teachers within the church. In 2 Timothy 2, Paul gives Timothy several *word pictures to remind Timothy who he is and what he's supposed to be about*. If you and I desire to be faithfully courageous in the midst of challenges/opposition, it is imperative that we embrace these word pictures. Last week we learned that we are to live like **stewards, soldiers, athletes, and farmers**. In 2 Timothy 2:14-26, Paul gives three other illustrations to help us know who we are and what we are to be about. We are to live as a **workman** who diligently (with intense effort, to do ones best) presents themselves to God, so they do not need to be ashamed, handling accurately the Word of truth. "Diligently presenting yourself approved of God accurately handling the Word of truth" not only means doing ones best to study God's Word, but also doing ones best to live God's Word. We are also **vessels** in God's house. The key point Paul is driving home is usefulness to the Master! The false teachers were in the house but were dishonorable and useless. Our desire should be to pursue righteousness, faith, love, and peace. If we do, we will be honorable and useful vessels. We are also **servants** (the state of being completely controlled by someone else). We are HIS servants! His servants are not to be quarrelsome, kind to all, able to teach, patient when wronged, all

with a spirit of gentleness. His servants should live with a desire to win those who are in opposition so that they may repent and walk in truth. As His servants, we should have a desire to see people rescued from Satan's captivity. Relying on the power of the Holy Spirit (1:7) and the proclamation of truth are essential in seeing this occur. Patience is also essential because some who are taught would rather quarrel and argue than learn and apply. Our desire should not be to win arguments but to win souls! As you seek to apply this passage to your life, ask yourself these questions:

- As a follower of Christ, am I living like a workman, vessel, and a servant? Am I an empty, clean, available vessel for Jesus to use? Is there any sin I need to confess or anyone I need to get right with? Am I seeking God's approval or man's? Am I intently seeking to study the Word and to live the Word? Am I seeking to win arguments or souls?
- Do I understand that there will be difficulty, opposition, and discouragement as I seek to follow Jesus? The 7 word pictures in 2 Timothy 2 (steward, soldier, athlete, farmer, workman, vessel, servant) help us know how to live a life pleasing to Jesus in the midst of the challenges.
- Am I passionately living in such a way so as to see people set free from the snare of the devil? Do I demonstrate faithfulness to God's Word, treat people with love, kindness, patience, and gentleness (even when they are in opposition) so that they might be set free?

Pastor Matt