



The Scrolls

Helping **CENTRAL BIBLE CHURCH** Families Belong, Become and Go Beyond V23 N44 October 31, 2021

FINISH STRONG

“For Those Who Have Veered Off Track”

2 Timothy 2:22-26

THIS WEEK'S CORE COMPETENCY

Kindness/Goodness

I choose to do the right things in my relationships with others.

“Make sure that nobody pays back wrong for wrong, but always strive to do what is good for each other and for everyone else.”

1 Thessalonians 5:15



How are the Lord's servants to behave?

It's easy to be kind in kind but not so easy to be kind in return for unkindness. Nevertheless, Paul tells Timothy, as well as other of the Lord's servants, that they must be kind to everyone (2Ti 2:24). This should come as no surprise since *kindness is an attribute of God* inextricably linked to other of his moral attributes, namely, love, goodness, compassion, mercy, and grace—love being the wellspring of the others. One theologian writes: “Closely related to love are goodness, mercy, long-suffering, and grace. Although distinctions are made, they are not exact. Goodness may be defined as God's benevolent concern for His creatures (Acts 14:17). Mercy is that aspect of His goodness that causes God to show pity and compassion (Eph. 2:4; James 5:11). Longsuffering speaks of self-restraint in the face of provocation (1 Pet. 3:20; 2 Pet. 3:15). Grace is the unmerited favor of God shown to man primarily in the person and work of Jesus Christ. All of these concepts are related and stem from the love of God who is love” (Charles C. Ryrie, *Basic Theology*, 44).

The Old Testament uses a unique term translated “lovingkindness” to refer to God's love, goodness, mercy, and grace in combination. The word occurs *frequently* in the Psalms. For example, Psalm 36:7 reads: “How precious is Your lovingkindness, O God! Therefore the children of men put their trust under the shadow of Your wings.” The prophet Isaiah links a number of God's moral attributes when he writes: “I will mention the *lovingkindnesses* of the Lord *And* the praises of the Lord, According to all that the Lord has bestowed on us, *And* the great *goodness* toward the house of Israel, Which He has bestowed on them according to His *mercies*, According to the multitude of His *lovingkindnesses*” (63:7 NKJV, italics added).

Kindness is also a fruit of the Spirit. No wonder the Lord's servants are to be kind to everyone. Paul tells the Galatians: “The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, forbearance, *kindness*,

goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law” (3:22-23, italics added). These virtues are produced by the Spirit of God and are thus linked to the moral attributes of God. Another theologian writes: “It is only as God shares with us his own essence—love—that we are able to engage in the work of the triune God in the world. This he does through the Holy Spirit who dwells within God's people” (Stanley J. Grenz, *Theology for the Community of God*, 97).

Finally, if that were not enough, by doing good, *Jesus set an example of kindness* for us to follow. In a speech recorded in Acts, the apostle Peter says: “You know what has happened throughout the province of Judea, beginning in Galilee after the baptism that John preached—how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and power, and how *he went around doing good* and healing all who were under the power of the devil, because God was with him” (10:37-38). Based on Jesus' example, Paul writes later: “Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up. Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, especially to those who belong to the family of believers” (Gal 6:9-10). Ways to show kindness are innumerable; just open your eyes. That means noticing when others are suffering. A kind word, a smile, opening a door, or helping carry a heavy load can all be acts of kindness. Celebrating someone you love, giving honest compliments, sending an email thanking someone, telling someone how they are special to you, helping an elderly neighbor with yard work or food, taking a photo of someone and sending it to the person, sharing homemade food, refusing to gossip, and donating old clothing and things you don't need are all ideas about how to practice kindness. Kindness also includes a willingness to wholeheartedly celebrate someone else's successes.

2 Timothy 2:22-26

22 *Flee the evil desires of youth and pursue righteousness, faith, love and peace, along with those who call on the Lord out of a pure heart.* 23 *Don't have anything to do with foolish and stupid arguments, because you know they produce quarrels.* 24 *And the Lord's servant must not be quarrelsome but must be kind to everyone, able to teach, not resentful.* 25 *Opponents must be gently instructed, in the hope that God will grant them repentance leading them to a knowledge of the truth,* 26 *and that they will come to their senses and escape from the trap of the devil, who has taken them captive to do his will.*

READ in another translation

22 *But keep away from youthful passions, and pursue righteousness, faithfulness, love, and peace, in company with others who call on the Lord from a pure heart.* 23 *But reject foolish and ignorant controversies, because you know they breed infighting.* 24 *And the Lord's slave must not engage in heated disputes but be kind toward all, an apt teacher, patient,* 25 *correcting opponents with gentleness. Perhaps God will grant them repentance and then knowledge of the truth* 26 *and they will come to their senses and escape the devil's trap where they are held captive to do his will. (NET)*

After reading the text, practice your Observation skills by noting the following:

- Underline "flee" and "pursue" in v. 22.
- Bracket "of youth" in v. 22.
- Bracket "out of a pure heart" in v. 22
- Underline "Don't have anything to do" in v. 23.
- Bracket "with foolish and stupid arguments" in v. 23.
- Box "because" indicating *reason* in v. 23.
- Circle "servant" in v. 24.
- Box "but" indicating *contrast* in v. 24.
- Circle "must" in vv. 24-25.
- Double underline "devil" and "his" in v. 26.

What one word would you use to describe the TONE of this passage? (i.e., stern, joyful, cautious, etc.)

What word or idea stands out to you in this passage?

What one thing do you not understand in this passage?

Try to summarize the THEME of this passage in one word. If you were going to describe these verses, you might say, "This text is about _____."



DIG DEEPER

Answer the questions to help you apply the passage and prepare for discussion

1. Paul doesn't name any "evil desires of youth." Name one or two.
2. Put what "*pursue* righteousness, faith, love and peace" means in your own words.
3. *Where* are these virtues best pursued and *why*?
4. Give an example of a "foolish and stupid" debate to avoid.
5. Explain the *contrast* in verse 24.
6. Paul and Timothy are certainly the Lord's servants. Who else?
7. The "opponents" Paul mentions (v. 25)—are they Christians? What makes you think so?
8. Why might instructing *harshly* be counterproductive?
9. What do you infer about *repentance* from verse 25?
10. **Discussion:** Talk about a command that Paul gives Timothy that you're going to take to heart.

Commentary On The Text

In the NIV, 2 Timothy 2:22-26 comprises one paragraph, containing an assortment of instructions given to Timothy, revolving around an assortment of imperatives and “must” statements: “flee” (v. 22), “pursue” (v. 22), “avoid” (v. 23 NKJV), “must not be quarrelsome” (v. 24), “must be kind” (v. 24), and “must” gently instruct (v. 25). One writer comments: “With the dangerous false teaching Paul had described, there were some specific actions Timothy needed to take. Negatively, he was to avoid certain traits and actions (vv. 22-23). Positively, he was to try to rescue false teachers from their involvement with error (vv. 24-26)” (Thomas D. Lea and Hayne P. Griffin, Jr., *1, 2 Timothy, Titus*, NAC, 219). The paragraph reads like a grocery list of things Timothy is to do and not do.

The first two commands form a *contrast* in verse 22. Timothy is to “flee the evil desires of youth” on the one hand, and “pursue righteousness, faith, love and peace” on the other. Paul doesn’t specify what “evil desires” he has in mind, but most commentators agree that they likely pertain more to immaturity than immorality. One writes: “In view of the context, he was probably thinking of the desire to argue, to develop a unique theology, to make a reputation for oneself by being doctrinally innovative, and the like. All of these are desires that the individuals, whom Paul warned Timothy to avoid, indulged. Nevertheless ‘youthful lusts’ is certainly a broad enough term to include sexual passions, love of money, and display of knowledge as well (cf. Gen. 39:12)” (Thomas L. Constable, “Notes on 2 Timothy,” 2021 ed., 39, planbiblechapel.org/tcon/notes/pdf/2timothy.pdf).

Paul does, however, specify the virtues he wants Timothy to pursue. Another commentator summarizes them well: “Paul encouraged Timothy to follow hard after righteousness, *an open rectitude in attitude and action*. He was to show faith—a *sincere confidence in God*—and love—a *growing affection for others*. He was to seek peace—a *genuine fellowship and harmony with other Christians*” (Lea and Griffin, 220, italics added). Such virtues are most effectively developed in biblical community. As gifted people interact in community, the Spirit of God uses their mutual gifting to mutually conform them into the image of his Son (Ro 8:23; cf., Eph 4:11-13).

The imperative that follows in verse 23, “Avoid” (NKJV) or “Don’t have anything to do with” (NIV), is then elaborated on in three “must” statements, concerning being “quarrelsome,” being “kind,” and instructing opponents “gently” in verses 24-25. Each of these statements carries the force of an imperative. Even the last one, which takes a *passive* form, “Opponents must be gently instructed” (v. 25), means “the Lord’s servant (v. 24) must instruct opponents gently.” Something easier said than done.

Paul’s command to avoid foolish and *uneducated* arguments, which cause quarrels, comes as no surprise in this

context, given the fact that he has twice warned Timothy against fighting word-wars (cf., vv. 14, 23) with false teachers. The apostle’s “must” statements continue to *contrast* negative vices with the positive virtues he enjoins. According to one commentator: “The first word gentle (*epios*) expresses the general quality of kindness, which must be exercised unto all men, while the third word patient (*anexikakos*) denotes an attitude of patient forbearance towards those who are in opposition. The second quality *apt to teach* [i.e., ready to teach] has already been met in the qualifications required of a bishop (I Tim. iii. 2)” (Donald Guthrie, *The Pastoral Epistles*, TNTC, 154).

False teachers, as well as others of the same ilk, must be *gently* instructed with a view to God changing their minds and returning them to the truth; *harshly* instructing them would likely have the opposite effect, causing them to dig in their theological heels. Paul wants to see God bring them to their senses, so they escape the devil’s grip on them. His goal is always remedial, never punitive, when dealing with errant brethren. “The phrase ‘in the hope that’ does not imply that God hesitates to give repentance but that human beings often refuse to accept it. Paul presented repentance as a gift given by God” (Lea and Griffin, 221).

The final clause of verse 26 has been understood differently by different interpreters. One commentator explains, “This problem lies in the antecedents of the pronouns: ‘having been captured alive by him [*autou*] for the will of that one [*ekeinou*].’ The capturing has been viewed as *by God* in order for the one captured to do *God’s will*. It has been explained as a capturing *by God’s bond servant*, to do *God’s will*. Others view it as a capturing *by Satan* for doing *his [Satan’s] will*” (Homer A. Kent, Jr., *The Pastoral Epistles*, 279-80; see also Donald Guthrie, *The Pastoral Epistles*, TNTC, 155-56). The NIV rightly reflects the correct interpretation.

Paul’s commands to Timothy—as well as to other servants of the Lord—in this passage, remind me of a certain so-called “one-another” commandment in the New Testament. To the Romans Paul writes: “Now I myself am confident concerning you, my brethren, that you also are full of goodness, filled with all knowledge, able also to *admonish one another*” (15:14 NKJV), and to the Thessalonians he writes: “And if anyone does not obey our word in this epistle, note that person and do not keep company with him, that he may be ashamed. Yet do not count him as an enemy, but *admonish* him as a brother” (3:14-15 NKJV). The term translated “admonish” “denotes the well-intentioned attempt to influence mind and disposition by apposite instruction, exhortation, warning, and correction (TDNT 4:1019, italics added)” (James D. G. Dunn, *Word Biblical Commentary*, 38B, *Romans 9-16*, 858). The kind of thing Paul instructs Timothy to do in verses 22-26 is the kind of thing that all believers are to do.

Word Studies/Notes

v. 22 *flee, pursue* “The two imperatives (‘flee’ and ‘pursue’) are identical with the commands of 1 Tim 6:11” (Thomas D. Lea and Hayne P. Griffin, Jr., *1, 2 Timothy, Titus*, NAC, 219).

v. 22 *of youth* “Timothy was probably in his mid-30s or younger, and in that day such an influential position was not usually held by a man so young” (The NIV Study Bible, note on 1Ti 4:12). “Probably Paul did not have sexual passions in mind here, at least not primarily” (Duane Litfin, “2 Timothy,” in *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: New Testament*, 755). “The emphasis is more on Timothy’s youthful temperament and the possible difficulty of avoiding arguments and being gentle in instruction” (William D. Mounce, *Word Biblical Commentary*, vol. 46, *Pastoral Epistles*, 533).

v. 22 *pure heart* “This call is true for all believers, in Ephesus and elsewhere . . . It is synonymous with the earlier phrase ‘everyone naming the name of [the] Lord’ (v. 19)” (Mounce, 534, 35). “His statement implies that traits of righteousness, faith, love, and peace are best developed whenever a Christian stays in the company of other believers” (Lea and Griffin, 220).

v. 23 *Don’t have anything* Cf., “refuse” (NASB); “avoid” (NKJV); “reject” (NET, HCSB); “have nothing to do with” (ESV, NRSV). This is the third command Paul gives Timothy in these verses. “Timothy needed to ‘refuse’ to participate in unwise and immature debates (‘foolish and ignorant speculations’), since these generate arguments (‘quarrels’) that prove divisive (cf. 1 Tim. 1:7)” (Thomas L. Constable, “Notes on 2 Timothy,” 2021 ed., 40, plano-biblechapel.org/tcon/notes/pdf/2timothy.pdf). “Paul was not prohibiting intelligent, probing theological discussion but useless wrangling over reconcile questions that divide and confuse. We must cultivate a judgment that can distinguish between these options” (Lea and Griffin, 220).

v. 24 *foolish, stupid* Cf., “foolish and uninstructed” (NET); “foolish and uneducated” (RGT); “foolish and unlearned” (KJV). “Since the opponents saw themselves as teachers of the law even though they were ignorant of it (1 Tim 5:7), and because Paul is speaking specifically of the heresy, it is best to keep the etymological nuance of the word, ‘uneducated,’ and see it as an appraisal of the heresy and its proponents” (Mounce, 534). “Not only must

Timothy refrain from waging thoroughly useless word-battles (verse 14), but he should even refuse, politely but definitely, to bother with the well-known (note the article) enquiries that would result in such word-battles. Such enquiries are foolish. They are senseless, the kind of investigations which one associates with morons. They are ignorant, ‘uneducated’ or ‘uninstructed’; that is, they are the work and the mark of ignorant men” (William Hendriksen, *New Testament Commentary: Exposition of the Pastoral Epistles*, 274).

v. 24 *servant* Cf., “the Lord’s slave” (NET). “Though *doulos* is normally translated ‘servant,’ the word does not bear the connotation of a free individual serving another . . . The most accurate translation is ‘bondservant’ (sometimes found in the ASV for *doulos*), in that it often indicates one who sells himself into slavery to another. But as this is archaic, few today understand its force” (*The NET Bible*, 43^{tn} on 2Ti 2:24). “Undoubtedly the background for the concept of being the Lord’s slave or servant is to be found in the Old Testament scriptures. For a Jew this concept did not connote drudgery, but honor and privilege. It was used of national Israel at times (Isa 43:10), but was especially associated with famous OT personalities, including such great men as Moses (Josh 14:7), David (Ps 89:3; cf. 2 Sam 7:5, 8) and Elijah (2 Kgs 10:10); all these men were ‘servants (or slaves) of the Lord’” (*The NET Bible*, 43^{sn} on 2Ti 2:24). “Any believer can be called ‘the Lord’s servant,’ but the designation was especially proper for a Christian leader such as Timothy [cf., 1Co 7:22]” (Lea and Griffin, 220-21).



APPLY THE TEXT

CENTRAL MESSAGE OF THE TEXT

The Lord's servants must demonstrate traits of spiritual maturity essential to gently instructing errant believers, so that God might bring them to their senses and return them to the truth.

CENTRAL MESSAGE FOR YOUR LIFE

(Rewrite the Central Message above to personally apply to your own life)



3 LIVING QUESTIONS

The "Living Questions" are simple questions we may ask of any text in order to apply the Bible to our life. Answer the questions below as personally as you can.

1. What does this passage teach me about God?

2. What does this passage teach me about myself?

3. What does this passage lead me to do?



FAMILY TALK

Were there dinosaurs on the ark? If we're not supposed to hit other people, why did God wipe out whole nations? Other religions think their god is right; how do we know our God is the real God? These are all questions my kids have thrown my way. As parents we feel like we should be the expert on all things, but especially when it comes to Biblical literacy and our child's spiritual development. To some degree this is true (no pressure...), but do we ever arrive when it comes to spiritual growth? Will we ever make a "100" on that test? Often, we feel like we lose credibility when we don't know the answer to our child's questions, so we spout out something that we think is mostly true or feels true. Newsflash: this is dangerous ground! Feelings are a horrible litmus test for truth. Parents, it's ok to not know the answer to the hard questions when it comes to faith. It is absolutely not ok to give false information that "sounds about right." We are daily growing in our faith and the knowledge of Christ. Let your kids have a front row seat witnessing that spiritual growth. They need to see us wrestling with what we hear and learn from the Bible. They need to see our mind blown when the Spirit teaches us new things. If we want our kids to have a vibrant spiritual life, we must model it ourselves. What steps are you taking toward spiritual growth? Do your kids walk alongside you as you grow in the knowledge of Christ? We are praying for you to model growth strong!

What Does The Bible Say?

Read 2 Timothy 2:22-26.

1. From the whole passage, what should believers avoid?
2. From the whole passage, what should believers pursue?
3. How should believers respond to those who oppose them?

What Do You Think?

Read Proverbs 15:1 and put it in your own words. How does "a gentle answer turn away wrath?"

What Do You Do?

Look around your house and find something really soft and something really scratchy. How are these like gentle words or quarrelsome words?

CORE COMPETENCY: Kindness/Goodness

I treat others better than myself.

MEMORY VERSE: 2 Timothy 2:22

"Flee the evil desires of youth and pursue righteousness, faith, love and peace, along with those who call on the Lord out of a pure heart."

KidPIX COUPON

Earn 1 KidPIX Token by completing the CENTRAL Kids Bible Study on this page and another token by memorizing and reciting the memory verse for this week.

Questions: kids@wearecentral.org

- ☐ I completed my Bible Study
- ☐ I memorized this week's verse
- ☐ I brought my Bible to church
- ☐ I brought a friend



CHILD'S NAME

GRADE PARENT SIGNATURE

OUR CORE COMPETENCIES

CENTRAL BELIEFS

Authority of the Bible (2 Timothy 3:16-17)
I believe the Bible is the Word of God and has the right to command my belief and action.

Church (Ephesians 4:15-16)
I believe the church is God's primary way to accomplish His purposes on earth today.

Eternity (John 14:1-4)
I believe there is a heaven and a hell and that Jesus Christ is returning to judge the earth and to establish His eternal kingdom.

The Holy Spirit (Romans 8:9)
I believe the Holy Spirit convicts, calls, converts and changes me as a child of God.

Humanity (John 3:16)
I believe all people are loved by God and need Jesus Christ as their Savior.

Identity in Christ (John 1:12)
I believe I am significant because of my position as a child of God.

Jesus Christ (Hebrews 1:1-4)
I believe Jesus Christ is the Son of God who became man, died for sinners and rose from the dead.

Life Purpose (Acts 20:24)
I believe I am a steward of God's resources and have been redeemed to participate in His Kingdom purposes for His glory.

Personal God (Psalm 121:1-2)
I believe God is involved in and cares about my daily life.

Salvation by Grace (Ephesians 2:8-9)
I believe a person comes into a right relationship with God by His grace, through faith in Jesus Christ.



CENTRAL VIRTUES

Love (1 John 4:10-12)
I sacrificially and unconditionally love and forgive others.

Joy (John 15:11)
I have inner contentment and purpose in spite of my circumstances.

Peace (Philippians 4:6-7)
I am free from anxiety because things are right between God, myself and others.

Patience (Proverbs 14:29)
I take a long time to overheat and endure patiently under the unavoidable pressures of life.

Kindness/Goodness (1 Thessalonians 5:15)
I choose to do the right things in my relationships with others

Faithfulness (Proverbs 3:3-4)
I have established a good name with God and with others based on my long-term loyalty to those relationships.

Gentleness (Philippians 4:5)
I am thoughtful, considerate and calm in dealing with others.

Self-Control (Titus 2:11-13)
I have the power, through Christ, to control myself.

Grace (Colossians 3:13)
I demonstrate forgiveness, mercy and generosity to others, even when they have offended me.

Hope (1 Peter 1:3-5)
I have a growing anticipation of God's promises and my secure eternity with Him.

Humility (Philippians 2:3-4)
I choose to esteem others above myself.



CENTRAL PRACTICES

Bible Study (Hebrews 4:12)
I study the Bible to know God, the truth, and to find direction for my daily life.

Biblical Community (Acts 2:44-47)
I fellowship with other Christians to accomplish God's purposes in my life, others' lives, and in the world.

Compassion (Psalm 82:3-4)
I seek to serve the last, the least and the lost in my community.

Disciple-Making (2 Timothy 2:2)
I multiply godly beliefs, virtues and practices in others to encourage their spiritual growth in Christ.

Evangelism (Acts 1:8)
I share Jesus with others through personal proclamation and demonstration of the gospel.

Generosity (2 Corinthians 9:6-11)
I gladly give my resources to fulfill God's purposes.

Prayer (Psalm 66:16-20)
I pray to God to know Him, to lay my request before Him and to find direction for my daily life.

Single-Mindedness (Matthew 6:33)
I focus on God and His priorities for my life.

Spiritual Gifts (Romans 12:4-6)
I know and use my spiritual gifts to accomplish God's purposes.

Worship (Psalm 95:1-7)
I worship God for who He is and what He has done for me.

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