

"A Life on Fire" Series

A Journey through the Letter of 2 Timothy

Opening Question: What is your favorite tool in the garage or item in your kitchen? Why?

Read: 2 Timothy 2:14-26

Background:

- The apostle Paul is writing this letter from the dungeon of Rome's Mamertine Prison as he awaits his execution. He writes to Timothy, his friend and coworker who is living and ministering in the historic city in Ephesus on the coast of Asia Minor (modern-day Turkey).
- Gangrene is the death and breakdown of body tissue resulting from either a bacterial infection or the loss of circulation. Gangrene's basic characteristic is that it spreads and poisons the whole body, ultimately killing it if it is not removed.
- A future bodily resurrection did not necessarily appeal to Greeks who viewed the flesh (and matter in general) as a corrupt prison from which humans should long to escape. To make the gospel more appealing to their culture, teachers like Hymenaeus and Philetus abandoned the hope of resurrection and new creation.

Explore Together:

1. Paul warns Timothy against getting caught up in what he calls "*quarrels about words,*" "*irreverent babble,*" or "*foolish and ignorant controversies.*" What is it about these debates that has Paul so concerned? What is at stake if one gets derailed in these ways?
2. Hymenaeus and Philetus tried to make the gospel more palatable for their culture and ended up distorting it the process. What aspects of the gospel are most difficult to swallow in our day and age? Are we in any way falling into "*the snare of the devil*" as we seek to contextualize the good news of Jesus for our friends and neighbors?
3. In v. 15, Paul charges us to labor diligently in the field of God's word so that we might be faithful teachers of his truth and unashamed in the way we handle and present Jesus' words of life. What does this labor actually look like? What is your strategy for growing as an "*approved worker*"?
4. In ways does Paul invite us to set ourselves apart for God's purposes?

Apply It:

- ➔ In what way is Jesus inviting you to set yourself apart for his purposes? How can we support one another in these "holy" callings?

2 Timothy 2:14-26 (ESV)

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.