

II Timothy, Sermon #16

II Timothy 2 – close out chapter 2

We learned last week that we are the servants of God.

Jesus was our supreme example of servanthood.

Jesus Christ served us, bought us, and paid for us.

I've entitled today's sermon "The Ministry of God's Servant"

II Timothy 2:24

Let us stand for the reading of God's Holy Word.

II Timothy 2:24-26

Let us pray.

You may be seated.

The Ministry of God's Servant

Before we can minister, before we can be used by God, there are certain characteristics that God calls on His servants to have:

I. The servant of the Lord **must not strive** – not looking for a fight or to be argumentative; with heated emotions; not looking to be contrary / keeping things stirred up.

- God admonished us to avoid the arguments that create strife – Vs. 23.
- A servant's purpose is not to win arguments, but to win souls.

Wrangling and battling does not bring about the desired result.
How many of us have been in heated exchanges with others?

Servants of the Lord are not to be quarrelsome, but kind to all.

That brings us to the second characteristic.

II. The servant of the Lord must be **gentle unto all men**.

A vessel of honor and a slave of the Lord will have a compassionate attitude toward all people.

As much as we are to speak boldly for the Lord without compromise, we are to do so with the attitude of kindness and gentleness.

We are not to jam the Bible down people's throats or to hit them over the head with it.

We are never to be harsh, abusive, overbearing, unkind, rude, thoughtless, or pugnacious.

There is to be a softness (gentleness) in the character of a servant, just as there was in the ministry of Paul.

I Thessalonians 2:7, *“But we were gentle among you, even as a nurse cherisheth her children.”*

Paul did not run roughshod.

Jesus demonstrated this gentleness while He was on earth—when He healed people, when He cried; woman who touched His garment. He had a care for people. He was gentle among people.

III. The servant of the Lord must be apt to teach, vs. 24c;

Able to teach—the ability to give the truth from God’s Word

Being nice is not enough!

We should be ever learning, therefore, ever teaching and sharing with others so that we can dispense the best medicine possible for the current problem.

The wounds of a friend!

IV. Fourthly, the servant of the Lord is to be patient and forbearing

Servants of God need to be patient.

In dealing with people, we are too impatient at times.

Hanging in there / staying with them / not letting frustration / give up on people

Now, with these four characteristics, the purpose of all this is to help believers to come to the knowledge of the truth, vs. 25.

A servant of God must instruct those who oppose him – there will be opposition.

You would think being a servant, we wouldn’t have any opposition.

How about Paul, Jesus?

- When working in these areas, the servant must do it with a meek spirit – gentle in our approach and meek in our disposition.
- We are not to crush our opponent.

The word “meekness” was used of colts that were broken for riding – meekness is power that is under willing control.

Jesus was the supreme example (Matt. 21:5) – power under control

- Matthew 11:29, *“Take My yoke upon you, and learn of Me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls.”*
- At any moment, Jesus could have destroyed His enemies with a word or had at His disposal “more than twelve legions of angels” (Matt. 26:53)

Jesus never defended Himself, but when they turned God’s temple into a den of thieves, He drove the people out.

- He hammered the hypocrites.
- He condemned the false leaders of Israel.
- He fearlessly uttered divine judgment upon people.

And yet the Bible says He was meek.

For the Christian, therefore, meekness is power used in the defense of God.

Meekness reflects a spirit of humility that does not focus on self, but on the Lord and on others in His name.

- Meekness has nothing to do with shyness or weakness or cowardice.
- It is power supplied by, and willingly put under the control of, the Holy Spirit, in faithful submission to the Word and will of God.

The servant of the Lord must be demonstrating the attitude of meekness when correcting those who are in opposition.

There is never a place in Godly correction for out-of-control anger or a self-righteous, holier-than-thou attitude.

The servant of the Lord is instructing, vs. 25, that means correcting, educating, or giving guidance.

The faithful servant of Christ is to be God's instrument for correcting fellow believers, whatever their position in the church, who persist in "ungodliness and worldly desire" and to admonish them to live "righteously and Godly in the present age."

The motivation of such correction should be the sincere desire that **perhaps God may grant them repentance.**

God gives repentance.

We are contrite over our sins, sorrowful, and that sorrow leads to repentance

II Corinthians 7:9, "Now I rejoice, not that ye were made sorry, but that ye sorrowed to repentance: for ye were made sorry after a Godly manner."

Repentance signifies a genuine change of mind, change of heart, and change of direction.

- God works repentance in the willing heart of one who truly hears and responds.
- The Bible says a wise man will heed and be yet wiser.

Dear people, we have a ministry of reconciliation, (II Corinthians 5:18).

We are to help people to be reconciled to God.

Repentance leads disobedient believers out of their wrong ways and into the knowledge of the truth.

Returning to God's truth helps them to come to their spiritual senses.

The word *recover* in verse 26 describes a man coming out of a drunken stupor.

It literally means to return to soberness, indicating that falsehood and sin produce what might be called a type of spiritual intoxication, a stupor resulting in loss of judgment and proper control of one's faculties.

That is what sin does, and when they come to the truth, the Bible says in **vs. 26**, that they come out of the trap of the Devil.

This is the way we can help rescue them from Satan's captivity.

Maybe you have a relative, friend that is trapped by Satan.

We must demonstrate vs. 24, and on top of that, talk to them about it.

Satan is a liar (John 8:44)—he captures people by his deception, as he did Eve.

God wants to see deceived persons brought to repentance

- A change of heart and conduct
- "I was wrong – I have changed my mind" and "I am acknowledging the truth."

It is a fearful thing that, because of sin and unfaithfulness, the devil can actually snare and hold a person captive . . . to do his will.

- A person becomes a pawn of Satan to work his evil will.
- Such is the terrible and tragic power of sin, and all of us have seen it.

But our gracious "God is faithful" ((I Corinthians 10:13). He will make a way of escape!

Not only does the Lord know "how to rescue the Godly from temptation" (II Peter 2:9), but He even promises His unfaithful, dishonorable vessels that "*if we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness*" (I John 1:9).

Satan makes people drunk with his lies, and the servant's task is to sober them up with the truth and rescue them.

God is in the salvaging business of people's souls and lives and He uses us to help in this great and eternal work.

The Ministry of God's Servant

Let us stand for closing invitation.

God's people – deceived and captured by sin, opposing God's truth and God's servants.

In order for us to help in their rescue, we must not strive but be gentle, able to teach, patient and meek, so that God can use us to help pry a person out of Satan's grip.

Satan's ultimate deception is keeping the lost blinded to God's salvation lest the light of the glorious Gospel of Christ should shine unto them.