**January 16, 2022 2 Timothy 2:14-26**

 ***We are the Workers***

**Scripture:** *2 Timothy 2:14-26 NRSV*

 *(14)Remind them of this, and warn them before God that they are to avoid wrangling over words, which does no good but only ruins those who are listening. (15)Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved by him, a worker who has no need to be ashamed, rightly explaining the word of truth. (16)Avoid profane chatter, for it will lead people into more and more impiety, (17)and their talk will spread like gangrene. Among them are Hymenaeus and Philetus, (18)who have swerved from the truth by claiming that the resurrection has already taken place. They are upsetting the faith of some. (19)But God's firm foundation stands, bearing this inscription: "The Lord knows those who are his," and, "Let everyone who calls on the name of the Lord turn away from wickedness." (20)In a large house there are utensils not only of gold and silver but also of wood and clay, some for special use, some for ordinary. (21)All who cleanse themselves of the things I have mentioned will become special utensils, dedicated and useful to the owner of the house, ready for every good work. (22)Shun 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 stupid and senseless controversies; you know that they breed quarrels. (24)And the Lord's servant must not be quarrelsome but kindly to everyone, an apt teacher, patient, (25)correcting opponents with gentleness. God may perhaps grant that they will repent and come to know the truth, (26)and that they may escape from the snare of the devil, having been held captive by him to do his will. 2 Timothy 2:14-26 NRSV*

**Notes:**

1. Be a good ***worker***
	1. What is a ***worker***?
	2. Do work you are proud of, done ***well*** and ***correctly***.
2. When we allow God to be ***first***, He makes time for us to accomplish what needs to be accomplished
	1. Be about the Father’s ***business***
	2. We need to be busy with God’s ***work***!
3. How can you be a ***workman***?
	1. ***Pursue*** Righteousness, Faith, Love, and Peace
	2. Be able to ***gently*** instruct.
	3. God is looking for a ***willing*** ***vessel***.
	4. God knows where you fit into His plan; ***trust*** ***Him***!
4. Are you A ***workman***?
	1. ***Seek*** where it is that you can apply your talents.
	2. God’s will can appear very ***vague***, unless we earnestly ***seek*** and ***ask***!
	3. What has the Lord ***given*** you to do that you have ***not*** ***done***?
5. Each of us are called to be a ***worker***
	1. Be FED; ***Fellowship***, ***Evangelism***, ***Discipleship***
	2. Be ***faithful*** in your spiritual disciplines.
	3. Get ***involved*** in the ministry of this church.
	4. We are the ***workers***.

**Script:**

If I were to sum up the Annual Report in a few sentences, what would I say? First, we are holding our own. Financially we are doing well thanks to the faithful giving of this congregation. Physically we have been holding steady. Our buildings and grounds are in good condition. We strive to make improvements, and we are looking to continue improving in the year to come. Church attendance is holding steady, but this is a hard thing to judge; we have no way to get an exact figure of those who watch the streamed services. Many stay away due to covid fears and concerns. Spiritually I can only gage what I see and what you share, and I must say I see many of you growing in the Spirit of the Lord. I am encouraged by the attitudes we have as we gather, and I am encouraged by the new growth we see.

It has been said that Christians today are some of the most active, loving, caring, and generous people in their community. It has been said that they bring rewards upon themselves for the work they do in the Kingdom of God. It has also been said that they act as if they are “holier than thou” to their friends and companions, especially in the presence of other Christians.

It has been said that Christians think they are too busy to be more involved in soul winning and being about Church Business; that all Christians should be totally committed to church ministries; to reaching the lost in our community. It has been said that in church ministries 20% of the people accomplish 80% of the work. And in recent years I have even heard some say that this ratio has increased to 15% of the people doing 85% of the work. Do any of these apply to us here at the church? Do any of these statements apply to your thinking and where you walk with the Lord? Turn with me today to 2 Timothy 2:14-26 and join me in the reading of God’s word.

 *(14)Remind them of this, and warn them before God that they are to avoid wrangling over words, which does no good but only ruins those who are listening. (15)Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved by him, a worker who has no need to be ashamed, rightly explaining the word of truth. (16)Avoid profane chatter, for it will lead people into more and more impiety, (17)and their talk will spread like gangrene. Among them are Hymenaeus and Philetus, (18)who have swerved from the truth by claiming that the resurrection has already taken place. They are upsetting the faith of some. (19)But God's firm foundation stands, bearing this inscription: "The Lord knows those who are his," and, "Let everyone who calls on the name of the Lord turn away from wickedness." (20)In a large house there are utensils not only of gold and silver but also of wood and clay, some for special use, some for ordinary. (21)All who cleanse themselves of the things I have mentioned will become special utensils, dedicated and useful to the owner of the house, ready for every good work. (22)Shun 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 stupid and senseless controversies; you know that they breed quarrels. (24)And the Lord's servant must not be quarrelsome but kindly to everyone, an apt teacher, patient, (25)correcting opponents with gentleness. God may perhaps grant that they will repent and come to know the truth, (26)and that they may escape from the snare of the devil, having been held captive by him to do his will. 2 Timothy 2:14-26 NRSV*

Here Paul is challenging the reader to Share God’s word; and in so doing, encourage them how to be a good worker. So what is a worker, look to verse 15, “*(15)Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved by him, a worker who has no need to be ashamed, rightly explaining the word of truth.”* When it refers to being not ashamed I believe it is saying, “Don’t be ashamed to get involved.” Do work you are proud of, not in a conceited way, but that the work you do is done well and correctly. Be proud to give of yourself, sacrificing your personal time for God’s kingdom. Tithing is a good start, but tithing is obedience to God; I am talking about the time you give to the church and God

When we allow God to be first, He makes time for us to accomplish what needs to be accomplished; time to do the work of the church, time to spend with your loved ones, and time to complete the tasks at home. We are to be about the Father’s Business. Look at the Great Commission found in Matthew 28:19-20, it shows us that going out and winning the lost, or making disciples or all men, IS the Father’s Business! Matthew 25:13 tells us “keep watch, because you do not know the day or the hour” that the Lord will return.

So we need to be busy with His work that He has laid out for us to do! By keeping watch, we should not be sitting idly by and waiting for His return, but be busy with His work so He can be pleased to see His servants accomplishing what He started when He left! Let me remind you of the “Parable of the Talents. (Matt 25:14-30)” Remember the one servant who did nothing with what the master gave him? What did the master do? He took the talent away from him as will the Lord if we do not use the talents He has given us! Well, that is what a workman is.

So how can you be a workman? In verses 22-26 of our passage today we see the tasks that we should apply to our lives; allow me to paraphrase:

* Flee the evil desires of youth
* Pursue Righteousness, Faith, Love, and Peace
* Avoid stupid and foolish arguments (Gossip is usually the root)
* A Lord’s servant must not quarrel
* A Lord’s servant must be kind to everyone
* A Lord’s servant must be able to teach
* Be able to gently instruct, (which means to use tact), for God to grant repentance (by showing where we may be in error)

God is simply looking for a WILLING VESSEL to accomplish His work here on Earth. If you will be willing to follow His will, then He will help transform your life to apply these principles which will allow you to focus on Kingdom work and not on yourself. God knows where you fit into the scheme of His plan, you don’t. So trust Him! Trust the talents He gave you, make you fit into a church but your brokenness to His will and desires that makes you fit!

So, let’s look at some application in our lives! Are you A Workman? First, ask yourself if you are willing to be involved? Second, are you going to allow yourself to be a willing vessel for His Business? If the answer is yes, then you need to begin to seek where it is that you can apply your talents … through time in prayer! God’s Will can sometimes appear very vague to our understanding, it is not always clearly shown to us unless we earnestly seek and ask!

Matthew 7:7 says “*Ask and it shall be given to you, seek and you will find, knock and the door will be opened to you.*” Now, is there something that is keeping you from even asking the question of the Lord? Maybe you don’t have the time to even begin to devote to ministry items well then let me ask you, “Where does your time come from?” Can’t it be said that the time we have on this Earth is FROM the Lord?

This leads me into saying, if the answer to the question is “No, I cannot be involved” “What is holding you back?” That is something that you have to answer for yourself I don’t know what it is, but let me ask three pivotal questions on the subject. What is it that the Lord has given you to do that you have not done? Have you spent time in prayer with the Lord over the use of your talents? Have you read His word and let it speak to you on what you should be doing?

Finally, let me give you one more scripture it may help you to focus on what God’s will is for you in the church. It is an easy one to remember, “He must increase, but I must decrease. (John 3:30 NRSV)” If you allow the Lord to increase in you; searching His word and spending time with Him, He’ll take care of your time issues and that is the beginning of showing brokenness to His will, not your own!

 IN the past year we have held our own, reading the various reports in the booklet will show you that. Financially we are strong; due to the faithfulness of our congregation, but even more because of the grace and blessings of the Lord. Church attendance is holding steady. Many are growing Spiritually. Our church leadership is working to keep us moving forward. Our buildings and grounds are in good condition; there are projects we intend to pursue, but nothing that is pressing. We are at a point of on-going maintenance. Church ministries have flourished but there is a need for each of us to do our part

Whether it is in our attendance, our service, or our outreach, each of us are called to be a worker, unashamed of the task we are called to. I encourage each of you to be a part of FED; Fellowship, Evangelism, Discipleship. Engage and participate in the **FELLOWSHIP** opportunities that we plan. Take advantage of **EVANGELISM** opportunities, share what the Lord is doing in your life and what you have seen the Lord do in those around you. Finally, I urge you to be a part of **DISCIPLESHIP; t**ake part in one of the small groups offered, whether it is Sunday morning or a different time of the week. Allow others to disciple you, and in turn you may disciple others.

As we look ahead to the year before us, be faithful in your spiritual disciplines. Continue to study your bibles; draw close to the Lord in prayer and devotional times; and seek the Lord and His guidance in all you do. I urge you to get more involved in the ministry of this church, without you there is something missing. It is my desire that each of you will be FED; through your involvement in our ministries, both in the church setting and in our outreach. But above all else, it is my hope, that where the Lord is calling you to serve, where the Lord is leading you; that you will be like obedient children, following after the Lord and doing what He asks. We are the workers, called upon to do the work of the church in God’s Kingdom during this time in which we live.

So I repeat Paul’s words to Timothy, to those of you who listen today: *“(15)Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved by him, a worker who has no need to be ashamed, rightly explaining the word of truth.”*