

Looking at ourselves through God's eyes

△ 2 Tim 2:14-16

Intro

We are carrying on with our
journey in 2 Timothy

We heard Paul exhorting Timothy not
to be ashamed of the message of the
Gospel

Regardless of how people reacted to him

That he has to be strong in Jesus, even
though he may suffer

Because Christ had to suffer more than
anyone of us will have to

But we are alive with him - so we do
not need to be afraid

But today we also have prayer
ministry and communion.

And after the sermon I will invite you to
do some self-examination

What is it that stops us from being
unashamed of the Gospel

Are there lies in our lives that we take for

Are there lies in our lives, that we take for granted

But that actually make us ashamed that we are followers of Christ or becoming followers of Christ

Us compared to articles to be used

And to do that I want to focus on a few verses of this passage

and that is also because this passages hinges around these verses:

²⁰ In a large house there are articles not only of gold and silver, but also of wood and clay; some are for special purposes and some for common use. ²¹ Those who cleanse themselves from the latter will be instruments for special purposes, made holy, useful to the Master and prepared to do any good work.

Paul speaks about two types of articles:

Those made of noble materials of gold and silver

Those made of common materials like wood and clay

But then he looks at the use:

some of them are for special purposes and others are of common usage

Although it is unlikely that articles of gold and silver are used for common purposes

Although you may have read / heard about the art works which is a golden toilet

If you use it for its purpose, it gets also dirty

So Paul says that any article can be used for special purposes, weather they are made of gold or silver or of wood or clay

Likewise any article can be used for common usage

So then he takes that metaphor and applies it us Christians

Whatever we are he says: Gold, silver, wood or clay

Can we be used for special purposes, because we are clean

Or can we only be used for common purposes, as we are not as clean as we should be

Two examples of not being quite as clean

This passage is surrounded by two examples in which we can be

'polluted' not as clean

1. False teaching

△ v 14-19

Paul reminds Timothy to stick to the heart of the Gospel in his speaking and teaching

1. by avoiding wrangling over words

This is as Christians we dispute about relatively small things of the Gospel

Which can cause a lot of harm

In the past there have been churches that have split over the interpretation of a small detail

That suddenly is very big, and takes the focus of Christ

For instance, Sedlescome chapel split into two around 1893

Even a new chapel was built next to the old one!

And then in 1907 the two churches united again

And the reason for the split and how they can together has not been documented in Church records....

2. Another more serious example is clearly wrong teaching

In Timothy's case he has to deal with people who proclaim that the resurrection of Christians has already taken place

Paul does not document the details of the dispute - so difficult for us to understand

But it was undermining the heart of the Gospel -

The hope in us that we are going to be resurrected by Jesus

A more common example is that many Christians believe that everyone will be saved, regardless if they believe in Jesus Christ or not

Instead Paul urges Timothy to be a

a good worker

Approved by God

No need to be ashamed of what he teaches and proclaims

one who explains the truth in a straight path

Unlike the others

Who God does not approve of

"The Lord knows who are his!"

Who are teaching in roundabout ways

swerving from the truth

And who ought therefore to be ashamed of what they are doing!

In he holds to the straight teaching

of the Gospel he therefore becomes an article for God's special purposes

2. Right behaviours

The second example comes after the hinge verse of the holy articles

Paul urges Timothy to avoid youthful passions, among them which are

stupid and senseless controversies

being quarrelsome

Instead Timothy is to pursue

righteousness, faith, love and peace

a pure heart

being kind to everyone

an apt - or clear teacher

patient

correcting opponents with gentleness

In that way these opponents may refine the truth and repent

so that they will avoid the snare of the devil

There is a lot at stake here!

Back to us

What are we?

are we special, dedicated and useful to our Lord?

Ready for every good work?

Or have we fallen into the trap of

controversial theologies or concepts

Or behaviour that is opposite to the will of God in our lives

This does not mean that we are all called for dedicated church purposes

Like I am in a way

Paul himself was a tent maker

But he made tents giving glory to God

So it is regardless if people think that we are the equivalent of gold, silver, wood or clay.

God does not look at the outward appearance

Instead he wants us to be clean, dedicated to him, ready for any good work

Self-examination

So now over to you

Let us spend time listening to God

Is there anything in our lives that we should change and clean?

should change and clean:

Are there lies that hold us away from the gospel of Jesus Christ?

Is there something, and interest or passion, that takes away our focus from Jesus

Because it takes over all our waking and sleeping thoughts

Have we quarrelled, spoken ill about someone or someone?

Do you see yourself as not worthy and therefore cannot be used by God?

List of affirming scriptures

After a while - pray together or alone