

Paul was very accomplished; but he could not share in God's glory. Paul is throwing all caution to the wind when it comes to being used to promote that awareness. The gospel goes out, even though Paul is in jail. If we lose our life; we still have eternal life in Christ. If our life becomes more difficult, we will have the future luxury and reign and riches with him. Conversely, if we try to limit our exposure and deny him; he will deny us. Either way he will not abandon his promises; even if we do. Our commitment level will not result in a loss.

There is no other way. Jesus is the only door to heaven. We advocate that others tune into Jesus. There is no doubt that he has fulfilled many prophecies; and is God's salvation for man.

Read 2 Timothy 2:14-19: There are a lot of forgeable and incorrect things that are spoken every day. We should not contribute to those endless raging debates. It is tempting to speak up when we hear something that sounds ridiculous. Today, the division and opposition of thought is severe. It is not about arriving at the truth. It is just a tool to bury our opposition. It is not an issue of having the right answer or the truth. Love is missing. These endless words are to bring damage.

Hymenaeus and Philetus allowed their imagination carry them away. They began to preach that the second coming had taken place. It made the believers very sad; thinking that they missed their opportunity for salvation. **We need to examine the scriptures very carefully.** We should not add or subtract anything.

I warn everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this scroll: If anyone adds anything to them, God will add to that person the plagues described in this scroll. ¹⁹ And if anyone takes words away from this scroll of prophecy, God will take away from that person any share in the tree of life and in the Holy City, which are described in this scroll. (Revelation 22:18-19)

We also need to stay out of endless arguments. It is important to determine if a person is even looking for the truth. They may just be on a quest to raise their importance and authority.

Do not answer a fool according to his folly, or you yourself will be just like him. ⁵ Answer a fool according to his folly, or he will be wise in his own eyes. (Proverbs 26:4-5)

Read 2 Timothy 2:20-26: Paul is comparing the church to a large house; full of all kinds of containers. You may have fine china, for special occasions. You also have trash cans, or perhaps coffee cans that hold the kitchen grease drippings. A valuable cup is worth much; and is considered important. The bathroom trash can

is cheap and common; and contains unclean things. We are containers. The contents of our hearts are evident by what flows out of our mouths.

*You brood of vipers, how can you who are evil say anything good? **For the mouth speaks what the heart is full of.** (Matthew 12:34)*

This passage implies that we can have some control over what kind of container/vessel that we are. If we jump right into gripe sessions and the criticism of others, we get moved into the trash container inventory. We can vacillate and take the bait, we taint a lot of good living, in a few moments. When we engage in the senseless arguments of this world; as well as foolish talk...we become a common vessel. If we make a concerted effort to honor God; and let his light shine through us we become holy and beautiful containers that have been cleaned. When we hold out for words of healing and truth to glorify God, we are acting as holy vessels. We have a special use; that is not common with all of the other containers around the house.

Many believers get caught up in winning the arguments. It is not about prevailing in our discourse. God does not need to be protected. We are to be healers; not to bring inflammation.

The sanctification process transforms our thinking. As we separate ourselves from garbage, lust and hatred we become associated with what is clean and special. We may be drawn to the same old bad habits; but we really cannot enjoy them without having a issue with our conscience. In a sense, being saved ruins us for this world. Now we are only good for one thing.

As a result, they do not live the rest of their earthly lives for evil human desires, but rather for the will of God. ³For you have spent enough time in the past doing what pagans choose to do—living in debauchery, lust, drunkenness, orgies, carousing and detestable idolatry. ⁴They are surprised that you do not join them in their reckless, wild living, and they heap abuse on you. (1 Peter 4:2-4)

If we mix course jesting or off-color humor into our conversation it is like pouring a little bit of garbage into the fine china. Nobody has a use for it, once it is contaminated. Those who wallow in the trash really have no use for fine china anyways. A cup of china is not really even good to scoop trash. Ezekiel compares the believer to the wood of a grapevine. It only has one purpose. It is not strong enough to construct a home; or make a peg to hang something up. It is not even good fire wood. It is only useful to grow grapes.

...how is the wood of the vine better than any wood of a branch which is among the trees of the forest? ³ Can wood be taken from it to make ^[u]anything, or can men take a peg from it on which to hang any vessel? ⁴ ^[u]If it has been put into the fire for fuel, and the fire has consumed both of its ends and its middle part has been charred, is it then useful for ^[u]anything? ⁵ Behold, while it is intact, it is not made into ^[u]anything. (Ezekiel 15:2-5)

The redeeming thing about a container is that it can be cleaned; and used for other uses. We all make poor decisions. We do not have to live like a fool our whole life; just because we have done foolish things. God's word washes us.

Christ also loved the church and gave Himself up for her, ²⁶ so that He might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word, ²⁷ that He might present to Himself the church ^[u]in all her glory, having no spot or wrinkle or any such thing; but that she would be holy and blameless. (Ephesians 5:25-27)

Some believers speak the truth in a way that produces resentment. Don't serve steak on a garbage can lid. Be humble and gentle.
