

## 2 Timothy 2:20-26

- The previous section ended with a verse about God's firm foundation which appears to be the foundation for the church either universal church or the church in Ephesus:  
"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."*
- The firm foundation could be:
  - Jesus because 1 Corinthians 3:11 says, "For no one can lay any foundation other than the one already laid, which is Jesus Christ."
- If the church (in Ephesus or universal) is the subject built on God's foundation (which could refer to Jesus as in 1 Corinthians 3:11), then the next verse (2:20) is referring to the church as "a great house".
- The discussion now turns to the vessels in the house. Some are noble or honorable such as gold and silver, while others are dishonorable or ignoble such as wood and clay. This is similar to the building materials used by teachers (true teachers and false teachers) in the church in the same set of verses in 1 Corinthians 3:12-15 – "If anyone builds on this foundation using gold, silver, costly stones, wood, hay or straw, their work will be shown for what it is, because the Day will bring it to light. It will be revealed with fire, and the fire will test the quality of each person's work. If what has been built survives, the builder will receive a reward. If it is burned up, the builder will suffer loss but yet will be saved—even though only as one escaping through the flames."
  - Gold, silver and costly stones – purified by and preserved through the fire of evaluation
  - Wood hay or straw – consumed by the fire of evaluation
- In 1 Corinthians 13:10 Paul calls himself a "wise builder" and said that others were building on the foundation that he laid. He was referring to his work and the work of others who followed him in the building of the church in Corinth.
- In these verses 2:14-26 Paul:
  - 2:14-19 – resist false teachers
  - 2:20-21 – separate from false teaching
  - 2:22-26 – respond to the false teaching and to those in false teaching in a way that will lead those caught in Satan's snare back into the truth.

2 Timothy 2:20 – “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.”

1722 [e]	3173 [e]	1161 [e]	3614 [e]	3756 [e]	1510 [e]	3440 [e]	4632 [e]	5552 [e]	2532 [e]	
En	megalē	de	oikia	ouk	estin	monon	skeuē	chrysa	kai	
20	Ἐν	μεγάλῃ	δὲ	οἰκίᾳ ,	οὐκ	ἔστιν	μόνον	σκεύη	χρυσᾶ	καὶ
In	a great	now	house	not	there are	only	vessels	golden	and	
Prep	Adj-DFS	Conj	N-DFS	Adv	V-PIA-3S	Adv	N-NNP	Adj-NNP	Conj	

693 [e]	235 [e]	2532 [e]	3585 [e]	2532 [e]	3749 [e]	2532 [e]	3739 [e]	3303 [e]	1519 [e]
argyra	alla	kai	xylina	kai	ostrakina	kai	ha	men	eis
ἄργυρᾶ ,	ἀλλὰ	καὶ	ξύλινα	καὶ	ὀστράκινα ;	καὶ	ἅ	μὲν	εἰς
silver	but	also	wooden	and	earthen	and	some	indeed	unto
Adj-NNP	Conj	Conj	Adj-NNP	Conj	Adj-NNP	Conj	RelPro-NNP	Conj	Prep

5092 [e]	3739 [e]	1161 [e]	1519 [e]	819 [e]
timēn	ha	de	eis	atimian
τιμὴν ,	ἅ	δὲ	εἰς	ἀτιμίαν .
honor	some	however	unto	dishonor
N-AFS	RelPro-NNP	Conj	Prep	N-AFS

- “vessels” from *skeue* which is plural of the Greek *skeuos* /skyoo-os/ which means “vessel”, “jar”, “dish”. Generally *skeuos* is used to refer to:
  - A vessel to contain liquid
  - Any instrument by which anything is done
  - A household utensil
  - The tackle of a ship
- In Romans 9:21-24 speaks of “vessels” (*skeue*) in a figurative sense as vessels made for honorable use and dishonorable use to refer to actual vessels of mercy and vessels of wrath: “Has the potter no right over the clay, to make out of the same lump one vessel for honorable use and another for dishonorable use? What if God, desiring to show his wrath and to make known his power, has endured with much patience vessels of wrath prepared for destruction, in order to make known the riches of his glory for vessels of mercy, which he has prepared beforehand for glory.”
- The image appears to be clear that the church (in Ephesus) that is built on the firm foundation will have within its temporal institution vessels (people) who are vessels for honorable use (saved, teaching truth) and common use (unredeemed, false teaching, empty talk).
- It appears that the two types of vessels will be used (or, allowed) by the Lord to serve his purpose just as is seen in:
  - Parable of the Wheat and the Weeds in Matthew 13:24-30 (although in the interpretation of this parable given in Matthew 13:36-43 the “field is the world” and not the church, so this should be considered when making a comparison.):

“He put another parable before them, saying, ‘The kingdom of heaven may be compared to a man who sowed good seed in his field, but while his men were sleeping, his enemy came and sowed weeds among the wheat and went away. So when the plants came up and bore grain, then the weeds appeared also. And the servants of the master of the house came and said to him, “Master, did you not sow good seed in your field? How then does it have weeds?” He said to them, “An enemy has done this.” So the servants said to him, “Then do you want us to go and gather them?” But he said, “No, lest in gathering the weeds you root up the wheat along with them. Let both grow together until the harvest, and at harvest time I will tell the reapers, ‘Gather the weeds first and bind them in bundles to be burned, but gather the wheat into my barn.’ ” ’ ”

- b. 1 Corinthians 3:11-15 the metaphor of building with things with eternal value such as gold, silver, costly stones, but also materials with merely temporal value wood, hay and straw.
- c. Romans 9:22 where Paul uses the example of honor vessels of mercy existing alongside the dishonorable vessels of wrath:
 

“What if God, desiring to show his wrath and to make known his power, has endured with much patience vessels of wrath prepared for destruction, in order to make known the riches of his glory for vessels of mercy, which he has prepared beforehand for glory”
5. Throughout the church age and throughout church history there will be false teaching, false teachers, imposters, confused members, etc. It will not change until the harvest in the end.
6. “wood” bowls were used for holding flour
7. “clay” from the word *ostrakina* (where we get our English word “ostrakon”, Gr. *ostrakon*, which refers to a piece of broken pottery called a potsherd, but an ostrakon is a potsherd with writing on it.)
8. The difference between honorable and dishonorable is if it is for holy work or common work.
  - a. This matches the previous point in 2:16 where Timothy is to present himself as a workman approved by God and to “avoid irreverent babble.”
    - i. The word “irreverent” means common, worldly, unholy, or, literally, “permitted to be walked on”.
    - ii. The difference between “honorable” and “dishonorable” is similar to the difference between a gold ring worn on your finger and concrete that is walked on.
  - b. This IS NOT A VERSE DESCRIBING SPIRITUAL GIFTS.
    - i. This is comparing believers and unbelievers in the church.
    - ii. This is contrasting true teaching in the church with false doctrines in the church.
    - iii. One commentary (Hermeneia, The Pastoral Epistles):
      1. says, “We are not dealing with a problem of those who are less gifted, but with the seducers and the seduced. This interpretation is demanded by the context.”
      2. translates/paraphrase 2:21: “Even though these vessels for disreputable use . . . are present in the house, nevertheless be sure that you yourself remain a vessel for honorable use . . . by cleansing yourself of these—perhaps . . . the actions designated as ‘disreputable’ ”

2:21 – “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.”

1437 [e]	3767 [e]	5100 [e]	1571 [e]	1438 [e]	575 [e]	3778 [e]	1510 [e]	4632 [e]	1519 [e]	5092 [e]		
ean	oun	tis	ekkatharē	heauton	apo	toutōn	estai	skeuos	eis	timēn		
21	ἐὰν	οὖν	τις	ἐκκαθάρη	ἑαυτὸν	ἀπὸ	τούτων	, ἔσται	σκεῦος	εἰς	τιμὴν	,
	If	therefore	anyone	shall have cleansed	himself	from	these	he will be	a vessel	for	honor	
	Conj	Conj	IPro-NMS	V-ASA-3S	RefPro-AM3S	Prep	DPro-GNP	V-FIM-3S	N-NNS	Prep	N-AFS	

  

37 [e]	2173 [e]	3588 [e]	1203 [e]	1519 [e]	3956 [e]	2041 [e]	18 [e]	2090 [e]
hēgiasmenon	euchrēston	tō	despotē	eis	pan	ergon	agathon	hētoimasmenon
ἡγιασμένον	, εὐχρηστον	τῷ	δεσπότῃ	, εἰς	πᾶν	ἔργον	ἀγαθὸν	ἡτοιμασμένον .
having been sanctified	useful	to the	Master	for	every	work	good	having been prepared
V-RPM/P-NNS	Adj-NNS	Art-DMS	N-DMS	Prep	Adj-ANS	N-ANS	Adj-ANS	V-RPM/P-NNS

1. Timothy is being encouraged to cleanse himself and his church of false teaching.
  - a. “cleanse” is *ekkathare* meaning “to cleanse thoroughly”. It is also used in 1 Corinthians 5:7 to “clean out the old leaven” (context is worth looking at)
    - i. *Ekkathare* is a verb in the Aorist Subjunctive Active 3<sup>rd</sup> person singular
      1. Aorist tense – refers to an action that once it has been done it is complete. It need not be a point in time, but a process that leads to successful, completion. Thus, the interlinear translation above is “**shall have cleansed**”
      2. Subjunctive mood – the mood of potential. This could potentially happen.
      3. Active voice – the subject causes or produces the action of the verb
      4. 3<sup>rd</sup> person singular – he or she did the cleansing. In this case he or she cleansed themselves.
2. Notice here the vessel that was dishonorable can be converted into something that is:
  - a. “For honorable use”
  - b. “Set apart as holy”
  - c. “Useful to the master of the house”
  - d. “**Ready for every good work**”
    - i. This sounds like the result that occur after a person has allowed the Scripture teach, rebuke, correct and train them as will be presented in 2 Timothy 3:16-17: “All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, **equipped for every good work.**” (“equipped” in 2 Tim. 3:17 is *exertismenos* meaning “to complete”, “to equip fully” indicating the person has been completely furnished, equipped and supplied to accomplish and finish the assignment.)
    - ii. “ready” here in 2 Timothy 2:21 is *hetoimazo* /het-oy-mad-zo/ meaning “to prepare” and “make ready”.
3. Consider that Timothy and others can choose to change their response to Jesus and their response to the True teaching. This is just like:

- a. In 1 Corinthians 3 where the worker could use better building material instead of face loss in judgment for using wood, hay or straw instead of gold, silver and costly stones.
  - b. In Romans 9:25-26 the vessels of wrath who were NOT God's people will be called by God, "my people", "beloved" and "sons of the living God."
4. Timothy and others in Ephesus are told they need to "cleanse" themselves "from what is dishonorable"
- a. "cleanse"
  - b. "dishonorable"

**2:22 – "So flee youthful passions and pursue righteousness, faith, love, and peace, along with those who call on the Lord from a pure heart."**

3588 [e]	1161 [e]	3512 [e]	1939 [e]	5343 [e]	1377 [e]	1161 [e]	1343 [e]	4102 [e]				
Tas	de	neōterikas	epithymias	pheuge	diōke	de	dikaiosynēn	pistin				
22	Τὰς	δὲ	νεωτερικὰς	ἐπιθυμίας	φεῦγε	;	δίωκε	δὲ	δικαιοσύνην	,	πίστιν	,
-	And	youthful	lusts	flee	pursue	now	righteousness	faith				
Art-AFP	Conj	Adj-AFP	N-AFP	V-PMA-2S	V-PMA-2S	Conj	N-AFS	N-AFS				

26 [e]	1515 [e]	3326 [e]	3588 [e]	1941 [e]	3588 [e]	2962 [e]	1537 [e]	2513 [e]	2588 [e]			
agapēn	eirēnēn	meta	tōn	epikaloumenōn	ton	Kyrion	ek	katharas	kardias			
ἀγάπην	,	εἰρήνην	,	μετὰ	τῶν	ἐπικαλουμένων	τὸν	Κύριον	ἐκ	καθαρᾶς	καρδίας	.
love	[and] peace	along with	those	calling on	the	Lord	out of	pure	a heart			
N-AFS	N-AFS	Prep	Art-GMP	V-PPM-GMP	Art-AMS	N-AMS	Prep	Adj-GFS	N-GFS			

1. In 2:22-26 two types of people are presented:
  - a. Believer and true teacher:
    - i. Flee youthful passions
    - ii. Pursue:
      1. Righteousness
      2. Faith
      3. Love
      4. Peace
    - iii. Work with those who call on the Lord from a pure heart
    - iv. Not quarrelsome
    - v. Kind
    - vi. Teach
    - vii. Endure evil
    - viii. Gentle
    - ix. Correct opposition
  - b. The false believer or a false teacher:
    - i. Foolish controversies
    - ii. Ignorant controversies
    - iii. Breed quarrels
    - iv. Senseless
    - v. Captured by Satan in a snare
    - vi. Doing Satan's will
2. Timothy is told two things:

- a. “flee” from *pheuge* which is used to say “flee”, “escape”, “shun”
  - b. “pursue” from *dioke* which means “to aggressively chase like a hunter”
3. Timothy is also told to “flee” and “pursue” in 1 Timothy 6:11:  
 “But as for you, O man of God, flee these things. Pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, steadfastness, gentleness.”
- a. “flee” the temptation to use godliness to get rich
  - b. “pursue” righteousness
4. “youthful passions” are likely more than sexual temptations, but would focus on temptations of “youthful passions” that arise in the midst of a discussion, during a debate or when called upon to teach. These more likely would include:
- a. Harsh answers
  - b. Lengthy expressions on trivial matters
  - c. Intolerance
  - d. Half-baked ideas
  - e. Zeal without true commitment
  - f. Asserting opinions from a place of authority
  - g. Basically an arrogant attitude with an abrasive presentation

**2:23 – “Have nothing to do with foolish, ignorant controversies; you know that they breed quarrels.”**

3588 [e]	1161 [e]	3474 [e]	2532 [e]	521 [e]	2214 [e]	3868 [e]	1492 [e]	3754 [e]	1080 [e]	3163 [e]			
Tas	de	mōras	kai	apaideutous	zētēseis	paraitou	eidōs	hoti	gennōsin	machas			
23	Tὰς	δὲ	μωρὰς	καὶ	ἀπαιδεύτους	ζητήσεις	παραιτοῦ	,	εἰδὼς	ὅτι	γεννώσιν	μάχας	.
-	And	foolish	and	ignorant	speculations	refuse	knowing	that	they breed	quarrels			
Art-AFP	Conj	Adj-AFP	Conj	Adj-AFP	N-AFP	V-PMM/P-2S	V-RPA-NMS	Conj	V-PIA-3P	N-AFP			

1. Two main points are going to be made in the next verses:
  - a. Stay out of quarrels and arguments that cause division
  - b. Deal with opposition and different viewpoints with patience and kindness because you are trying to show them the Truth.
2. “Refuse” is *paraitou* /par-ah-ee-teh-om-ah-ee/ means “to beg from” or “to beg off” it is translated here in the interlinear as “refuse”, but in the ESV as “Have nothing to do with” or NIV as “Don’t have anything to do with”
  - a. *paraitou* is also in 1 Timothy 4:7, “Have nothing to do with irreverent, silly myths. Rather train yourself for godliness.”
3. “foolish” is *moros* (as our word “moron”)
  - a. referring to the nerves it means “dull” or “sluggish”
  - b. referring to the mind it means “dull”, “stupid”, “foolish.”
4. “stupid” is *apaideutous* /ap-ah-ee-dyoo-tos/ meaning “uninstructed”.
  - a. Referring to someone who is “untrained”, “uneducated”, “in need of training or education.”
  - b. The subject is “ignorant”
5. “controversies” (ESV) or “arguments” (NIV) or “speculations” (interlinear) are all translations of *zeteseis* /dzay-tay-sis/
  - a. *zeteseis* means “a search” or “questioning”.

- b. zeteseis is used to refer to “ a question”, “a debate”, “a controversy”,
  - c. zeteseis can also refer to “a seeking” or “a searching”
  - d. These are subjects, topics or areas that there is no clear answer, but there is a question. People attempt to answer the theological, philosophical or social question with their own thoughts, experiences, and opinions. But, no matter how they search or seek for an answer there is still room for more ideas from morons and uneducated speakers to present a concept or an idea that will attract other stupid morons.
6. Timothy is to “refuse” to discuss or answer unsearchable questions based merely on human opinion, philosophy or ideology.
  7. These zeteseis (“questions”, “debates”, “searching”, “speculatings”) are never resolved, but merely form opposing groups which then “breed quarrels”.
  8. “they breed” *gennosin* means “to bring forth” as in “give birth to”
  9. “quarrels” from *machas* which means “fights”. Originally referred to “battles” or “conflicts” in military, but in philosophical battles of words it meant “strife”, “contention”, “quarrel”

**2:24 – “And the Lord's servant must not be quarrelsome but kind to everyone, able to teach, patiently enduring evil,”**

1401 [e]	1161 [e]	2962 [e]	3756 [e]	1163 [e]	3164 [e]	235 [e]	2261 [e]	1510 [e]	4314 [e]
doulon	de	Kyriou	ou	dei	machesthai	alla	ēpion	einai	pros
24 δοῦλον	δὲ	Κυρίου	, οὐ	δεῖ	μάχεσθαι	, ἀλλὰ	ἥπιον	εἶναι	πρὸς
[The] bond-servant	now	of [the] Lord	not	it behooves	to quarrel	but	gentle	to be	toward
N-AMS	Conj	N-GMS	Adv	V-PIA-3S	V-PNM/P	Conj	Adj-AMS	V-PNA	Prep

3956 [e]	1317 [e]	420 [e]
pantas	didaktikon	anexikakon
πάντας	, διδακτικόν	, ἀνεξίκακον
all	able to teach	forbearing
Adj-AMP	Adj-AMS	Adj-AMS

1. Quarreling about unsolvable ideologies is not what the servant of the Lord is to do.
  - a. The reason these *zeteseis* lead to quarreling is:
    - i. Not all men are on the same foundation. Some are on Jesus. Others on pagan gods. Some on naturalism. Etc.
    - ii. The ideas and logic of men regarding theology, philosophy or society are not all beginning on the concept of YHWH and the revealed word.
    - iii. There will always be a mixed multitude of opinions concerning these because people (pagans and believers) are standing on a variety of potential foundations.
    - iv. People will arrive at different answers depending on their foundational beliefs or worldview.
    - v. Timothy, a servant of YHWH, will find it best to teach the Word of God instead of trying to negotiate with these “morons” (undeveloped nerves) and “stupid” (uneducated in the Truth).
2. The answer for Timothy is to:

- a. Be gentle with the “morons” and “stupids”
- b. Teach the “morons” and “stupids”
- c. Approach the teaching of “morons” and “stupids” with “FORBEARING”, or *anexikakon*.
3. “patiently enduring evil” (ESV) or “not resentful” (NIV) or “forbearing” (interlinear)
  - a. *anexikakon* comes from two words:
    - i. *anecho* – meaning “to hold up” and “to bear with”. *Anecho* is used to communicate the idea of “enduring”, bearing with”, having patience with”, “suffering” and “persisting”.
    - ii. *kakos* – meaning “bad” or “evil”. *Kakos* is used to refer to a wide variety of things and people considered to be “bad” or “evil” in a variety of ways.
  - b. *anexikakon* means “enduring evil” or “having patience with badness”.
  - c. In this case the teacher is going to have to be patient with the “moron” and the “stupid” while they the teacher attempts to build the foundation of Jesus and the Truth in the soul of the person.
    - i. Again, it is not a matter of entering the debate at their unsustainable position
    - ii. It is about laying the foundation of Jesus and Truth in their soul. And, then building on that.
4. “able to teach” is from *didaktikon* meaning “apt at teaching” and “able to teach”

2:25 – “correcting his opponents with gentleness. God may perhaps grant them repentance leading to a knowledge of the truth,”

1722 [e]	4240 [e]	3811 [e]	3588 [e]	475 [e]	3361 [e]	4219 [e]	1325 [e]	846 [e]
en	prautēti	paideuonta	tous	antidiatithenous	mē	pote	dōē	autois
25 ἐν	πραΰτητι	παιδεύοντα	τοὺς	ἀντιδιατιθεμένους	, μή	ποτε	δώη	αὐτοῖς
in	gentleness	disciplining	those	opposing	lest	ever	may give	them
Prep	N-DFS	V-PPA-AMS	Art-AMP	V-PPM-AMP	Adv	Conj	V-ASA-3S	PPro-DM3P

3588 [e]	2316 [e]	3341 [e]	1519 [e]	1922 [e]	225 [e]
ho	Theos	metanoian	eis	epignōsin	alētheias
ὁ	Θεὸς	μετάνοιαν	, εἰς	ἐπίγνωσιν	ἀληθείας
-	God	repentance	unto	a knowledge	of [the] truth
Art-NMS	N-NMS	N-AFS	Prep	N-AFS	N-GFS

1. “gentleness”
2. “disciplining”
3. “those opposing”
4. “God may give them repentance unto a knowledge of the truth.”



2:26 – “and they may come to their senses and escape from the snare of the devil, after being captured by him to do his will.”

2532 [e]	366 [e]	1537 [e]	3588 [e]	3588 [e]	1228 [e]	3803 [e]	2221 [e]
kai	ananēpsōsin	ek	tēs	tou	diabolou	pagidos	ezōgrēmenoi
26 και	ἀνανήψωσιν	ἐκ	τῆς	τοῦ	διαβόλου	παγίδος	, ἐζωγρημένοι
and	they might come to their senses	out of	the	of the	devil	snare	having been captured
Conj	V-ASA-3P	Prep	Art-GFS	Art-GMS	Adj-GMS	N-GFS	V-RPM/P-NMP

5259 [e]	846 [e]	1519 [e]	3588 [e]	1565 [e]	2307 [e]
hyp'	autou	eis	to	ekeinou	thelēma
ὑπ'	αὐτοῦ	εἰς	τὸ	ἐκείνου	θέλημα .
by	him	for	-	his	will
Prep	PPro-GM3S	Prep	Art-ANS	DPro-GMS	N-ANS

1. “they may come to their senses” is from one word in the Greek *ananepsosin*
  - a. *Ananepsosin* referred to regaining sobriety after a long night of drinking.
  - b. This word was used as an image in the spiritual and ethical realm
2. “escape”
3. “snare”
4. “having been captured” is zogreo which means literally “to capture alive”
5. “for his will”