

Not First #5:
BIBLE-READING

Word

Scripture Reference

2 Timothy 2:14-26

Discussion Questions

1. Growing up, especially during your teenage years, whose approval did you try to seek?
2. All churches are to do the work of evangelism and discipleship, but there are certain things that some churches do better than others (i.e. some churches have great prayer meetings, others are social justice-focused, some are mission-minded, and others are known for music styles, etc.). According to many, our church (GCCP) generally is known for its strong Bible teaching. It's a good characteristic to have, but if your church does not have a strong pulpit ministry, would you self-initiate to read and understand the Bible for yourself, or are you too lazy to do it on your own because you're being "fed well" each week? Remember that weekly messages in church is not a substitute for your personal practice of the spiritual discipline of Bible reading. In Paul's letter to his protege Timothy, we see Timothy's church dealing with an issue: There were people who were propagating wrong teachings, teaching things that are not taught in Scripture and taking passages out of context. Read 2 Timothy 2:14-26. What did Paul admonish Timothy to do (v.14). How do you filter what you do through the lenses of the Word of God?
3. Reading God's Word is a spiritual discipline that EVERY believer needs to practice, because it reminds us that we are not #1. The passage teaches us five compelling reasons why you need to personally read and know the Bible well:

- a. **Reason #1: To be approved by God (v. 15).** Simply reading the Bible is not enough. You need to comprehend what it says, so that you know and understand what actually is in the Word of God. How did Paul encourage Timothy to make himself known before God? Does handling the Word of God correctly mean that you have to be an expert? Share how you are able to handle the Word of God correctly, thus you don't need to be ashamed.
- b. **Reason #2: To prevent the spread of wrong theology and false teachings (v. 17-18).** You know that what you are hearing is really from the Bible if you are reading it yourself. The people in the church need to know the Bible well, or the danger of wrong theology and false teaching will infiltrate the church. Christians who do not read the Bible, then claim promises that the Scripture never made to them end up believing in wrong theology, resulting in their living in disappointment. Share common examples of what some Christians would quote or believe about God's promises when in actuality, the Bible does not teach it. Discuss how this infiltration can destroy a church. Why is having a solid, biblically-rooted statement of faith in the church so important? How can you show your love for your church by being defender of what the Bible teaches?
- c. **Reason #3: The truths the Bible contains never change (v. 19).** Paul reminded Timothy that the foundation and head of the church is the Lord Jesus Christ, and the truths of His Word is based on a God who keeps His promises, not on the opinions of the majority. Paul was encouraging Timothy to stand his ground on the solid foundation of God's Word, which never changes because He does not change. This means that the standards of truth the Bible speaks about will always be the same regardless of culture, generation, gender, ethnicity, or age. Discuss why you should be happy that unlike culture and tradition, the truth in the Word of God never changes.

- d. **Reason #4: It will prepare you for life (v. 20-21).** Paul further explained that there are many types of containers, but the important thing is the purpose they serve: Is it for honorable or dishonorable use? Timothy had to separate himself from the false teachers so that he would be a vessel of honor, set apart for God's use. Discuss why sin would make your usefulness to the Master dishonorable. Discuss how the Bible helps you to prepare for every good work useful for the Master? Why is it necessary to read the Bible daily?
- e. **Reason #5: It is a practical guide for daily living (v. 22-26).** These verses admonish us to pursue righteousness, avoid petty fights, treat gently those who are wrong, etc.—a very practical character-building guide in life. The Bible is your instruction manual for life. Share how the Bible has been your guide in living out your life.

Walk

Reading the Bible is a must in your daily life. Like an instruction manual for a gadget or machine, it gives you the right instructions on how you should live your life. If you don't follow it, then you will break your life. Think about how you can present yourself as one approved to God. If you don't have a habit of reading the scripture daily yet, would you ask God to motivate you to do it?

Worship & Prayer

Heavenly Father, You have given me Your Word to teach, rebuke, correct, and train me in righteousness. I cannot thank You enough that such a guide for my daily life—spiritually and practically—is so available for my use. It is a shame that I don't always use it for the purposes that You want me to do. May You help me to love Your Word and to read, comprehend, and apply its truth in my life. In Jesus' name. Amen.