

Stay on Target

Series: Setting the table

Life Group Discussion

Welcome to another opportunity to connect with God and one another.

I. Getting to know one another...

Share one project or goal that you accomplished sometime during your life. It doesn't have to be the most significant .. just one that comes to mind.

II. Centering...

Take a quiet moment to center your soul on God's presence. Have everyone close their eyes... take a deep breath...and prayerfully listen as one member reads the following Scripture... slowly ...THREE times...after which they may lead in an opening prayer for the group time.

Proverbs 4:25-27

Let your eyes look straight ahead;

fix your gaze directly before you.

Give careful thought to the paths for your feet

and be steadfast in all your ways.

Do not turn to the right or the left;

keep your foot from evil.

III. Exploring...

This week we are continuing engaging the Biblical Book called "2nd Timothy." Paul, an apostle, is writing to younger Timothy who has been his spiritual "son" and faithful co-worker. Paul is now in prison in Rome and anticipates these are his final days. As there are several questions to consider, it may serve well to have just two or three participants respond to each question.

1. Have someone read aloud the two sections of text below while all follow the text:

2 Timothy 2:8-10

⁸Remember Jesus Christ, raised from the dead, descended from David. This is my gospel, ⁹for which I am suffering even to the point of being chained like a criminal. But God's word is not chained. ¹⁰Therefore I endure everything for the sake of the elect, that they too may obtain the salvation that is in Christ Jesus, with eternal glory.

2 Timothy 2:14-26

¹⁴Keep reminding God's people of these things. Warn them before God against quarreling about words; it is of no value, and only ruins those who listen. ¹⁵Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a worker who does not need to be ashamed and who correctly handles the word of truth. ¹⁶Avoid godless chatter, because those who indulge in it will become more and more ungodly. ¹⁷Their teaching will spread like gangrene. Among them are Hymenaeus and Philetus, ¹⁸who have departed from the truth. They say that the resurrection has already taken place, and they destroy the faith of some. ¹⁹Nevertheless, God's solid foundation stands firm, sealed with this inscription: "The Lord knows those who are his," and, "Everyone who confesses the name of the Lord must turn away from wickedness."

²⁰In 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. ²¹Those 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.

²²Flee the evil desires of youth and pursue righteousness, faith, love and peace, along with those who call on the Lord out of a pure heart. ²³Don't have anything to do with foolish and stupid arguments, because you know they produce quarrels. ²⁴And the Lord's servant must not be

quarrelsome but must be kind to everyone, able to teach, not resentful. ²⁵ Opponents must be gently instructed, in the hope that God will grant them repentance leading them to a knowledge of the truth, ²⁶ and that they will come to their senses and escape from the trap of the devil, who has taken them captive to do his will.

1. In verses 8 to 10, what does Paul tell us about God's purposes?
2. In verse 13, Paul begins saying: "Keep reminding God's people of these things." What follows in the remainder of our text, includes things to avoid in order to maintain one's relationship to God's purposes. Give a quick look through verses 14-26, and share what you identify we are told to avoid?
3. In verses 20-21, what is Paul describing? How does purpose make a difference?
4. In verse 22, why is it important to recognize that there is something to flee as well as pursue?
5. Throughout this whole text, we catch some of Paul's charge to manage the problem of vain ideas that distract and divide. He refers to "quarreling about words" (v. 14), "godless chatter" (v. 16) and "foolish and stupid arguments" (v. 23) While he does not expound on the difference between these what could be healthy questions, drawing from both the text and your general experience, what do you think distinguishes what Paul wants us to avoid?
6. In verses 23 to 26, if we seek to be the "Lord's servant," how should we respond to that which can derail people from God's purposes?