

2 Timothy 2:22-26

Pursuing the Right Things

Read Verse 22-26

An atheist was taking a walk through the woods.' What majestic trees! What powerful rivers! What beautiful animals!' he said to himself.

As he continued walking alongside the river he heard a rustling in the bushes. Turning to look, he saw a 7 foot grizzly charging towards him.

He ran as fast as he could up the path. Looking over his shoulder he saw that the bear was closing in on him. His heart was pumping frantically and he tried to run even faster.

He tripped and fell on the ground. He rolled over to pick himself up but saw the bear raising his paw to take a swipe at him.

At that instant the atheist cried out: 'Oh my God!...' Time stopped. The bear froze. The forest was silent.

It was then that a bright light shone upon the man and a voice came out of the sky saying: 'You deny my existence for all of these years, teach others I don't exist and even credit creation to a cosmic accident.

Do you expect me to help you out of this predicament? Am I to count you as a believer?' The atheist looked directly into the light.

'It would be hypocritical of me to suddenly ask you to treat me as a Christian now, but perhaps, could you make the BEAR a Christian?'

'Very well,' said the voice. The light went out, and the sounds of the forest resumed.

And then the bear lowered his paw, bowed his head and spoke: 'Lord, bless this food which I am about to receive and for which I am truly thankful, Amen.'

Have you ever considered yourself to be a runner?

A) Maybe you are like me – you hate running = Maybe you love it – you run all the time – Others RARELY RUN

B) Reality is all of us are runners in **this regard** – we all have things that we are pursuing.

1) Webster- Pursue = to follow in order to overtake / to strive to gain; seek to attain or accomplish.

C) All of us have things in our lives we are pursuing in that way.

D) And all of us have areas in our lives that we need to put the same effort into running away from.

Paul closes out this Chapter by exhorting Timothy concerning things that He should be **running from.... running after** and who He is to be **running with!**

A) Paul closes the Chapter with a word about how to correct those who have fallen out of step.

B) Begins – **What we are to Run From!**

A) Verse 22 **Flee also Youthful Lust -**

C) Now the first thing that we need to make note of here is these are not Lusts – reserved for youth.

1) **Man I wish my teenager was in here right now!**

D) These are things that might originate in youth but can easily carry over into adult life – if we are not careful.

Most of the time when this verse is quoted it is being used in the context of fleeing sensuality – Lust of sexual immorality.

A) I do believe that it is appropriate to use it in that way: There are numerous verses in the Scripture that warn us in that manner.

B) Joseph is often the example used in this regard

C) **He Literally Fled from the seduction** and sexual advances of Potiphar's wife. {Ran out of his clothes

1) Many men have given into similar advances and temptation

Proverbs 6:26

“For by means of a seductress A man is reduced to a crust of bread; And an adulteress will prey upon his precious life.”

Flee those situations: Flee = Phuego– Fool go — Run for your life!

A) Don't think about / don't pray about it– don't see how long you can resist it – Just Run! – Flee – FOOL GO! Get out of there

Aa) Our English word fugitive is derived from the Greek word phuego!

B) The Greek verb is here a present imperative of command, indicating that fleeing is not optional but is to be persistent

1) Fugitive refers to a person who is continually on the run in order to escape capture.

C) Don't get tangled in the web – of sexual immorality

1) So it is fitting to apply this verse in that way: But the term youthful lust is much broader than sexual temptation.

In fact the context would suggest that Paul had something entirely different in mind as he wrote these words to Timothy.

A) The Context is about interaction with others AND INTERPERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS {Timothy's role as a Pastor.

B) New Testament scholar Gordon Fee: translates "youthful lust" as "headstrong passions of youth"—the desires characteristic of youth.

William Barclay related it to the tendencies toward impatience, self-assertion, contentions or the love of arguing, and love of novelty that stem from youthful idealism.

C) Barclay called impatience the "Chronic sin of youth."

1) Impatience is not a struggle that is reserved for the young – Most of us struggle in that area.

D) Today's impatience is fed by the media's quick fix. After all, on television everything gets resolved in the space of an hour (films 2hrs.)

1) Problem is Real, life isn't a Movie!

D) Did you know that it takes seven miles to turn a cruise ship around?

It can't just turn on a dime like a speed boat.

E) Our lives often resemble – cruise ship – big complicated – takes time to change things.

Impatience can cause us to act on impulse! {Results in huge problems

A) When we get impatient we can make rash decisions! People get hurt

B) Impatience can cause us to be harsh with pp and abuse power – overly assertive
1) My way or the highway mentality. I am right you are wrong, that settles it

Where we don't listen to other peoples point of view.

C) Impatience can breed a sense of entitlement: Which is one of the major Challenges employers of major corporations are experiencing today

1) Gen Y – Mid 20's early 30's - Sense of entitlement

Because they are a Generation that has been given so much – They are Technologically advanced –

A) They have grown up being told how special they are – and it is manifesting itself in the work force in this way: -

B) No longer are interested in entry level positions – they expect to leap frog over others –who have been in companies for 10 yrs or more.

1) They expect the best pay: They think nothing of asking for vacations way before their anniversary dates where they are eligible for vacations

C) This is a common problem in major corporations today and I have had a number of Pastors – talk to me about this as well.

But again this is not a mentality that is exclusive to youth – We all can fall into that mentality of entitlement

A) Most of us have grown up hearing slogans like You deserve a break today Or Have it your way

Contentious: Youth love to battle

A) The love of debate and winning—is a sin of youth. Here dogmatism flourishes, fed by an inability to comprehend or tolerate other points of view.

B) The listening faculty is undeveloped.

C) The *love of novelty*, which tends to condemn a thing simply because it is old and to desire a thing simply because it is new, underrating the value of experience.

D) Don't appreciate those who have paved the way. – The hard work that went into making it easier for us.

Paul is exhorting – Timothy run away from those tendencies – the temptation to be overtaken in those things

A) But here is something that I love about the Bible – It never tells us to just run away – but always tells us to run toward something

B) Paul covers that next in v.22 – Flee Youthful lust but #2 Pursue Righteousness / faith / love / peace.

C) Righteousness – speaks of right things – has to do with our relationship to God.

D) That which relates to a personal holiness

1) Holy is a word that we don't like to use today

Today many loudly claim there is no connection between character and performance. The argument has been particularly heated in reference to those in political life—where the analogy is often made between the head of state and an airline pilot. “Who would you rather have at the control of the plane?” it is asked. “A competent pilot with moral weaknesses, or an incompetent pilot with moral character?”

The problem with the analogy is that it is apples and oranges. Skillfully landing a plane is not an intrinsically moral task, but piloting the state is. Even granting the analogy, suppose the plane crashed in the Pacific, and you and the other survivors are in a lifeboat captained by the competent (but immoral) pilot, and there are insufficient rations to maintain life until rescue. Would you want *him* to make the decisions about who gets rations and who does not?

Character counts

The Lord wants us to pursue being pp of a Holy Character!

The godly believer is also to pursue... faith.

A) In this context, (Faith) is better rendered “faithfulness,” **His actions before men, he is trust worthy & loyal yes be yes and your no be no!**

B) He also will **pursue... love**, Of the several words in Greek that are translated **love**, *agapē* is the highest and that is the word that is used here.

C) Agape love is a love of choice, not of feelings or sentiment, as fine as those sometimes may be.

D) It is the love of the mind and the will, not of emotion or affection even of the highest sort.

1) It is the love of conscious determination, not impulse.

It is the love that focuses on the welfare of the one loved, not on self-gratification or self-fulfillment.

A) *Agapē* love is not based on the attractiveness or worthiness of those who are loved, but on their needs, even when they are most unattractive and unworthy.

B) It is selfless and self-giving.

C) It is the complete opposite of being Self assertive and rough with people

1) Opposite of abusing power- but sees the position of power as an opportunity to serve.

The godly believer is to also pursue... peace.

A) The word describes living in harmony with others – Pursue that – Jesus said blessed are the peace makers

B) In this context it does not refer to absence of warfare / the opposite of being contentious – rather seeking to live in harmonious relationships with others.

Paul commands, “**If possible, so far as it depends on you,**”, “**be at peace with all men**” (Romans 12:18).

C) Sometimes it just isn't going to happen – but Pursue those things, run after those things

Now that can be hard because most of the things – fly in the face of our normal fleshly tendencies that has had years of practice – looking out for #1

A) Our flesh is naturally selfish – loves to battle / wants to be right/ is prone toward many of those youthful lust.

B) So how are we supposed to do this?

#3 We are not to run alone – Paul next tells us who we are to run with! **Those who call on the Lord out of a pure heart!**

A) Pure heart

Matthew 5:8

Blessed are the pure in heart, For they shall see God.

Titus 1:15 **“To the pure all things are pure.”**
{Think the best of others – see Brothers and sisters in Christ – not after the flesh. Carnal man vs Spiritual man.

1 Peter 1:22

love one another fervently with a pure heart,

B) Pure heart speaks of a heart that is wholly devoted.

C) You find others who are seeking to live those kind of lives and have that kind of an affect on others and run with them

Application: Who are you running with?

A) Running with those who continually run toward – sensuality ?

B) Running with those who chase after contentions – those who love disputes – complainers – love to pick others apart

C) They can do it in such a spiritual manner that really only reveals the immaturity of their hearts for it is so unlike Christ

D) I have literally had to run from pp who are overly negative – I can easily get sucked into that
1) My natural tendency is to notice things that are not right.

Finally #4 Paul lays out guidelines how to correct and hopefully restore those who have fallen out of step.

23 But avoid foolish and ignorant disputes, knowing that they generate strife.

A) Avoid foolish and ignorant disputes

(foolish) has the root meaning of being mentally dull, silly, or stupid, and is the word from which we get “moron.”

(ignorant) means unlearned and untrained and often carried the additional idea of undisciplined.

B) Avoid those kind of conversations – majoring on minors – leads to strife !

2 Tim 2:24-26

24 And a servant of the Lord must not quarrel but be gentle to all, able to teach, patient, 25 in humility correcting those who are in opposition, if God perhaps will grant them repentance, so that they may know the truth, 26 and that they may come to their senses and escape the snare of the devil, having been taken captive by him to do his will.

Avoid quarrels for no purpose – { some things we have to fight for}

Gentle: Meek – Meekness = power under control

A) Refers to a Stallion that has been willingly broken – The Stallion has yielded his person to the rider

B) **Brokenness does that** – How many time have you been wrong – how many times have you said stupid things / done stupid things

1) Broken under the power of the Holy Spirit

C) Yielded our person – that is how we become meek – that is how we have that gentle spirit
I don't know anything: Ever been hard on your teenager – What kind of teenager were you

Ever been hard on a brother – Have you ever done the same thing He did

Gentleness carries with it an attitude of brokenness – that constantly remembers I am what I am by the grace of God

Able to teach – talking more about rightly using the Word in a corrective atmosphere

Patient – He must be patient because God has been patient with you.

A) Greg O – Kick this kid out of his youth group!

B) Have you ever done anything stupid like that?
Did God kick you off of His team?

C) Correcting in Humility - Not pride – not a know it all – not a person who comes across like they are entitled to anything.

Correcting is a word that means to instruct, educate, or give guidance

The heart of it is this that they might come to their senses and be restored

A) It is His kindness that leads to repentance

B) I love this heart of the Lord – it is never to cast off and to throw out – He is so longsuffering

C) His heart is to see the wayward come to their senses Repent – turn from their pride / their sin their Hypocrisy and turn to Him

Be Set free – whether they know it or not they are enslaved – ensnared to sin

John 10:10

10 The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly.

Luke 4:18-19

**18 "The Spirit of the LORD is upon Me,
Because He has anointed Me
To preach the gospel to the poor;
He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted,
To proclaim liberty to the captives
And recovery of sight to the blind,
To set at liberty those who are oppressed;
19 To proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD."
NKJV**

Luke 19:9-10

10 For the Son of Man came to seek and to save what was lost."

You today: who are you Pursuing ? Who are you running with?

- A) Bitterness
- B) Pride
- C) Sensuality

Give the Lord your heart today