

## THE BOOK OF SECOND TIMOTHY

"Household Vessels"  
2 Timothy 2:19-21

### Introduction

1. The dark backdrop of doctrinal and moral degradation (vv. 14-18) has another side to it. The use of the strong adversative "nevertheless" (v. 19) is the indication of this fact. God's purposes will not be hindered.

2. While Timothy must be alert to the sad expectation of subversion (v. 14) and actual apostacy (v. 18), there is the single antedote of sure help--the Word of God (v. 15). Anyone who is solidly in the Word will not be affected by the machinations of the evil one. We are not ignorant of his devices (2 Cor. 2:11).

3. Hence, God has a good work for us. He has some word of encouragement as well. God help us to lay hold upon it. It concerns our role within the family of God. Study :-

### 1. THE FOUNDATION OF GOD v. 19.

#### a. It has surety

The word "sure" is actually an adjective and would better be placed near its noun, thus: "the firm foundation of God standeth." It describes the foundation and is not a part of the predicate. No matter how subversive the work of the false teachers, God's foundation is impregnable. This may well be a direct reference to the Lord Jesus Christ (1 Cor. 3:11). It may also be a witness to the stability of God's truth. In any case, there is no instability with HIM!

#### b. It has security

This is provided by the seal which speaks of ownership, authentication, and destination as well. Some have seen this as a superscription over a doorway to a building. Whatever, it does have two facets to it:

1) Godward This one notes the Lord's omniscience. He knows who belongs to Him. He knows those over whom He is owner (John 10:14). This mark of God's elective powers are absolutely certain and undiminished forever!

2) Manward As God knows, so man shows! The response of man to God's work is purity! The verb "nameth" is only found here in the Pastorals and means to utter a name as acknowledging and appropriating what the name involves. It is something like a confession of faith. Such a person, Paul writes, "departs" from iniquity. The verb is the same as "apostostize" and means to stand apart.

Further, it is from "unrighteousness." Whatever, therefore is involved in the election of God, it does not relieve the individual of attention to moral character and conduct. The quotations for the seal are from Numbers 16:5, 26.

## 2. THE VESSELS OF GOD

### a. Their division

The "great house" surely has something to do with the visible church. The whole section is a divine commentary on the contents of Matthew 13--the kingdom of mystery form. The two major divisions are: honor and dishonor vessels.

### b. Their classification

Two groups are given, but each one contains two subdivisions: gold and silver; wood and earth. Whereas 1 Cor. 3:12 refers to the work, here it is the workers. The usefulness of the classification is to show that God has all kinds of vessels for His use in His house. Any of them may be employed for honor or dishonor!

### c. Their elevation

There is the possibility to move from dishonor to honor within the house. The rules are given. The first is an active verb "purge" with the reflexive pronoun. When one does this, he cleanses himself from "these." This word may be either neuter or masculine. If the former, it means to purge from "unrighteousness" (v. 19); if masculine, then from the false teachers (vv. 14-18). It would appear that both doctrine and practice are involved no matter what! Results: the vessel is sanctified. The verb is perfect passive. God works a mighty work! It is an illustration of the active passive principle of Rom 12:1, 2. This, in turn, makes the vessel "fit" or useful for the Master, a word meaning "despot" or one with complete ownership. This, in turn, makes the vessel prepared (perfect passive verb) for service. God works this too. Not for great work, but for good work!

Note the order revealed here: separation, usefulness and readiness for service. This order is inviolate! An illustration of how God allows movement within the house is provided in the O.T.: check the movement of the vessels of the temple. They were dedicated (1 Kings 7:51), then desecrated (2 Chron. 26:18), and finally delivered (Ezra 1:11).

Conclusion How do you stand in the house as a vessel? Yes, does He know you? Oh, stir up your heart in these days unto godliness. Be of useful service unto Him, your Master.

"Oh, use me, Lord, use even me,  
Just as Thou wilt, and when, and where."  
---Francis Havergal