

Dear Friends and Family,

I have to wonder how much, or rather how little, did Mary and Joseph know about the baby they would raise together? We often think we know so many things, and then in the moment, we realize there is much to learn.

I'm sure you've heard, "I was an expert on raising children. Then I had kids."

Our children teach us! We are called to raise and care for them, yet often we find that we learn much from them. How much more so was it with Jesus? Can you imagine raising the one who was present at the beginning, the creator of all things, the Alpha and Omega? How many times did Mary and Joseph just stop speaking and stare at Jesus, eyes wide and jaws dropped? The Bible tells of how He was in the temple teaching when He was only a child (Luke 2:47). Can you even imagine taking this in as a parent? Yet they did. Time after time after time. They were called to raise the Prince of Peace, The Counselor, The Almighty God. And they did their best.

Pastor's Point of View

The big question: **How can you be a strong workman for Christ in 2020?**

Day 1 - READ 2 Timothy 2:14-18

1. In your own words write out what is taking place in these verses. It is often helpful to journal while studying scripture.
2. What do you yourself need to do as commanded by these verses?
3. Have you ever been in a situation where your faith has been upset? Have you ever upset the faith of another by your words? How can you ensure that will not happen again?

Day 2 - READ 2 Timothy 2:19

1. What a beautiful promise from God!
2. What is the firm foundation Paul speaks of here?
3. How can you ensure that your foundation is firm in the Lord?
4. Read Romans 6:1-7. Consider what this says in context with 2 Timothy 2:19.
5. What does Romans say we are free from?

Day 3 - READ 2 Timothy 2:20-21

1. What may be some things you need to pray to give over to the Lord to cleanse yourself?

2. What do you need to do to become a vessel of honor, sanctified for the Lord?
3. What is the purpose of a vessel? If it is not filled, is it fulfilling its purpose?
4. What does it mean to be prepared for every good work?

Day 4 - READ 2 Timothy 2:22-26

1. Make two lists. Write those things you are to flee from. On the other side, record what you are to pursue from verses 22-23.
2. What benefit do we receive when we are not quarrelsome but have a pure heart?
3. Read verses 24-26 very carefully.
4. Do you know someone lost in sin today? Recognize that they are held captive by sin. The roots of sin run deep. How can you help?
5. How should you pray for and respond to that person?

We often desire to change people and “fix” them. However, it is only Christ who can change hearts and make all things new. Our command is to gently correct, diligently pray, and rely on Christ that “God may grant them repentance leading to the knowledge of the truth, and they may come to their senses *and escape* from the snare of the devil”.

Sometimes true strength comes in what we don’t say. Being a strong workman means keeping ourselves pure of heart, leading others in the way everlasting, and praying that they would come to the knowledge of the truth. May you enter this New Year with resolve to serve the Lord, no matter how much you know or don’t know. May you be a strong workman, serving God as Joshua challenged his people almost 6000 years ago.

“But if serving the Lord seems undesirable to you, then choose for yourselves this day whom you will serve, whether the gods your ancestors served beyond the Euphrates, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land you are living. But as for me and my household, we will serve the Lord.” Joshua 24:15

In joy and thanksgiving,

Happy New Year!

Pastor Matt

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*Therefore, since we have so great a cloud of witnesses surrounding us, let us also lay aside every encumbrance and the sin which so easily entangles us, and let us **RUN** with endurance the race that is set before us -- Hebrews 12:1*