

# MAXIMISE YOUR POTENTIAL – Sunday 23<sup>rd</sup> April 2017

## 7: THE POTENTIAL OF CHRISTLIKENESS

### 2 Timothy 2.14-26

You have probably had a lengthy break from your group meeting – take time to catch up together!

We return to the series about **Maximising Our Potential** – this is the overall theme of the apostle's final words to Timothy.

2 Timothy is Paul's last letter, penned just weeks before he was executed. Paul leaves a legacy of encouragement to Timothy and to us today.

When we think of the word **Christlikeness**, what comes to mind?

Why should the call to 'become more like Christ' be the desire of every believer?

What do you believe is involved in the pursuit of Christlikeness?

Romans 8.29 and Philippians 1.6 refer to the work that God does in our lives.

2 Corinthians 3.18 is a glorious promise and we are assured that one day it will be a completed work 1 John 3.2.

What is the difference between trying to copy Christ and growing in Christlikeness?

There were **three pictures of the believer in v.2-6** – the soldier, the athlete, the farmer. If you did not do that study – spend a few moments reflecting on the challenge they present.

**In the lengthy section of v.14-26 there are a further three pictures.**

#### 1. THE CHRISTIAN IS LIKE A WORKMAN v.14-19

There is a contrast between good workmen and bad workman.

Who has experienced a bad workman doing a job?

V.15 is a challenging verse *Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a workman who does not need to be ashamed and who correctly handles the word of truth.*

What is the implication of gaining God's approval? How can we make sure our pursuit for God's approval is 'grace' based and not 'works' based?

The essential item in the Christian workman's toolkit is to be the Word of God.

In what ways do we need to make sure scripture is the key tool that keep us committed to sound teaching?

Do you have a scripture reading plan that you use?

How can you improve the way you 'correctly handle the word of truth'?

Paul gives an indication that we can become poor workman and there is also an illustration in Hymenaeus ( 1Tim 1.20) and Philetus.

How do you keep yourself from being influenced by the distortions to the Gospel?

## 2. THE CHRISTIAN IS LIKE A VESSEL v.20-22

A strange picture of the believer! In a house there are pots and pans, jugs and bowls – utensils for a wide range of uses. There are some ‘vessels’ that come out only on special occasions and are not like the ‘vessels’ used on a daily basis. Every vessel has its place within the home.

The contrast that Paul is making though is that some vessels are for ‘noble purposes and some for ignoble.’ There is the contrast of underlying motivation and the pursuit of holiness. It is as though Timothy takes a spiritual check-up and allows God to highlight what is noble ie. like the fruit of the Spirit being present in his life and that which is ignoble, like self-interest that mars his Christian witness.

In what way do you see yourself as a chosen vessel, and what are the challenges?

v.21 is a challenging verse. In the Message ‘*Become the kind of container God can use to present any and every kind of gift to his guests for their blessing.*’

With this picture there is the challenge to live clean and holy lives – pursuing righteousness, faith, love and peace.

## 3. THE CHRISTIAN IS LIKE A SERVANT v.23-26

Jesus is often spoken of as a servant, we too are servants. Our lives characterised by God honouring communication – *don’t have anything to do with foolish and stupid arguments...*

What are some of the qualities that Paul mentions regarding a servant here in this section and can you think of any other qualities mentioned elsewhere?

Highlight the negatives and the positives within these verses.

Here in this chapter are at least six pictures of the believing disciple.

What picture speaks most to you?

How do you sense you need to apply principles from the picture to your own life today?

**FOR YOUR OWN NOTES:**