

# Talk It Over

## FAN INTO FLAME (Week 4) Get A Firm Grip

### SMALL TALK

1. As a teenager whose approval did you seek most?

### VIEWPOINT

2. **READ 2 Timothy 2:14-26.** What are the main themes of this section of Paul's letter?
3. What was Paul's point when he used the illustration about different sort of articles that are used in a house? (2:20-21) Can you connect that point with what he said before (2:19) and after (2:22)?
4. What instructions are found throughout this section about pointless quarrels? (2:14, 16-18, 23-26)

### GETTING PERSONAL

5. What sorts of things do we get into senseless arguments about that prove to be counterproductive to our main task of passing the Gospel Baton?
6. When are you tempted to engage in "godless chatter" or "stupid arguments"?
7. Of the four goals in verse 22, which one do you need to work on this week?

### MAKING PROGRESS (THIS WEEK)

8. In view of VVCC's 5 core statements listed below, what can you do 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"*** (2:15)--that is to say, who has a firm grip on the Good News Baton and is getting ready to pass it?

May 15, 2022

## **FAN INTO FLAME: 4-Get A Firm Grip**

Today I'd like to pass the **Gospel baton** to you in a way that you get a firm grip on it so you can pass it to others.

**QUESTION:** How do you get a firm grip on good news in a bad news world?

**How do you get a firm grip on good news...**

- ...when your secret past just caught up with you and now that it is known it is ripping apart your life and relationships?
- ...when your income is constantly less than your outgo?
- ...when you are grieving over really bad news?
- ...when you have no idea how to get out of the **black hole of depression or anxiety**?
- ...when your daily grind is so unbearable that spiritual concepts no longer sound real, and you feel like giving up on prayer?

I believe today's topic is vitally important to all of our lives.

Anyone interested in hearing more about **How to get a firm grip on good news in a bad news world?**

### **I. Get a firm grip on the living JESUS**

*2 Timothy 2:8 (NIV) Remember Jesus Christ, raised from the dead, descended from David. This is my gospel,*

The LIVING Jesus is the GOOD NEWS (Gospel).

Paul uses the term “**gospel**”, which simply means “good news” to refer to a very specific message of good news. Not just any good news, but the good news about who Jesus is, and what he has done, and how to receive this good news.

*2 Timothy 2:14 (NIV) <sup>14</sup> Keep 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.*

**The gospel is the main thing**, and we need to keep the main thing the main thing.

Throughout the ages, Church people tend toward getting into debates about relatively unimportant matters instead of going about the great commission for which Jesus called us, which is to teach the gospel, make disciples, and equip disciples to make more disciples.

## II. **Get a firm grip on the GOSPEL**

*2 Timothy 2:15 (NIV) Do 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.***

I always thought this was about correctly handling the Bible. Although that is important. That is not what Paul is writing about here.

### **Paul is writing about “correctly handling the gospel”!**

1. **The context** is about not getting side tracked on issues and arguments when our main task is to proclaim the Gospel and equip followers to live it and proclaim it.
2. **Paul** used the phrase **“the word of truth”** in two other letters where he clearly defined his terminology.

*Ephesians 1:13 (CSB) In him you also were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit when you heard **the word of truth, the gospel** of your salvation, and when you believed.*

*Colossians 1:5 (CSB) because of the hope reserved for you in heaven. You have already heard about this hope in **the word of truth, the gospel***

### **The Gospel is the Message of truth about JESUS.**

Paul gave Timothy his Gospel Template. (2:2) We have it too, in his letters and the sermons in Acts.

1. **WHO IS JESUS?** He is the Son of God sent to save us—the Messiah, the Savior of the World.
2. **WHAT DID HE DO? Jesus voluntarily took the judgment we deserve for our sin.** What is Sin? One definition is this: **Sin is what is in the heart when we do what we want instead of what we know to be right.** Every culture and everyone everywhere has a sense of right and wrong, even if we do not have agreement about what it is. Where did we get this sense of “ought”? God. Jesus knows this about us, we have all sinned against God, and he knows what will happen to us if he did not pay for our sin debt before God our creator.
3. **HOW DID JESUS DO THIS?** By his life, death, and resurrection which fulfilled the promises and prophecies of the Jewish Scriptures (our Old Testament).
  - **LIFE:** God publicly endorsed Jesus by doing powerful miracles, and signs through Him during his public ministry.
  - Jesus taught about His coming kingdom and established it in a different way than anyone expected.
  - Jesus made many audacious claims regarding his own divinity and his unique union with God the Father that caused the religious leaders of his day to take offense. Because of these claims, though Jesus did nothing but “good” the religious leaders accused him of being “evil.”
  - **DEATH:** Because of these claims, they condemned and crucified him.
  - **RESURRECTION:** But God vindicated Jesus and every claim he made by raising Jesus from the dead even as Jesus predicted and the scriptures prophesied.
  - Jesus stated his victory cry from the cross, **“It is Finished”** which can also be correctly translated, **“Paid in Full.” It was what he came to do.** When Jesus laid down his own life voluntarily as a sacrifice paying for our sin debt,
1. **WHAT RESPONSE IS EXPECTED?** If you hear this good news and respond by trusting in Jesus, and turn from your sins back to God, Jesus invites you to **UNITE with him in the New Covenant.** The

official ceremony for this is the “baptism” ceremony where you are buried in water and raised out of water, uniting you by faith to Jesus in his death, burial, and resurrection to be washed and forgiven from all your sins.

2. **WHAT IS THE RESULT? The “Passover” of the final judgment.** Jesus became our “Passover” lamb, and fulfilled this ancient picture and practice, explaining the depths of its meaning. By his life and death, in substitution for ours, he offers the way of salvation. There is no other way to experience the “Passover” of the Final Judgment but this way.
- When you reject Jesus, you reject the “passover” of the final judgment, and you must **face the final judgment for yourself by yourself.**
  - You are **free to choose what you want.** Do you want life with Jesus, or do you want life without Jesus?
  - According to Jesus (and the New Testament), **either choice is eternal.**

### III. **Get a firm grip on on LIVING it**

*2 Timothy 2:19 (NIV) ... “The Lord knows those who are his,” and, “Everyone who confesses the name of the Lord must turn away from wickedness.”*

*2 Timothy 2:21 (NIV) Those 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.*

Living the good news means saying YES to Jesus about everything he asks of us. Every YES to Jesus also says NO to our old way of doing things. Our old ways were buried with Christ, we are united with him and raised to live a new life united with Jesus by the power of the Holy Spirit.

**How do you get a firm grip on good news in a bad news world?**

I think we are tested on this question every day.

## **PERSONAL ILLUSTRATION: Black Hole or Heavenly Portal.**

Just this past week, something took place that felt like a bad news black hole just opened up in my world. I had a choice to make. I could slip into the black hole in outlook and attitude or choose to access the heavenly portal.

- If I let myself stay in the black hole,
  - I will be pulled into a deeper darkness.
  - It will be disorienting.
  - It will be discouraging.
  - It will feel like the joy of life draining out of me.

But there is an open door, a very real HEAVENLY PORTAL, opened to us by Jesus, and accessible to us in Jesus' Name.

*Hebrews 4:16 (NIV) Let us then approach God's throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need.*

I often access the **heavenly portal** by praying the Lord's model prayer. I humbly worship, humbly ask, and God fills me up to overflowing again. The bad news that was filling my soul (mind, will, and emotions) gets flushed out by God's mercy and grace washing my soul (mind, will, and emotions) clean again. The experience is very real. Many times I have experienced moving from sadness to joy in a matter of minutes. The dark battle is over, and the path before me feels hopeful again.

Your grip is not firm on the GOOD NEWS until you are LIVING IT! When your ongoing experience is really good news, sharing it in a compelling way is not difficult.

If you are new here and have not gone to START HERE. Would you respond today by going to the information table and signing up? START HERE is next Sunday at 10:30 in the room right across the hall.

See you next Sunday for **Fan into Flame part 5-“Be Courageous”**