

MULTIPURPOSE

Scripture Reading: Read 2 Timothy 2

We've all seen the infomercials on television, haven't we? The miracle product that can eliminate all your other gadgets and save you time, space, and money "if you order right now" is promoted vigorously by an overly energetic salesperson. The "But wait...there's more!" line that usually appears somewhere in the show encourages you to grab this incredible deal before it's too late. When tested by the Good Housekeeping Research Institute, however, not all multipurpose tools or promoted products live up to their billing. They may look good on television but they don't work as well in real life.

In 2 Timothy chapter 2, Paul challenges Christians to become multipurpose tools in the hands of God; tools that don't just look good but are available to do good in varied situations. Check it out for yourself in verses 20-21: *"In a large house there are articles not only of gold and silver, but also of wood and clay; some are for noble purposes and some for ignoble. If a man cleanses himself from the latter, he will be an instrument for noble purposes, made holy, useful to the Master and prepared to do any good work."*

In these verses, Paul seems to imply that not every vessel in the Master's house is a multipurpose tool. Only those who have turned away from wickedness and false teachings (notice the context of verses 14-19 and verse 22) are holy vessels dedicated to noble purposes. These are the vessels that have cleansed themselves and are useful to the Master and prepared to do any good work.

So, how does this play out practically in our lives? Think about the last phrase of verse 21 for a moment: "...prepared to do any good work." Is it possible that there are missions God has planned for you but they can't be assigned yet because you haven't gone through the process of preparation? Maybe you are walking in persistent, intentional and unrepentant sin and it is limiting your ability to go to the next level of service for the Master. Or, perhaps there is still too much spiritual or emotional immaturity in your life. To try and fulfill the calling in an immature state would cause you to crash and burn. So, instead, you're forced to sit on the shelf, wishing for more, but destined to be a wood or clay pot rather than a gold or silver vessel. Maybe the problem is broken places in your heart from the past, damaged emotions or memories, unforgiveness or bitterness that hinder your ability to move forward. Whatever the cause, a failure on our part to be prepared limits us in what we can do for the Master.

I don't know about you but I don't want to finish this life and look back with regrets as to what I could have done or been in Christ if only I had been willing to complete the preparation process. I don't want to be found wanting when tested by the Heavenly Housekeeping Research Institute. Through God's grace and by the power of his Holy Spirit, I want to live up to the advertising as a vessel, *"useful to the Master and prepared to do any good work."*

Action Step & Prayer Focus: Pray and ask the Lord to reveal to you any areas of your life that are keeping you stuck in a wood and clay bowl service level when God has a gold and silver vessel ministry waiting. Be obedient to deal with whatever he shows you.

Take-a-way: *Multipurpose believers are prepared to do any good work!*