

- *Work/serve in a way that is approved by God, handling Scripture well, remaining pure, avoiding distractions, etc*

Introduction

- Paul is encouraging Timothy in his task of leadership, in his responsibility for the church in Ephesus:
 - and in these following verses he encourages and challenges Timothy in a variety of ways
 - one **split** of the passage suggests three controlling images of the task Timothy has...
 - workman (**vs.14-19**), tools (**vs.20-21**), and teacher (**vs.22-26**)
 - not the only way, I think, you could grapple with this passage, but I've found it helpful...

Workman (**vs.14-19**)

- Appraisal
- positive and negative sides to that
 - core skill of handling God's word - what does that mean?
 - and results of negative assessment, more than merely demotion - destroying the faith of some...
 - cf doctors competencies...
- Yet even really bad workers can't upset God's master plan. His foundation is secure, giving us confidence even when we feel we have failed

Tools (**vs.20-21**)

- Slightly confusing...
 - are the gold and silver for noble purposes and the wood and clay for ignoble?
 - don't think so...!
 - (tables...)
- Whether you think of yourself as gold or silver or wood or clay the call is to be pure, holy
 - and ready for any good work

Teacher (**vs.22-26**)

- Manner rather than technique that is to the fore:
 - temperament and character...
 - fleeing the evil desires of youth (Timothy is a young man; he is to flee those things that are particular temptations for young men...)
 - pursuing positive character - righteousness, faith, love, peace, purity
 - no quarrelling and arguments over insubstantial things...
 - kind...
 - **gently** instructing...
 - not forcing, brow beating, but imploring, working hard for the positive change and transformation to happen...

Conclusion

- Who is able for such a task?
 - remember, it's God's work - and we are his fellow labourers...
 - **workman**: present yourself to God... his foundation stands firm...
 - **tools**: useful to the Master...
 - **teacher**: God will grant them repentance...