

2 Timothy 2:10-19

May 13, 2020

The phrase “profane, vain babblings” in verse 16 (KJV) is identical to 1 Timothy 6:20. The Greek words are *bebelos* = common, not sacred and *kenophonia* = empty-talk.

The second word is easy enough to understand, particularly when we know that “vain” means “empty” in the Bible. The first word is translated profane, godless, or irreverent. Profane in the modern sense of “dirty talk” is rebuked in Ephesians 5:14 but that is not the meaning here. Certainly, any teaching on the resurrection we would not call profanity, even if it is wrong.

So what is irreverent or godless chatter? It is to make assertions about God or His Word without a proper reverence for His Holiness, or without regard for simple accuracy. In this passage, some were saying that the resurrection had occurred, most likely meaning that the spiritual resurrection we experience when we pass from death to life upon believing is the only resurrection we can expect. This denies any

future bodily resurrection. It would no doubt upset the faith of those who believe the lie.

We can find other examples of irreverent babble in the world around us. Any newspaper article that starts by claiming to have “rediscovered” the genuine Jesus likely fits this description. Adding to scripture is irreverent even if well intentioned. So is pruning scripture to eliminate portions we find thorny – as practiced, for example, by “red letter Christians.”

Scripture never presents a problem without telling us the answer. Here it is “rightly handling the word of Truth” – drawing a straight line, relying on the Spirit, without swerving left or right toward our own inclinations.

“But this is the one to whom I will look: he who is humble and contrite in spirit and **trembles at my word**” (Isaiah 66:2).

Notes

2:17 This is probably the same Hymenaeus, engaged in the same false teaching, as in 1 Tim. 1:20.

2:19 Seals were often put on foundations of building. They might identify the owner or repeat a motto.

Questions for study and discussion:

1. How does verse 10 imply both man’s ability to choose salvation and God’s election?
2. What does faithless mean in verse 13, in contrast to the Lord’s faithfulness?
3. Can you think of any words that cause fruitless quarrels?

4. See Ephesians 4:29 along with this passage. What is a strong reason to be careful of our words?

5. The literal Greek in verse 15 says we are to “cut straight” the Word of truth. (The word for cut is also translated as divide in Heb. 4:12). The sense is of a drafter drawing a straight line or a mason making a straight cut. How does that picture illustrate this passage?

6. According to the Mayo Clinic, “Gangrene refers to the death of body tissue due to either a lack of blood flow or a serious bacterial infection. Gangrene commonly affects the extremities, including your toes, fingers and limbs, but it can also occur in your muscles and internal organs.” How is gangrene an apt picture of irreverent babble?

7. It has been said the two aspects of the foundation of God are His holiness and His grace.

What in verse 19 talks of God’s holiness?

List three times in Scripture where God demonstrates His holiness.

What in verse 19 talks of God’s grace?

List three times in Scripture where God demonstrates His grace.

Where and how are His holiness and grace reconciled?