

# ADELAIDE DEAF COMMUNITY CHURCH

10<sup>th</sup> Oct.2004

**“Not What We say, but What We do.”**

**2 Timothy 2:8-15, Luke 17:11-19**

Paul shows a beautiful attitude to Timothy, writing like a loving father to a son, explaining how he should live (How we should behave today). Paul is encouraging Timothy to keep witnessing for Christ, to keep spreading the gospel, but not to argue with words. Why? Because arguing over words puts people off, always trying to show who is better with words, competing against others. Paul is a prisoner in Rome, tied up in chains. We don't know what the "crime" is, except that it must have been something to do with witnessing the gospel, the Good News, that made some Jews angry about Paul, and had him arrested. The Romans believed that all religions should be prayed to, not just only one, because they could not tolerate one religion above others. All had to be on same level. This is a bit like people today trying to say that the god of Hindus, Buddhists, Shinto, Islam, and even Christianity, is all the same God! However, God makes it very clear in the first commandment, *"You shall have no other gods before Me."* So, if Paul does not want us to argue over words, then what can we do?

**1. Witnessing should show thru our lives every day.** When we act our lives the way Christ wants us to live, keeping God first in everything we do, this speaks more for our faith in Christ than all the words of arguing for Christ. People notice how we behave. For example, if a Christian behaves in a way that is not very Christian, like swearing, telling dirty jokes, or making excuses not to attend church, then what will your friends think of your Christian faith? They will probably see Christians as two-faced people, not worth sticking up for Jesus, since they did not get a very good impression of the faith as shown by that person. If we act faithfully, meaningfully, seriously, without being too fuddy-duddy goody goody, then people may take Christianity more seriously for themselves.

**2. This is very important doing times of great temptation.**

We all have temptations in life. Even I as a pastor, married 23 years, and others my age, are still attracted to younger women. But we have to block our feelings to remain faithful to our wives (Proverbs 29:11, 1 Thess.4:4). In conversations, we must resist the temptation to lie to improve our standing or status. Rather than lie, it is better to say nothing at all, or if pressed, must say the truth honestly as simply matter of fact. If someone congratulates you on a fine job, but you know you didn't do it all, then you must tell the person, *"Oh, I didn't do it all, Jim helped me with this."* The congratulator will be quietly impressed that you were modest enough not to take all the credit, but to share it with the other. That's honesty. Trying to claim credit

at someone's expense will backfire on your character eventually, if not now, then it will on the Last Day.

### **3. In times of crisis, or great trouble, your character shows.**

When we have big troubles in our lives, it will make your character show up. A serious illness or injury can show how a person one copes with this. He/she may either show self-pity, anger, and demand attention from others. Or he can pray, ask God for strength to help him cope, and pray for his family to cope as well. Of course, it is a very natural human condition to say "Why me?" and we can forgive him quickly enough. But no one likes it if that person is always harping on, "Poor me, poor me!" That puts people off. The death of a loved one often shows how others cope in life. Generally, Christians, should cope better than others, because our faith tells us that this is not the end of the world, because for our deceased friend and believer, this is the start of a joyful new life in heaven.

#### **Summary.** (2 Tim. 2: 10, 14, 15.)

*Paul said, "So I patiently accept all these troubles. I do this to help all the people that God has chosen. I accept these troubles so that people can have the salvation that is in Christ Jesus. This glory never ends." And to Timothy, Paul said, "Continue telling people these things. And warn those people before God not to argue about words. Arguing about words does not help any person. And it ruins those people who are listening. Do your very best you can to be the kind of person that God will accept, and give yourself to Him. Be a worker who is not ashamed of his work – a worker who uses the true teaching in the right way." Amen.*