

Series: The Essential Church; *Sermon:* **Keep the Main Thing the Main Thing;**
Delivered by **Rev. Eric Channing**, pastor of congregational care and family
ministries, on July 7, 2019

Bible text explored: 2 Timothy 2:14–19

¹⁴Remind them of these things, and charge them before God not to quarrel about words, which does no good, but only ruins the hearers. ¹⁵Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a worker who has no need to be ashamed, rightly handling the word of truth. ¹⁶But avoid irreverent babble, for it will lead people into more and more ungodliness, ¹⁷and their talk will spread like gangrene. Among them are Hymenaeus and Philetus, ¹⁸who have swerved from the truth, saying that the resurrection has already happened. They are upsetting the faith of some. ¹⁹But God’s firm foundation stands, bearing this seal: “The Lord knows those who are his,” and, “Let everyone who names the name of the Lord depart from iniquity.” [ESV]

Review and application:

1. What are some examples in the fields of music, sports, or politics you can give of things that appeared true but were eventually exposed as false?
What makes the discovery of leaders in the church who are not genuine especially tragic?
2. What had Paul warned leaders in the early church that they would confront?
(See *Acts 20:29*.)
3. What (vv. 14-15) are the “these things” about which Paul is telling Timothy he must remind his congregation? (See the preceding paragraph: *2 Tim. 2:8-13*.)
What is the holy calling to which each of us is called? (See *2 Tim. 1:9*.)
What effort do we need to make to qualify us as genuine workers in God’s kingdom?
4. Pastor Channing explained that the sense of “rightly handling” the word of truth is one of cutting straight. How can we “do [our] best” to understand the Word correctly?
While engaging in learning and dialogue, how can we avoid shortcuts, on the one hand, or needless digressions, on the other?
5. What (vv. 16-18) would the “irreverent babble” that Paul warned Timothy to avoid include?
How can erroneous teaching, man-made rules, or hurtful accusations spread like gangrene, and why is firm action against it required?
What is the eventual fate of false teaching? (See *2 Tim. 3:9*.)
6. What (v. 19) is the solid foundation for God’s word of truth?
(See *1 Cor. 15:3-4*.)
7. In Bible times, a seal denoted ownership. (See *Eph. 1:13-14*). This seal’s wording is based on the *Numbers 16* account of Korah’s rebellion. Read the seal’s first inscription (corresponding to *Num. 16:5-6*). How does it affirm the security of every believer?
Read the seal’s second inscription (corresponding to *Num. 16:26-27a*.) How does it emphasize human responsibility?