

“2 Timothy 2:19”

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BIG SANDY, Texas—Last Wednesday, our congregation observed the seventh day of Unleavened Bread. At our church service, I had the opportunity of giving a presentation titled “2 Timothy 2:19.”

The verse begins by Paul explaining the importance about what he was about to write.

- Paul wrote: “The solid foundation of God stands, having this seal.”

Then, Paul mentioned two extremely important concepts.

- Paul mentioned: “The Lord knows those who are His.”

- Paul mentioned: “Let everyone who names the name of Christ depart from iniquity.”

God knows, people don't

Have you ever heard of the word *ignoramus*? An *ignoramus* is an ignorant or uninformed person. Please don't dogmatically proclaim your opinion about who is converted. You will look foolish to people who believe what the Bible says.

While it is appropriate for people to recognize the behavior of other people, recognizing behavior is far different than proclaiming a person's standing with God.

Extra verses

In the presentation, I read only three sections of Scripture about this first concept. Before I mention those verses, let's look at eight verses that were not mentioned in the presentation.

- Hebrews 5:14—It is true that God wants His followers to have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil. Discerning behavior is very different from classifying a person's standing with God.

But even good behavior does not guarantee that a person has a strong relationship with the Lord.

■ Matthew 7:21-23—The Son of God said to people who did impressive behavior (preached prophecy in His name, cast out demons in His name and did many wonders in His name): “I never knew you. Depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness.”

■ Matthew 25:12—The Son of God gave a parable where the Lord said to guests at the wedding: “Assuredly, I say to you, I do not know you.”

Some people believe in identification religion.

■ Matthew 3:8—Some people thought they were more important than they were and said: “We have Abraham as our father.”

■ John 8:33—Some people thought they were more important than they were and said: “We are Abraham’s descendants and have never been in bondage to anyone.”

■ Matthew 16:18—Many religious people use this verse to proclaim two messages—that their leader is the “only true leader” and that their denomination is the “only true church.”

■ Revelation 3:7-13—Since the congregation in Philadelphia was not corrected, some leaders and denominations brag (yes, brag) that they are the prophetic manifestation of the Philadelphia congregation.

■ Revelation 14:1-5—Although some people love to brag about being part of the 144,000, please focus upon the proper behavior and not upon seeking to classify individuals.

Highlighted verses for first concept

Here were the three highlighted verses in the presentation about the Lord knowing those who are His.

■ Mark 9:38-49—The disciples forbade people from casting out demons in Christ’s name—because those people were not part of the right group. Christ responded with words that would shock some religious people who think too highly of themselves.

■ John 10:16—Christ said: “I have other sheep who are not of this fold. I will bring them also; I must bring them too. They will hear My voice. There will be one flock and one shepherd.”

■ Revelation 3:17—It is ironic (admittedly a trifle humorous and ultimately a sad commentary) that the people who love to brag about being like the Philadelphia congregation (in verses 7-13) actually portray the undesirable characteristics (those being “wretched, miserable, poor, blind and naked”) that are mentioned here to the congregation in Laodicea.

If you know Christ, depart from iniquity

The Bible message (in both the Old and New Testaments) is to depart from iniquity. Please respond to the Father's grace with commitment to Him and with love towards other people.

Additional verses

In the presentation, I read only three sections of Scripture about this second concept. Before I mention those verses, let's look at eight verses that were not mentioned in the presentation.

- Exodus 20:1-17—Because the Lord God brought the children of Israel out of slavery, He gave them 10 behaviors that He desired from them.
- Ezekiel 18:4-32—The Lord mentioned that people are held accountable for what they know.
- Matthew 19:16-21—Christ mentioned here only five Commandments about loving your neighbor—and then instructed the man about his personal weakness.
- Matthew 22:36-40—Christ mentioned here about loving God (described in the first four Commandments) and loving one's neighbor (described in the last six Commandments).
- John 12:47-48—Judgment is based upon what people know.

The following three verses (which give three connected definitions of sin) were not read in the presentation.

- 1 John 3:4—Sin is identified by the law of God.
- James 4:17—Sin is based upon a person's understanding.
- Romans 14:23—Sin is based upon a person's faith

Highlighted verses for second concept

Here were the three highlighted verses in the presentation about departing from iniquity.

- Romans 6:1-6—Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound? Certainly not!
- 1 Peter 4:12-16—Suffering for Christ is different from suffering for sin. Peter mentioned only four examples of sin (murder, theft, evil-doing and busybodying).
- Luke 18:9-14—Christ gave a parable about the contrasting approaches of an arrogant Pharisee and a humble tax collector.