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Oaks Early Risers Bible Class

**The Oaks
Baptist Church**
Grand Prairie, Texas



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Perseverance in Leadership A Study in 2 Timothy

Date	Lesson	Text
06/28	Introduction	
06/28	Perseverance in Heritage	1:1-18
07/12	Perseverance in Work	2:1-13
7/19	Perseverance in Character	2:14-26
07/26	Perseverance in Following	3:10-17
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Food for Thought

Beautiful character begins in the heart

O Lord, You see what's in my heart,
There's nothing hid from You;
So help me live the kind of life
That's loving, kind, and true.

*Do not conform any longer
to the pattern of this world,
but be transformed by the
renewing of your mind.
Then you will be able to test
and approve what God's will is,
his good, pleasing and perfect will.*
Rom 12:2 (NIV)

(from "Our Daily Bread" Apr 19, 2004)

PERSEVERANCE IN CHRISTIAN CHARACTER

2 TIMOTHY 2:14-26

Character development was once a primary goal of education. In ancient Greece both Aristotle and Socrates gave attention to how moral excellence might be transmitted to the young. In the seventeenth century John Locke, the English philosopher, saw character development as the goal of education. John Stuart Mill, a nineteenth century English philosopher, said "Development of character is a solution to social problems and a worthy educational ideal." However, Western society lost its way in the twentieth century. **As culture shifted toward secularism, education began to focus on pragmatics—the knowledge and skills needed to obtain and hold a job. Today's lesson shows what can happen, even in the church, when there is a failure to focus on godly character based on Scripture. It also offers solid encouragement for developing those traits of character that are distinctively Christian.** Privacy. It has been cherished by most people, even touted as a constitutional right in America and other countries. Yet technological advances and the pressure to thwart terrorists and criminals have eroded personal privacy enormously. We use the Internet, scarcely aware that every move we make is being tracked, often for commercial purposes. We send personal e-mails, usually forgetting that they all are preserved on a network server somewhere. We drive around town, oblivious to the intersection cameras that are capable of reading our license plates and tracking our movements. We use our credit cards, disregarding the fact that this use provides a permanent record of our purchases. We talk on cell phones, failing to remember that these are open lines on the public airways, and anyone with the right equipment can listen. We make withdrawals at cash machines, unmindful that cameras are taping us during the transaction. We deposit our trash after eating at the fast food restaurant, unaware that the napkin bearing a trace of our saliva could be used to pinpoint us via DNA testing. Our smallest actions seem to be noticed and recorded. Even so, we certainly are not to the extreme of George Orwell's book 1984, which depicted government cameras in citizens' houses to track them 24 hours per day. On the other hand, the Bible consistently presents God as one who is aware of everything we think, say, and do. Nothing is hidden from him. As the psalmist wrote, "You perceive my thoughts from afar... you are familiar with all my ways" (Psalm 139:2, 3). So often we behave contrary to this reality, don't we? We do things that we know displease God and somehow believe that he doesn't notice or care. **Today's lesson teaches us that there is no room for hidden evil in the life of a Christian disciple.** While God is gracious to forgive our sins, **He also expects our best efforts in the pursuit of godliness.** God is not the only observer of our behavior. Particularly if we are teachers, our actions will teach as much as our words. This week we get a disturbing look at the troubles of the Ephesian church where Timothy ministered. It is disturbing because it seems too much like churches we have known. **Teachers were leading believers astray with ridiculous, speculative doctrines.** Most disturbing of these, for Paul, was a denial of future resurrection. Paul identifies the main perpetrators of this error by name: Hymenaeus and Philetus. Hymenaeus is known to us from 1 Timothy 1:19, 20, where he is described as having shipwrecked his faith, requiring that he be "handed over to Satan" (that is, cut off from the church and its fellowship). The church at Ephesus had its choice of many flavors of false doctrine (as do Christians today). First Timothy 1:3-7 does give us some of the elements of the particular false teaching at Ephesus. Paul indicated that it contained a Greek, pagan element because of its concern for mythology (v. 4). It also had Jewish elements because of its concern for genealogies and the Law (vv. 4, 7). The part that is repeated in today's Scripture, however, was its characteristic of speculation that led to endless, meaningless discussion (compare 1 Timothy 1:4, 6). *(Excerpt from the NIV Standard Lesson Commentary)*

One of the problems in the church at Ephesus was that they were straying from the truth and from godly living. Paul instructed Timothy in principles for keeping sound doctrine, staying in the path of godliness, and helping others remain in the truth and in righteousness. Timothy needed to remind his congregation to persevere. **Soldiers persevere in war by being focused. In the same way, believers need to focus on God and His Word.** Jesus was raised from the dead, and His followers will also be raised with Him. This is the truth we must focus on. Yet many were leaving sound doctrine. **They needed to study the Word of God and learn to interpret it properly. All sound doctrine is based on the Bible, but fables and unfounded doctrines are based on human invention.** Some in Ephesus were teaching that the resurrection had already happened, a doctrine contrary to Scripture. Paul's remedy was to avoid arguing over unfounded doctrines and instead study the true doctrine of resurrection in the Bible. *(Excerpt from the Bible Expositor and Illuminator)*

NOTES AND CROSS-REFERENCES

STAYING IN THE TRUTH (2 TIM 2:14-18)

By persevering (vs 14)

- Persevering in the truth by not distorting God's word (2 Cor 4:2)
- Persevering in the truth by not doing anything against the truth (2 Cor 13:8)
- Persevering in the truth by maturing in the word (James 1:18)
- Persevering in the truth by being established in the truth (2 Peter 1:12)
- Persevering in the truth because it lives in us (2 John 1:2)
- Persevering in the truth by working together for the truth (3 John 1:8)

By studying the Bible (vs 15)

- Studying the gospel in the Bible (Col 1:5)
- Studying to strengthen belief (Eph 1:13)
- Studying by keeping the word near (Rom 10:8)
- Studying to be cleansed by the word (Eph 5:26-28)
- Studying the word and receiving it as the actual word of God (1 Thess 2:13)
- Studying the word to judge thoughts and attitudes (Heb 4:12)
- Studying the word and doing what it says (James 1:21-22)
- Studying the word because it stands forever (1 Peter 1:23-25)

By avoiding unfounded doctrine (vs 16-18)

- Avoiding unfounded doctrine by watching doctrine closely (1 Tim 4:16)
- Avoiding unfounded doctrine by not seeking to suit one's own desires (2 Tim 4:3-4)
- Avoiding unfounded doctrine by not following rebellious teachers (Titus 1:10-11)
- Avoiding unfounded doctrine by not following false prophets (2 Peter 2:1-3)
- Avoiding unfounded doctrine by not listening to those who appeal to lustful desires (2 Peter 2:18-19)

STAYING AWAY FROM INIQUITY (2 TIM 2:19-22)

By being separated from iniquity (vs 19)

- Be separated from iniquity by turning from evil and doing good (Ps 37:27)
- Be separated from iniquity by purifying self from everything that contaminates (2 Cor 7:1)
- Be separated from iniquity by putting off the old self (Eph 4:21-24)
- Be separated from iniquity by not allowing even a hint of sin in our life (Eph 5:3)
- Be separated from iniquity by putting to death ungodliness (Col 3:5-6)
- Be separated from iniquity by not conforming to evil desires (1 Peter 1:14-16)

By honoring God (vs 20-21)

- Honor God with our body (1 Cor 6:20)
- Honor God because He is worthy of honor (Rev 4:11)
- Honor God with our finances (Prov 3:9)
- Honor God with our heart (Matt 15:8)
- Honor God by honoring Jesus (John 5:22-23)

By pursuing godliness (vs 22)

- Pursue godliness through training (1 Tim 4:7-8)
- Pursue godliness along with contentment (1 Tim 6:6)
- Pursue godliness by fleeing ungodliness (1 Tim 6:11)
- Pursue godliness through God's divine power (2 Peter 1:3)
- Pursue godliness by maturing in the faith (2 Peter 1:5-8)
- Pursue godliness because the end is near (2 Peter 3:10-11)

BRING OTHERS TO THE TRUTH (2 TIM 2:23-26)

By avoiding quarrels (vs 23)

- Avoid quarrels by not following false teachers (1 Tim 6:3-5)
- Avoid quarrels by getting rid of our old self (Col 3:8-10)
- Avoid quarrels because they are unprofitable and useless (Titus 3:9)
- Avoid quarrels by getting rid of pride (Prov 13:10)
- Avoid quarrels by not yielding to our own evil desires (James 4:1)

By instructing others in the truth (vs 24-25)

- Instruct others in the truth by holding firm to the sound doctrine (Titus 1:9)
- Instruct others in the truth by teaching with wisdom (Col 1:28)
- Instruct others in the truth by warning, encouraging and being patient (1 Thess 5:14)
- Instruct others in the truth through qualified teachers (2 Tim 2:2)

By rescuing others from the devil (vs 26)

- Rescue others from the devil by seeking God to open their eyes and turning them from darkness to light (Acts 26:17-18)
- Rescue others from the devil through the name of Jesus (Luke 10:17-20)
- Rescue others from the devil by snatching them from the devil's fire (Jude 1:22-23)
- Rescue others from the devil by persevering in godly doctrine (1 Tim 4:16)