

2 Timothy

I. Introduction

- A. **2 Timothy 2:20-22** . . . “Now in a large house there are not only gold and silver vessels, but also vessels of wood and of earthenware, and some to honor and some to dishonor. [21] Therefore, if anyone **cleanses himself** from these things, he will be a vessel for honor, sanctified, useful to the Master, prepared for every good work. [22] Now **flee** from youthful lusts and **pursue** righteousness, faith, love and peace, with those who call on the Lord from a pure heart.”
1. **Matthew 5:6**, “Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied.”
 2. **1 John 3:2-3**, “Beloved, now we are children of God, and it has not appeared as yet what we will be. We know that when He appears, we will be like Him, because we will see Him just as He is. [3] And everyone who has this hope fixed on Him purifies himself, just as He is pure.”
- B. No one consistently does what is loving and right by accident. Therefore, to cleanse ourselves, flee youthful lusts, and pursue righteousness, faith, love, and peace, to hunger and thirst for righteousness, and to purify ourselves – we must be intentional.
1. To be intentional is to do something on purpose, with a purpose. To do something on purpose with a purpose requires a plan. To make a plan requires thought, insight, and sometimes, counsel. To work a plan requires thought, insight, and self-discipline. To work a plan through to completion requires perseverance.
 2. As I said two weeks ago, it is probable that the method I am presenting today is not the only God approved method for change. It is possible that though this method works for me, it may not work for you. Yet you won’t know without trying it for several months.
 3. If this method does not work for you, ask God to teach you what will work, and then use what He gives you to progressively kill off your old sinful nature and pursue growth in godliness.
- C. According to my research, which has not been exhaustive by any means, there are a small number of practical works focused on spiritual growth. Most of them speak about what we ought not to be, what we ought to be, and helpful settings for getting to where we ought to be – such as a monastic setting.

1. I have found only one work that provides a specific, defined method (*my research is not exhaustive*), and it's methods are similar to mine.
2. There are five well-known, historic works that speak about the experience of change, the parts of us that need to change, and settings that promote change. They are:
 - a. Ladder of Divine Ascent, John Climacus (6th Century).
 - b. Holiness of Life, St. Bonaventure (13th century) – for nuns
 - c. Revelations of Divine Love, Julian, of Norwich (14th century)
 - d. Imitation of Christ, Thomas A`Kempis (15th century)
 - e. Dark Night of the Soul, Saint John of the Cross (16th century)
3. The one work I am aware of that provides a specific, defined method comes from Evagrius Ponticus (4th century). A modern day translation is labeled ASPIRE, which stands for **A**bstain, **S**tudy, **P**ray, **I**ntercede, **R**eflect, **E**xamine.

D. Pray

II. Conclusion

- A. **Proverbs 21:31**, The horse is prepared for the day of battle, but victory belongs to the LORD.