Series: A Life of Impact

**How to Stop Spinning Your Wheels**

2 Timothy 2:20-26, September 3, 2017

Introduction: Does it matter how we get there?

1. To stop spinning your wheels you need personal cleansing.

(vv. 20-22)

a. Some dishes aren’t clean enough to be used.

* v. 20 *vessels of gold and silver … for honorable use*
* v. 20 *but also of wood and clay … for dishonorable*
* v. 21 *if anyone cleanses himself from what is dishonorable, he will be a vessel for honorable use*

b. We need cleansing from unworthy masters.

* v. 21 *set apart as holy, useful to the master of the house, ready for every good work*

c. We need cleansing from unworthy values.

* v. 22 *So flee youthful passions and pursue righteousness, faith, love, and peace*

d. Pursue personal cleansing as a group project.

* V. 22 *pursue righteousness … along with those who call on the Lord from a pure heart*

Q. How could the woman preparing for a career in family counseling not see that selling her body to earn her tuition fees would impact her effectiveness?

Q. How are Christians tempted to think that character and effectiveness are unrelated?

Q. Why did Paul feel it was important for Timothy to pursue growth in righteousness along with others? Why are we often tempted to go it alone with our attempts at personal growth?

2. To stop spinning your wheels you need God’s wisdom.

(vv. 23-26)

a. Don’t get drawn into arguments.

* We think that arguments solve problems.
* v. 23 *Have nothing to do with foolish, ignorant controversies; you know that they breed quarrels.*
* v. 24 *the Lord's servant must not be quarrelsome*

b. Take up kindness as your strength.

* We think tough times call for a tough response.
* v. 24 *but kind to everyone*

c. Stop nagging and start teaching.

* We think that being angry will get our message across.
* v.24 *able to teach*

d. Be patient and play the long game.

* We like instant results and quick fixes.
* v. 24 *patiently enduring evil*

e. It’s not just what you say; it’s how you say it.

* We just want to have our say.
* v. 25 *correcting his opponents with gentleness*

f. God is the only One who changes people’s hearts.

* We think we can fix people on our own.
* v.25 *God may perhaps grant them repentance leading to a knowledge of the truth*

g. Remember that evil forces can entrap people.

* We can’t understand why people act the way they do.
* v.26 *they may come to their senses and escape from the snare of the devil, after being captured by him to do his will*

Q. Why are patience, kindness and gentleness so crucial in dealing with people who are resistant and aggressive? Why does tough talk and argument seem like it’ll help?

Q. How does the fact that God is the One who “grants repentance” change how we view resistant people we’re trying to impact?

Q. How does a recognition that people are ensnared by the devil change both our attitude and our approach toward them?

Study ahead: Next week, we’ll study Proverbs 1:1-7.

**Notes:**