

Study Guide - Characters 3 from 7-28-2018

Key Scriptures: “Be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.” 2 Timothy 2:15

- Acts 18:24 “Now a certain Jew named Apollos, born at Alexandria, an eloquent man and mighty in the Scriptures, came to Ephesus.”
- 1 Peter 3:15 “But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts, and always be ready to give a defense to everyone who asks you a reason for the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear.”
- 2 Timothy 3:1-4 “But know this, that in the last days perilous times will come: For men will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, unloving, unforgiving, slanderers, without self-control, brutal, despisers of good, traitors, headstrong, haughty, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God.”
- 1 Peter 3:15 “But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts, and always be ready to give a defense to everyone who asks you a reason for the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear.”

Start Talking:

- Apollos “knew the Scriptures well.” How does it make you feel when someone explains a portion of scripture and you realized you thought you knew what it meant, but you didn’t?
- 1 Peter 3:15 tells us to always be prepared to give the reason for our hope. If someone asked you why your hope is in Jesus, what would you say?
- Pastor Bobby said that people are looking for answers. Some scoffers of God seem like they already have all of the answers. How do you witness to someone who is confidently arrogant, but wrong about God?
- Pastor Bobby said that “God and His Word are under attack like never before.” Discuss an example in which something is broadly believed and embraced by our culture which is clearly opposed to God’s Word. Share.

Start Thinking:

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- 2 Timothy 3:1-4 says that in the end times, “people will love only themselves....they will slander others.” Do you think this is going on in the battles for elected positions that are in progress now? Are you expecting to see more before November? Is this worse than it used to be?
- Pastor Bobby said that these attacks are because people are wanting to become their own god. Can you give an example of what someone thinks, says, or does when he is trying to be his own god? What does this look like in a person’s life? Share examples.

Start Sharing:

- Read 2 Timothy 2:15, especially the part that says that we should to be able to correctly explain the Word of truth. What does it mean to understand a portion of scripture “in context”? What does “in context” mean?
- Explain the difference between someone saying, “This is what this scripture means to me” and “This is what this scripture means.” How diligently does God expect you to properly comprehend what the Bible is really saying?
- Read 1 Peter 3:15. Can you defend your hope in Jesus in meekness and gentleness? Do you feel that there is too much on the line to be too meek? Can you be a defender of the truth and not an offender of the ones you are trying to reach? Discuss.

Start Praying:

“Lord, give us a renewed dedication to learning what Your Word is really saying. Help us to explain our hope in a respectful way, knowing that it is Your Spirit that will use Your Words to bring life to one who is spiritually dead. We are ready to be useful to You. Help us discern all that you want us to know. Amen.”

Start Doing:

- Naaman was too self-centered at first to receive the prophet’s simple instructions for his healing. Write down one way you will

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simply accept what God is saying to you in His Word, and to not make it so complicated.

- Do you know anyone who thinks that he or she is too important to listen to the simplicity of God's Word? Share.
- Pastor Bobby said Naaman wanted God to do things his way. Have you ever prayed for something in such a specific way that you are not willing to consider that God may want to answer it another way? How do you get more open minded in your relationship with God and His Word, so that you can hear His Spirit speaking through His Word. Give an example. Share.