

Final Words

Study the Word

2 Timothy 2:15

January 13, 2019 pm

HDBC

The old phrase “Absence makes the heart grow fonder” may be true in relationships between those who are in love. The opposite can be true as well. Too much of a good thing can lead to casual attitude, taking it for granted.

I like shrimp; fried, boiled, grilled, baked. But if I had it every day, my graving for it would soon fade. If I had all that I wanted and more in my freezer, I would soon begin to ignore it and avoid it. Gold is a wonderful metal. Valuable. But if all the plastic in the world suddenly turned to gold, it would soon be less valuable.

Maybe that is what has happened to Christians in particular and Americans in general when it comes to the Bible. We have had too much of a good thing.

*2017 – 88% of Americans own a Bible
Average 3.5 Bibles. 24% have six or more Bibles*

But we do not have a healthy faith in it.
21% believe it is inspired and read at least 4 times per week.
39% believe it is inspired but do not read it on a regular basis
40% believe it is not inspired and rarely or never read it

Turn to 2 Timothy 2:15.

Be diligent to present yourself approved to God as a workman who does not need to be ashamed, accurately handling the word of truth. (NASB)

Strive diligently to present thyself approved to God, a workman that has not to be ashamed, cutting in a straight line the word of truth. (DARBY)

Be diligent to present thyself approved to God -- a workman irreproachable, rightly dividing the word of the truth; (YLT)

1. The Challenge *Be diligent*

The word means **to make haste, to exert one's self**. This is all in the pursuit of being approved by God. Speaks of making something the priority of your life. Going after it with all that you have and are. **Impatient expectancy**.

Same word is found in 1 Thess. 2:17 where Paul speaks of his *eagerness or strong desire* to be with them and fellowship with them face to face.

A call to bring all of life into a burning focus. Call to do more than just float along. Reminded of the phrase, **Any dead fish can float downstream**. There is something worth exerting effort over.

I think of Olympic athletes who train for years just to have an opportunity to compete. If athletes can become that focused, how much more should we, who are not striving for a gold medal, but to bring glory to our savior and Lord.

2. The Goal

Present Yourself - All will stand before the judgment seat of God. No one will escape His scrutinizing gaze. This is an established fact. The fact that we know it is coming should motivate us to be prepared.

I remember the first sermon that I preached in preaching class. I knew I was to be judged not only by the dreaded Dr. Hight, but also by my classmates. The knowledge of that gave me great motivation to be prepared.

Approved of God - It means to be approved after a period of testing. Same word found in James 1:12. Used of testing metal in order to approve its authenticity. "Biting a coin."

Used to describe the process of **testing new invention** to see if it really works. Testing a **math equation** to see if it is really true. To be placed under the scrutiny and of passing. Not talking about approval for salvation.

Approved as a **workman**. . . Talking about standing before God and hearing those words *Well done good and faithful servant*. **Like child who hears the**

words of father “Good job.” Or a coach praising an athlete. Or employer bragging on worker.

3. The Subject *The Word of Truth*

What is it that will determine if we are approved before God? Many things. Here Paul is speaking of a specific subject: The Word of God. Speaking of our approval before God as it relates to His Word.

Two areas of examination/scrutiny:

A. Effort

Note the text. ***As a workman who does not need to be ashamed. . .***

Note that we are judged or evaluated in a context of work. Workman is one who works. Talking about effort. What kind of effort have you exerted in your relationship to the word? Do you read it? Study it?

Memorize it?

There will come a day when the overseer, the boss will come and take a close look at your work. He will put it under the lights. When He does, will your face begin to blush with shame because of your laziness?

B. Accuracy

Not only will we be judged for our effort, but also for our accuracy. In other words, not only for how devoted we were to the word, but for how we handled the word when we approached it. Not only how much work did you get done in this area, but what kind of quality did you have?

School teacher: *Great effort, poor accuracy. Great accuracy, poor effort.*

Handling accurately - Means to cut a straight path. To cut straight.

Cutting straight line through forest to build a road.

Farmer: Cutting a straight row in field.

Pilot: Holding a straight course on a ship in ocean.

Stone mason cutting the stone with straight edges.

Carpenter cutting a straight edge on board.

Seamstress cutting straight line in the cloth.

What does it mean in relation to the Word?

1. Approach the Scripture with an open mind.

Most already have minds made up.

F.F. Bruce's dad told him, Follow truth. Follow truth no matter where it may lead you. Follow truth even if it causes you to give up your most cherished point of theology. Follow truth, for it will never lead you astray.

Previously learned theology is not bad or wrong because it is old, but we must never be more loyal to our taught theology than we are to the truth of God's word. Word and it's meanings do not change. Not that there is new revelation, but my understanding is growing & expanding.

2. Use Honest Methods of Interpretation of Scripture

Analogy of Scripture. Plain Sense makes sense. Holy Spirit.

3. Apply Scripture to Your Life

Make application. Live it. Let your life become a living translation of the word.

4. Read with Expectation of Learning

Approach it with anticipation.

Craig Randall drove a garbage truck in Peabody, MA. In a garbage container one day he noticed a Wendy's drink cup. Contest going on. Sticker had not been taken off. Picked it up and removed sticker hoping to win a chicken sandwich or order of fries. Instead he found he had won \$200,000 toward construction of new home.