



Rightly Dividing The Word of Truth

2 Tim 2:15

2 Tim 2:15: Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth. (KJV)

OBJECTIVES

1. The learner will consider various methods of studying.
2. The learner will consider various resources for study.
3. The learner will understand the term "Hermeneutics".
4. The learner will understand the term "Homiletics".
5. The learner will consider the benefits of scripture memorization.
6. The learner will know the difference between a topical and expositional study.
7. The learner will be provoked to deeply study the Word of God.

CHAPTER OVERVIEW

Be a positive example as a teacher (2:1-2)

Be a positive example as a focused soldier (2:3-4)

Be a positive example as a dedicated athlete (2:1-5)

Be a positive example as a persevering farmer (2:6-13)

Be a positive example as a zealous workman (2:14-19)

Be a positive example as a sanctified vessel (2:20-23)

Be a positive example as a gentle servant (2:24-26)

WHAT DOES 2 TIMOTHY 2:15 MEAN?

Study: "Be earnest," or "diligent." Diligence was a virtue that Timothy had to possess and manifest. The word translated "diligent" means, "to be zealous, eager or to make every effort."

to show: "present. "

thyself: (himself) as distinguished from those whom Timothy was to charge 2 Tim 2:14

approved: tested by trial: opposed to "reprobate" Tit 1:16

workman: alluding to Matt 20:1; a laborer

not to be ashamed: by his work not being "approved" (Phil 1:20). Contrast "deceitful workers" (2 Cor 11:13).

rightly dividing: "rightly handling" or "rightly administering" both literally, means cutting "straight" or "right": the metaphor being from a father or a steward, 1 Cor 4:1, **cutting** and **distributing** bread among his children, Luke 12:42. An illustration is made of "making one's way", the way an engineer builds a highway.

It is believed Paul is telling Timothy *make ready a straight way* for "the word of truth," and may he himself walk straight forward according to this line, turning neither to the right nor to the left, "teaching no other doctrine" 1 Tim 1:3; "rightly dividing" is also applied to the metaphor of a mason laying bricks, or smoothing out concrete, ensuring his work is one that doesn't bring shame.



the word of truth: "the truth" what is true in any matter under consideration truly, in truth, according to truth; of a truth, in reality, in fact, certainly. John 17:17. Necessity of truth: it helps one to grow - Eph 4:15; set us free - John 8:32; purifies the soul - 1 Pet 1:22.

"Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a workman who does not need to be ashamed and who correctly handles the word of truth." NIV

HOW DO WE RIGHTLY DIVIDE?

I. Read. Over 26 times in the New Testament, the bible makes reference to reading God's word. Reading will cause us to get an understanding, Eph 3:4. Reading will aid in us knowing how to conduct ourselves in the Lord's House, Col 4:16, 1 Thes 5:27. Reading will help us become knowledgeable in the ways of God. The Eunuch became aware of Isaiah through reading God's word, Acts 8:28-32.

Jesus asked several times during His ministry, "Have you not read" Matt 12:3; Matt 19:4; Matt 21:16; Matt 21:42; Matt 22:31. The implication is that Jesus wants and expects His followers to read. Jesus is our superlative example and we find in the scriptures where Jesus Himself "stood up to read." Luke 4:16. If we would be diligent to show ourselves approved unto God, a workman that needed not to be ashamed rightly dividing the word of truth, it will start with reading.

- Do you dislike reading?
- What have you done to overcome your dislike of reading?
- Can we be pleasing to God if we don't read, study, and understand his word?
- If anything, what is hindering you from accomplishing this 1st step? How can you be helped to foster greater reading habits?

II. Study. After having completed the initial step of reading, we should then apply the 2nd step, that of studying. Webster defines "study" as the following: (1) application of the mind to the acquisition of knowledge, as by reading, **investigation**, or **reflection**. (2) a personal effort to gain knowledge: to pursue one's studies. (3) research or a detailed **examination** and **analysis** of a subject. (4) a written account of such research, examination, or analysis. Listed are some helpful guidelines in studying the bible:

- A. Book Study.** First, consider who wrote the book. Usually the answer is found in the first verses. Notice Rom 1:1 and 1 Pet 1:1. This is not always the case, i.e. Hebrews and Acts. *Who wrote the book of Acts? How do you know?* Additional research may be required to know the author. Ultimately, the Spirit of God is the author, 2 Tim 3:16.
- B. Period of History.** While studying a New Testament book, the period of history will be much easier to determine. For the most part, it was penned during the 1st century. For your own study, the period of history can be divided into the dispensations of time, or it can be detailed to the possible year it was written. Some books will be easier than others. Some historical events may help to estimate the year of the book.
- C. Social, Economic, and Religious conditions of the location the book is addressed to.** How much richer the text and your understanding when you have some background of Corinth, or Athens and then consider what Paul is saying to the saints in those locations. How much more can we relate to those healings in the gospels, when we consider the medical conditions of that day and the fact no one was able to do the things that Jesus was doing? John 3:5. How important was it to see Jesus?

- D. **Why was the book written?** This will determine what you will get out of it, and what the author's intent is for you. Some book's intent are clearer than others, notice 1 John 5:13; John 20:30-31; Luke 1:1-4; Rev, 1:1; Gal 1:11; Jude 1:3.
- E. **To whom was the book written?** A congregation, i.e. Romans, Galatians, 1 Thessalonians, or a person, i.e. Timothy, Titus, Philemon, etc.
- F. **How does the book relate to other books in the Bible?** 2 Peter and Jude both deals with false teachers. Colossians and 1st John both deal with Gnosticism. James, 1st Peter and Revelation deal with persecution. Galatians, Romans and Hebrews deals with law and grace.
- G. **Text Study.** Never forget as you approach scripture, we are dealing with God's word (2 Tim 3:15-17). Be in prayer, ask for guidance, wisdom and understanding (Jam 1:5). Be careful in your understanding of the scriptures, careful not to wrest the scriptures. 2 Pet 3:16, Gal 1:8-9.
- H. **Remember there is only ONE correct interpretation of the verse.** Our challenge is to find that 1 single meaning. Some would say, a verse can have several different meanings, this is a false approach to study. There is only ONE correct interpretation, but there may be several applications. 2 Tim 2:15, has one meaning, yet many applications.
- I. **Try to receive the mind of the writer.** Do not bring or read your own understanding into a verse. This form of studying is called **eisegesis**. This is when we isolate and bring external ideas to the text. The honest seeker of the word is concerned with exegesis. Exegesis, means "to bring out of the text". Unfortunately, this is the place where many falter in their study. They isolate to the scriptures instead of exiting from the scriptures.
- J. **Remember there is a vast difference between what the verse says and what people say it says.** Unfortunately, too quickly we readily accept the words from the lips of man instead from the mind of God. This is one of the biggest reasons for many being led astray. Man find themselves trying to defend what another man says instead of what the bible teaches.
- K. **NEVER, NEVER, NEVER interpret one verse of scripture to the contradiction of another.** How many ways can man be saved? Some believe John 3:16 is all you need. Some believe Rom 8:24 is all you need. Some believe all you need to do is Rom 10:9-10. Some will say all you need to do is found in 1 Pet 3:21. You cannot use an isolationist approach with a holistic subject. All the verses must be brought together to get the full understanding. If we study scripture to the contradiction of each other, remember, the problem is our approach, never is it the mind of God at fault.
- L. **Always search for the major thrust of the passage.** What is occurring? Is it a historical narrative, Gen 31. Is it a prophecy, Isa 2:1-4? Is it an example, Acts 2:37-47. Who is speaking?
- M. **Determine if the language of the text is literal or figurative.** Jesus said he was the door, John 10:9; a vine, John 15:1; the road, John 14:6. These are figures of speech. Jesus said if your hand or foot offend cut them off, if your eye offend, pluck it out, Matt 18:8-9. Was this literal or figurative? Should not all the disciples be handicapped based on a literal understanding?
- N. **Study the meaning of words.** Word studies are truly invaluable in bible study. So much more is gleaned from a good word study. Word studies would help to alleviate, much of the misunderstanding in false doctrine. Study the word baptism. It will help you to understand, the scriptures were not making reference to sprinkling. Remember, some words change their meaning over the centuries. In conducting word studies, the following is recommended:
- 1) Identify the root Greek or Hebrew word from a Greek or Hebrew concordance. (Vine's Expository Dictionary.)
 - 2) Read the lexicons on the word. (Strong's Concordance)
 - 3) Consult commentaries if necessary.
 - 4) Study the particular use of the word (especially in its context) Context Is Everything (C-I-E)
 - 5) Draw your conclusions based on your research.

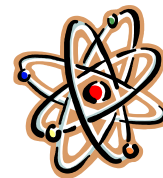


Those are just a few of the many guidelines that should be considered in a thorough study of God's word. If we approached God's word from this angle, we will be hard pressed to come away from the scriptures with the

incorrect meaning. This is the epitome of rightly dividing the word of truth. When applying those guidelines above, you have used a scientific approach to study. You have used **Hermeneutics**.

SCIENTIFIC TERMS

- A. **Sacred Hermeneutics** (her-me-neu-tics). Sacred Hermeneutics is the formal process by which the interpreter employs certain principles and methods in order to derive the author's intended meaning. There are several layers to biblical hermeneutics.



Types of Biblical Hermeneutics.

- 1) **Topical:** Searching the Scriptures by a subject matter.
- 2) **Expository (Systematic):** Going through a passage of scripture in order per chapter by consecutive chapter & verse by verse with little (if any) interaction with other passages.

Topical Example: Faith. What is faith? Heb 11:1. How important is faith? Heb 11:6. How does faith come? Rom 10:17. How strong should my faith be? Matt 17:20. When Christ returns what is He looking for? Luke 18:8.

Expository (Systematic) Example: Heb 11:1-ff Faith on Stage: Hebrews 11 has been called "The Faith Hall of Fame". Indeed, many examples of people with faith are given. It is as if the author of Hebrews brings examples of faith "on stage" before us to demonstrate this essential quality for every child of God. In verses 1-13, there are several examples of people of faith.

- Introduction - Vss. 1-3 Faith is...
- Abel offered - Vs. 4 (He was obedient.)
- Enoch was translated - Vss. 5-6 (He was obedient. He pleased the Lord.)
- Noah moved with godly fear - Vs. 7 (He was obedient. By faith, Noah worked.)
- Abraham obeyed. - Vss. 8-9 (He was obedient. Abraham was called to go out to the place.)
- Abraham waited - Vs. 10 (He was obedient. He waited for the city.)
- Sarah judged God faithful - Vss. 11-12 (She was obedient. She waited for God to keep His promise.)
- Conclusion - Vs. 13 These all died in faith.

- B. **Homiletics.** (Gr. *homiletikos*, from *homilos*, to assemble together). In theology, it is the application of the general principles of rhetoric to the specific department of public preaching. The one who practices or studies homiletics is called a *homilist*. Homiletics is the study of the composition and delivery of a sermon or other religious discourse. It includes all forms of preaching, viz., the sermon, homily and catechetical instruction. It may be further **defined as the study of the analysis, classification, preparation, composition and delivery of sermons.**

SCRIPTURE MEMORIZATION

It is God's desire that we memorize his word. Deu 6:6-9; Deu 11:18-21; Joshua 1:7-8. David said "Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee" Psalm 119:11. Scripture memorization has become almost a lost art among Christians today, and it is a great loss. Storing Scripture in the heart can be a great blessing in one's Christian life and witness.

The example of the early Christians is clear: Peter, Stephen, Paul, and others quoted extensively from the Old Testament in their impromptu sermons (Acts 2:17-21; 7:32-34; 13:33-35; etc.), and the same has been true of most of the great preachers and teachers of the Word ever since.

There are multitudes of situations where it is of great help to be able to cite from memory an appropriate Scripture passage. This is the most effective way of making Scripture a part of your thought patterns. The discipline and repetition necessary to memorize a text will plant it deep within your consciousness. Memorization places Scripture at your fingertips, always at your disposal for use on unexpected occasions. It will

*Georgia Avenue Church of Christ, Wednesday Night Bible Study
Feb-Mar 08*

also enhance your teaching, counseling, and witnessing. All Christians can do it if he or she tries and will find their Christian lives strengthened in the process.

The Lord Jesus Himself, in His humanity, no doubt learned the Scriptures as a boy (Luke 2:47,52) and then quoted from them extensively in His many discourses, "leaving us an example, that ye should follow His steps" (1 Peter 2:21). He provided a perfect illustration of the validity of our text, defeating Satan in each of his three temptations simply by quoting a Scripture verse that He had long before hidden in His heart (Matthew 4:4,7,10). For the Word truly to be in our lives, it needs to be in our hearts

STEPS TO MEMORIZATION

1. Pray. Ask for guidance.
2. Be positive.
3. Determine which translation you will use.
4. Use memory cards/flash cards.
5. Set realistic goals.
6. **Read the whole verse. Read aloud if possible at least 10X.**
7. **Notice each word as you read. Read slowly.**
8. **Visualize what you are reading.**
9. **Determine the breaks in your verse. The punctuation does that for you.**
10. **Start with 1 break at a time. "As the father hath loved me."**
11. **Continue unto all breaks have been committed to memory.**
12. **Add one verse to it.**
13. **Follow the same pattern, begin with the previous verse.**

RESOURCE BOOKS

1. Strong's Concordance
2. Vine's Expository Dictionary of Old and New Testament Words
3. Bible Handbook
4. Bible Dictionary
5. Bible Atlas
6. Nave's Topical Bible
7. Manners and Customs of Bible Times

References:

Zondervan, Holy Bible, KJV, NIV

A Charge to Keep, Mike Winkler, Winkler Publications, Inc, 2005

How to Effective Study the Bible, J. J. Turner, Quality Publications, 1988

Scripture Memory made easy, Mark Water, Hendrickson Publishers, 1999

Online:

www.crosswalk.com

www.memoryverses.org



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<p><u>Apply a Hermeneutical Approach to:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The book of Philemon• The book of Ephesians• The book of 2 John• The book of Galatians• The book of 1 Peter	<p><u>Conduct a Topical Study on the following:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Hands• Hearts• Love• Hell• Friends
<p><u>Conduct an Expositional Study on:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 1 Cor 13• Eph 4• Acts 5• Philemon 1• Psalms 23	<p><u>Memorize any or all of the following passages:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Psalms 23• Eph 4:4-7• Rom 1:16-17• John 3:16-17• Rom 10:17, Heb 11:6, Luke 13:3, Matt 10:32-33, Acts 2:38 (Plan of Salvation)

