

Rightly Dividing the Word of Truth : Introduction

2 Timothy 2:15

In this series of lessons we are going to be looking at the divisions and covenants that are found in the word of God. To fully understand the word of God one must identify the divisions that are found in the word of God and keep them divided especially for the sake of doctrine. A quick example would be that in the Old Testament under the law Israel had to keep the commandments and all of the law. Now after the resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ we are saved by grace through faith without works (**Ephesians 2:8-9**). So we clearly see that the doctrine of Salvation was different under the law than it is now after the resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ. This is not the only division that we will find in the word of God, there will be several others and we will show them as clearly as possible in these lessons.

Let us look at the key verse in the scripture on this subject.

2 Timothy 2:15 “Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.”

This is an amazing verse because it tells that that we must study the word of God and it tells us that the word of God needs to be rightly divided. An interesting fact is that most all of the new modern bible versions take the word study out of the verse or change it to something else. Someone doesn't want you to study the word of God and there is only one person that it could be. If you guessed Satan then you guessed right.

There are two key things to rightly dividing the word of truth.

1) You must have the word of Truth (**John 17:17**)

- Today we have the truth without error in a King James Bible. Many do not believe or teach this they claim that only the originals were inspired. This greatly limits the power of God to say he could use men to write it down but not to translate it. Below are a several verses dealing with us having the word of God today as he wants it.

Psalms 12:6-7 (Here God said he would preserve his word)

Psalms 132:8 (Here God has magnified his word above his name)

Matthew 24:35 (Here Jesus said that his words would not pass away)

2) You must let the Holy Spirit Interpret the word of God (**2 Peter 1:20-21**)

- The Holy Spirit is the one who authored the word of God. Therefore he is the only one who can properly interpret it.
- The way in which the Holy Spirit interprets the word of God is by comparing spiritual things with spiritual things. That is when interpreting God's word we have to compare scripture with scripture so that they do not contradict one another. And the Holy Spirit will do this because the word of God is true with no contradictions.

When studying the word of God you must use some guidelines. We will list some guidelines below and as you will see they are just simple common sense guidelines. But if not followed it will result in confusion and false teaching.

Guidelines for studying God's Word :

- 1) Never add to or subtract or change the word.
 - Many do this today because they don't understand the word of God or because they don't like what it says. We are told 3 times in God's word not to mess with it (**Deuteronomy 4:2**; **Proverbs 30:6**; **Revelation 22:18-19**). Note this is once at the front, once at the middle, and once at the end.
- 2) Never take a verse out of context.
 - Many today will pull a verse out of a passage and try to teach something with it without keeping it in the context. For example many use **Matthew 24:13** to teach you can lose your salvation. The problem is they tell you that the end is your life, but the very next verse (verse 14) tell you what the end is. It is after the gospel of the kingdom had been preached in all the world. This is a tribulation passage for the gospel of the kingdom is not even preached we preach the gospel of the grace of God. This is what happens when you take a verse out of its context.
- 3) Ask yourself who is talking and to whom are they talking.
 - If it is a passage that is dealing doctrinally with the Jews in the Old Testament then it cannot doctrinally be applied to you in the church age.
- 4) Always take the verse to be literal unless the context shows that it absolutely cannot be taken literal. Never vice versa.
 - For instance when Jesus is saying in John 10 that his sheep hear his voice. He did not have physical sheep with him there he was speaking figuratively those who were obeying and following him.
 - Many today try and do the opposite here they make everything figurative when it is not.
- 5) Remember the all scripture has 3 applications, doctrinal, historical, and spiritual.
 - For an example take the Ten Commandments found in **Exodus 20:1-17**.
 - The historical application is that God is giving Moses these Commandments for the children of Israel.
 - The doctrinal application is that Israel had to keep these commandments to be right with God.
 - Now even though in the church age we are no longer under the law for doctrine we can get a spiritual application from the Ten Commandments, so we don't just throw them out. Remember that all of them are found in some form in the New Testament except keeping the Sabbath.

There are 3 good things to practice also for learning the word of God. First separate the things that do not go together. Second study the things that do go together. The words "like" and "as" are usually very helpful here. And last of REPITION is the best teacher.

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2 Timothy 2:15

1) There are 2 key phrases in 2 Timothy 2:15 in regards to studying the word of truth, what are they?

2) List 2 necessary things that you need in order to rightly divide the word of truth? Give scripture for each one.

3) What are some guidelines for studying the word of God?

4) List three ways that are very important for learning the word of God.