

A New You? Look to the Word

2Tim 2:15: Be diligent to present yourselves approved to God as a workman who does not need to be ashamed accurately handling the Word of God

- **Intro: This is usually my first sermon topic of a new year.**
 - I will start it a little earlier this year.
- **Are You Tired of the same ol same ol you every year**
 - **Are you tired of the same ol mistakes you keep making**
 - Are you tired of the same ol arguments with your spouse
 - Or the same problems with friends and family
 - **Are you ready to make a positive change from now moving forward...**
 - ◆ Then Look to the Word of God!
 - **If we want to be a God fearing and God honoring church**
 - We must look to the Word of God
 - **If you want to be a God fearing and God honoring person**
 - You must look to the Word of God.
 - **Too many times:**
 - You have been confronted with the need to dig into God's Word
 - And too many times you have agreed that it is important
 - And too many times you have walked out the doors of church ready to begin
 - And too many times you have never started
 - Or you started and stopped
 - Or you began, but you read the word haphazardly
 - You did not read it with the purpose it was designed for
 - ◆ Therefore, you did not grow in the Word like you should
 - **We dig into the Word so that we might Know Christ Jesus the Savior King**
 - We are to dig into the Word so that we may enjoy God in Christ
 - So that we may treasure Him above all things...
 - ***Above every person, every pleasure, every possession and every passion***
 - **We can read God's Word over and over and glean many wonderful facts from it**
 - Yet we can read it without enjoying God one bit
 - But this is not how it is meant to be approached
 - **If you find yourself right now, not enjoying God more when you read His Word**
 - ◆ Stop! And make a change
 - ◆ Do not continue on this course
 - ◆ It will only harden your heart
 - **Don't be like those we are warned of in James**
 - ◆ James 1:22-24 ²² But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves. ²³ For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man who looks intently at his natural face in a mirror. ²⁴ For he looks at himself and goes away and at once forgets what he was like.
 - **What should you do?**
 - Pray and confess your sins before God
 - Pray and ask for God to show you His wonderful ways...
 - Pray **Psalm 119:18 Open my eyes, that I may behold Wonderful things from Your law.**
 - Never Give Up: God can be found in His Word... I am certain of it...

- **We fail to find Him because we look with eyes blinded by sin**
 - ◆ We look with hearts darkened by sinful passions
 - ◆ We look with minds cluttered with worldly endeavors
- **One Final Warning:**
 - We can become too familiar with God's Word
 - And miss the important things God has in store for us
 - For me, my trouble is when I have memorized a verse
 - **I have a very hard time stopping to consider and meditate and pray that the Holy Spirit**
 - ◆ Will work in me
 - ◆ I quickly run right through that verse
 - ◆ Or that story
 - ◆ As if I was too familiar with the words to get anything from it
 - This is a very dangerous proposition
- **Therefore Guard yourselves in prayer and commit yourself in action**
 - Asking God to open your eyes to things previously hidden
 - Purposely stop and ask questions regarding the words God has put to paper
- **Remember: To know God, You Must know His Word**
 - They are so closely related, they are almost synonomous
 - I said almost... not exactly
 - They are so closely joined that Jesus Himself is called the Word of God in numerous places
 - **They are so closely joined that the scriptures teach**
 - **Psalm 119:2 Blessed are those who keep his testimonies, who seek him with their whole heart.**
 - Those who keep his testimonies (his Word) are those who seek HIM with their whole heart
 - **God and His commandments are not identical, but God's commandments reflect who He is**
- ❖ **1) Paul's Instruction to Timothy**
 - **2Tim 2:15: Be diligent to present yourselves approved to God as a workman who does not need to be ashamed accurately handling the Word of God**
 - **Be diligent**
 - **Paul's instruction to Timothy is that he be diligent**
 - **The sense of the word means to be eager...**
 - **Like: Many children were eager to open Christmas presents... and some adults**
 - ◆ If you weren't you probably have been
 - ◆ I am a very eager person
 - ◆ When something exciting is coming, I can barely wait
 - **Paul is telling Timothy... When it comes to presenting yourself to God as approved**
 - Be eager to do so... or do this quickly and have an intense desire
 - Be diligent about it..
 - **Paul is giving Timothy a command...**
 - He is not offering him a suggestion...
 - The meaning of this particular sentence is that Paul is telling Timothy
 - Do this... Not... "this would be a good thing to do" rather... "you must do this!"
 - **Paul is also telling Timothy that He must be the one to do it...**
 - I find it very interesting to try to understand the meaning of words...
 - What is Wrapped up in this word?
 - ◆ It is an understanding that Timothy has to be the one to put in the effort
 - **This will not magically be done to timothy...**

- **If Timothy wants to stand before God approved...**
 - ◆ To stand before God unashamed... (that is what this is all about) Right?
 - ◆ Then He must actively work hard to do so...
 - ◆ And we all thought the Christian life was going to be easy!

➤ **The Big Question is this?**

- What must Timothy be so actively working on?
- What must Timothy be so eager and diligent about?
- **It is: Rightly Handling the Word of Truth**

➤ **Rightly handling the Word of Truth**

- Accurately Handling the Word of Truth
- **Paul knows, that if Timothy will go about his life handling God's Word Properly**
 - He will be unashamed before God
- **Paul knows God will do many wonderful things through Timothy if he is faithful to one thing:**
 - To Rightly Handling God's Word

➤ **Accurately handling**

- **The Greek verb orqotomew means to cut stone with possible reference to:**
 - Plowing
 - Cutting leather
 - Cutting bricks or stone
- **He simply means that timothy is to cut through God's Word properly**
 - To read it in its context, not to twist it
 - To find the meaning of the text, to work hard at it
- **He does not want Timothy to make God's Word crooked**
 - Because that is done all the time
 - People twist it and turn it and call it right, when they are wrong
 - God's Word means what it means, not what we want it to mean to suit us!

➤ **He is to be like a Faithful Workman**

- **The word "workman" typically refers to an agricultural laborer**
 - The term was frequently used by Christ and Paul to describe spiritual workers who labor to produce a spiritual harvest
 - A faithful worker is one who fulfills the charge of the master
- **The Laborer Labors...**
 - He works hard... every day consistently putting in the effort

➤ **There is a Reference of Final Judgment, but also to a present standing before God**

- **"Present"** is typically an end times word referring to presenting oneself or the church to God in judgment (Col 1:22; 1Cor 8:8)
- **"Approved to God"** shows that it is divine evaluation rather than human evaluation that concerns the Apostle
- **"Unashamed"** refers not to embarrassment before men, but before God

➤ **Application**

- We are called to dig deeply and rightly into God's Word
- Those who handle Scripture accurately will be rewarded as faithful workers
- Those who mishandle Scripture will be ashamed in the presence of the heavenly Judge

❖ **2) There are some Common Mistakes Made in Studying the Word**

- **Don't make these:**

- Read to fast
- No Plan

- Overwhelmed
- No attention given to context (culture, history, geography, language)
- The what does it mean to you error
- Bible can not contradict itself... The Bible interprets the Bible
- The Bible is mainly interpreted literally

❖ 3) How Should We Study God's Word

- **How would we study particular verses?**
 - Take your time!
 - **Ask questions about the book**
 - **Find a Good Commentary, Bible Dictionary, or Study Bible.**
 - **Ask Questions**
 - **When:**
 - **What's going on at this time:**
 - **Who:**
 - **Why:**
 - **To Whom:**
 - **Where:**
 - **Remember...** Not all questions have to be answered...
 - **Our main goal is trying to get to the intention of the author...**
 - ◆ **What was God intending when He used this man to author the book**
 - **Read the whole book**
 - **Ask questions inside the verse (go through the verse)**
 - Look to other books of the Bible
 - Define words
 - Understand Phrases
 - **Find the meaning**
 - **Apply it to today**
 - We can have the same tendencies as those from the past.

❖ 4) Why is it important to study God's word?

- **1) Why is it important for a brain surgeon to study for years before they cut someone's head open?**
 - People like their heads, and brains
 - The brain is very complicated
 - Someone's total well-being and life may depend on it.
- **2) Why would it be important for a roller coaster engineer to have prepared before he put the roller coaster together?**
 - People like their bodies
 - You are very vulnerable on the ride
 - It moves very fast, and people could get killed
 - Money is made from roller coasters
- **3) Why is it important for a pilot to have 100s of hours of flying in before flying 200 people from New York to New Zealand?**
 - People are very vulnerable at 30,000 feet
 - We are not birds
 - Misty says its UNATURAL

❖ 5) Why is it important for a Christian to know God's word?

➤ 1) You Will Starve and Be unfruitful Without it

- **Matt 4.4** But he answered, "It is written, " "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God." "
- **Example: Consider your breathing...**
 - ◆ You will not get much benefit from the breath you took an hour ago
 - ◆ If you stop taking them now...
 - ◆ That breath helped you then
 - ◆ It will not help you now
- **Consider your eating**
 - ◆ That meal you ate 5 weeks ago wont help you much today
 - ◆ If you have not eaten in a week
 - ◆ It helped you then, it gave you energy, it is long gone now
- **Consider your drinking**
 - ◆ That glass of water you drank last week won't help you now
 - ◆ If you find yourself without water
 - ◆ It helped you then, but now you need new water
- **This is not a perfect analogy... because God's Word can feed your soul forever**
 - ◆ But if you stop, you will wither... that is the truth...
 - ◆ You will wither
- **We live by the Words that come from the Mouth of God**
 - If you find yourself alive but not living for God... Look to His Word

➤ 2) You can not live a holy life without it

- **John 17:17,19** – "Sanctify them in the truth; Your word is truth. As You sent Me into the world, I also have sent them into the world. For their sakes I sanctify myself, that they themselves also may be sanctified in truth."
- **It Will Set you apart from sin**
 - **I sanctify myself-** (in the indicative tense) "Jesus is saying that I am continually setting myself apart from sin"
 - **Sanctify them in the truth, thy word is truth!**
 - ◆ Jesus is asking the Father to set us apart from sin
 - ◆ And he is using His word to do it.
 - ◆ I promise you... Stay out of God's Word, and you will stay away from God.
- **God's Word will Bring you closer to God**
 - You will know more about Him
 - You will have more of a friendship with him

➤ 3) So Many People Do not Know God

- EX: The emperor's new robe (he did not know)

➤ 4) So Many People are Hurting

- **You could point them in the right direction**
 - Who made us?
 - How were we made?
 - What proof is there?
 - What were we made for?
 - What is our purpose?
 - Why do I feel guilty about certain things?
 - What is gonna happen to me?

- What will happen to this world?
- Is there anything reliable to get truth from?

❖ 6) Finally Consider Psalm 119:18

- Because We can do nothing without the help of God's Spirit
- **Psalm 119:18** Open my eyes, that I may behold Wonderful things from Your law.
- **1) We will be unable to see without God opening our eyes**
 - I think it goes without saying...
 - The writer recognizes his blindness to God's wonderful things
 - He knows they are there, but knows he is too blind to see them
- **2) We must pray for God to open our eyes**
 - He asks for God's help
 - He relies on God to show him the wonderful things in His Law
 - **He Works, We Work, He Works**
 - There is a cycle here...
 - ◆ We must understand that God has worked and drawn us to Him and His Word
 - ◆ He tells us we must seek and dig and read and study
 - ◆ And we then respond by asking His help as we seek and dig and read and study
- **3) Found this Nugget about how we should pray at Desiringgod.org**
 - **1) That God would teach us his Word.**
 - Psalm 119:12b, "Teach me Your statutes."
 - **2) That God would not hide his Word from us.**
 - Psalm 119:19b, "Do not hide Your commandments from me."
 - **3) That God would make us understand his Word.**
 - Psalm 119:27, "Make me understand the way of Your precepts"
 - **4) That God would incline our hearts to his Word.**
 - Psalm 119:36, "Incline my heart to Your testimonies and not to [dishonest] gain."
 - **5) That God would give us life to keep his Word.**
 - Psalm 119:88, "Revive me according to Your lovingkindness, so that I may keep the testimony of Your mouth."
 - **6) That God would establish our steps in his Word.**
 - Psalm 119:133, "Establish my footsteps in Your word."
 - **7) That God would seek us when we go astray from his Word.**
 - Psalm 119:176, "I have gone astray like a lost sheep; seek Your servant."
 - **This verse comes at the end of Psalm 119**
 - ◆ After all the things he says about the greatness of God's Word
 - ◆ It is remarkable that this godly man ends his psalm with a confession of sin
 - ◆ He see the need for God to bring him back
 - ◆ We must always consider our weaknesses and how we need God to bring us back

❖ Invitation:

- **Let us Commit ourselves to Action**
 - Write some steps that you will put into action immediately
 - Starting even now... That will continue when you get home
 - Do not delay, Satan would have you wait until a tomorrow that never comes
 - **Be Reasonable: Bite off only what you can chew**
 - Many plans have failed because they were bigger then the man could handle