

HOW TO STUDY THE BIBLE

Context is King!

Lesson #2 (Answers to Homework)

I. HOMEWORK

The purpose of this homework is to apply what was learned in both lesson one and lesson two. You should have read the appendix at the end of Lesson #2, "The Student, the Fish, and Agassiz." You should have answered the questions under point "A" concerning the genre, theme, historical context, setting, and outline. You should have meditated on and made observations of **II Tim. 2:15** as directed.

A. Look at II Timothy 2:15:

1. What kind of book is it? **Epistle**
2. What is the theme? **The endurance and responsibility of a good minister.**
3. What was the historical context and setting? **It was Paul's second Roman imprisonment. He was abandoned by friends and had no support. Nero had blamed the burning of Rome on Christians and persecution was severe. Paul knew his life was in peril and that he would almost certainly die a martyr. Wanting to encourage Timothy in his ministry he writes his final words stressing those things which are most important for the church to carry out.**
4. What are the major outline points of the book of **II Timothy**?
 - a. **Chapters 1 & 2 Persevere in present testings.**
 - b. **Chapters 3 & 4 Persevere in future testings.**

II. OBSERVATIONS OF II TIMOTHY 2:15

- A. Using only your Bible and no other resources, write down **15 things** you can observe from **II Tim. 2:15** and its near context.
- B. "Be diligent to present yourself approved to God as a work man who does not need to be ashamed, handling accurately the word of truth."
- C. Write down **15 observations** from what **II Tim. 2:15** and its near context says.
 1. The verse starts off with a command "**be diligent.**"
 2. The object of the command "**be diligent**" is "**yourself.**"

3. The word "**diligent**" implies that persistence is needed to achieve the goal/s of the command.
4. The command "**be diligent**" is the third in a string of commands starting in **vs 14** where the command to "**remind**" and "**not to wrangle**" precede "**be diligent.**"
5. The command "**be diligent**" is a positive command.
6. The word "**present**" tells us that those who interpret the scriptures are being observed by God and are to be diligent to present themselves in the right way.
7. We "**present**" ourselves to be "**approved to God.**"
8. The person we are to "**present**" ourselves to is "**God.**"
9. The phrase "**present yourself**" tells us that when dealing with God's Word we are placing ourselves before God as His "**diligent,**" "**accurate,**" and "**approved**" workman.
10. This verse tells us in order to be "**approved to God**" we must be accurate handlers of Scripture or else we will be breaking the command of the verse and hence be in sin.
11. This verse tells us that if we do not meet God's criteria of being "**diligent,**" "**accurate,**" or "**workman**" we will not be "**approved to God.**"
12. The phrase "**approved to God**" tells us that we are trying to please God when we handle the Scriptures not men.
13. The phrase "**approved to God**" tells us that if we are trying to please men we are not "**approved to God.**"
14. The word "**workman**" tells us that in order to be approved in the way we handle the Scriptures we must be like a diligent workman when handling the Word.
15. The word "**workman**" is one of 6 different metaphors Paul uses in this chapter to describe those who are entrusted with the Word of God and all of them describe those who work very hard at what they do i.e., **1) good soldier vs. 3; 2) an athlete vs. 5; 3) the hard working farmer vs. 6; 4) a workman vs. 15; 5) vessel of honor vs. 20; 6) bond servant vs 24.**
16. The phrase "**not be ashamed,**" tells us that some who handle God's Word without being diligent workman unto God should be ashamed.

17. The phrase “**not be ashamed**” is a negative exhortation.
 18. The phrase “**not be ashamed**” is achieved by handling the Word accurately.
 19. The word “**handling**” tells us that we are to be doing something with God's Word and it involves ongoing intimate contact.
 20. The phrase “**handling accurately**” tells us that God is looking for precision in how we handle the Word.
 21. The phrase “**handling accurately**” tells us that there is one right way to handle the Scriptures and all other ways are wrong or inaccurate.
 22. The object of the phrase “**handling accurately**” is “**the word of truth.**”
 23. The phrase “**the word of truth**” is a synonym for the Scriptures.
 24. Being “**ashamed**” is antithetical to being “**approved to God.**”
 25. The command is defined by three phrases 1) to be “**approved to God,**” 2) “**as a workman who does not need to be ashamed**” but 3) “**accurately handling the word of truth.**”
 26. Out of all three phrases that modify the command to “**be diligent**” two are positive and one is negative.
 27. The negative phrase “**as a workman who does not need to be ashamed**” is found in between the two positive commands.
 28. The near context (**vs. 14**) tells us not to wrangle about words and so we know that being accurate interpreters of Scripture does not fall into that category because Paul would not command us to do something in **vs. 15** after commanding us not to do it.
 29. The near context of **vs. 14** tells us that **vs. 15** is something those in Timothy's church knew about but needed to be reminded of.
 30. The near context of **vs. 14** tells us that **vs. 15** is very important since Paul solemnly charged Timothy in the presence of God to handle accurately the Word.
- D. Write down **5 key observations** of what **II Tim. 2:15** does not say.
1. The verse does not say only certain portions of God's Word are to be handled accurately but all of God's word.

2. The verse does not say that there are certain times when accuracy, diligence, and approval by God can be bypassed.
3. The verse does not tell us the specific process or steps to take in order to be accurate and approved.
4. The verse does not tell us that only certain men can be approved.
5. The verse does not tell us how long it will take to handle God's Word accurately but only that we need to be diligent until the job is done.
6. It does not say we can be slothful and approved.
7. The verse does not say that we can be inaccurate and still approved.
8. The verse does not say we are to study in order to be approved to men.
9. The verse does not say that we only need to be careful how we handle the Word when we are young Christians and later when we are mature in the Lord rely on that previously gained information.
10. The verse does not say there are some people who need to handle the Word accurately and others don't have to.

E. Write down **10 key questions** which might be asked of the text, which if answered would help you understand the text better. (I.e. Questions that might relate to Paul's motives, words and their meaning, what we see in the text about God, what we see in the text about our relationship to God, etc.)

1. Is this verse a universal command?
2. Is this verse only speaking to pastors?
3. What is a workman?
4. What kind of workman am I?
5. What specifically must I do to be a good workman?
6. Why is it important to be diligent when handling God's Word?
7. What does it take in order to qualify as being diligent?
8. What are the consequences of not being diligent?
9. Does being diligent always entail the same thing?

10. What does it mean to present yourself to God?"
11. Why is it important that we handle God's Word accurately?
12. What does "diligent . . .handling" imply?
13. What does the Greek tell us about the words diligent, present, approved, workman, ashamed, handling, and accurately?
14. Are the methods of handling God's Word accurately always the same?
15. What does it mean to be approved?
16. What does it mean or what are the consequences of not being approved?
17. How does a person know if they are approved to God in their handling of the Word?
18. What are the implications of being ashamed and how or when will this occur if we fail to be accurate?
19. Is accuracy more important or equal to speaking style, oratorical ability, humor, writing ability etc. and why?
20. Is making observations of a text, stating what a text does not say, and asking questions about a text part of being a diligent workman who does not need to be ashamed?

II. Conclusion:

- A. After working through Lesson #2, what are some of the lessons you learned which will help you in future Bible study?
- B. You should have read the section by Charles Spurgeon on "Search the Scriptures" and written down what you learned from him.