

S.O.H.L.

WEEKLY MINISTRY MEDITATIONS

Pronounced "Soul"

January 27, 2014

Study *yourself* approved!

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

Once upon a time there was a man who went to church and bible study every week. He loved his pastor and he learned everything by listening and studying his pastor teachings. Well one day he had a question about the bible and he went to the church to ask the Pastor the answer, but the Pastor was out of town. So he called the Pastor, but there was no answer. He left a message on his phone to return his call. The information he needed was very vital because he needed to answer a question asked of him. So he prayed to God that the Pastor would return his call immediately so he could ask the question. In the prayer, God said to the man, "Why don't you ask me, I'm the one who taught the Pastor."

The apostle Paul wrote to the evangelist Timothy, Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needs not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth (2 Timothy 2:15). This verse well-illustrates the need for understanding that word meanings may change, and we must be ever on guard against misapplying or twisting scripture, even when we try to teach the truth. The rendering, study to show thyself approved unto God is found only in the King James Version, translated in the year 1611. In 1611 the word study meant strive, or be diligent. Thus the New American Standard Bible renders the verse, Be diligent to present yourself approved to God as a workman who does not need to be ashamed, handling accurately the word of truth. The New International Version renders the verse, 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.

Bible study is very important, but 2 Timothy 2:15 is not just a command to study the Bible. Being an approved workman involves much more. Paul wanted Timothy to understand that to be a workman that God could approve, he would have to be diligent in his service to God. God is not the kind of Master that accepts shoddy work! By earnestly applying himself in service, Timothy would not need to be ashamed as he stood before God in the day of judgment. To be that diligent, approved workman, he would have to correctly handle the word of truth, what the King James Version renders, rightly dividing the word of truth. Of necessity, correctly handling the Bible, the word of truth will involve much study, contemplation, and prayer. It will involve bringing an open mind, an open heart, and a faithful life to the word of truth. Implied in the correct handling is the proper understanding of the divisions between the Old and the New Covenants, understanding that the New Testament is the rule of faith and practice for Christians today. The goal of being an approved workman should be the goal of all of God's children.

SCRIPTURE READING - ACTS 8:30

THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK

A thorough knowledge of the Bible is worth more than a college education. – Theodore Roosevelt

