

2 Timothy: The Good Fight Finishing Well in Christ

Lesson 41—2 Timothy 2:14-19

Continuing from our last study...

Prayer

Start by praying over the passage and asking the Holy Spirit to give you fresh insights and wisdom in understanding it. Then read through the entire passage two or three times. The depth of theology is so great that I would strongly advise using the New Living Translation for one of your Scripture readings.

Scripture Meditation/Memorization

One of the most fundamental and rewarding Christian disciplines that pays back in full spiritual dividends is Bible meditation/memorization. It is an absolutely fundamental in the formation of your spiritual development, spiritual walk and faith growth. In Psalm 1:1-2 (NLT), the Psalmist warrior, King David said,

*“Oh, the joys of those who do not follow the advice of the wicked,
or stand around with sinners, or join in with mockers.
But they delight in the law of the Lord,
meditating on it day and night.”*

Memory Verse

“Be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.”—2nd Timothy 2:15 (NKJV)

Study Format

We have all had weeks in which the time available for preparation of our Bible study evaporates under an unexpected event or a pressing project at work. To enable everyone to complete the study, even when time is at a premium, questions are being divided into two categories: essential and expanded. The Essential Questions are those necessary to understand key points of the passage. The Expanded Questions or growth questions help expand knowledge and gain deeper insight into the Scripture.

If you are concerned about having enough time to complete the whole study, it is suggested that you start by first answering the Essential Questions for each day and answer the Expanded Questions as time permits.

2 Timothy 2:14-19—How to Avoid the Pitfalls of False Teachers

A friend of mine worked for years as a bank teller. After I had to forfeit a bogus \$20 bill that I had gotten as change from a grocery store, I asked my friend what special training the bank gave him so that he did not fall victim to a counterfeit. My friend told me that when you handle so much true currency, it is easy to spot a counterfeit. He said after handling the real thing, that a counterfeit will almost burn your fingers. God wants us to apply this same principle to handling His Word frequently to avoid accepting counterfeit doctrine.

Essential Questions:

1. Earlier in chapter 2, Paul used the imagery of a soldier, athlete and the farmer. *The fourth metaphor Paul used to describe the Christian worker is a workman. How do we present ourselves to God as approved workers?¹

- a. How can we handle God's Word correctly?²

¹ Stott, J., & Johnson, L. (1998). *2 Timothy: Standing Firm in Truth* (p. 28). Nottingham, England; Downers Grove, IL: Inter-Varsity Press; IVP Connect: An Imprint of InterVarsity Press.

² IBID

b. ...incorrectly?

2. Verse 15 should be a marching order for all of us. The Greek word for *handle correctly* literally means to *cut straight*. What does this mean to you and what practical steps should we take to be a workman approved?

3. Dissension within the church can be devastating to unity within the body of Christ.

a. What can we learn about it from this passage?

b. This seems to have been an ongoing problem in Ephesus as Paul also addressed it in his previous letter written five years earlier. What do you learn from 1 Timothy 6:3–5?

c. What specifically was the false teaching of the two apostates mentioned and how did Paul address a similar problem in 2 Thessalonians 2:1–3?

4. It has been said that the lives of believers are the only Bible that some nonbelievers will ever read and they can't hear the gospel message because our lives are speaking too loudly. How does Paul take us to task in verse 19?

Expanded Question:

5. In light of internal conflicts within the church caused by false teachers, what assurances or sources of hope does Paul offer to believers in verse 19?

6. It has been said that within the church, on *essentials*, we need unity; on *nonessentials*, liberty; and in *all things*, love for our brothers. In today's passage, Paul warns against unhealthy dissension on nonessentials. What are some essentials ("solid foundations" verse 19) that are non-negotiable within the church? (Hint: for reference read a list of essentials in Titus 3:4–8 before his warning against divisiveness in Titus 3:9–10.)

7. *Why is bodily resurrection central to the Christian message?³

³ Question taken from *Christ-Centered Exposition Commentary—1 & 2 Timothy and Titus*, B&H Publishing Group, Nashville, Tenn., 2013

8. *Why does it seem that false teaching spreads more easily and quickly than sound doctrine?⁴

Lesson 41 Summary/Take Away

If one of your friends at work or a neighbor were to ask you what you did on Tuesday, you would tell them you went to a Bible study. The next question would likely be, “What did you learn?” We often summarize an entire athletic contest or a movie in a few brief sentences and easily convey the essence of the event. Now apply these same skills to give a summary of the passage in a sentence or two. Then, in an additional sentence or two, describe what impact this passage will have on how you live.

Memory Verse

“Be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.”—2nd Timothy 2:15 (NKJV)

Key Words/Phrases

Write out the definition of these key words. You can use a regular dictionary or go to one of the Greek sources listed in the Tool Box at the end of the study. You may also use a concordance to see where else and how the word is used in the Bible.

⁴ Question taken from *Christ-Centered Exposition Commentary—1 & 2 Timothy and Titus*, B&H Publishing Group, Nashville, Tenn., 2013

Rightly Dividing the Word of Truth (2 Timothy 2:15)

Tool Box

Step 1: The Bible. Read the passage in a couple of different versions. If you are having trouble understanding a passage, choose a more dynamic version such as *New Living Translation*. To focus in on the exact meaning of a verse, choose a more literal translation such as *New King James Version*, *New American Standard Bible* or *English Standard Version*. *The Amplified Bible* is another excellent version.

Step 2: Study Tools. Use these to help you dig deeper. Background Information: 1) Unger's Bible Dictionary, 2) Bible Dictionaries online at biblestudytools.com and blueletterbible.com. (recommend both David Guzik and Chuck Smith's commentaries/study notes); Word Studies: 1) Zodhiates' *The Complete Word Study New Testament*, 2) Vine's *Complete Expository Dictionary*, and 3) Strong's *Dictionary of Bible Words*.

Step 3: Commentaries. Commentaries should not be used in place of studying God's Word directly, but they can give you additional insights. Some good commentaries include: Warren Wiersbe, J. Vernon McGee, F.F. Bruce, *the Expositors Bible Commentary*, *NIV Application Commentary*, *The Bible Knowledge Commentary* (edited by Walvoord & Zuck), *the Tyndale New Testament Commentaries*, and William Barclay (*great for background and culture, but be careful of his spiritual applications).

Step 4: Online Assistance. Should you have a specific question about the study please e-mail your inquiry to: mannyqwcm@gmail.com

