

Sunday Service Sermons

10 January 2021

Spiritual Competency

“Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a workman who has no need to be ashamed, rightly handling the word of truth.” *2 Tim. 2:15*

That is the NIV translation.

Phillips puts it this way, “For yourself, concentrate on winning God’s approval, on being a workman with nothing to be ashamed of, and who knows how to use the word of truth to the best advantage.”

While it is true that God can use anybody he does want His people to be intelligent on the issues of faith.

Informed, aware and ready to testify to what they believe and why they believe it.

Paul is urging Timothy, and all of us who follow, to present ourselves as competent workers who are skilled in doing the work of God’s kingdom.

The better equipped we are the more God can use us.

I went to seminary to equip myself for God’s service even in the event that I would return home to farm and work in my local church.

But as I finished my degree I was pressured to be a pastor due to the need for pastors.

As fate would have it I soon returned to my home area and began the ministry God had for me.

For many years my ministry was to those who wanted a God connection but not a church obligation.

Like Paul being lead to the gentiles, I was lead to those who are less comfortable among long time church attendees.

After presenting our bodies as our living sacrifice to God we are then ready to be used by him to further His kingdom.

It is in and with our existence that we are to honor and glorify God.

It is with our existence that we are to demonstrate both the wisdom and power of God.

Paul affirmed this same idea in his first letter to the Corinthians, in which he declared that the body is the dwelling place of the Holy Spirit, and it should not participate in immoral activities.

We are to keep our existence, our essence, pure and usable for God.

Paul is encouraging us toward maturity, skill, and competency in the service of our Lord.

Paul appealed to Timothy’s sense of pride in personal accomplishment, “a workman who has no need to be ashamed.”

Have you ever seen a carpenter who is ashamed of his craftsmanship?

Or a bricklayer who laid a crooked wall?

Or a woman who made a dress and was then ashamed to wear it?

Paul was encouraging Timothy to present himself to God and to do what was necessary to become a skilled worker who “rightly handles the word of truth.”

We can do a number of things to improve our spiritual competency in our ministry for our Lord.

The King James Version translates this verse: “Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.”

Competency requires study and practice.

Only as we study can we be skilled.

Let us focus our attention on how we should study the Bible if we would rightly handle it so as to accomplish the purpose for which God intended it.

It is important to read the bible regularly.

We should spend time every day listening to God as he speaks to us through the Scriptures.

We should read the Bible subjectively

It is not enough that we read the Bible merely as a record of what happened in the ancient past.

God can and will speak to us in the present if we will listen to him.

We should read the bible intelligently.

One must beware of reading the Bible as he or she would read some kind of crystal ball.

We must follow certain guidelines as we study the Bible.

Seeing the Bible in its historical context.

Being aware of the times and conditions into which God spoke His Word.

And believing that it was divinely inspired by God himself.

We need to understand the language of the times.

Knowing the figures of speech and terminology used by the author to communicate divine truth.

We should study the Bible in a logical manner, not merely searching for proof texts to make our point.

Examine each phrase and verse in its original context.

Study the paragraph in the light of the chapter, and the chapter in the light of the book, and each book in the context of the whole of Scripture.

Remember that the Bible is a record of God's self-revelation.

Only the Holy Spirit can unlock his secrets and reveal to us the great Biblical truths of God.

We should read the Bible systematically.

A good pattern would be to read five chapters in the Old Testament every day and three chapters in the New Testament, reading straight through both the Old and New Testaments.

We should read the Bible prayerfully.

Memorize and meditate on the great promises and the great warnings in Scripture.

We should read the Bible obediently.

We should study the Word so that we might learn about God, ourselves, and others.

And as God reveals his truth to us, let us respond to it with love, appreciation, and obedience.

As it is important that ministers interpret the Scriptures correctly and apply them properly.

It is just as important that Sunday School teachers know how to handle the Word of God properly.

And it is equally important that every Christian study to show himself or herself a worker who does not need to be ashamed and who uses the Word of God rightly.

If we study diligently and present ourselves joyfully to our precious Lord, it is highly unlikely that we will be ashamed of ourselves or of our lives when we stand before him in Glory.

Also it will equip us to be ready and able to be used of God to further His Kingdom on Earth as it is in Heaven. Amen? Oh Yes, Amen and Amen!