

"Give Diligence ..."

"... to present thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, handling aright the word of truth" (2 Tim. 2:15).

Paul uses the word "*diligence*" frequently. The word signifies "haste in doing something;" the something, in the above case, being of presently oneself approved unto God. It should be the constant desire of every human to stand approved in the sight of God and to do so, one must make haste in that effort. The apostle does not charge Timothy to seek to be approved of man; that is immaterial; every man should desire to be approved in God's sight. Being approved of God is the difference between eternal life and joy, of heaven and hell.

"A workman that needeth not to be ashamed." Timothy was a "*workman*," a "*servant*" of Christ. Many parables set forth the truth that we are servants of God, sent to labor in His vineyard. There are the parables of the talents; the laborers in the vineyard, Paul's illustration that he and Apollos were "*fellow-laborers*" together. We have a work to do and we are blessed if we are active in doing His will; so that we might not be ashamed "*at his coming*."

"Handling aright the word of truth." The command to "*handle aright the word of truth*" implies that we can handle the truth incorrectly. Satan is a master deceiver and is skillful in the misuse of the truth. He steals it out of the heart of some; he perverts it in other circumstances. In the case of Eve, he denied it. The word of Paul has some hard things within it and some wrest it, subverting the minds of those who have not learned to fend for themselves (2 Pet. 3:16). We also may pervert the scriptures and must take care that we use them properly.

Both preceding and following this verse are passages that show how some might "pervert" God word. *"Of these things put them in remembrance, charging them in the sight of the Lord, that they strive not about words, to no profit, to the subverting of them that hear" (2 Tim. 2:14).* *"But shun profane babblings: for they will proceed further in ungodliness, and their words will eat as doth a gangrene" (2 Tim. 2:16).* Both verses are warnings against quarreling about words or profane babblings. No servant of Christ is handling aright God's word when he is constantly arguing about words. Words are important and none should conclude that Paul's words mean we should contend about the significance of words. To argue that the word *baptidzo* means "immerse" not sprinkle or pour is not included in those words which are "*profane babblings*." To contend that the word *psalmos* does not allow instruments of music in our worship is not "*striving about words*."

To show that "*unleavened*" means without leaven and such is the kind of bread we must break in the Lord's Supper is necessary. To contend that the word "*for*" in Acts 2:38 means "in order to obtain" the remission of sins rather than "because of" the remission of sins is not profane babblings. Words have meaning and we should respect what each word means -- but we must equally remember that we can argue about some words to no profit, resulting in the subverting or overthrowing of those who hear. It is a wise person who can discern between words that edify and those who subvert. Doing this is necessary in order that we may present ourselves approved unto God.

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