



2 Timothy 2:14-19

# WORK HARD TO KNOW THE TRUTH

*At the heart of the crisis in Western civilization lies the state of the mind... The problem is not only to win souls but to save minds. If you win the whole world and lose the mind of the world, you will soon discover you have not won the world. Indeed, it may turn out that you have actually lost the world... The greatest danger besetting American Evangelical Christianity is the danger of anti-intellectualism. The mind, at its greatest and deepest reaches, is not cared for enough... People are in a hurry to get out of the university and start earning money or serving the church or preaching the Gospel. They have no idea of the infinite value of spending years conversing with the greatest minds and souls of the past, and thereby ripening and sharpening and enlarging the powers of thinking... If it is the will of the Holy Ghost that we attend to the soul, certainly it is not His will that we neglect the mind. No civilization can endure with its mind being as confused and disordered as ours is today. All our ills stem proximately from the false philosophies that have been let loose in the world and that are now being taught in the universities, and ultimately of course, from the devil, whether or not the human agents know it... For the sake of greater effectiveness in witnessing to Jesus Christ Himself, as well as for our own sakes, Evangelicals cannot afford to keep on living on the periphery of responsible intellectual existence.* —Charles Malik, *The Two Tasks* (1980)

In 2 Timothy 2:14, Paul makes a shift in his exhortations to Timothy. In 1:8-2:13, Paul exhorts Timothy to stand strong as a good soldier of Christ. Now, in 2:14-26, he exhorts Timothy to be diligent, patient, gentle, humble, and loving as a pastor and servant in the church.

As a pastor, Timothy would need to be aware of four different types of people who are often a part of, or influencing, a local church:

1. **Word Fighters** (2:14).
2. **False Teachers** (2:16-18).
3. **Sideline Spectators** (2:20-21).
4. **Deceived Critics** (2:25-26).

In each case, Timothy is to respond as a faithful servant of the Lord.

## DON'T STRIVE ABOUT WORDS—INSTEAD STUDY THE WORD!

- The issue:
- The danger:
- The solution:

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

*The scandal of the evangelical mind is that there is not much of an evangelical mind. —Mark Noll*

**Charge.** Greek, *diamartyromai*, “to testify through and through; to bear witness to (and originally meant to do so under oath).”

**Strive about words.** Greek, *logomacheo*, lit., to be a word-fighter.

**Ruin.** Greek, *katastrophe*.

*Disputing about words seeks not the victory of truth but the victory of the speaker. —R. W. Ward*

**Study.** Grk, *spoudazo*, “to hasten to do something; to exert oneself; be diligent; labor.” It suggests an intensity of purpose and effort. The word “study” in KJV English meant “to strive toward; devote oneself to; to show zeal for.”

*The great cause of neglecting the Scriptures is not want of time, but want of heart, some idol is taking the place of Christ.*

—Robert Chapman (1803-1902)

*Be diligent to present yourself approved to God as a workman who does not need to be ashamed, accurately handling the word of truth. (NASB)*

- Knowing God's truth requires \_\_\_\_\_.
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### How to Study God's Word

1. Observation. Seeing what it says in its context.  
*Meditation. Allowing it to penetrate my heart.*
2. Interpretation. Studying to understand its meaning.  
*Devotion. Learning from the wisdom of others.*
3. Application. Seeking to live it out in my daily life.

### DON'T BE INFECTED BY FALSE TEACHING— INSTEAD BE FOCUSED ON FRUITFUL LIVING!

- The dangers of false teaching.
  - It is \_\_\_\_\_ to those living in sin.
  - It is \_\_\_\_\_ like gangrene.
  - It is \_\_\_\_\_ to one's faith.
- The example of false teaching.
- The antidote to false teaching.
  - Grow deeper \_\_\_\_\_ in God's Word.
  - Look for the \_\_\_\_\_ of God's Spirit.
  - Rest in the \_\_\_\_\_ of God's sovereignty.

*What a person thinks about God's Word in reality reflects what a person thinks about God.*

—John MacArthur, Jr.

*The vigor of our spiritual life will be in exact proportion to the place held by the Bible in our life and thoughts. —George Müller (1805-98)*

**Rightly dividing.** Grk, *orthotomeo*, "to cut straight." Used in Greek for plowing a straight furrow or for cutting and squaring a stone so it fits perfectly into a structure.

*Truth is conformity to fact or reality; exact accordance with that which is, or has been, or shall be.*

—Noah Webster (1758-1843)

*Truth is so obscure in these times and falsehood so established, that unless we love the truth, we can not know it. —Blaise Pascal (1623-62)*

*Certain carryovers from the pagan religions out of which believers came...could have led some to the conclusion that all of salvation's blessings were to be experienced now. A modern parallel is what we might describe as Christian triumphalism (or the 'health and wealth' gospel), which tends to present the Christian message as the quick solution to all of life's problems. The same basic mistake seems to be involved.*

—Philip H. Towner

*We must make a great difference between God's Word and the word of man. A man's word is a little sound, that flies into the air, and soon vanishes; but the Word of God is greater than heaven and earth, yea, greater than death and hell, for it forms part of the power of God, and endures everlastingly.*

—Martin Luther (1483-1546)