

## ~2 Timothy~

## Lesson 10 – Rightly Dividing the Word of Truth (part 2)

We are continuing our study of the book of 2<sup>nd</sup> Timothy. Last week we began looking at 2 Timothy 2:14-19. In this section, Paul began warning and exhorting Timothy concerning false teachers in the church. This was a main point in his first epistle and Paul stationed Timothy in Ephesus to combat these heresies and develop structure in the church to uphold the pure Words of Truth.

As we learned last week, these false teachers were known as the Gnostics, and they had infiltrated the church of Ephesus and were destroying the Truth in that church. Deceiving spirits and doctrine of demons were teaching heresy and blaspheming the name of God and drawing many Christians away from the Truth.

As we saw last week, these doctrines of demons didn't stop in the first century. Satan and his demons have been using this Gnostic reasoning for the last 2,000 years and unfortunately we have seen this heresy corrupt many people in the church and much of the church itself. The most recent effects of this heresy and the one that hits closest to home was the uprise of human thinking in the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century which came through Gnostic influence.

- This was an age of innovation, technology, science, and discovery.
  - All of which, if motivated toward righteousness, are great things. However, these amazing achievements started distracting mankind from God and making men think that they were gods themselves.
  - The self righteous, free thinking heresies of the Gnostics began to rise up through deceiving spirits.
  - And unfortunately the church, instead of standing up for the Truth, started compromising the Truth and the church started becoming more like the world to “keep up” with modern advancements.
  - Such wrong thinking and compromise led to the biggest downfall of all. The “re-issue” of the Bible
    - In 1881, two men, Westcott and Hort, led by deceiving spirits, introduced a “new and revised” Greek New Testament to the world. This Greek New Testament revised the Textus Receptus of the pure words of the NT and brought in the heretical Alexandrian texts and claimed them to be the True Word of God.
    - And instead of the church recognizing their deception as Erasmus did in the 16<sup>th</sup> century, the modern church, influenced by the world, embraced this doctrine of demons and issued a “new and revised” Bible.
    - This deception began to create doubt in the Word of God and from this point forward, the world and the church has been drifting away from the Truth.
  - This new age of advancement over the last 150 years, this era of higher thinking has created an abundance of wealth in the west, but in doing so has drawn us further from the Truth.
    - The world has focused this abundance on self, making themselves gods. A right to free-thinking centered on selfishness.
    - And unfortunately the modern church has fallen into this trap. It is trying to become more like the world, falling into the trap of the religion of self. An inner-directed experience of religion rather than teaching the Truth of the Word of God.
  - The Gnostic heresies of self-righteous, higher thinking, making themselves their own god... has invaded the church and many so-called “evangelicals” have compromised the Truth
    - This is what the enemy does. It is obsessed with disputes and making a war of words against the Word of Truth, a logomacheo, λογομαχέω, against the logos, λόγος, THE WORD, **1 Tim 6:3-5**, read what God said to Ezekiel, **Ezek 2:6-8**
    - Paul's response to these heresies whether in the 1<sup>st</sup> century or the 21<sup>st</sup> century is to be diligent and Rightly Divide the Word of Truth

Let's read our text today- **2 Timothy 2:14-19**

**2 Timothy 2:15** †Be diligent to present yourself approved to God, †a worker who does not need to be ashamed, †rightly dividing the word of truth.

† *Be diligent to present yourself approved to God...*

- “*be diligent*” spoudazo, σπουδάζω, to make a maximum effort. The KJV translates this “study” but it is really more than that.
  - It is diligence, faithfulness, eagerness toward God and His will on your life, **2 Pet 1:10; 3:14**.
  - Paul is still talking directly to Timothy, spoudason, σπούδασον, is a second person singular. “You Timothy” make a maximum effort
- “*to present yourself approved to God*” σεαυτὸν δόκιμον παραστήσαι τῷ Θεῷ,
  - seauton, σεαυτὸν, is a second person singular pronoun- “You Timothy, make a maximum effort to present “yourself”, seauton, σεαυτὸν, approved to God”
  - “*present*” parastesai, παραστήσαι, compound of παρα – along side (parallel)+ ἵστημι, to stand – to stand alongside God. Standing in agreement with God
  - “*approved*”, dokimon, δόκιμον, being approved as genuine. Remember James 1 and Romans 5
    - It is trials, testing, suffering that intensely works our dokimion which intensely works our hupomene bringing us to glory, or in these words, “stand alongside God, approved as genuine”
    - Remember the words Paul has already told Timothy, “*If we endure, we will reign with Him*”, 2 Tim 2:12, “*that we might obtain the salvation which is in Christ with eternal glory*”, 2 Tim 2:10; Col 1:21-23; 3:1-4.

† make a maximum effort to stand alongside God, approved as genuine, ... *a worker who does not need to be ashamed...*

- “*a worker*” ergates, ἐργάτης, this goes back to verse 6, *the hard working farmer*.
  - Also 1 Tim 5:17, *those who labor in the word and doctrine*.
  - You can see the idea Paul is trying to get across; the hardworking farmer; making a maximum effort; laboring in the Word- all in faithfulness to do God’s will.
  - This isn’t earning your way to salvation, this isn’t works based, it is faith based. It is being faithful in our call. Heb 4:11, *Let us therefore be diligent* spoudazo, σπουδάζω, *to enter that rest...*” and Heb 4:3 says, “*we who have believed do enter that rest*”
    - Making a maximum effort, laboring in His Word...is from the point of believing God
    - This is laboring or being diligent to enter His rest is being a worker with God, a fellow-worker in His plan of redemption, being faithful to Him and His calling on our life.
- “*a worker...who does not need to be ashamed*”
  - Paul told Timothy at the beginning of this letter, 2 Tim 1:8- “*do not be ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me his prisoner, but share with me in the sufferings for the gospel...*”;
  - Romans 1:16- *For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes...*
  - 1 Peter 4:16- *Yet if anyone suffers as a Christian, let him not be ashamed, but let him glorify God in this matter.*
  - Acts 4:31- ... *and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and they spoke the word of God with boldness.*

† a worker...who does not need to be ashamed... *rightly dividing the word of truth.*

- This is the act of being diligent, being a worker, approved genuine and unashamed to stand alongside God,
- “**rightly divide**” orthotomeo, ὀρθοτομέω, to cut a straight path. To set forth truthfully without perversion or distortion. A compound word of orthos, ὀρθῶς, upright straight, correct + temno, τέμνω, to cut sharp
  - This term can be used for a mason cutting stones straight and true, so the building stands upright. It can also be used in cutting a straight path to make a road.
  - This is the only place orthotomeo, ὀρθοτομέω, is used in the NT, but we find it in Proverbs 3:6 in the LXX- *In all your ways acknowledge Him, And He shall direct*, orthotomeo, ὀρθοτομέω, *your paths*. (He shall make your paths straight)
  - Another way we could translate this within the context of what Paul is saying is to “guide the Word of Truth along a straight path (like cutting a path that goes straight to its goal) without being turned aside by a war of words or profane and idle babblings.”
- “**the Word of Truth**” ton logon tes aletheias, τὸν λόγον τῆς ἀληθείας,
  - Paul was entrusted with the pure Words of Jesus Christ. And as we learned a couple of weeks ago, Jesus is the Word, Jn 1:1, He is the logos, λόγος that cannot be bound, 2 Tim 2:9. He is the Word of God, ὁ λόγος τοῦ Θεοῦ, Rev 19:13
  - We also know Jesus is the Truth, John 14:6 “*I am the way, the Truth, and the life*”, and the Word of God is Truth, John 17:17 ~ *Sanctify them by Your Truth. Your Word*, logos, λόγος *is Truth*.
- To summarize verse 15:

Put forth a maximum effort yourself, to stand alongside God, approved as genuine, being a faithful worker, not ashamed of the testimony of the Lord, rightly guiding the Word of Truth along a straight path without being turned aside by a war of words or profane and idle babblings.

2 Timothy 2:16-18 <sup>16</sup> †But shun profane and idle babblings, for they will increase to more ungodliness. <sup>17</sup> †And their message will spread like cancer. †Hymenaeus and Philetus are of this sort, <sup>18</sup> who have strayed concerning the truth, saying that the resurrection is already past; and they overthrow the faith of some.

† <sup>16</sup> *But shun profane and idle babblings, for they will increase to more ungodliness.*

- “**shun**” periistemi, περιῖσθημι, to stand in avoidance. To purposely go around. This is a present imperative, meaning we are commanded to continue avoiding, and it is in the middle voice meaning we are acting this out on ourselves.
  - We ourselves must keep a watchful eye and avoid profane and idle babble.
- periistemi, περιῖσθημι, is the 2<sup>nd</sup> use of the compound, histemi, ἵσθημι, to stand
  - The 1<sup>st</sup> was in verse 15- parastesai, παραστήσαι “to stand alongside”
  - Notice Paul’s use of the prepositions in conjunction with histemi, ἵσθημι, to stand:
    - para, παρα + ἵσθημι, = to stand alongside God, v. 15
    - peri, περι + ἵσθημι, = take a stance to avoid and go around idle babblings, v.16
    - there is a 3<sup>rd</sup> use of this word in verse 19 coming up
- “**profane and idle babblings**” pointless and empty talk
  - That’s what false teaching is, pointless and empty talk that leads to ruin
- “**for they will increase to more ungodliness**”
  - The pointless talk will increase and morph into great ungodliness and impiety, which, if left unhindered, will increase to a rejection of Christ and eternal damnation, 1 Tim 6:4- *envy, strife, reviling, evil suspicion*; 2 Tim 2:14- *for the purpose of the ruin and destruction of the hearer*.

† <sup>17</sup> *And their message will spread like cancer.*

- “*their message*” ha logos auton, ὁ λόγος αὐτῶν, Paul purposely uses logos, λόγος here to show a contrast between the “True” logos, λόγος and their false teachings.
  - This is not the WORD OF GOD, but the word of THEM. The logos they claim as truth is false. The Gnostics claimed to know the truth, but their truth is not “THE Truth”.
  - Paul is contrasting this by saying we must rightly divide THE WORD OF TRUTH because their FALSE WORD will spread like cancer or gangrene, γάγγραινα,
    - Gangrene is a bacteria that spreads swiftly and is fatal
    - Their word is death, but our WORD is life

† *Hymenaeus and Philetus are of this sort, <sup>18</sup> who have strayed concerning the truth, saying that the resurrection is already past; and they overthrow the faith of some.*

- “*Hymenaeus*” is mentioned in 1 Timothy 1:19-20 as a rejector of the Truth
- “*who have strayed concerning the Truth*” Hymenaeus and Alexander were possible ringleaders within the Gnostic circle because we see them mentioned in 1 Timothy and then mentioned again here in 2 Timothy. 2 Timothy 2:17; 4:14-15- “*Alexander the coppersmith did me much harm... You must also be aware of him for he has greatly resisted our words*”
  - This word “*strayed*”, astocheo, ἀστοχέω, to deviate or depart- is used three times in the NT all of which occur in only these two letters to Timothy, **1 Tim 1:6; 6:20-21**; 2 Tim 2:18
    - The Gnostic heresies were leading astray many in the church of Ephesus, to the point that Paul says in 2 Tim 1:15- “*all those in Asia have turned away from me*”
  - “*strayed...concerning the Truth*”
    - Those who deviate or depart the Truth are *destitute of the Truth*, 1 Tim 6:5; *always learning but never able to come to the knowledge of the Truth*, 2 Tim 3:7; *they resist the Truth*, 2 Tim 3:8; *they do not endure sound doctrine...and they turn their ears away from the Truth*, 2 Tim 4:3-4;
- “*saying that the resurrection is already past*”
  - The Gnostics didn’t believe that Jesus actually became flesh and blood because they say matter cannot be saved.
    - Likewise for the Christian’s resurrection. Since matter cannot be saved, they say there is no physical resurrection, only a spiritual ascent to knowledge and higher thinking
    - They were asserting that the resurrection had already occurred in the spiritual renewal of the believer and the physical resurrection would not take place.
    - This goes against the foundational core of Christianity.
  - Our blessed hope is based on Jesus’ resurrection so that we too we will have eternal life in our resurrected glorified bodies and live with Jesus forever, Titus 1:2, 13
  - Paul tells us in Romans that *we are eagerly waiting for the adoption, the redemption of our body*, Romans 8:23
  - In Corinthians Paul says our faith is futile if we don’t believe in a physical resurrection, **1 Cor 15:12-19**.
  - The resurrection is the foundation to our Christian doctrine. This is one of those pillars of the Truth that hold up the Gospel. This is why the Gnostics were attacking it and trying to break it down and this kind of nonsense is ruin to the hearers, 2 Tim 2:14.
- “*and they overthrow the faith of some*”
  - “*overthrow*”- overturn, destroy, corrupt. Those who get sucked into the lies and deceit of these false teachings will have their faith corrupted and it leads to the total ruin and destruction of their faith, and *without faith it is impossible to please Him*, Heb 11:6; *if we are*

*faithless (without faith) He will deny us*, 2 Tim 2:12-13. This effect has damning, eternal consequences

- “*the faith of some*” Why is it that some will have their faith overthrown?
  - Those who are weak, unskilled in the Word, those who compromise the Word of Truth, those who don’t remain on the straight path of Truth will be overthrown by these false teachings.

2 Timothy 2:19 †Nevertheless the solid foundation of God stands, having this seal: “The Lord knows those who are His,” and, “Let everyone who names the name of Christ depart from iniquity.”

† *Nevertheless the solid foundation of God stands, having this seal: “The Lord knows those who are His,” and, “Let everyone who names the name of Christ depart from iniquity.”*

- “Nevertheless”- *mentoi, μέντοι*, - However, in contrast to those who have their faith overthrown, the solid foundation of God and His faithfulness still stands.
- The solid foundation of God is that He, the Word, is faithful, *πιστός ὁ λόγος*, 2 Tim 2:11
  - This all goes back to Jesus who is the faithful Word of God. No matter what we do or what decisions we make, good or bad, that One who is faithful, remains faithful, 2 Tim 2:11, 13
- “*having this seal*” The seal is a sign or a stamp of approval that shows genuineness.
  - The seal isn’t a predestined fate to individuals.
    - Some commentators say this is a sealing on the righteous
  - No, it is a stamp of approval on the foundation as His guarantee of faithfulness.
  - It is a seal of His faithfulness:
    - rewards to those who are faithful
    - and rejection to those who have their faith overthrown.
    - The seal isn’t a guarantee of our eternal salvation, but rather a guarantee of His faithfulness, a guarantee of His promises that in Him the promises of God are Yes and Amen, **2 Corinthians 1:18-22**
    - It is a seal to guarantee that if you name the name of Christ and take a stance away from unrighteousness, He is faithful to grant you eternal salvation.
- This seal on the foundation of God is not a predestined seal on the righteous that they can never waiver or be destroyed by false teaching.
- No, if this was the case, why did Paul just spend 5 verses solemnly warning us to avoid false teaching?
  - The seal is a word of encouragement that says, the Word is faithful, God is faithful to uphold righteousness, “He knows those who are His, those who are naming the name of Christ, and He is faithful to reward those who are is.”
  - And He is equally faithful to deny those whose faith has been overturned.
    - God is faithful to distinguish between the faithful and the faithless. Therefore, the foundation is sealed in this way:
- “*The Lord knows those who are His,*” and, “*Let everyone who names the name of Christ depart from iniquity.*” “all those who are naming the name of Christ must stand away from unrighteousness”
  - God’s true servants are those who are holy and faithful to His Word; those who are naming His name and are keeping themselves away from unrighteousness.
    - John 10:14- *I AM the Good Shepherd and I know My sheep, and am known by My own.*
  - “*depart from iniquity*” , *ἀποστήτω ἀπὸ ἀδικίας*, is “taking a stance away from unrighteousness”
    - This statement is a very emphatic statement using *ἀπὸ* “away from” twice.

- The word aposteto, ἀποστήτω, comes from the word apostate. However, this is being used as an apostate away from unrighteousness.
- Also, this root word is ahistemi, ἀφίστημι, to stand away from.
  - This is the 3<sup>rd</sup> instance of Paul using a compound of this root word, histemi, ἵστημι, to stand. He is doing this to make the comparison.
  - παρα + ἵστημι, = to stand alongside God, v. 15
  - περι + ἵστημι, = take a stance to avoid and go around idle babblings, v.16
  - ἀπὸ + ἵστημι, = to stand away from unrighteousness, v.19
- Those who are faithful to His Word keep themselves from iniquity, Psalm 119:2-3, 9, 101, 105, 133 and they are cleansed and sanctified by His Word, Jn 15:3, 17:17
  - Those who guide the Word of Truth along a straight path, and guide their life by the Word of Truth will be sanctified and keep themselves from unrighteousness.

In summary:

You, Timothy, continue to bear in mind as foundational all this that I have told you so far. Solemnly charging and urging you before the Lord not to engage in a war of words striving about the Truth which leads to no profit, ruin and destruction to anyone who hears and receives these lies into their life.

Put forth a maximum effort to stand alongside God, approved as genuine, being a faithful worker, not ashamed of the testimony of the Lord, rightly guiding the Word of Truth along a straight path without being turned aside by a profane and idle babblings.

But take the stance to avoid and go around pointless and empty talk, for this will increase into great ungodliness and impiety which, if left unhindered, will lead to a rejection of the Truth, being swayed away by heretical words saying, “the resurrection has already past”. This heresy is the path to eternal damnation and ruin, and if taken heed, it will spread like gangrene and destroy and corrupt the faith of those who believe the lie.

However, in contrast to those who have their faith overthrown, God remains faithful. For those who are faithful to Him, He will reward, and those who are faithless, He will deny, nevertheless, the Word of God is faithful, and the solid foundation of God stands, that even if we are faithless, He remains faithful and the foundation is sealed in this way, “the Lord knows those who are His and all those who are naming the name of Christ must stand away from unrighteousness”