

Two Essentials in Rightly Dividing God's Word – Part 1 1 Corinthians 10:32-11:2

Introduction:

1. Everything a believer needs is found in the Bible. **2 Timothy 3:16-17**
2. But you must know how to study it in order to get the profit out of it that God intended.
 - You must follow God's prescribed method of study. God has given us this in **2 Timothy 2:15**. "Rightly dividing" literally means "to cut straight."
3. If we read the context, we learn that there were two men that were erring in doctrine. How were they erring?
 - They were saying that the resurrection was past. What did this result in? The overthrowing and subverting of other believers.
 - These guys did not leave and abandon the Scriptures, yet they were clearly teaching false doctrine. It isn't that they were unscriptural, but they were simply failing to rightly divide God's Word.
 - By simply misplacing the time period of the resurrection, they were involved in false doctrine. If the resurrection was past, we are no longer in the time of grace, but in the last days of prophecy.
4. Here in our text, we find two essentials that are absolutely necessary if a person is to rightly divide God's Word.

First, you must know who God is addressing.

1. Whenever you are attempting to understand a passage of Scripture, the first question you should ask is, "Who is God talking to in this passage?"
2. Notice how Paul divides humanity into three groups in **1 Corinthians 10:32**.
 - Jews - those who are members of the nation of Israel
 - Gentiles - anyone that is not a Jew - all other nations and people groups
 - The church of God - those who are members of the body of Christ in this present dispensation of grace - **Ephesians 1:22-23; Galatians 3:26-28**
3. God's Word is always directly addressing one of these groups, or individuals within one of these groups.
4. Remember this: the entire Bible is written **for** us, but it is not all written **to** us.
 - The command to build the ark
 - The command to build the temple
 - Christ's command to go to Jerusalem and wait for the promise of the Spirit
 - The Sabbath day command to be observed specifically on the seventh day
5. Many of the events in the Bible are written for our example and for our practical application (**1 Corinthians 10:6, 11**). They are not written for us to build a doctrine around.
 - **Illustration:** A pastor says, "Every Christian should bring in gold and jewelry to help pay the bills for the church because that's what they did in the Old Testament to build the tabernacle."
 - This is false doctrine. Why? Because that Scripture wasn't written directly to us. It was never written for that purpose. Can we learn from it? Yes, but we don't build a doctrine around it. This was clearly for Israel.

6. Every passage has a **doctrinal** application for the group addressed and a **practical** application for people of all ages.
 - In **Acts 2:38**, who is God addressing through Peter? The context is clear - the house of Israel. vs. 36
 - Yet people have built an entire doctrinal belief system around this verse. Yet they conveniently ignore verses 44-45.
7. Dispensationalism is basically just a time line of history and recognizing God's instructions for mankind in those different time periods.
 - You recognize the differences of how God was working and you recognize where you are in the divine history of the ages.
 - God never changes, but His dealings with man change. God's instructions on how He desires man to respond to Him and what He would have them do have indeed changed throughout the course of history.
8. Those who fail to make a distinction in God's messages will end up confused and sometimes completely bewildered.
 - For example, we are not required to offer animal sacrifices that were required under the Old Testament law system.
9. The entire Bible is written for our learning, but it is presumptuous to think that the entire Bible is written directly to us. People in past ages have needed God's instruction, and people in future time periods (tribulation and kingdom) will also need God's instruction.
10. God's Word is a marvelous book that shows us God's Word to different people in different time periods under different circumstances.
11. We can learn from all of it, but it simply is not all written directly to us. As we rightly divide, we examine carefully who God is addressing and in what time period.