

The Fine Line

*Rightly Dividing the Word of Truth
2 Timothy 2:15
Rev. Bradley Jury*

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

Isaiah 28:9-13 –The "Fine" Line

Whom shall he teach knowledge? and whom shall he make to understand doctrine? them that are weaned from the milk, and drawn from the breasts. For precept must be upon precept, precept upon precept; line upon line, line upon line; here a little, and there a little: For with stammering lips and another tongue will he speak to this people. To whom he said, This is the rest wherewith ye may cause the weary to rest; and this is the refreshing: yet they would not hear. But the word of the LORD was unto them precept upon precept, precept upon precept; line upon line, line upon line; here a little, and there a little; that they might go, and fall backward, and be broken, and snared, and taken.

There is a basic difference between an explorer and a tourist. The tourist travels quickly, stopping only to observe the highly noticeable or publicized points of interest. The explorer, on the other hand, takes his time to search out all that he can find.

"The Bible without the Holy Spirit is a sun-dial by moonlight." - D.L. Moody

Have you ever visited Conner Prairie? I've been to historical reenactments around the country including colonial Williamsburg, Gettysburg, Jamestown, Yorktown, Plymouth. In each of the visits I have observed the meticulous craftsmanship of the workers. skilled craftsman used the original tools to hand-craft several breathtaking pieces of quilting, iron tools, weapons, candles, pottery and other every-day necessities. It is amazing to conceive of the fact that they used tools which we would find crude and by hand, by candle and window light, made pieces of furniture which still exist today and we still buy today!

Only in watching someone with this skill do you truly appreciate the talent it requires. In watching them work, you also begin to think about what it takes to develop such skill.

The Bible clearly uses a word picture similar in experience to our journey through this Colonial workshop. The command of scripture is that we are to study so diligently that we can pass the same test and evaluation that would allow someone to become certified as a master carpenter. That is the clear teaching of this passage. The beauty of God's ability as a teacher is His ability to be so very clear. This word picture is simple and easy to understand. We are commanded to present ourselves to God as a master skilled craftsman.

Can you do that? Can you honestly say that you handle God's word with such skill? Can you say that you have put in the diligent effort to develop such specific skills that you handle God's word and apply it in your life with the skill of a master carpenter? This morning I would like to define for you what I believe those basic skills are. I want you to be able to honestly know where you are and what you need to know in order to be able to stand before God with integrity and confidence.

1. We must handle the Scriptures with great CAREFULNESS.

2 Peter 1:19-21

We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts: Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation. For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.

- **Literal Principle**
- **Figurative Principle**
- **Historical Principle**
- **Grammatical Principle**

2. We must rely upon the Holy Spirit with great CONFIDENCE.

1 Corinthians 2:14

But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.

1 John 2:27-28

But the anointing which ye have received of him abideth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you: but as the same anointing teacheth you of all things, and is truth, and is no lie, and even as it hath taught you, ye shall abide in him. And now, little children, abide in him; that, when he shall appear, we may have confidence, and not be ashamed before him at his coming.

*“God has not hidden His truth from us,
but its meaning is not always instantly clear.”*

—John MacArthur

3. **We must bow to the power of God with great SUBMISSIVENESS.**

Jeremiah 23:29

Is not my word like as a fire? saith the LORD; and like a hammer that breaketh the rock in pieces?

Hebrews 4:12

For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

Jesus quoted O.T. Scripture on the topics of...

- False teaching
- Compromise
- Worldliness
- Prophecy –end times

Jas 1:25

But whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed.

2Co 3:18

But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord.

4. **4 Tools for practical Bible interpretation:**

May I suggest 4 tools to help you have a practical approach to reading your Bible. I have used these 4 tools for several years both in my private Bible reading and in my preparation to teach and preach from the Scriptures:

- Principle to outline
- Command to obey
- Promise to claim
- Example to follow

5. Questions to think about further:

- Am I willing to allow the Bible to speak for itself?
- Am I discerning when it comes to sorting out? (Princ, Com, Prom, Ex.)
- Am I willing to allow the Word of God to tell me how to live even in the personal preferences of my life?

At the height of her fame as the other woman in the Ivana and Donald Trump breakup, Marla Maples spoke of her religious roots. She believed the Bible, she told interviewers, then added the disclaimer, "but you can't always take [it] literally and be happy."

—Today in the Word, Moody Bible Institute, Jan, 1992, p.22.

- What are the repercussions of living without submission to the truth?

1 Samuel 12:15—Samuel's warning to Israel when anointing Saul as first king of Israel.

But if ye will not obey the voice of the LORD, but rebel against the commandment of the LORD, then shall the hand of the LORD be against you, as it was against your fathers.

1 Samuel 15:22—Samuel's rebuke to Saul for offering up a sacrifice without approaching God the right way.

And Samuel said, Hath the LORD as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the LORD? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams.