



## Rightly Dividing the Word of Truth – Part 1

Tim Canup

Paul wrote, “Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth” (II Timothy 2:15). The New King James Version translates it, “Be diligent to present yourself approved to God...” We should be well impressed that God wants us to do more than casually read over His Word; but rather, to diligently study it. Let us give attention to the last phrase of this verse, “...rightly dividing the word of truth.”

What does this mean? It **does not** mean dividing truth from error. Yes! We do have an obligation to discern truth from error as taught by others (I Thessalonians 5:21; Hebrews 5:12-14); however, this is not what this verse teaches. All things in the Bible are recorded accurately, even when it records an erroneous statement made by another, (for example, the arguments of Job’s friends or some of the teachings of the Pharisees). What then does it mean? The American Standard Version of 1901 helps us better understand, as it translates it, “handling aright.” We should so handle the Bible that our interpretation of any given passage is in harmony with the rest of the Bible. Some believe since we cannot all see the Bible alike, we should accept any and every interpretation offered. God had only one central meaning when He revealed His Word to us. If our interpretation is incorrect, then we will be held accountable. Jesus said, “I am **the way**, **the truth**, and the life...” (John 14:6), He did not say one of many ways or truths.

This verse means that we should study our Bibles so as to discern what is binding on us today from what was bound on those who lived under the Old Covenant (or Old Testament). Consider the example of Noah. God gave a specific command, to a specific man, in a specific time, for a specific purpose. God does not require us to build an ark for Him today. If we fail to make this distinction, we will be unable to determine what God expects of us in our service to

Him today. We also must realize we cannot take certain things from the Old Testament that we like and ignore the rest. In our next article, we shall notice that God has put an end of the requirements of the law of the Old Testament. So what purpose does the Old Testament serve? Paul answered when he said, “For whatever things were written before were written for our learning, that we through the patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope” (Romans 15:4).

At the West Jefferson church of Christ, we believe in the Old Testament. We believe it came from God and happened exactly as it is recorded; however, we do not believe the laws and requirements found therein are binding on us living today. We are bound by a new law, the New Testament (Please read Matthew 26:28; Colossians 2:14; Hebrews 9:15-17; 10:1, 9). We earnestly plead that you will come “Back to the Bible.” If you would like to study further with us from God’s Word by either an in-home open Bible study or correspondence course my mail, please print & return this coupon to: Back To The Bible; 221 Barnett Street; West Jefferson, NC 28694 or visit our website @ [www.wjchurchofchrist.org](http://www.wjchurchofchrist.org).

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