

## How To Study Your Bible (part 3—Differences)

2 Timothy 2:15—“...*rightly dividing the word of truth.*”

### TOP TEN SIGNS YOU MAY NOT BE STUDYING YOUR BIBLE ENOUGH:

- 10) The Preacher announces the sermon is from Galatians ... and you check the table of contents.
  - 9) You think Abraham, Isaac, & Jacob had a hit song during the 1960's.
  - 8) You get frustrated when you can't find Charlton Heston listed in the Concordance.
  - 7) Your favorite Old Testament patriarch is Hercules.
  - 6) You didn't realize you left your Bible on the pew last Sunday until you were leaving for church this Sunday.
  - 5) You believe “cleanliness is next to godliness” is actually a verse in the Bible.
  - 4) You see your kids reading the Song of Solomon and demand: "Who gave you this stuff?"
  - 3) You think the Minor Prophets worked in rock quarries.
  - 2) You keep falling for it when the Pastor says to turn to the book of Hezekiah.
- And the number one sign you may not be reading your Bible enough:
- 1) The kids keep asking too many questions about your usual bedtime story: "Jonah the Shepherd Boy and His Ark of Many Colors."

The Bible is like a blue print. A blue print is a plan for building (site plan; foundation; plumbing; electrical, etc.). The Bible lays out God's “building plan” for the ages. What I am seeking to do in these message is teach you how to read God's blue print.

Bible study involves “*rightly dividing the word of truth.*” “*Rightly dividing*” comes from a word meaning “to cut straight.” Paul was a tentmaker. A tentmaker must cut straight lines in the fabric, otherwise the pieces would not fit together when sewn.

DIVISION IS NEGATIVE—That's why many Christians don't like studying dispensational truth. Division is contrary to the philosophy of this world. The world says “unite” (make everything the same; break down boundaries). God says “divide.” We are not to integrate anything. We are to divide, not blend.

ILLUS: TEA BLENDING is a special art today. There are all kinds of blends of teas (Orange spice; Raspberry teas; Earl Grey etc.). The trick is to

blend in another favor with the tea to make it palatable. Many churches are blending Law and Gospel, works and faith, and leading undiscerning souls astray. We are not to rightly *blend* the Word, but rightly *divide* it.

When you divide something you MAKE A DIFFERENCE. When Jesus comes again, He will divide the sheep from the goats (Mt. 25:32)—He will make a difference. When we study our Bible we **look for things that are different** (example: Rev. 6:2 cf. 19:11-16—horse riders are similar, but not the same). We must make a distinction where God makes a difference (cf. Ex. 11:7; Lev. 10:10).

➡ A failure to distinguish between things that are different leads to confusion (cf. Lev. 18:23; 20:12; Acts 19:32; 1 Cor. 14:7, 33).

**ILLUS:** If you don't discriminate at an intersection regulated by a traffic light, there is going to be confusion (and likely a crash)!

- A difference between the Old Testament and the New Testament.
- A difference between a Jew, a Gentile, and the church (1 Cor. 10:32).
- A difference between God's plan for the earth and His plan for the heavens.
- A difference in the ministry of the Twelve and the ministry of Paul.

➡ God never changes (Mal. 3:6), but He may change His methods (Mk. 10:51-52 - healing Blind Bartimaeus; cf. John 9:6-7 - man born blind).

### **Seven examples of dispensational divisions / differences:**

1. **Changes regarding Capital punishment** — Forbidden in Gen. 4:8, 15 - Recommended in Gen. 9:6; Ex. 21:12; Rom. 13:4; Acts 25:11.
2. **Changes in observing Sabbath days** — Commanded in Ex. 20:8-10; Lev. 23:1-6, 10, 15, 24, 27) - Changed after the cross (Col. 2:14-17; Gal. 4:9-11).
3. **Changes in Diet** — Regulations for Jews under Law - (Lev. 11:2-4 - No dietary laws after Acts 10:9-15 cf. 1 Tim. 4:1-5).
4. **Changing commissions** (Kingdom- Mt. 10:5-7; Church- Rom. 1:13-16 cf. Mark 16:15; Mt. 24:14; Col. 1:4, 23)

5. **Change in the basis of forgiveness** — Before the cross - Mt. 6:14-15; 18:21-35 / After the cross - Eph. 4:32.
6. **Change in destiny after death** between the O.T. and N.T. (Luke 16:22 cf. 2 Cor. 5:8; Phil. 1:23)
7. **Changes in receiving the Holy Spirit** (Acts 2:28 cf. Acts 8:12, 15-17; 10:43-45, 48). Acts is a transitional book going from Law/Jews to Grace/gentiles.

**SUMMATION:** 2 Tim. 3:15-17: We must look at a verse of Scripture three ways:

1. **HISTORICALLY**— The content of a passage of Scripture actually happened in history just the way it says it happened.
2. **DOCTRINALLY / DISPENSATIONALLY** (or prophetically)—Every verse of Scripture is God speaking to a specific people for a specific purpose.
3. **DEVOTIONALLY / PRACTICALLY** (or inspirationally) — This verse is profitable for me to either rebuke me; correct me; or teach me how to live righteously today.

**PRINCIPLE:** All Scripture is *not* written TO us (doctrinally), but all Scripture is written FOR us (devotionally). *“For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for OUR LEARNING, that WE through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope”* (Rom. 15:4; 1 Cor 10:6, 11).

**Bible study should follow a simple three-step process**