

**WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO
SHOW THYSELF
APPROVED UNTO GOD?**

**THE STUDY WHICH MAKES ONE
APPROVED**
2nd Timothy 2:15

2. A good concordance. This is important especially for finding other Scriptures on the same subject and finding key words and phrases. (In book form or free online.)
3. Read the Word CONTEXTUALLY. That is read it and be clear about the context and background of the passage. (Who is it written by, who were the first recipients (Timothy/Titus), what is its primary message?) Ex. John 14:26.
4. Read the Word in its GENRE... is it a song, letter, biography, history, prophecy, didactic, poetry, wise sayings, practical instructions?
5. Read the Word with an historical-grammatical perspective.
 - a. Historically—with respect and regard for the history behind it! This is necessary to make an application from it. (Acts 20:7) (1st Cor. 10:11)
 - b. Grammatically—noun—who is the subject? Verb- what is the action being done or to be done? Connecting words—and, but, for, therefore, since, when, and after. (They are key in connecting words or sentences) (Ills. Hebrews 10:19... therefore... used 16 times in Hebrews alone)
 - c. With regards to time... (last days, now, after, then, immediately, in those days, etc.

W. Robert Palmer said this in regards to reading the Bible with understanding:

All issues [of faith] can be divided into three categories:

1. **Scriptural**—what has been revealed in Scripture, by precept or precedent.
2. **Unscriptural**—what has NOT been revealed in Scripture. Means something not in the Bible. (Opinions, liberty and respect must prevail here)
3. **Anti-Scriptural**—what violates the Scriptures. What is contrary to the Word or undermines or undercuts the Word.

Paul gave this instruction to Timothy... ***“Hold fast to the form of sound words which you have heard.”*** (2nd Ti. 2:13)

THE STUDY WHICH MAKES ONE APPROVED

The key Scripture for these messages is 2nd Timothy 2:15... "Study to show yourself approved unto God, a workman who needs not be ashamed, rightly dividing the Word of truth." (Most all more current translations, including the NKJV says, "Be diligent to present yourself..." The idea that is stressed even above the study element is the diligence this requires.) STUDY IS JUST A PART AND SUMMATION OF THAT! The ESV says "do your best..."

Nehemiah 8:8 NKJV ***"So they read distinctly from the book, in the Law of God; and they gave the sense, and helped them to understand the reading."***

Neh 8: 8 ***"They read from the Book of the Law of God and clearly explained the meaning of what was being read, helping the people understand each passage."*** NLT

One of our preachers, Knofel Staton wrote years ago, *"There are many opinions about the Bible, many interpretations of it. How can we sift through them all and find the truth? Why do people disagree about what the Bible says? The reason does NOT lie in the Bible itself, but in the readers."*

An even greater question is "How can we present ourselves before God to have His approval?"

Even in Jesus' time, there were groups of people who approached the Bible differently and sectarianism existed even then. It got to the place that the traditions of the spiritual leaders of generations past, became the acid test of truth, rather than what the Word really said. [Read Matthew 15:3] We can read the Bible and draw conclusions from the Bible through the lens of tradition and through the lens of prejudice. By Jesus' time, the Jews had become a very prejudiced people. They had lost sight of the heart of God for the world, including all its people/ethnic groups.

Why is an understanding and proper application of the Bible necessary?

1. You will err if you don't understand it. (Matthew 22:29)
2. It is written for our guidance. (Psalm 119:105)
3. It is inspired of God. (2nd Peter 1:20-21 & 2nd Timothy 3:16)
4. We are to speak the truth in love. (Eph.4:15)
5. We are to reach unity in the faith. (Eph. 4:13)
6. The Holy Spirit works through the inscribed Word. (Eph. 6:17)
7. We are to keep God's commandments. (1st Jn. 5:3)
8. Jesus want His words to abide in us. (Jn. 15:7)
9. We will be judged by God's Word. (Jn. 12: 48)
10. We are to handle correctly/rightly the Word of truth. (2nd Tim. 2:15)

Can the Bible really be understood? YES, absolutely yes! Can we understand everything about every subject covered or referred to in the Bible? NO! Of course not! But we can understand to an adequate measure what God's purpose, will, and expectation of us for life and salvation.

T. Norton Sterrett writes that there are **5 aspects of our heart** that we must have in order to understand the Bible:

1. A new heart. 1st Corinthians 2:14 & Ephesians 4:20-21
2. A hungry heart. 1st Peter 2:2
3. An obedient heart. Psalms 119:98-100
4. A disciplined heart. Matthew 7:7
5. A teachable heart. Isaiah 50:4

What tools do we need to read the Bible with understanding?

1. A good TRANSLATION. This is the foundation. (Not a paraphrase—they are helpful, but remember they are the words of men putting it in their own words and thoughts. Illus. Kenneth Taylor—The Living Bible)