



Preach Like a Lady



## Module 1

# Tools of the Trade

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## Equipping Yourself to Preach & Teach

### Unit 2

## STUDYING

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AFFIRMING FAITH

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# STUDYING

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

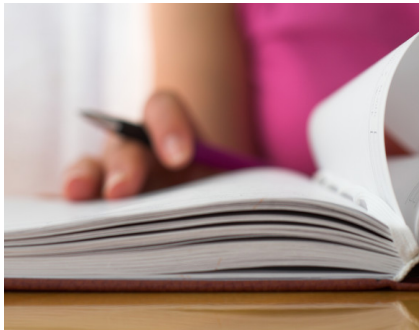
2 Timothy 2:15

## NOTES

### LESSON 1: THE WORK AND JOY OF STUDYING GOD'S WORD

Simply reading the Bible is not the same as studying it. An effective minister must be a dedicated **student**. You and I can hardly expect to see spiritual fruit without contributing our parts in preparation to preach and teach. This includes knowing both the God of the Word and the Word of God.

As a minister, you have a mandate to put time and effort into your studies—to present yourself to God and diligently seek to correctly interpret



Scripture. It's only when we correctly understand the Word ourselves that we can correctly impart its beautiful truths and mysteries to others.

The Word is a sacred treasure, and studying it is an adventure that will last a lifetime. On our journey we must treat Scripture with respect and be careful to receive it as the Lord has given it. You may be tempted a time or two to manipulate a passage or text to make a point, but God's Word must remain sovereign in its integrity. We cannot add to it. We cannot take away from it.

In Unit 1 we looked at 1 Tim 4:13: "Till I come, give attendance to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine." This Scripture tells us we need to apply and attach ourselves to reading, and that includes understanding what we read through study. It exhorts us to be "given" or "addicted to" exhortation and doctrine.

Study equips a minister with words that comfort, encourage, and instruct others in the precepts and teachings of God. How can we deliver what we don't possess? We must know the Word and allow it to speak to us. And we must use it to validate the words we believe the Lord personally revealed in our prayer, study, or through another believer.

⇒ When you study to *know*, not to *preach*, God will give you the appropriate message in each time and each place you minister.

When you are well studied, you will find that message preparation takes less time as you draw from previous studies to prepare for your next message. In fact, being well studied prepares you to **be a tool in the hand of God**. Before Ezra was used mightily by the Lord in the reunification of the people and the temple building project, he was “a ready scribe in the law.” He “had prepared his heart to seek the law of the Lord, and to do it, and to teach in Israel statutes and judgments” (see Ezra 7:6, 10). Ezra was prepared for the work of God in large part by his devotion to the Word of God.



Having something worthwhile to say requires an investment on your part. Scholarship can only be faked for so long. If you don't know the Word yourself, parroting someone else's messages or teachings can only take you so far. People can discern if a speaker “owns” a word or message, and there is no substitute for personal study.

“Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth” (2 Tim 2:15). It's your responsibility and mine to do our best to rightly handle the Word of God so we can live rightly—live unashamed.

As teachers and preachers, it's imperative that we not only know it and live it right for ourselves, but that we communicate it rightly to others. The Greek phrase translated “**rightly dividing**” in the KJV means not only to “**correctly handle**” but also to “**guide on a straight path**.” I need to walk the straight path, and I need to guide others on the straight path. How can a minister preach well—preach accurately— without study?

## THE JOY OF STUDY

To me, studying the Bible is a joy, but I have to be honest. It didn't start out that way. This big book with its big, old words can be intimidating. But not only is it important to your walk with God and your ministry to accurately understand the Bible, I believe that once you start digging in and discovering the beautiful truths in Scripture, you will find Bible study to be one of the greatest joys in your life.

Taste and see that the Lord is good. His Word gets better the more you ruminate on it. Studying brings a unique joy to those who delight in its treasures. Richard Foster, author of *Celebration of Discipline*, said, “**Study produces joy.**”

⇒ “Like any novice, we will find it [study] hard work in the beginning. But the greater our proficiency, the greater our joy. Study is well worth our most serious effort.”

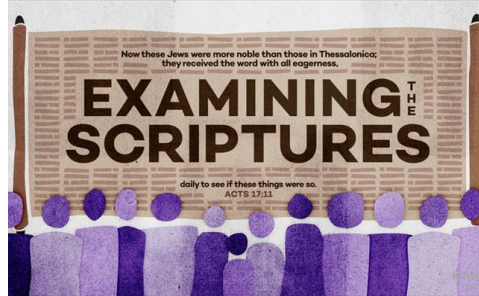
—Richard Foster

The Word of God is living and active (see Heb 4:12). God's Word is not only living itself, it causes life to come about, it "quickens." That is why we can read a verse many times and discover something new with each reading.

## A NOBLE PURSUIT

In Acts 17 the Bible mentions a group of believers, Bereans. Verse 10 says the Bereans were more noble than the believers in Thessalonica because "they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so."

These Christians not only listened attentively to the words spoken to them, ready to receive them, they searched the Bible and dug deep to make sure what Paul, their preacher, was saying to them corresponded with Scripture. The Bible calls this "noble." It's virtuous. Searching Scripture and using it to validate spoken words is a good thing for any believer to do, and critical for a minister.



⇒ Studying goes beyond written words. A true student will find life lessons everywhere—in nature and science, in people and relationships, in cultures and organizations.

Coming up next:

- Lesson 2: Gains from Study & Understanding Figures of Speech
- Lesson 3: Biblical Interpretation
- Lesson 4: Bible Translations & Study Resources
- Lesson 5: Word Meanings & Application
- Lesson 6: Inductive & Exegetical Bible Study Methods
- FREE BONUS: 30 Study Tips