

REMINDER

EVERYONE'S INVITED TO ATTEND THE -



BASIC LIFE PRINCIPLES CLASS

Providing practical, Biblical answers for your home, work, and personal life.

Topics Covered Include:

- Tracing Problems to Root Causes - *Stop Treating The Symptoms!*
- Experiencing True Success
- Discovering Purpose in Life
- Gaining Financial Freedom
- Building Genuine Friendships
- Having Harmony in Marriage
- Overcoming Feelings of Inferiority
- Learning How to Remove Guilt
- Conquering Anger and Bitterness
- Overcoming Impure Habits

***This Class Begins NEXT SUNDAY At 9:45 A. M.,
and Is Open To Anyone Age 14 Up.
Study materials provided.***

Every Christian Should Take this Class at Least Once in Their Life!

Due to time restrictions, we must begin promptly. Please be on time.



**The Late
Dr. Ron Dunn**

How To Interpret The Bible, Part I

by the late Evangelist Ron Dunn

Would you open your Bibles this morning to II Timothy 2, and I'm going to read just one verse...verse 15. Beginning this morning I want to give you a three part study on the subject that I think is one of the most vital subjects to Christians today, namely, interpreting the Bible for yourself. And we'll read the 15th verse of the second chapter of II Timothy, where he says to this young man, Timothy -

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

Now, I want to underscore that last phrase for it is the text of our study - ***“...rightly dividing the word of truth.”***

Now, most of you know that I grew up in Arkansas. In Arkansas today there are still quite a few people who consider “hog-calling” a fine art. It's true that farmers don't do it much anymore, but every year in various parts of the state they hold contests...hog-calling contests. And I'll not try to reproduce what they say, what they do, but it goes something like this... “woo-pig-sooie-woo-pig...” But, it starts out slow and soft and it builds up until at the last when you say “pig” it's a big scream and if you're within ten miles you can probably hear the “woo-pig-sooie-pig” bouncing from wall to wall. And if you ever go to an Arkansas University football game, you will also hear those rapid fire hog calls from the fans jumping up and down in the stands. Most of them will be wearing bright red plastic hats shaped like a running razorback and what they're doing, of course, is cheering their team, the Arkansas Razorbacks. For those of you who do not know, a razorback is a skinny, long-legged, half wild, mongrel hog with a bad disposition. But anyway...

I heard about an Arkansas farmer once who lost his voice and was not able to call the hogs at feeding time. And so, with this problem, he began to think, “how can I get my hogs to come at feeding time?” Well, he solved the problem by training his pigs to respond to the sound of a stick hitting a tree and every day at feeding time, he would go outside and pick up a stick and beat on a tree and it wouldn't be long before the pigs would crowd around the feeding trough. And it was a great success until one day when the farmer went out to feed his pigs and found them running back and forth, grunting and oinking...lathered in sweat, laboring to get from one tree to another...several pigs had already collapsed in a heap... It only took the farmer a minute to discover what had happened. A flock of woodpeckers had descended on the farm

and were hammering away at the trees and the pigs were chasing the sounds of the pecking, looking for food that wasn't there...going from one tree to another.

Now, I do have some doubts about the accuracy of that story, but I have none about the truth that it illustrates. Many Christians are behaving like those unfortunate pigs...maybe I ought to use a more flattering metaphor... Ministers are finding themselves with a flock of sheep that are confused and frustrated, exhausting themselves, scurrying from one voice to another, searching for food that isn't there, and frankly some of the voices that they're hearing are woodpeckers just pecking on hollow logs.

“Rightly dividing” means to ***“handle accurately*** the word of truth”...interpreting the Bible for yourself.

We live in a day when the volume of religious teaching is exceeded only by its variety. Twenty-four hours a day you can watch it on television, dishing it out faster than you and I can take it in. You go to the bookstores, they're all bulging with all kinds of books...everybody has a tape ministry. There are so many kinds of teaching today. There has never been a moment in history when communication has been at its peak as it is today.

And it can be confusing. I remember on a recent Sunday morning, as I was getting ready for church, I flipped on the television...I always like to see what the competition is up to...and being Sunday, of course, most of the programs were religious. I watched one minister charge his congregation to adopt a policy...what he called “downward mobility”...in other words, instead of accumulating more and more...they should dis-accumulate. He was saying that in the light of world hunger, Christians should be giving their money to buy food for starving children rather than buying newer automobiles and larger houses and building bank accounts and his listeners, his congregation were very silent and they didn't seem to be enjoying the sermon.

The interesting thing is I turned to the very next channel and found another minister who was preaching prosperity. He was saying that prosperity is our divine right and that God wants all of us to healthy and wealthy. Now, I want to tell you something...his congregation was reacting differently...they were shouting “Praise the Lord” and waving their hands in ecstasy. And I thought, “It's no wonder that people are confused” what with so many voices that they're hearing...every one of them claiming, of course, to have the truth...it can be extremely confusing.

So, the question is ***“How can we really know what the Bible teaches?”*** How do we discern between truth and error? How do we recognize who is a true teacher of the word of God and who is not? In other words, how can we interpret the Bible for ourselves? Is there a way that we can find the truth for ourselves in this matter?

Paul gives us, I believe, a clue in II Timothy 2:15 that we read a moment ago, where he says that if we are diligent to present ourselves approved as a workman who does not need to be ashamed, handling accurately the word of truth. Now that phrase ***“rightly dividing”*** translates a Greek word that means ***“to cut along a straight line, to cut along a straight road through***

heavily forested country or country that is difficult to pass through.” It means “*to guide the word of truth along a straight path*” like a road that goes straight to its goal so that the traveler may go directly to his destination.

This word was used to describe the work of a priest as he would slice through the sacrificial animals according to God’s instructions. It was used of a farmer cutting a straight furrow. It was used of a stonemason who would quarry huge rocks so that they would fit into the walls of a building. It was used of a tailor or a tentmaker who cut cloth. But the key in every case is that it indicates precision. “Be diligent,” Paul said, “do your best, be zealous, take pains, make every effort and be persistent, handling accurately the word of truth demands serious and hard work.”

Now, I’ll just tell you from the outset that good, accurate Bible study is not easy. It’s not easy and as you and I approach the word of God, we have to come to it not only handling it accurately but also being diligent in that. If we are going to be lazy in our study, in our interpretation, then naturally we’re not going to be able to interpret the Bible for our own selves.

This Bible that I hold in my hand...what is it? Well, it is the Word of God. The Bible is the product of revelation and inspiration. There are three components which make up revelation. God revealed Himself to man and of course revelation is God’s communicating to man spiritual truth which man could not otherwise know. This is very important. It is a special and extra-ordinary manifestation which removes the veil in a special and extraordinary way from something that is hidden. It is God’s communicating to man spiritual truth which man could not otherwise know.

Now, there are three components here -

First of all there is **MANIFESTATION**. By manifestation I mean the historical act of God. He revealed Himself by His activity...by His deeds. Now, the Bible is not so much a book of theological propositions...it is not a book of dogma. It is a record God’s manifesting Himself in human history. It is a record of those times when God acted in such a way in the affairs of the world, in the affairs of men that He revealed something of His character...the manifestation of God.

The second component is **INSPIRATION**. Inspiration is the ability God gave to man to interpret accurately the divine manifestation. So we have manifestation, inspiration...the final component is what I will call **ILLUMINATION**. Now this Bible, as we have it...as I hold it in my hand is the product of manifestation and inspiration. But for it to be revelation to us, to me, to you, there must be illumination. Illumination is that gift of God’s Spirit which enables us to grasp this record of God’s inspired manifestation.

Illumination is the Spirit of God, who inspired the Word in the first place, illuminating our hearts and minds so that when we read the Bible we can grasp what God is saying, and the Bible becomes to us a revelation. Without that illumination of the Holy Spirit, the Bible is an interesting and beautiful book written in beautiful ways and containing all kinds of interesting stories and

all kinds of wisdom but it doesn’t become to us a revelation until the Spirit of God enables us to grasp it to understand it.

So we have these three components of revelation: **manifestation**, which is the historical act of God whereby God did something that revealed His character. Then we have **inspiration** which is the ability, supernatural ability, that God gave to man to accurately interpret the divine manifestation and record it. **Illumination** is that gift of God’s Spirit which enables us to grasp the record of God’s inspired manifestation which is the Bible.

You see, the Bible is the product of that manifestation and inspiration. God revealed to man by His deeds. The Holy Spirit’s inspiration enabled man to record that revelation and what the Spirit inspired, He illuminates and this illumination is essential to a correct understanding of the Scriptures.

But, and this is where **our** study comes in...an unsound approach to the Bible will thwart the Spirit’s word...an unsound, a faulty, inaccurate approach to the Bible stifles the work of illumination in our hearts. To handle accurately the word of truth, we must have sound principles of interpretation and faithful application of those principles.

Now, I want to give you a sort of mini-course in basic hermeneutics. You may say, “Well, what in the world is hermeneutics?” Hermeneutics is the science of interpretation. Hermeneutics is the ability to understand the thought of an author and then communicate that thought to others. It’s simply the science of interpreting a written work...being able to understand the thought of the author who wrote that work and communicating that thought to others.

I want to tell you something...most of the confusion concerning various types of teaching...for instance, the health and wealth, sickness and healing...most of the confusion concerning those teachings would be eliminated if we followed the basic rules of interpretation. Every error of the health and wealth theology is a result of the violation of the rules of hermeneutics.

So, we’re going to begin with our study...interpreting the Bible for yourself. Our family has a farm in Arkansas. We call it a farm for lack of a better word...we don’t farm it. But, several years ago we had a road cut straight back from the lake to the end of our property which was about a mile and a half of heavily wooded land. A few days before the bulldozers arrived, my brother and I spent a day tracking all the way back to that end of the property which, as I said, was about a mile and a half...tracking all the way back...and we spent the day tying strips of red cloth on certain trees to mark the path of the way we wanted the road to go. The red flags were guide lines that enabled the bulldozers to cut a straight path through the woods and arrive at the correct destination.

That is exactly what Paul is talking about...the figure of speech he is using when he spoke and said to Timothy, “we need to handle accurately the word of truth.” Actually, in a very real sense as my brother and I were tying the red flags we were handling accurately the word of truth, you see. There was a straight path to

the back without any deviation...cutting it straight all the way to the back. In the same way you and I are to handle accurately the word of truth...cutting a straight path to the right interpretation of the word of truth.

So as we go through these rules of interpretation, think of those as the red flags that my brother and I tied on those trees to guide the bulldozer accurately to his destination.

(continued next week)

NURSERY MINISTRY WORKERS FOR THIS WEEK

10:50 a.m. Service ----- Cradle Roll 1: Rebekah White
 Cradle Roll 2: Nathaniel White
 6:30 p.m. Service ----- Cradle Roll 1: Charity Crawford
 Cradle Roll 2: Brian Crawford
 Wed. Eve. Service ----- Cradle Roll 1: LeAnna White
 Cradle Roll 2: Seth White

AND THE PEOPLE CAME...

Week of February 21, 2010

Sunday School ----- 21
 Sunday Morning Service ----- 38
 Evening Service ----- 32
 Wed. Eve. Service, 02/24/10 ----- 30

AND THE PEOPLE GAVE...

Week of February 21, 2009

Undesignated Tithes & Offerings ----- \$ 632.00
 Insurance Fund ----- \$ 122.00
Total Received for Week of 02/21/10: \$ 754.00

Average amount of Undesignated Offerings needed to operate the church EACH WEEK,  as a minimum = \$ 1,400.00

FUND DRIVE REPORTS

We Are Suspending Our Specific Fund Drives Until Our Regular Weekly Offerings Come Back Up To Where They Need To Be. Please Give As Much As You Can To Help Us Catch Up After The Extremely Low Giving We Experienced This Summer And Fall.

Visit Us Online At - www.southheightsbaptist.com

WHAT IT MEANS TO BE SAVED

1. ***Admit that you are a sinner.***
2. ***Admit that God says all sins must be paid for.***
3. ***Accept the fact that Christ took upon Himself the suffering necessary to pay for all your sins.***
4. ***You must change your mind about sin and sinning (God calls this repentance).***
5. ***By an act of your will, accept by faith the Lord Jesus Christ, who can save you from the penalty of sin. Then, tell God about this in a simple prayer. Believe that God keeps His promise to save you, and thank Him for His salvation.***



Please Remember To Be Faithful to Give!

As with everything else, the costs of keeping a church going never go down - they always go **up**. Bills wait for no one, and churches are no exception to this. An extra, sacrificial gift today by everyone present would go a long way...

We encourage all of our membership to practice obedience to God by being faithful every payday to give back to Him His tithe (10%). *If every family in our church would practice this one simple discipline, we would never have weeks where we have to put off paying some bills until the following week!*

Everything is expensive, especially for a small church like ours, but ours is a BIG God, and He LOVES to bless His children when they are obedient to Him!

If you are already a tither, we thank you, and encourage you to also give offerings as well. If you're currently not tithing, won't you please start **today** - OK? Thank you.

Church Directory

Todd W. White ----- Pastor
 Mickie Shatwell ----- Pianist
 Dickie Eberle ----- Greeter, Custodian
 Larry Mathews, Caryn Quinnelly, Todd W. White ----- S.S. Teachers
 Larry & Mary Byars, Brian & Charity Crawford,
 Dwayne English, Geroux family ----- Outreach
 Flowers ----- Hannah and Shirley White