

Diligent Study (Slide 1)
Just a Reminder

Reading: 2 Timothy 2:14-19

Diligent Study takes conscious and steadfast effort! Think of it in the following terms:

An Actor:

(Disclaimer: I'm not advocating for anyone becoming an actor. It could be an honorable vocation, like any other and was at one time but today it has been hijacked by immorality that dulls the senses.)

When an actor is given a part to play, that really is just the beginning.

They have to learn their speaking parts (dialogue). They have to come to know the character they will be playing. If it is a biography, they really have to know the individual they hope to realistically portray. They have to interject mannerisms, emotions and feelings. It takes a great deal of work. One might say diligence.

If they are portraying a historical figure, they have to really study that person from every angle to really be convincing on stage or on screen.

Interestingly enough, in live performances, the *main character* generally has an *understudy*. Someone who

can step in and take the main actor's place in the event something prevents them from performing.

Again, the *understudy* must be well versed and immersed in that same character. Just as the main actor, the *understudy* understands it takes due diligence and tremendous study.

The audience expectation is that the actor will not bring into the performance any unexpected foreign attribute or dialogue that doesn't relate to the person they are portraying. Any element that seems out of place would degrade the authenticity of the actor's portrayal and cancel their reality.

Even in that world of *make-believe* that kind of performance would be ***“to the ruin of the hearers.”***

However, Apostle Paul is not talking about *make-believe* but what should be a reality for all who truly wish to be Christ-like!

Be ***diligent/ study*** so that when we read the Bible we understand it through further analysis! (Slide 2)

Study so we know the character of Christ.

Study to know how to act in all situations.

Study so that you will know what you are talking about when you give someone an answer for the ***“hope that is in you with meekness and fear”***

Study so that we know the truth.

It's amazing what you can find out about the Word of God by reading and studying its contents.

One story we are all so familiar with is that of ***Jesus*** raising ***Lazurus*** from the dead. I have probably heard several preachers speak about the miraculous power of Christ.

The most familiar parts of the miraculous raising of ***Lazurus*** are the following:

He's been dead for four days and *“He stinks”* because of natural decomposition.

John 11:39 (Slide 3)

Jesus said, “Take away the stone.”

Martha, the sister of him who was dead, said to Him, “Lord, by this time there is a stench, for he has been dead four days.”

We are familiar with what Jesus shouts to raise him from the dead:

John 11:43b

"Lazarus, come forth!"

And we likely remember what occurred afterward is that those Jews who were present with Mary, believed in Jesus.

We may also recall, that despite the miracle performed right in front of them, that some of the Jews were concerned that Jesus would create more followers and they left and told the leaders of the Jews what Jesus had done.

Despite this incredible miracle, the Pharisees, also concerned he would take away their popularity, plotted to kill Him before He could create too great of a following.

What may not be at the forefront of our minds is that the Jews also plot to kill Lazarus.

John 12:9-11 (Slide 4)

⁹ Now a great many of the Jews knew that He was there; and they came, not for Jesus' sake only, but that they might also see Lazarus, whom He had raised from the dead. ¹⁰ But the chief priests plotted to put Lazarus to death also, ¹¹ because on account of him many of the Jews went away and believed in Jesus.

How would you like to be in Lazarus' shoes (likely sandals)? Lazarus had just been raised from the dead and now he is in fear for his life and knows he could shortly die by stoning or some other means!

Without *diligent study* we may miss the point for us because what happened isn't just about the miracle!

It seems to me that the Christian must know that our association and belief in Christ could have a negative impact on our physical life or at least our mental state.

I believe we are just in the beginning stages of more and more Christian persecution in our country.

These are things we must know!

It's interesting that there are so many supposed free thinkers and intellectuals who call belief in the Bible a "sad state" since it is written, as they claim, as the first *pre-scientific text*. And science in the hands of some, is used to try and disprove the Bible. However, science only proves the Bible's authenticity.

The so-called intellectuals statement simply proves the narrowness of those who feel that their own intellectual ability is far too superior to give credence to creation. They feel they are just too sophisticated and the Bible is an outdated text.

Yet, their supposed intelligence creates fantasies such as evolution and other impossibly substantiated claims of earth's beginnings.

Their so-called *"intellectual, yet, dumbfounding comprehension* of the possibility of a creator gives extreme validity to:

1 Corinthians 1:18-25 (Slide 5)

¹⁸ For the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God. ¹⁹ For it is written:

***"I will destroy the wisdom of the wise,
And bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent."***

(Slide 6) ***²⁰ Where is the wise? Where is the scribe? Where is the disputer of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of this world? ²¹ For since, in the wisdom of God, the world through wisdom did not know God, it pleased God through the foolishness (Slide 7) of the message preached to save those who believe. ²² For Jews request a sign, and Greeks seek after wisdom; ²³ but we preach Christ crucified, to the Jews a stumbling block and to the Greeks foolishness, (Slide 8) ²⁴ but to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God. ²⁵ Because the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men.***

In my mind it is simple to prove the scientific credence of the Bible from its pages. Long before space travel, before modern technology and even the first telescope, Job had this to say written some 3,500 years ago:

Job 26:7 (Slide 9)

He stretches out the north over empty space; He hangs the earth on nothing.

If you were able to see some of the stunning pictures of earth from the recent *Artemis II* space travel you can easily see what is written in the book of Job is positive proof that the *Word of God is all knowing and absolute.*

The Bible also speaks of the shape of the earth. For many years, long disputed to be flat, if only faith would have been their guide they would have known full well it is in the shape of a “circle.” From those same pictures mentioned above, it appears perfect in form.

Isaiah 40:22 (Slide 10)

It is He who sits above the circle of the earth, And its inhabitants are like grasshoppers, Who stretches out the heavens like a curtain, And spreads them out like a tent to dwell in.

The earth and all that is in it and on it and the heavens are the tangible elements that substantiate the Christian faith.

We can cite many more instances that prove the Bible to be the ultimate science book.

The Book of Books also should have a tremendous impact on how we live!

Have you ever misplaced something that is extremely valuable to you? Maybe it is the *keyfob* you must use today to start your car.

My wife's car has one of those *keyfobs*. If you don't have it your car won't start. If it's lost inside your car and you want to leave your car unattended with maybe something inside that you don't want someone to steal, you can't lock your car.

Just recently, the fob was lost inside the car. Silas and Rose looked all over for that fob but couldn't find it. Rose said the car starts but she can't lock it. Yet, it has to be in the car somewhere.

I know from past experience that it could be anywhere in the interior of that car. So I helped in the search, probably moving things around more than they did. Well I found it! It was just in the door panel where there is a nice little covey to store your gloves or other treasures you may need.

I was relieved to find it. It is one of those things that is important to have and is also quite expensive to replace.

What if you lost the only resource you had to know what God wants for you to have a peaceful and spiritual life?

What if you had never had the opportunity to know the Word of God because the Holy Bible that was to be

handed down to you was lost before you could learn its contents?

Perhaps this is an age in which there simply were no other sources of information. No internet or digital sources that had the Bible. Before cell phones, before modern transportation. Before any type of telecommunication.

The physical, held in your hand, read by candle light or lantern Holy Bible was gone!!

Now imagine how you would feel if it was found!!

How would you respond if you began to study it and you realized you had it all wrong and you weren't living up to God's standards? In fact, you're not on the road to salvation at all!!

Your way of life is displeasing to the Lord! Perhaps you come to realize that society and leadership in that society had been pushing mankind farther and farther from God!

Did you know the Bible speaks about just such an instance?

We most likely recognize the name **King Josiah** because he became **King** when he was *8 years old*. That is something that stands out in our mind. How could a child be thrust into such a critical leadership position with its incredible responsibilities?

Well first of all, we should keep this in mind because it still applies today:

Daniel 2:21b (Slide 11)

He removes kings and raises up kings

Daniel 4:17c

In order that the living may know

That the Most High rules in the kingdom of men,

Gives it to whomever He will

The fact that **Josiah** was 8 when He became King stands out to us for sure. It's also interesting that **Josiah** at 8 **Joash** at age 7 (**2 Kings 11**) when they became King, ***did what was right in the sight of God.*** They certainly had maturity beyond their physical age and it also makes an important statement about those Kings who should have known better.

In **2 Kings 22** we find a situation where the ***House of the Lord*** was being renovated because of absolute neglect for several years prior to **Josiah**. The ***House of the Lord*** had been neglected by previous kings who indeed also neglected the will of God.

It's amazing to see the reaction of those who are really seeking the Lord when they truly compare the life they are living with the Book of Books.

In the case of **Josiah** this was the ultimate, you might say, ***Bible Study!***

During that renovation, the **Book of the Law** was found. After it was read to **Josiah**, he tore his clothes because of his deep grief and as a sign of repentance for the behavior of all of **Judah** who violated the sacred covenant God had made with them by serving idols.

When we come to know His truth, because we are seeking God with **diligence** through studying His Holy Word, we should have just as strong of a reaction when we find we haven't lived up to His will. God will recognize our repentant attitude just as He did **Josiah**.

Josiah's request:

2 Kings 22:13 (Slide 12)

"Go, inquire of the LORD for me, for the people and for all Judah, concerning the words of this book that has been found; for great is the wrath of the LORD that is aroused against us, because our fathers have not obeyed the words of this book, to do according to all that is written concerning us."

The Answer:

2 Kings 22:16-20 (Slide 13)

¹⁶ "Thus says the LORD: 'Behold, I will bring calamity on this place and on its inhabitants—all the words of the book which the king of Judah has read—¹⁷ because they have forsaken Me and burned incense to other gods, that they might provoke Me to anger (Slide 14) with all the works of their hands. Therefore My wrath shall be aroused against

this place and shall not be quenched. ¹⁸ But as for the king of Judah, who sent you to inquire of the LORD, in this manner you shall speak to him, 'Thus says the LORD God of Israel: (Slide 15) "Concerning the words which you have heard— ¹⁹ because your heart was tender, and you humbled yourself before the LORD when you heard what I spoke against this place and against its inhabitants, that they would become a desolation and a curse, (Slide 16) and you tore your clothes and wept before Me, I also have heard you," says the LORD. ²⁰ "Surely, therefore, I will gather you to your fathers, and you shall be gathered to your grave in peace; and your eyes shall not see all the calamity which I will bring on this place."

If we truly seek to serve God, His Word will also create in us a ***tender heart*** and humble us before Him! But that cannot happen unless we ***study to show ourselves approved.***

Be reminded: ***"The Lord knows those who are His"***

Invitation

The answers to all of life's questions are in the details. The answer to eternal life is God's Holy Book. Have you heard the message and has your heart been conditioned to submit your will to Him? If so, follow through. Come to Him in baptism and become a child of God.

If you are a child of God but need the prayers of your Brethren for any reason, please let us know.....

Let us know how we may assist you.....

Reading

2 Timothy 2:14-19

¹⁴ Remind them of these things, charging them before the Lord not to strive about words to no profit, to the ruin of the hearers. ¹⁵ Be diligent (translated “study” in the KJV) to present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth. ¹⁶ But shun profane and idle babblings, for they will increase to more ungodliness. ¹⁷ And their message will spread like cancer. Hymenaeus and Philetus are of this sort, ¹⁸ who have strayed concerning the truth, saying that the resurrection is already past; and they overthrow the faith of some. ¹⁹ Nevertheless the solid foundation of God stands, having this seal: “The Lord knows those who are His,” and, “Let everyone who names the name of Christ depart from iniquity.”

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