

Elder Training Series

Session 17 - Mandates Relating To Thoroughly Equipped, Sound Doctrine, And Handling The Scriptures, from 2 Timothy 3:16-17, Titus 2:1, and 2 Timothy 2:15 (NIV based)

(Repeating) NOTE: Again perhaps it would be prudent for you to mark or highlight the items in this document that you need to work on or improve.

READ: 2 Timothy 3:16-17

SECTION POINT: God wants leaders of ministry to be extensively trained in the Scriptures, which will facilitate them in being "thoroughly equipped" to do "good" ministry functioning that will produce "good" ministry results.

- - "All Scripture is God-breathed", meaning that all of it has ultimately come from God, been inspired by God, is empowered by God, meets God's full approval, and is useful for God to accomplish His will in and by means of His servants on the earth. (2 Timothy 3:16)
- - The Scriptures are a direct way in which He communicates with His servants about what He wants them to do and what they should not do.
- - The Scriptures are "useful for" and provide guidance in such areas as: the "teaching" of the Scriptures; "rebuking" sinfulness and waywardness; "correcting" faulty thinking, beliefs, and conduct; and "training" in how to live "righteously" before God.
- - An implication here is that God can extensively and extraordinarily use a "man of God", a leader in ministry, who has been thoroughly trained in the Scriptures, to accomplish "every good work". (2 Timothy 3:17)
- - And contrarily, in a general and broad sense, God will not and does not extraordinarily use a leader in ministry who has not been thoroughly trained in the Scriptures and does not live righteously before Him.
- There is no apparent alternative way to appropriately bypass or circumvent this reality
- men of God definitely must be "thoroughly equipped" by means of advanced training in the Scriptures, in order to excellently accomplish "every good work" in their ministry functioning.
- - - - Otherwise, they will naturally be functioning from a position of their own humanistic and worldly thinking, which is directly influenced and corrupted by their own sin nature, because they possess a small and limited understanding of the Scriptures. (2 Peter 1:4; v.8 in Colossians 2:6-8)
- - Therefore, every elder, overseer, pastor, and ministry leader needs to possess or be actively pursuing a sufficiently high level of training in the Scriptures.
- - Being self-taught in the Scriptures is generally not adequate, because it is too easy to wander off into erroneous interpretations, limited understanding, and subsequent incorrect applications of the Scriptures.
- - So the best approach is to acquire extensive academic training in the Scriptures from a reputable Bible college or seminary that holds sound doctrines and strives to equip people for ministry work.
- - There are some Bible colleges and seminaries that do offer taking courses online, which is convenient and usually much less expensive in financial costs for the student.

- - A very distinct benefit of being extensively academically trained in the Scriptures is that it has the capacity and likely will produce a more righteous personal daily living in the Lord for the student.
 - Being extensively academically trained in the Scriptures also gives depth and variety to the person's teaching and preaching.
 - - - - Otherwise, the person is always teaching or preaching essentially the same shallow message over and over again, like a one-trick pony.
 - - - - With the people in one's church or ministry hearing only that kind of elementary, simplistic, and repetitive teaching and preaching, there is an overwhelming likelihood that they will not substantially progress beyond being immature in the faith and not producing much if any fruit for God's kingdom.
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READ: Titus 2:1

SECTION POINT: By implication, leaders of ministry need to be extensively trained in the sound doctrines of the Scriptures in order to fulfill God's mandate that they "must teach what is in accord with sound doctrine".

- - God mandates that leaders of ministry "must teach what is in accord with sound doctrine". (Titus 2:1)
- - By extension, this mandate includes the necessity that every elder, overseer, pastor, and ministry leader must personally possess "sound doctrine" within their own beliefs of the Scriptures.
- - For indeed, how can a person preach, or teach, or promote, or defend "what is in accord with sound doctrines" if he/she does not hold or does not adequately understand what the sound doctrines of the Scriptures are?
- - Therefore, leaders of ministry need to pursue and acquire advanced academic training regarding sound doctrines, which is appropriately based on, aligned to, and "in accord with" proper interpretation of the Scriptures.
- - This advanced academic training in sound doctrines will give each leader of ministry a firm and critical foundation from which to operate in doing ministry.
- - This foundation of advanced academic training in sound doctrines will serve as a guardrail - "...a lamp to [your] feet and a light for [your] path" that keeps the leader of ministry from wandering off into teaching or allowing false doctrine to infiltrate and become established in his/her church or ministry. (Psalm 119:105)
- - He will be better able and equipped to successfully fulfill the mandate to "watch [his]... doctrine closely" and "persevere in [it]". (1 Timothy 4:16)
- - And this advanced academic training will serve as an anchoring foundation from which to obey the mandate to steadfastly "continue in what you have learned and have become convinced of" in your "knowledge of the holy Scriptures". (2 Timothy 3:14,15)
- - With this advanced academic training in sound doctrines, the leader of ministry will be better able to preclude, recognize, ward off, and repel false teaching that inevitably tries to infiltrate good churches and ministries.

- - And with this extensive training in sound doctrines, the leader of ministry will be equipped to readily insert, incorporate, and infuse the teaching of sound doctrine into his sermons, Bible lessons, and religious discussions.
 - - So, from the benefits listed in the above statements, advanced academic training in sound doctrines of the "Scriptures" will likewise greatly contribute to "the man of God being thoroughly equipped for every good work". (2 Timothy 3:16,17)
- [- - For more information on sound doctrines, see (or review) the document "Session 08 - Qualifications Listed in Titus 1:9" in this "Elder Training Series" on the 'Home Page - Ministry' of this website, www.BelieverAssist.com .]
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READ: 2 Timothy 2:15

SECTION POINT: God mandates that leaders of ministry are to strive to correctly handle and expound the Scriptures, which necessitates that they must acquire extensive training in the Scriptures.

- - Extensive training in the Scriptures also enables and equips leaders of ministry to fulfill the mandate to "correctly handle the word of truth". (2 Timothy 2:15)
 - - This "correctly handle the word of truth" involves "properly dividing or dissecting" the words, phrases, verses, sections of verses, and books of the Scriptures, in order to ascertain their correct concepts, doctrines, meanings, applications, and etcetera. (Strong's #3718 - 'correctly handle')
 - - Upon ascertaining their correct meanings, then these various elements of Scriptures can be rightly "expounded" upon or presented and "explained in detail" to the listeners. (Strong's #3718 - 'correctly handle')
 - - If the leaders of ministry "do their best" or "earnestly make effort" to acquire and implement extensive training in this regard, then they can "present [themselves] to God as... an approved... workman", "not... ashamed" because they have "correctly handled the word of truth". (Strong's #4704 - 'do your best')
 - - Obviously, all of this training in the Scriptures (as described in this document) is contingent upon each leader of ministry being teachable in the Scriptures, and being willing to expend the time and effort to acquire this advanced level of training in the Scriptures.
 - - So, the teacher of the Word must first become a student of the Word - extensively studying, meditating on, reflecting on, learning, and applying the Scriptures.
 - - This prolonged and strenuous activity of being extensively trained in the Scriptures requires a sustained attitude of genuinely desiring to want to know the Scriptures - and correctly.
 - - Any entrenched dread or begrudge-ment will ultimately result in quitting or shortening the amount of training in the Scriptures.
 - - Thereby, each elder, overseer, pastor, and ministry leader must possess and be compelled by an intense innate desire to learn the Scriptures, even to the extent that "[their] delight is in the law of the LORD", resulting in "and on his law [they] meditate day and night" - Psalm 1:2.
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APPLICATIONS AND IMPLICATIONS:

- - As an elder, overseer, pastor, or ministry leader, do you allow the Scriptures to impact you personally - to 'teach you, rebuke you, correct you, and train you in righteousness'?
- - Do you teach or preach the Scriptures in a way that effectively facilitates your listeners to be impacted personally by the Scriptures - to 'teach them, rebuke them, correct them, and train them in righteousness'?
- - Specifically, does your teaching or preaching actually contain and directly present from the Scriptures all four of these aspects - "teaching, rebuking, correcting, and training in righteousness"? Or instead, do you in fact gloss over, soft-pedal, or skip altogether any hint of "rebuking and correcting", while presenting very diluted "teaching and training in righteousness" from the Scriptures?
- - Do you actually teach or preach specifics about individual verses of Scriptures, expounding in detail on the meaning of particular words and phrases in the verses? Or instead, do you in fact surf over the depth of the meaning of verses in your teaching or preaching?
- - When you are composing a sermon or Bible lesson, do you allow the selected Scripture verse to dictate the core contents and main points of your sermon or lesson? Or instead, do you preselect the contents and main points that you want to present, and then try to find and manipulate a Scripture verse to say what you want it to say so that it matches your pre-selected contents and main points?

- - When you are making a statement about a doctrine of the faith in your teaching or preaching, is that doctrine statement based on sound consideration of all verses that pertain to that doctrine? Or instead, do you essentially selectively choose which verses you are giving credence to, and ignore the verses that contradict or oppose your doctrine statement?
- - Do you currently possess sufficient training and knowledge of the Scriptures in order to make correct judgments about doctrines of the faith?
- - Do you really want to risk facing God in accountability on Judgment Day because you have been teaching doctrine that was incorrect, or in error, or false? Or you have been incorrectly handling the word of truth?
- - Do you think that God will fully bless and prosper your church or ministry if you have been teaching doctrine that is incorrect, or in error, or false? Or if you have been incorrectly handling the word of truth?
- - How do you expect the Scriptures to significantly impact your listeners if you are teaching or preaching the Scriptures in a diluted form, or wayward manner, or with false content?

- - Can you envision the value and resulting beneficial effects of being "thoroughly equipped" as you endeavor to fulfill the functioning of being an elder, overseer, pastor, or ministry leader? Or instead, are you satisfied with actually being mediocre-ly equipped, or marginally equipped, or poorly equipped, or perhaps even outright not equipped?
- - Can you envision the value and resulting beneficial effects of your always teaching doctrine that is sound and your always correctly handling the word of truth will have on

the healthiness and growth of your church or ministry as you fulfill the functioning of being an elder, overseer, pastor, or ministry leader?

So now has come the crossroads - the point of decision of which path you will take.

- - Do you think that currently you, as an elder, overseer, pastor, or ministry leader, are actually "thoroughly equipped for every good work", and thoroughly equipped for "teaching what is in accord with sound doctrine", and thoroughly equipped for "correctly handling the word of truth"? Or instead, are you beginning to see and accept that you are in need of extensive academic training in the Scriptures in order to raise you to the level of being "thoroughly equipped" in these areas?

Works Cited:

Bible. "The Holy Bible: New International Version." *The Bible Library CD-ROM*. Oklahoma City, OK: Ellis Enterprises, 1988.

"Strong's Greek Dictionary." *The Bible Library CD-ROM*. Oklahoma City, OK: Ellis Enterprises, 1988.

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