



Northside Proclaimer

Proclaiming The Word Of The Lord

1 Thessalonians 1.8

Northside Church of Christ Welcomes You!

April 17, 2016

Approved of God

Bryan Garlock

“Be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth” (2 Timothy 2.15 NKJV). The apostle Paul charges Timothy to mature in at least four qualities in 2 Timothy 2.15 to be considered approved to God.

First, he was to be diligent. Interestingly the King James Version translates the Greek word for diligent as “study.” Thayer defines the word as: “to make effort, be prompt or earnest:—do (give) diligence, be diligent (forward), endeavour, labour, study.”¹ One can see it is appropriate therefore to define the word as study. Study takes diligence and certainly takes time. Solomon’s wisdom instructs that studying makes one weary (Eccl. 12.12).

Additionally, as one is to diligently make his calling and election sure by developing certain divine qualities, one is to earnestly strive to present himself approved to God (cf. 2 Peter 1.3-10). One such way to present ourselves approved to God is defined by Paul as presenting “your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service. And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God” (Rom. 12.1-2). Further Paul wrote, “...approve what is excellent, and so be pure and blameless for the day of Christ” (Phil. 1.10). In other words, one diligently pursues the approval of God by seeking to discern that which is good, acceptable, excellent and the perfect will of God all while presenting himself as a living sacrifice. Accordingly, he will be pure and blameless and eagerly awaiting the return of Christ.

Consequently, if one does not give energetic effort towards approval or if one does not learn to approve of the things God approves of, God will not commend him.

Northside
church Of Christ

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Announcements

- Remember the shut in's.
- Pray for the church and one another.
- Remember the spiritual sick among us.
- Call or email Bryan to add announcements, thanks.
- **We need volunteers for door knocking. Please see Bryan.**
- **We need volunteers for picking folks up. Please see Bryan.**

Five Day A Week Reading Plan

Mon: 2 Chron. 9-13
Tues: 2 Chron. 14-18
Wed: 2 Chron. 19-23
Thurs: 2 Chron. 24-28
Fri: 2 Chron. 29-33

Secondly, the one seeking the approval of God will be a worker. Throughout Scripture, God has given considerable notice to the laborer. For instance, all are to work and not steal (Eph. 4.28), receive their due wages (1 Tim. 5.18, etc.) and not be lazy (2 Thess. 3.10). These three passages alone teach us that a worker is to be diligent in his duties, honest in his dealings and dedicated to his cause. Therefore, he deserves his earned wages.

Thirdly, he will not be ashamed. Paul taught Timothy, "... do not be ashamed of the testimony about our Lord, nor of me his prisoner, but share in suffering for the gospel by the power of God" (2 Tim. 1.8). We ought to imitate Paul as one who was not ashamed of the gospel or of his suffering for Christ (see Rom. 1.16; 2 Tim. 1.12). Do we truly believe that God will approve of those who are ashamed of Him and His word? (cf. Mark 8.38). Consider that each time we shrink back from declaring the truth or compromise the truth so as not to offend someone that we stand unapproved before our Creator. That should be a sobering thought and one that motivates us to never disown our Lord no matter the cost. Paul was certainly one who was favored. Are we?

Fourthly, he rightly divides the word of truth. Unfortunately, some do not handle God's word correctly. They either twist the Scriptures to fit their desires or unintentionally pervert the text. While the latter is often the case, God's word is still left to perversion. The one who is diligent to approve of the things that are acceptable to God will not purposely mishandle or lightly handle the Scriptures. He will desire to understand God's will on every religious matter whether the work and worship of the church or how he is to love and conduct himself as a Christian (Eph. 5.17; Col. 3.17, etc.). We not only have the responsibility to interpret correctly the word of God, but we have the responsibility to apply its truths to our lives (see James 1.21-25).

Finally, Paul wrote, "For it is not the one who commends himself who is approved, but the one whom the Lord commends" (2 Cor. 10.18). We may approve of ourselves, and our family and friends may even approve of us (Luke 16.15). Yet that kind of approval is flawed. God said to Samuel, "Do not look on his appearance or on the height of his stature, because I have rejected him. For the Lord sees not as man sees: man looks on the outward appearance, but the Lord looks on the heart" (1 Sam. 16.7). Thus in the end the only one the Lord commends is the one who is a diligent and unashamed worker who properly handles the word of truth. Only this man will be "approved in Christ" (cf. Rom. 16.10). This is the highest commendation conceivable. BG

¹ "G4704 - spoudazō - Strong's Greek Lexicon (KJV)." Blue Letter Bible. Web. 13 Apr, 2016. <<https://www.blueletterbible.org//lang/lexicon/lexicon.cfm?Strong's=G4704&t=KJV>>.