

STRAIGHT TALK FOR SEMINARY STUDENTS

STUDY TWO

Accurately Handling the Word

2 Timothy 2:15–19

Be an expositor. Don't be an entertainer. They're a dime a dozen. Everybody wants to build a quick little church by being an entertainer. So, they'll out-entertain the guy down the street and use all the gimmicks to bring in the people. You faithfully deliver the Word of God.

—Charles R. Swindoll

WHETHER we serve as a full-time teaching pastor or part-time Sunday school teacher, whether we instruct in a seminary classroom or meet one-on-one with new believers, all Christians do well to learn the skill of exposition.

Exposition is the bridge across which we carry the gospel message to others. For this reason, the apostle Paul urged his trusted friend Timothy to “be a good worker, one who does not need to be ashamed and who *correctly explains the word of truth*” (2 Timothy 2:15, emphasis added).

Paul's admonition is not only for the preacher. It is for all who have received the gospel light of God's glory, which shines brightly the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Accurately handling God's Word allows His light, shining in us, to shine through us to those who desperately need it. Who knows how God will use you as you pass along His Word to someone today!



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Committed to Excellence in Communicating Biblical Truth and Its Application

Accurately Handling the Word

2 Timothy 2:15–19



PREPARE YOUR HEART

As you open the Scriptures, ask the Lord to open your eyes to the truths He longs to reveal to you. Also, ask Him to guard you against false teachers who twist the Scriptures to manipulate others. Take a moment to record a prayer below.



YOUR TURN IN THE SCRIPTURES

In these *Searching the Scriptures* studies, we build the foundation necessary for exposition.

Exposition helps us serve others the spiritual meal we have prepared for ourselves. Through exposition, we can explain the meaning and purpose of any given biblical passage. Chuck wrote that exposition contains three characteristics:

- 1) The biblical passage is carefully observed, clearly understood, and interestingly explained.
- 2) The biblical passage remains the central focus of your message or point.
- 3) The biblical passage is illustrated and applied according to today's real-world needs.¹

Exposition is a practice as equally important today as it was in the day of Moses, Solomon, Ezra, and the first-century apostles. Paul told us why in 2 Timothy 2:15–19.



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2 Timothy 2:15–19



Observation: Be Diligent

Paul thought carefully about his letter to Timothy, which we call 2 Timothy. Paul, imprisoned in Rome, could sense death approaching, so he cared about how faithfully the truth would be passed from him to Timothy and from Timothy to others. That is why he wrote *2 Timothy 2:15–19*. Using two of your preferred translations, observe this passage and record your notes below.

What practices did Paul want Timothy to pursue (2 Timothy 2:15)?

I'm not surprised that he starts out with, "Be diligent." Boy, if there's a profession in the world where you can be lazy, it's ministry. Be diligent. —Chuck Swindoll

What practices did Paul want Timothy to avoid and why (2:16–18)?



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Why did Paul mention Hymenaeus and Philetus, and what error did they commit (2 Timothy 2:17–18)?

What is Paul's logical connection between verse 15 and verse 19?

What is the logical connection between verses 16–18 and verse 19?

In his commentary on 2 Timothy, Chuck urges us all to walk in the same steps of Paul and Timothy because we encounter the same assault on truth today as they did two thousand years ago:

The apostle lamented the very same challenges less than one generation after the Lord commissioned His apostles to evangelize the world. Technology has amplified the voices of religious profiteers—duplicating and disseminating their lies with greater speed and efficiency—but little else has changed. Their perversions and methods remain the same. So, as the light began to fade in Paul's dungeon, the apostle wrote his timid friend in Ephesus, encouraging him to expose and confront peddlers of apostasy. Two thousand years later, his words continue to inspire and equip all defenders of truth.²



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2 Timothy 2:15–19



Interpretation: Present Yourself Approved to God

Now, put 2 Timothy 2:15–19 in your own words. Rewriting verses proves to be one of the most illuminating exercises of Bible study. It requires you to do background research in a Bible dictionary, commentaries, varying translations, and online tools like the NET Bible and Dr. Constable’s free *notes* on each book of the Bible. After giving the passage a thorough study, you can unfold its meaning in your own way.

Do that now for each verse below. Take it one thought at a time. Answer the following questions: “What does this mean?” “What does this idea look like in real life?” and “Why does this matter?” Then write out your own interpretive translation.

2 Timothy 2:15

So, the clear picture is: be a diligent workman, make certain that you yourself are authentic—tried and true—and as you handle the Word, handle it accurately. I love that: accurately handling the Word of truth. —Chuck Swindoll

2 Timothy 2:16



Accurately Handling the Word

2 Timothy 2:15–19

2 Timothy 2:17

2 Timothy 2:18

2 Timothy 2:19

You accurately handle the Word when you cut a straight line, as best as you're able to do in the time you have, between what God has written, what it meant to the people to whom He wrote it, and now what it means to us who live today. Let me tell you something. You do that faithfully and regularly, people will love you for it. They are starving for it, and they don't get it most places. —Chuck Swindoll



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2 Timothy 2:15–19



Correlation: Bring Out the Book

Accurate and clear exposition of Scripture has anchored God's people to His plan for their lives since the earliest days. Nehemiah 8 records a scene in which the exiled Jews, who had returned to their homeland, gathered to worship and hear Ezra, Nehemiah, and the Levites teach them the Scriptures.

We will study this passage in correlation as it helps us know how to respond rightly to God's spoken Word.

Read *Nehemiah 8*. What did Ezra and the Levites do for the Israelites gathered about them?

How did the Israelites initially respond to Ezra and the Levites' exposition of God's Word? How did Nehemiah encourage them to respond?

What a privilege and gift to have God's Word! Do not let your copy collect dust; don't attempt to preserve its mint condition. Wear it out that you may have the mind of Christ as His Word dwells in you richly.

So the people went away to eat and drink at a festive meal, to share gifts of food, and to celebrate with great joy because they had heard God's words and understood them. (Nehemiah 8:12)



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Application: Being a People of the Book

For this study's application, we will focus only upon strengthening God's Word in the church. Consider the ways in which God's Word is preached and taught in the local church where you serve as a member. Now consider one habit you can establish that will enhance the ministry of the Word among your fellowship. It could be a monthly note of encouragement to Sunday school teachers, giving a donation for your pastor to build his library, joining a Bible study group, or serving as a teacher in the children's ministry. Think it over carefully and pick something that you can do consistently. Write out your plan below.

I didn't set out to write books. I didn't set out to go on the radio. I set out to go into the Word of God and to be a workman who presented myself, approved to God, accurately handling the Word of truth. That's it. That's the goal. —Chuck Swindoll



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A FINAL PRAYER

Father, You sent Your Son to live among us. He taught us Your Word and He finished His task. Help me to abide in Your Word that I, too, might finish the task You have given me. I take comfort in Jesus' promise that He will not lose one of those whom You have given Him. How I adore You for that. I commit my life into Your hands—every minute of it—and ask that You glorify Yourself through all that I am. In Jesus' name, amen.

ENDNOTES

1. Adapted from Charles R. Swindoll, *Searching the Scriptures: Find the Nourishment Your Soul Needs* (Carol Stream, IL: Tyndale House, 2016), 191.
2. Charles R. Swindoll, *Swindoll's Living Insights New Testament Commentary: Insights on 1 & 2 Timothy, Titus* (Carol Stream, IL: Tyndale House, 2014), 200.

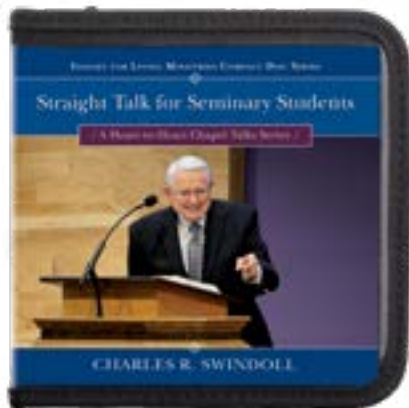


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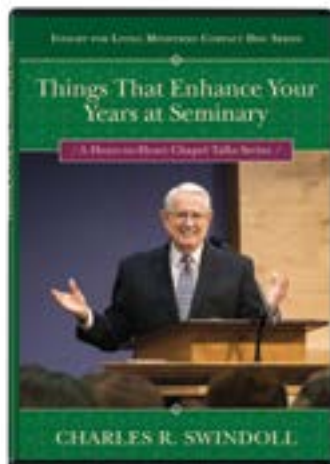
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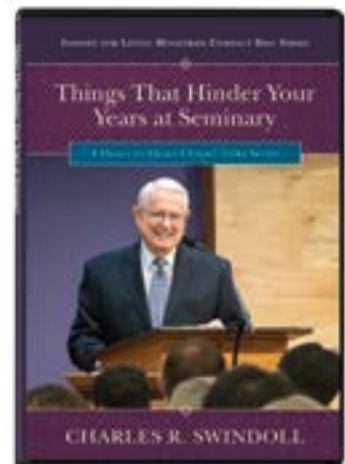
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For the 2019 broadcast, this *Searching the Scriptures* study was developed by Aaron Massey in collaboration with Bryce Klabunde, executive vice president of Pastoral Ministries, based upon the original outlines, charts, and transcripts of Charles R. Swindoll's messages.

