

Recap of 3/27/22 message by Joe Ricchuiti – Acts 17:10-15

1. The Berean's nobility was seen in their openness to Paul's message, their willingness to test the truth of the message by Scripture. Their daily study of the Word of God is a model for us.
2. Scripture itself was their "touchstone," not Scripture in the service of their politics, culture, nationalism, or prejudices. If we are not regularly in the Scriptures, we are not: growing spiritually, living up to our potential, growing more intimate with Jesus, equipped for spiritual warfare, prepared for worship, or prepared to defend the truth from error. The Word is a source of encouragement, challenge, understanding, unfailing direction, and unparalleled wisdom.
3. "The vigor of our spiritual life will be in exact proportion to the place held by the Bible in our life and thoughts. I solemnly state this from the experience of 54 years.... Great has been the blessing from consecutive, diligent, daily study. I look upon it as a lost day when I have not had a good time over the world of God." (George Mueller)
4. We are called to handle the Word of God correctly, accurately (2 Timothy 2:15).
5. Eight basic principles for Bible interpretation:
 - Interpret the Bible literally**, plainly, from a normal point of view, allowing for figures of speech. Don't allegorize or spiritualize it. "When the plain sense of Scripture makes good sense seek no other sense" (Dr. David Cooper).
 - Observe the context**, use it to find the passage's primary meaning: "Before asking, 'What does this passage mean to me,' we should ask, 'What did the writer of this passage mean when he first wrote it?' Understanding the passage in its context will help us grasp this single, original meaning." (From **Explore the Bible Yourself** by Rick Yohn). Once we understand a passage's original meaning, we can make application to other situations without violating the context. "A text without a context is a pretext."
 - Interpret Scripture by Scripture**. Cross-references will direct us to other passages that shed light on the one we are studying.
 - Understand the historical situation of a passage**. We must bridge the gap between our minds and the minds of the Biblical writers who wrote in a different language, in a different culture, in a different place, in a different time. Use tools such as a Bible Atlas, Bible Dictionary, Commentaries, or computer programs and apps such as Logos.
 - Observe the progress of revelation** – distinguish God's dealing with different people in different times. "...revelation is progressive in the sense that God has revealed Himself in various ways over the centuries, and each time He has imparted to us more information about Himself....Because of progressive revelation, the teachings of earlier parts of Scripture find fulfillment and clarification in the later parts of Scripture" (Yohn). Dietary laws would be one example.
 - Interpret grammatically**. Observe the relationships of words to each other.
 - Question every interpretation**. Ask: Is my interpretation consistent with the rest of Scripture...historical Christianity?
 - Guard against reading into Scripture what isn't there**. "Let the passage speak for itself" (Yohn)