

Rom. 14:19 So then let us follow after things which make for peace, and things whereby we may edify one another.



John 8:32 and ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.

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## AN APPROVED WORKMAN

by Jim Stauffer

Paul instructs Timothy on how to be a servant approved before God when he says, *“Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.”* (KJV **2 Timothy 2:15**) Lest we give a cursory examination of the word study in this text, note the ASV, NASB and other translations use the word diligent.

The Greek word and definition for the word study is: ***spoudazo***; to make effort, be prompt or earnest - endeavour, do diligence, be diligent, give diligence, be forward, labor, study (***Strong's Dictionary of Bible Words***).

The gist of this passage is in order to be approved before God we must give this diligence. Now, surely no one would deny his desire to be approved of God. This passage tells us one who is approved of God is one who is not ashamed of who he is and what he does because he rightly divides the word of truth. Rightly dividing the word of truth means to handle it, understand it and teach it accurately. And, of course he gives us the pathway for us to accomplish this. Study, give diligence, labor at it until our understanding is accurate and then teach it to others (**Acts 8:4; 2 Tim. 2:2**).

There are two very important conclusions to be made by the child of God if he wishes to be approved by God. First, we must come to an understanding of the word of truth. Paul speaks of his teaching the truth as the mystery of the gospel and says we can understand it. *“How that by revelation he made known unto me the mystery; (as I wrote afore in few words, Whereby, when ye read, ye may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ) Which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit;”* (**Ephesians 3:3–5**) Second, we must teach others accurately the Scriptures, the gospel, the truth as revealed by the Holy Spirit to the apostles.

These two goals will require diligence. They will demand we give heed to what God says and not the doctrines of men (**2 John 9**). The ministry of our Lord is filled with his communication with a very religious group, the Scribes, Pharisees and Sadducees. Yet as religious as they were, they were condemned for being hypocrites. They were hypocrites because He showed them He was from God and they still rejected both Him and His message.

The challenge for every person who strives to be approved of God is to give diligence to understand His message and then to accept it in spite of what those closest to you may think of your actions.

The numbers of people on the face of the earth who practice or hold to some religion is a very large number. Much larger than many believe. And yet of all of us, Jesus says this, *“Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.”* (**Matthew 7:13–14**)

As a heads up to all men, Jesus warns us there will be influences in our lives we have to reject and friends and relatives we have to discard to accept this truth He has revealed. *“Think not that I am come to send peace on earth: I came not to send peace, but a sword. For I am come to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter in law against her mother in law. And a man's foes shall be they of his own household. He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me: and he that loveth son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me. And he that taketh not his cross, and followeth after me, is not worthy of me. He that findeth his life shall lose it: and he that loseth his life for my sake shall find it.”* (**Matthew 10:34–39**)

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Do you wish to be approved of God? Have you diligently applied yourself to understand what the Scriptures teach? Can you, once you understand it, put everything and everyone who distracts you from it away from you? This is the demand of the one who chooses the strait and narrow way.

## TWO MEN SEEK FAITH

by Bill Hall

Two men seek faith. **The first man's** approach is to try to find solutions to all the problems. He has delved deeply into the difficult questions relating to the Genesis account of creation. He has read volumes on the flood. He finds the story of Jonah particularly challenging. He relies heavily on archaeology and secular history for confirmation of his solutions. He believes **because** he is satisfied with his own answers to the problems of faith.

**The second man's** approach centers upon Jesus Christ. He too has had to consider evidences and struggle with certain problems, but he is fully persuaded that Jesus Christ is the Son of God and has confessed that he believes that fact with all his heart. Believing in Jesus as the infallible Son of God, he does not question anything Jesus believed, anything Jesus said, or anything Jesus authorized to be said.

He, too, wondered about the Genesis account of creation, but his questions ceased when he read the words of Jesus: *Have you not read that He who made them at the beginning 'made them male and female' and said, 'For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh'?"* (Matthew 19:4,5) If Jesus' stamp of approval was on the creation story, that was good enough for him. He didn't have the solution to all the problems, but he believed **because** Jesus believed it, and he believed in Jesus.

His faith in other Old Testament accounts was similarly established. He found Jesus' stamp of approval on the flood (Matthew 24:37-39) and the story of Jonah (Matthew 12:40), and in fact, on all the Old Testament record in one sweeping statement recorded in **Luke 24:44**: *"Then He said to them, 'These are the words which I spoke to you while I was still with you, that all things must be fulfilled which were written in the Law of Moses and the prophets and the Psalms concerning Me.'"*

Since the New Testament contains what Jesus said combined with what He authorized to be said, the

second man had no trouble believing the New Testament. His faith in the whole Bible simply rests upon his faith in Christ as the infallible Son of God. He too finds the study of the problems of faith intriguing and challenging, but his own personal faith is not dependent on finding solutions to all the problems.

**The first man's** faith stands on shaky ground, for it is founded human wisdom. Should some later archaeological discovery or other bit of evidence not now known prove his solutions to be false, the very foundation of his faith would be gone. He would have to seek new solutions or lose his faith entirely.

**The second man's** faith may not appeal to the highly sophisticated, but it is founded on the rock - on the One who is *"the same yesterday, today, and forever"* (Hebrews 13:8).

*"So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God"* (Romans 10:17).

## Am I too bad to be saved? No.

Paul answers our question: *"And I thank Christ Jesus our Lord who has enabled me, because He counted me faithful, putting me into the ministry, although I was formerly a blasphemer, a persecutor, and an insolent man; but I obtained mercy because I did it ignorantly in unbelief"* (1 Timothy 1:12-13). Paul was aggressively immoral and violent in his rejection of Jesus Christ. His story of sin and conversion is found in **Acts chapters eight through nine**.

God is great in love and mercy, even extending to people like Paul (formerly Saul). *"And the grace of our Lord was exceedingly abundant, with faith and love which are in Christ Jesus."* (1 Timothy 1:14).

Our question is important because Paul says that it is the very reason He was saved! *"This is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief. However, for this reason I obtained mercy, that in me first Christ might show all longsuffering, as a pattern to those who are going to believe on Him for everlasting life"* (1 Timothy 1:15-16). Paul was saved to illustrate that God can save anyone who is willing to turn and be faithful. That includes you and me.

Praise God! *"Now to the King eternal, immortal, invisible, to God who alone is wise, be honor and glory forever and ever. Amen."* (1 Timothy 1:17) You can change because you can be forgiven.

**Don Bunting**

## Complaining

**Philip C. Strong – southportcofc.org**

**We all do it.** We complain about potholes and bad roads, and then complain about roadwork and repair crews slowing us down. We complain about a waitress who's serving half or more of the restaurant getting our order wrong or being too slow. And of course, the songs at worship service were either pitched too high or too low or led too fast or too slow... We don't mean to be selfish, ungrateful, and opinionated, but we are anyway.

**“Do all things without grumbling** (*‘complaining,’* NIV) **or disputing** (*‘arguing,’* NIV); *that you may prove yourselves blameless and innocent children of God above reproach in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom you appear as lights in the world, holding fast the word of life, so that in the day of Christ I may have cause to glory because I did not run in vain nor toil in vain,* **Phil.2:14.** For our purposes here, there are two primary words under consideration: *goggusmus* (*gong-goos-mos*), translated as **“grumbling,”** means to murmur, or a secret displeasure not openly avowed; and *dialogimos* (*dee-al-og-is-mos*) translated as **“disputing,”** in this case basically means to argue. What they have in common is inward displeasure - whether muttered privately to one's self or a sympathetic few, or openly proclaimed for everyone to hear. Either way, the *grumbler/complainer* and the *disputer/arguer* is not pleased with whatever/whoever is presumed responsible. We, included me, need to just **STOP:**

•**Stop Grumbling/Complaining and Disputing/Arguing-** obviously. Otherwise, we are neither

**“blameless”** nor **“innocent, children of God above reproach,”** and we certainly aren't being the kind of **“lights in the world”** that we should be, **Phil.2:15.**

•**Stop being Selfish,** as it is usually a root-cause of complaining and disputing. We just want our way, and when we don't get it or can't have it, we grumble, mumble, and complain or argue. It shouldn't escape our notice that this chapter began with the admonitions to **“Do nothing from selfishness or empty conceit, but let each one of you regard one another as more important than himself”** and to **“not merely look out for your own interests, but also for the interests of others,”** **Phil.2:3-4.** If we'll stop being so concerned with and intent on our own interests and having our own way, we'll find far less about which to *grumble* and *complain*.

•**Stop being Ungrateful.** It has been said many times in many ways that if we will just stop and “count our blessings,” most of the things we *grumble* and *argue* about will seem far less important. In fact, we'll probably be ashamed of them, and of ourselves for

complaining about them. Simple appreciation/gratitude goes a long way towards eliminating complaining specifically, and improving our overall selves... and gratitude with contentment, well that's just the “coup de gras” of selfish grumbling and arguing, **cf. 1Tim.6:3-8!**

•**Stop being So Opinionated.** I've said for a long time, “Opinions are like noses- pretty much everyone has one; it's just where you stick 'em that counts.” While my/your opinions matter, we have to understand that they matter mostly to me/you. You and I may not be able to help having opinions (though surely we can limit the number of them) but we can help sharing them so freely. Did the other person ask for your/my opinion? If so, share it reservedly and with gracious consideration, **cf. Col.4:5-6;** if not, keep it to yourself, **cf. Prov.10:19 and Eccl.6:11.**

**While there is a time** and a place for well-meant and graciously-delivered constructive criticism, *grumbling/complaining* and *arguing/disputing* is just wrong-headedly *selfish*, and usually only proves just how *ungrateful* and *opinionated* we are... at least to everyone else if not to ourselves. We can and must be and do better in these regards.

**(Edited – JH) Taken from 25th Street Messenger**

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**We believe in worshiping and serving the Lord as He has instructed in His word.**

**Things not taught in the Bible that people believe, and foster false teaching as a result.**

**Christians worshiping on the Sabbath (See Acts 20:7; 1 Cor. 16:1,2)**

**Please call us to study the Bible. It is refreshing.**

**Psa. 1:1** *Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the wicked, Nor standeth in the way of sinners, Nor sitteth in the seat of scoffers: 2 But his delight is in the law of Jehovah; And on his law doth he meditate day and night. 3 And he shall be like a tree planted by the streams of water, That bringeth forth its fruit in its season, Whose leaf also doth not wither; And whatsoever he doeth shall prosper. 4 The wicked are not so, But are like the chaff which the wind driveth away. 5 Therefore the wicked shall not stand in the judgment, Nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous. 6 For Jehovah knoweth the way of the righteous; But the way of the wicked shall perish.*

## HOURS OF WORSHIP

Sunday A.M. 9:30 Bible Study

Sunday A.M. 10:20 Assembled Worship

Sunday P.M. 5:00 Assembled Worship

Wednesday P.M. 7:00 Bible Study and Worship

**Visitors welcome**

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### NEWS AND NOTES:

#### THOSE IN NEED OF PRAYERS:

Alma Baumgartner, Jan Patrick,  
Denese Goring, Brooklyn Boyer,  
Tracy Richardson, Tina Brofft, Matt  
Bassford, Cleveland Redding, David  
and Joanne Beckley, Zack Rogers,  
Mark Walker, Bill and Carol Miller,  
Pat McLoud and Lexi Montgomery.

Bible Classes - Sunday Morning -  
REVELATION - Bill Miller  
Wednesday Evening - GENESIS -  
Jim Stauffer

Sunday Sermon - LESSONS FROM  
THE LIFE OF CAIN



## **What Must I Do To Be Saved?**

**Hear** the gospel - Romans 10:17

**Believe** in Jesus Christ - Hebrews 11:6

**Repent** of sins - Acts 17:30

**Confess** Christ as Lord - Romans 10:9,10

**Be Baptized** for remission of sins - Acts 2:38

**Be Faithful** unto death - Revelation 2:10