

Diligently Seeking God (Hebrews 11:6)

PRAIRIE VILLAGE CHURCH OF CHRIST

Church Bulletin Articles from May 29, 2011

Hear sermons online at www.pvchurchofchrist.com

Scripture of the Week



2 Timothy 2:15

“Be diligent to present yourself approved to God as a workman who does not need to be ashamed, accurately handling the word of truth.”

The command has been issued by God to all Gospel preachers to handle the word of truth accurately when they teach it. This was Paul’s charge to his young protégé and fellow preacher, Timothy.

Paul warned him in this letter about people who had gone astray from the truth and perverted it (verse 18). He told Timothy it was his job to teach the word accurately so he could help people and not harm them. The Greek word rendered “accurately handling”, or as the King James Version of the Bible puts it, “rightly dividing” is “*orthotomeo*”. This word literally means “to cut straight”. The Greek word “*ortho*” means to straighten or align. An orthotic or orthopedic appliance is a device used to support or correct the function of a person’s arms, legs or body. Many people wear orthotic inserts in their shoes to straighten a misalignment of their feet or ankles so they can walk correctly and achieve good health. In the same way, anyone who undertakes the task of teaching God’s word must be

careful to do so correctly, so they can be sure to help the people they teach have a healthy, profitable walk in Christ. Unfortunately, the problem of inaccurately handling the truth that existed in Paul and Timothy’s day has only multiplied with the passing of time. There are many people today who preach and teach from the Bible with the best intentions, but they do not handle God’s word with precision. It is every individual’s personal responsibility to make sure that what they are taught and what they believe is the straight truth (1 John 4:1). Our spiritual health depends on a correct understanding of, and an accurate obedience to the Bible. If a person is damned on the last day, he won’t be able to blame a bad preacher. We will all be judged individually by how we handle the word of truth (John 12:48).

Accurately Handling the Word of Truth

One of the problems people run into when studying the Bible is a lack of awareness of the difference between the Old and New Testaments. I really love the Old Testament because we can learn a great deal from it. We learn that God created the universe and that He created people in His image. We also learn that He is happy with people when they obey Him, and displeased when we rebel by sinning against Him. The Apostle Paul wrote of the worth of the Old Testament in Romans 15:4 and 1 Corinthians 10:6. These verses state that we can learn and find encouragement and hope from those old accounts. But in the New Testament, through Christ Jesus, God has provided people a “better covenant” with “better promises” (Hebrews 8:6), and He has made many changes. For instance, under

God’s prior covenant with Israel, animal sacrifices were required to atone for the sins of His people. We don’t need to sacrifice animals today because Christ sacrificed himself, once for all time, for everyone’s sins (Hebrews 9:26). The only people qualified to sacrifice animals were priests. When the sacrifices were done away with, the need for priests was eliminated as well. In God’s current covenant, Christ is our High Priest (Hebrews 3:1), and symbolically, all Christians are considered priests who sacrifice their lives to Him (1 Peter 2:5, 9; Romans 12:1). Under that older covenant, God’s people were required to keep holy the Sabbath Day. They could perform no work on Saturday because it was a day of mandatory rest (Jeremiah 17:24). Violation of this law was even punishable by death (Exodus

31:14-15). Under the new covenant in Christ, the first day of the week (Sunday) is God’s special day of worship (Acts 20:7; 1 Corinthians 16:2), but there is no prohibition of work on that day. The Sabbath day has been done away with (Colossians 2:16-17), so there is no “Christian Sabbath.” In the Old Testament God commanded people to worship Him with manmade musical instruments, and we find hundreds of examples of people doing that. In the New Testament the command is only to sing (Ephesians 5:19; Colossians 3:16). Nowhere in the New Testament will you find a Christian worshipping God with a manmade instrument. Worshipping God by playing music is an accepted practice in most churches today. Don’t you think if God wanted that He would have asked for it at least once?

Please Come Visit Us At...

Prairie Village Church of Christ
4616 Valley Station Rd., Louisville, KY 40272
Preacher – Louie Taylor
Phone Number – 502.807.3211
www.pvchurchofchrist.com

Times of Services

Sunday Morning Bible Study.....9:30
Sunday Morning Worship Service.....10:30
Sunday Evening Worship Service.....6:30
Wednesday Evening Bible Study.....7:30



Handling the New Testament Accurately

The problem of mishandling the word of truth doesn't end with a good understanding of the differences between the Old and New Testaments. Changes have even taken place in the Church of Christ since the truth was revealed in the first century. A close examination will show us that even some of the practices we read about in the pages of the New Testament have been done away with. For example, we see in the first few chapters of the book of Acts, when Christ's church was first established in Jerusalem, it looked a lot different than local churches do today. The leadership of the church there in that city was provided by the Apostles and certain daily tasks were assigned to seven men who met certain qualifications (Acts 6:1-6). God's arrangement for a local congregation now is for elders to lead (Acts 14:23) and deacons to serve (Philippians 1:1). There aren't any Apostles living today, and the

qualifications for deacons are different than those found in Acts 6:3 (1 Timothy 3:8-13). Certain people in the infant church were also endowed with miraculous powers from the Holy Spirit, to teach the truth and to verify the message they taught (Mark 16:20; Hebrews 2:3-4). They didn't have the New Testament in written form as we do today, so they needed direct inspiration from God to know His will, and miracles to confirm that the message was truly from Him. The need for miracles has been eliminated because we have God's message completely revealed and confirmed now in the New Testament (Jude 3). God even told us there would come a time when all miraculous gifts would cease (1 Corinthians 13:8). Jesus promised the Apostles that they would receive special powers of inspiration and miraculous gifts from the Holy Spirit (Acts 1:1-8), and they received them (Acts 1:26; 2:1-4).

They could even pass some of those gifts on to other people by laying their hands on them (Acts 8:17-18). But this ability to work miracles and transfer miraculous power died when the Apostles died. They left behind the Bible to teach us everything we must know and do to make God happy with us. In John 16:13 Jesus promised He would send the Holy Spirit to guide the Apostles into all the truth. That promised was fulfilled by the time Peter wrote that God has given us "all things that pertain to life and godliness through the true knowledge of Him who called us" (2 Peter 1:3). The Bible is all people need to make them complete and acceptable to God now (2 Timothy 3:16-17). We have all we need in the God's perfect revelation to make us everything He wants us to be in His sight. Direct inspiration and miraculous gifts have been done away with, and it was never God's intention for them to remain.

GOSPEL MEETING AUGUST 15-17 WITH GERRY SANDUSKY — Please mark your calendars and make early plans to attend every day of this short, three day meeting with Gerry Sandusky of Madison Indiana. Brother Gerry has entitled this series of studies, "Standing at the Door of the Day of Eternity". Each lesson will be taken from the New Testament book of 1 Thessalonians, and the goal of this meeting will be to motivate each one of us to live every day of our lives on planet earth as if it might be our last.