

I am certain that all of us want to deeply understand the Word of God. This means to grow in knowledge and understanding of it.

Once we appreciate that the Lord died for our sins and we have God's gift of eternal life, we are told to seek and find the deeper things regarding our calling and hope.

[Col 1:9](#) For this cause we also, since the day we heard, do not cease to pray for you, and to desire that you might be filled *with* the knowledge of His will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding,

[Col 1:10](#) that you might walk worthy of the Lord to all pleasing, being fruitful in every work and increasing in the knowledge of God,

[2Ti 1:8](#) Therefore you should not be ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me His prisoner. But be partaker of the afflictions of the gospel according to *the* power of God,

[2Ti 1:9](#) who has saved us and called *us* with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace which was given us in Christ Jesus before the eternal times.

[Eph 4:1](#) I therefore, the prisoner in *the* Lord, beseech you that you walk worthy of the calling with which you are called,

How do we know the holy calling with which we are called? And if we do not know what it is, how can we walk worthily of it? Israel is a called out company; a "church", the remnant of Romans 9-11 is a called out company; a "church". What church or called out company has God given us today and instructed us to pursue and make our own?

To know the calling God has given us in Christ through the Apostle Paul requires we do a lot more than just read our Bibles, we need to study the Word of God as much as we might study for our high school graduation. Does this sound imbalanced or too difficult? We might study for a college degree which will only fit us for this life, but the Word of God prepares us for eternal life and the opportunity not only to live with Christ but to reign with Him. This does not mean we have to attend a theological college, it means we need to regularly, diligently study God's Word. However, to diligently study our Bibles we must apply the Bible study rules our Heavenly Father has given us.

Many Bible teachers are now realizing this wonderful truth; all the Word of God is for us (2Tim.3:16) but not all the Word of God is about us (2tim.2:15). Not all the New Testament is about us either.

Here are two important Bible study principles we have considered in the past. They are found in the writings of our apostle Paul and they instruct us as to how we must study God's Word;

[Php 1:9](#) And this I pray, that your love may abound yet more and more in full knowledge and in all perception;

[Php 1:10](#) that you may distinguish between things that differ,

And

[2Ti 2:15](#) Study earnestly to present yourself approved to God, a workman that does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the Word of Truth.

In Philippians Paul says distinguish things that differ or as the KJV says "approve things excellent". It is impossible to approve things that are excellent if we do not compare the differences in the Word of God. Notice the MKJV which has "distinguish things that differ" does not say extinguish things that differ by ignoring the things that differ. When the Holy Spirit inspires the NT writers to use different words and phrases it is important we notice the differences to understand God's precious Word. Remember the game, which one of these is not like the other?

In 2Timothy Paul says we must rightly divide the Word of Truth and divide means to separate the things that differ. Most dispensationalists are very familiar with this phrase but we need to recognize that dispensationalists did not invent this Bible study principle. It was God Himself who told us to rightly divide and if God says we are to rightly divide then it is up to us to recognize that God suggests there could be wrong division.

Do we understand what it means to distinguish things that differ and to rightly divide? Here are two things that are different. By separating the following things we learn, grow and begin to rejoice in the wonder of God's only calling in operation today.

Both the following passages are written by our Apostle Paul. The first passage was written during the Acts period when

Israel still stood as God's people and the Lord's imminent return to the earth was the hope held. The second pair of passages was written after Israel was set aside for a time at Acts 28 and the return of the Lord to the earth was postponed.

In the following Acts period passage Paul writes about the "parousia" of the Lord. The parousia means His personal presence on the earth, His arrival back from Heaven to the earth. When we looked at this passage we discovered that nothing in it remotely suggests that either the Lord or the believers associated with this hope were going back into heaven. The Lord is descending out of heaven to the earth and those resurrected and changed believers were going up to meet Him in the air as He descended to the earth.

1Th 4:13 But I would not have you ignorant, brothers, concerning those who are asleep, that you be not grieved, even as others who have no hope.

1Th 4:14 For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so (like this) God will also bring with Him all those who have fallen asleep through Jesus.

1Th 4:15 For we say this to you by the Word of *the* Lord, that we who are alive *and* remain until the coming (parousia) of the Lord shall not go before those who are asleep.

1Th 4:16 For the Lord Himself shall descend from Heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ shall rise first.

1Th 4:17 Then we who are alive *and* remain shall be caught up together with them in *the* clouds, to meet the Lord in the air. And so we shall ever be with the Lord.

After Acts 28, Paul writes about a new hope as follows:

Eph 2:1 And He *has made you alive*, who were once dead in trespasses and sins,

Eph 2:4 But God, who is rich in mercy, for His great love *with* which He loved us

Eph 2:5 (even when we were dead in sins) has made us alive together with Christ (by grace you are saved),

Eph 2:6 and has raised *us* up together and made *us* sit together in the heavenlies in Christ Jesus,

Eph 2:7 so that in the ages to come He might show the exceeding riches of His grace in *His* kindness toward us through Christ Jesus.

The Church which is His Body has been raised and seated with Christ in the heavenly places which is far above the clouds and air of 1Thess.4.

The following passage is completely different to 1Thess.4 but sadly tradition has obscured the difference;

Col 3:1 If then (or since, if does not always mean doubt) you were raised with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ is sitting at *the* right hand of God.

Col 3:2 Be mindful of things above, not on things on the earth.

Col 3:3 For you died, and your life has been hidden with Christ in God.

Col 3:4 When Christ our Life *is* revealed, then you also will be revealed with Him in glory.

Here we are clearly told that when our Lord is revealed in the heavenlies, then we, the Church which is His Body will also be revealed with Him at the same time in the same place; the very place God has raised and seated us.

God the Father is not enthroned in the air or the clouds and our Lord is not seated at God's right hand in the air or the clouds either. Our Lord, The Head of our Church is seated at God's right hand in the heavenly places. We have been raised together and seated in front of God's face in the heavenly places as well.

When our Lord is revealed or manifested (phaneroo), He is seated at God's right hand in the heavenly places; He is not descending in the clouds with angels. His descent in the clouds of 1Thess.4 is His parousia which is not the same as the phaneroo of Colossians 3.

When the Lord is revealed He will not be moving at all. He will remain seated at the Father's right hand in the heavenlies when the light bursts forth and reveals Him throughout His entire kingdom. Our Lord's Kingdom stretches from the heavenly places or the heavenlies to the earth beneath.

When we are manifested with Him we will not be meeting Him as He descends "out of heaven", we will be taken to heavenly places, seated and then manifested with Him there. This takes place before He descends to the earth, before 1Thess.4

I hope we are beginning to see the wonder of the differences between 1Thess.4 and Ephesians and Colossians.

It is my opinion that Satan has been working for many years to blind the eyes of Christians to this incredible event, the appearing, the revelation of our Lord and Head in the heavenly places. Can we see how subtle the enemy has been? He turned Christians' eyes away from the hope given to us today by turning eyes to another hope given to another group of

believers in another time. The enemy did not turn Christians' eyes away from the Bible, which would be too obvious. Our eyes were turned away because we failed to rightly divide the Word of truth; we failed to test things that differ. I hope each reader is beginning to see how important the Bible study principles really are.

That moment of His appearing is when our hope will be realized.