

## **2 Timothy 2:15 "Study", "be diligent" or "do your best"?**

2 Timothy 2:15 "STUDY to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth."

Bible correctors claim the King James Bible is wrong or incorrect when it says "Study...rightly dividing the word of truth." They tell us it should be translated in this place as "be diligent" or "do your best" or "make every effort".

Greek words as well as English words can have very different meanings depending on the context. Admittedly, the Greek word *spoudazo* can mean "to endeavor", "to be diligent", "to labor" or even "to be hasty" but it also has the meaning of "to study something with great care".

So even if you thought that "study" should be "be diligent", what are you to be diligent in? - the answer is in the verse - "rightly dividing the word of truth". That's why contextually it makes perfect sense to translate the word as "study".

Not only does the KJB render this word as 'study' but so also do Tyndale 1525, Coverdale 1535, the Great Bible 1540 - " Study to shewe thy selfe laudable vnto God, a workman", Matthew's Bible 1549 - "Studye to shewe thy selfe laudable vnto God a workeman", the Bishops' Bible 1568, the Geneva Bible 1599, the Whiston's Primitive New Testament 1745, Webster's 1833 translation, the Douay-Rheims version, Murdock's Translation 1852 of the Syriac text - " And study to present thyself before God", Noyles Translation 1869, the Calvin Bible 1855, the Amplified Version 1987, Green's interlinear and his Modern KJV, the KJV 21st Century Version 1994, the Hebraic Roots Bible 2009, the Urim-Thummin Version 2001 and the Third Millennium Bible 1998.

Even the earlier Douay-Rheims Catholic bible had "study" - "Carefully study to present thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly handling the word of truth."

But of course the more modern ones like the St. Joseph New American Bible 1970 and the New Jerusalem bible 1985 match the modern Vatican Versions like the ESV, NIV, NASB. The New Jerusalem bible says "make every effort to present yourself before God as a proven worker" while the St. Joseph says: "Try hard to make yourself worthy of God's approval"!!!

KJB - "Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman"

NIV - "Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved"

ESV - "Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved"

NASB - "Be diligent to present yourself approved to God as a workman"

NKJV - "Be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker"

NET - " Make every effort to present yourself before God as a proven worker"

The Italian Diodati 1602 and the Nuova Diodati 1991, and the 1927 Italian Rivudeta have "study" spelled 'studiati'. "STUDAITI di presentar te stesso approvato a Dio..."

The French Martin 1744 also reads like the King James Bible with: "ETUDIE-toi de te rendre approuvé à Dieu

Likewise the 2004 Reina Valera Gomez Spanish bible says: "ESTUDIA con diligencia para presentarte a Dios aprobado, como obrero que no tiene de qué avergonzarse, que traza bien la palabra de verdad."

The word is spoudazo in Greek and I have a modern Greek dictionary that has nothing to do with the Bible at all. It is like a Spanish/English- English/Spanish dictionary you buy in the stores.

If you look up spoudazo it says "to study". Also the well-known lexicon of Liddell & Scott on page 1630 lists one of the meanings of spoudazo as 'to study'. The noun form means 'study' and another noun form spoudastees means 'a student'.

If you do not know Greek and want to verify this for yourself simply go to <http://www.kypros.org/cgi-bin/lexicon/> and do one of two things: 1. type the word spoudazo in the Greek to English side or 2. type in the word "study" on the English to Greek side and see what result you get. You don't have to have a seminary degree to do that.

Matthew Henry comments on this verse saying: "Study to show thyself approved unto God, 2 Timothy 2:15. Observe, The care of ministers must be to approve themselves unto God, to be accepted of him, and to show that they are so approved unto God. In order thereunto, there must be constant care and industry: **Study** to show thyself such a one, a workman that needs not be ashamed. Ministers must be workmen; they have work to do, and they must take pains in it.

Workmen that are unskilful, or unfaithful, or lazy, have need to be ashamed; but those who mind their business, and keep to their work, are workmen that need not be ashamed. **And what is their work? It is rightly to divide the word of truth.** Not to invent a new gospel, but rightly to divide the gospel that is committed to their trust. Observe here, 1. The word which ministers preach is the word of truth, for the author of it is the God of truth. 2. **It requires great wisdom, study, and care, to divide this word of truth rightly; Timothy must study in order to do this well."**

To me the difference is the new versions with their "do your best" or "be diligent to present yourself to God as one approved" seem to imply a lot of self-effort to gain approval, whereas the King James Bible seems to be saying "study so you can be sure you have the right doctrine God has revealed."

Perhaps the reason the Every Man For Himself Bible Versionists prefer "do your best", "work hard", "be diligent" etc. is due to a fundamental difference in one's approach to God's words.

Maybe those who do not believe that any Bible in any language is or ever was the preserved, inspired and infallible words of God feel they need to gear up for a rigorous Bible reconstruction project, since they have no Bible they can trust completely. They must work hard, sweat nails to ferret out every Greek nuance, every learned scholar's conjecture; they first consult 50 different versions, Cardinal Martini, Von Soden, then consult Thayer, Kittel, Driver; look for some fragment from an Egyptian garbage dump, Ugaritic tablet, Dead Sea scroll etc. - anything that could aid the never ending search for what God possibly, maybe, might have said so as to reach a tentative idea on the meaning of the text. Or maybe they just want a translation that "feels right" to them. The "every man did that which was right in his own eyes" syndrome.

In contrast to this, the Bible Believer is blessed to have God's inerrant preserved words in the King James Bible. They feed upon and study God's infallible words and rejoice in them as Jeremiah of old who said: "Thy words were found and I did eat them; and thy word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of mine heart: for I am called by thy name, O LORD God of hosts." (Jeremiah 15:16) The King James Bible believers don't try to correct it, or alter it or change it to fit the passing fads of modern "scholarship". The Bible Believer praises God that He has providentially preserved His words so we can read them today in the 17th century English of the King James Holy Bible, the only Bible seriously believed by thousands of living saints to be the very words of the living God.

I believe the modern version editors who change this word here to something like "be diligent" or "do your best" or "make every effort", have neglected the context of the verse and made a change only for the sake of changing things to get their copyrights, make money, and to undermine the Christian's faith in an inerrant Bible.

Even the secular world has noted that those who actually READ their Bibles are those who read and study the King James Bible, as this article from USA Today called 'Bible Readers Prefer the King James Version' shows.

<http://www.usatoday.com/news/religion/2011-04-21-king-james-bible.htm>

"for the children of this world are in their generation wiser than the children of light." Luke 16:8

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