

## The Resolutions of Jonathan Edwards

**Resolution 28:** Resolved, to study the Scriptures so steadily, constantly and frequently, as that I may find, and plainly perceive myself to grow in the knowledge of the same.

### Anchor Text: 2 Timothy 2:15

Today's resolution should be rather universal in the believer's lives. While many of Edwards thoughts are useful for their insightfulness and their specificity, today's resolution is helpful as a reminder of every Christian's responsibility to immerse themselves in the Bible.

1. The command
  - a. You'll notice here that Paul admonishes his young protégé to "study"
  - b. The term means to be dedicated in the pursuit of understanding the word
    - i. It has been pointed out in many sermons and commentaries that "studying" is different than giving a passing glance or reading a few verses while our minds are elsewhere
    - ii. Instead, to study the Word is to be immersed in "the Scriptures so steadily, constantly and frequently..." as Edwards writes
  - c. Those who are students of the word are those who are constantly plumbing the depths of the truth with an eye to discerning God's revelation
  - d. A true student of the Bible is one who values the truth in its pages deeply
2. The toll
  - a. To this point, I would assume that most of us would agree that studying is a good thing but what about when the Bible is difficult to understand?
  - b. Notice here that Paul tells us that those who study are "workers"
  - c. The implication is clear... those who steadily study the word of God should be prepared to labor
    - i. Unfortunately, many in our world have been educated in systems that instill this odd idea that something that is not immediately understandable is not worth our time
    - ii. We are so prone to "give up" and defer to "experts" in our world and this has bled into the church's posture towards the Word of God
  - d. However, the Lord's intentions are clear and His nature is complex!
    - i. Often, His desire is for us to work to unearth what is present in His Word and we will find that when we labor in faith that the Spirit will illuminate truth, we will experience a great blessing and joy
3. The goal
  - a. Notice that Paul gives a stated goal to Timothy... he should study so that he can "rightly divide the Word of truth"
    - i. The term means to open up the Word in such a way that its truths are presented with accuracy and clarity

- ii. This ability to interpret and teach the Word in a worthy manner is a product of our Spirit-given knowledge of the truth that comes as a product of our study and effort
- b. Folks, one of the reasons why you should work hard to understand the Word is because there are people that surround you (many of them family members and other loved ones) who desperately need to know the truth!
- c. God's plan is for Him to gain glory through your accurate teaching of the Word
  - i. Have you labored today, not only for your own good but for the good of your child who will need spiritual counsel or spouse who will depend upon your biblical wisdom or co-worker who needs hope but is mired in unbiblical living?
  - ii. If not, be motivated to know the truth so that what God impresses upon your heart can change you AND those around you!
- d. Our hope is that Smyrna remains a beacon of truth in this world
  - i. That certainly includes and prioritizes the pulpit ministry and the teaching of our Sunday school teachers but it also incorporates every single member who is called to "teach them all that I (Christ) have commanded you"
  - ii. May we cut the Word straight because we studied the Word well even when this study takes time and effort!