

THE FOREST HILL NEWS

Published weekly by the Forest Hill church of Christ

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Forest Hill Church of Christ

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VISIT US SOON!

Sunday:

Bible Study..... 9:30 A..M.
Morning Worship.....10:30 A.M.
Evening Worship..... 6:00 P.M.

Wednesday:

Bible Study7:00 P.M.

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Volume 33

September 6, 2005

Number 36

PAUL'S HERMENEUTIC

Dan Winkler

How's that for a fifty-dollar word? Hermeneutics. It has to do with the science of interpretation and, in specific, the interpretation of scripture. Well, when it comes to understanding the Bible, I like Paul's approach.

Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth (2 Tim. 2:15 KJV).

First, our study of the Bible should be "Personal": "Study to show thyself approved unto God." We need to make certain that we are what God wants us to be. We can "protect" the truth (cf. 1 Peter 3:15) and "correct" others with the truth (cf. 2 Tim. 2:25,26), but if we fail to "accept" and apply the truth to our own lives first, we are hypocrites (Matt. 7:1-5).

Second, our study of the Bible should be "Practical": "Study to show thyself...a workman that needeth not to be ashamed." Of interest, the words "intellectual(s)," "scholars," and "scholarship" are never used in the New Testament (KJV, NKJV, ASV, NASV, RSV, NIV). But look for the words "do," and, that, with implicit derision (1 Cor. 1:20; NIV). But look for the words "do," "doer," and "work." Our study of the Bible is to be more "vocational" (cf. Eph. 4:1,2 KJV) than "intellectual" in its emphasis. We are to be and do what God wants us to be and do.

Finally, our study of the Bible should be very "Professional": "Study... rightly dividing the word of truth." We must, literally, "handle aright the word of truth." If we are studying the Old Testament, we should be looking for principles to underscore (Rom. 15:4) or examples to motivate (1 Cor. 10:11) us to obey New Testament precepts. If we are studying the New Testament, we should pay attention to context and not make passages say more or less than God intended (cf. Rev. 22:18,19).

In short, the best interpretation of the Bible calls for our looking into, learning from, and personally living by its blessed message. That's "Paul's Hermeneutic" in 2 Timothy 2:15.

(Brother Winkler preaches for the Lord's church in Huntingdon, Tennessee.)

What is Wrong With Robert R. Taylor, Jr.?

Allen Webster

[Editor's Note: The editor could not resist featuring brother Webster's article in the *Forest Hill News*. We share the affection for brother Taylor and hold him in high esteem.]

Robert R. Taylor, Jr., recently preached a Gospel meeting at the Jacksonville church of Christ. Sitting across the table at a fellowship meal prior to the final service, I asked him about a rumor I had heard about him. "Brother Taylor, tell me about your bible reading program." "Well," he answered in his man-of-few-words style. "I try to read about ten chapters a day." With a little prompting, he admitted that it has been his practice for over fifty years to read the entire Bible through each year, and the New Testament through each month. He also confessed that he "tried" to memorize "about ten" new verses each day.

"How do you find time to do that?," was my next inquiry. [I had quizzed him at lunch one day as to how many preaching appointments he had a year. He said that he usually preaches about fifteen meetings a year and speaks on about twenty-five lectureships. Many of these appointments require that he write a chapter for a book. He has also written about thirty books himself, a number of tracts, and been the local preacher for the Ripley (TN) church of Christ for over thirty years.] He replied, "I keep a Bible with me and snatch a few minutes here and there."

His wife, Irene, was sitting beside him and volunteered a brief glimpse into their family life when their children were still at home. She explained that in their family devotions their son and daughter enjoyed playing a game with their father. They tried to stump him by reading a verse from somewhere in the New Testament (without telling him where) and challenging him to quote the verse that preceded it and the one that followed it. She said, "I can't remember them ever stumping him."

What is wrong with Robert R. Taylor, Jr.? Does his TV not have ESPN, CNN, and the History channel? Doesn't he watch the news first thing in the morning and last thing at night? Does his telephone not work? Doesn't the man have any friends to talk to, for crying out loud!? Is he the last man in America without a computer and his speed Internet?

Doesn't he have ballgames to go to and things to buy and sell? Doesn't he have to mow his grass, carry out his garbage, hang his suit back in the closet, shine his shoes, wash his car, and tend his garden? Doesn't he have to go to the doctor, keep his dental appointments, stop by the cleaners, pick up "bread and

milk" on the way home, or get a haircut before Sunday?

Don't people expect him to teach classes and visit hospitals and print bulletins and preach sermons and attend meetings and promote events and set up Bible studies and go see the wayward and drop by to invite the visitors back next Sunday? Doesn't he have a stack of mail that needs sorting and a desk that needs organizing? Doesn't he have to make an appearance at graduations, weddings, and funerals? Doesn't he frequent the local coffee shop to get that "man on the street" flavor for his sermons? Doesn't he have letters to write, grandchildren to "spoil," a wife to pamper, and personal interests, hobbies, and likes? Doesn't he ever sleep in, go on a vacation, or take a day off?

Doesn't he enjoy reading the daily paper and a couple of magazines each month? Doesn't he keep up with the stocks and the scores? Doesn't he have a favorite NFL, NBA, and MLB team and a favorite NASCAR driver to follow? Doesn't he know what despot invaded what country last night and what scandal on Capitol Hill is being rumored in the blogs? Doesn't he keep up with what Republican accused what Democrat of what ethics violation (or was it a Democrat who accused a Republican yesterday)? I venture the man doesn't even know where Howard Dean and Ken Mechlman are scheduled to speak this week. Doesn't he keep up with which politician's poll is up by ten percentage points in the election that is "only three years off" now? Doesn't he know what the latest study found will kill you if you eat it, or what will keep you alive if you take it? Doesn't he have to keep up with the weather and the obituaries? Doesn't he know what actor has the hottest movie, what song is number one again this week, or what author has written the latest got-to-read novel?

I suppose the answer to many of these questions is "yes." He lives in the real world just like the rest of us...except maybe he lives a little less in it than some of us...and lives a little better in it than most of us.

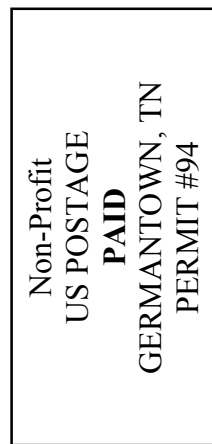
There are some things you didn't tell me, but I'd like to speculate are true about Robert R. Taylor, Jr.:

- I suspect that somewhere along the way you came to *enjoy* your time in the Word and can no more imagine going with out it than you can imagine skipping your daily meals (Psalm 119:97). I'd guess that your reading lost that "Oh, I've got to check off the chart" feeling many years back (cf. Psalm 1:1).
- I figure your children thought this was normal behavior for a daddy as they grew up (Proverbs 17:6). (And, I'd be surprised if they are not daily Bible readers now, Proverbs 22:6.)

- I doubt Sister Irene has ever begrudged the time you spend in Bible study, knowing it is what makes you the man she respects, and the husband she loves (Luke 1:6; 1 Peter 3:7).
- I doubt you have ever gotten into the pulpit at Ripley with a sermon that seemed “off the shelf” (2 Corinthians 4:13).
- I suspect you have a long list of sermon ideas that you “just can’t wait to preach” (Hebrews 11:32) while some of us are scrambling around on Saturday night for something to “get us by” promising ourselves that “we’ll do better next week.”
- I’d guess that you still learn something every time you read the bible through (Romans 11:33; Ephesians 3:8).
- I would venture that the devil has less success at tempting a man so full of Scripture than he does those of us who still have a little trouble finding Galatians on the fly (Psalm 119:9-11; Matthew 4:1-10).
- I doubt that you watch as much TV (about five hours a day) and read fewer newspapers than the average “man in the pew” (and “man in the pulpit” for that matter) (Ephesians 5:16). I would imagine that if you are in a room where a TV is on that it seems so silly and vulgar compared to what you are used to (Ephesians 5:12).
- I figure you thought about heaven more last week than the rest of us (Colossians 3:1-2).

**What is wrong with Robert R. Taylor, Jr.?
Nothing!**

Note: Brother Taylor has no idea this is being written. I’m sure that if I’d asked permission, his humility would have insisted that I “leave his name out of it.” So, Brother Taylor, as you read this, please take consolation in knowing that your example is inspiring a new generation of preachers to be “men of the Book” and countless members far and near to rededicate themselves to reading the Bible. This article is not really about you. It is really about us, and our need to follow as hard after heaven as you are. We give God the glory for having such a servant as you. Only a great God could make such a dedicated follower.



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