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How to Rightly Divide

It is impossible to obey every instruction from the Lord in the Bible. There are instructions from the Lord that conflict with earlier instructions, instructions that are no longer feasible, or instructions that were simply not written to us.

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Our job then is to discern which instructions we should obey and which we should not, the reasons why, and the context in which they should be obeyed. This is popularly called dispensational Bible study or right division.

To determine the context of a passage ask who, what, when, where, and why? Here are some simple questions to ask to determine the context of a passage:

- 1.) *Who is speaking?*
- 2.) *To whom are they speaking?*
- 2.) *What are they speaking about?*

Next, you must ask if you fit in the audience of the passage. If you do then obey; if not, then you must let it be as instructions not written for your participation.

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For example, if the Devil is speaking then you can conclude that the lying words that

come out of his mouth are not for you to obey. If God is speaking Noah to build an ark you can determine that you are not in that audience since the Flood is already past.

If God is speaking about making a covenant with Israel you can also determine that you are not in the context since you are not Israel (if you are a Jew reading this then there are other questions you must ask).

If we ask these questions throughout the scriptures we find that many passages have the same context. These doctrinal contexts, dispensations, need to be rightly divided from one another.

We are living in the dispensation of God's grace where Jesus gave instructions to the apostle Paul that are more excellent for us than the instructions in other dispensations ([Phil 1:10](#), [Eph 3:2](#)).

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