

**“Handling the Word of Truth: Historical and Cultural Context”  
(2 Tim 2:15; Phil 4:13)**

**Verse to Remember:** “Be diligent to present yourself approved to God as a workman who does not need to be ashamed, accurately handling the word of truth” (2 Timothy 2:15).

**How to accurately handle a passage of the Word of Truth (Phil 4:13):**

**1. Read and study the context (with prayer)**

- Today’s focus is historical and cultural context. This means getting into the world of those who are in the Bible, seeking to put ourselves in their lives, their century, their time, their place, their culture. There is a lot that we can learn about the historical and cultural situation from the Bible itself. There are also study Bibles and commentaries that can be helpful in providing this information as well.

- As we look at Philippians 4:13 (“I can do all things through him who strengthens me.”), it is important to look at the life situation of Paul, who wrote it. Paul was in prison (Phil 1:12-14). Throughout Paul’s ministry, he suffered many trials and often went without (2 Cor 11:24-27 cf. Acts 9:16).

- The logical context of the verse is also important. What was the flow of Paul’s argument? (see Philippians 4:11-13).

**2. Find the main point (with prayer)**

- Notice Paul doesn’t say “I know how to turn suffering need into having abundance through Christ who gives me strength.” Rather he says in Philippians 4:11-13, “I have learned the secret of being filled and going hungry, both of having abundance and suffering need. I can do all things through him who strengthens me.” This is what we saw in the historical situation of Paul’s life. He was strong in Christ, but he was in prison as he wrote the book, and he suffered great trials throughout his life and ministry. So, the main point is that regardless of what he was experiencing, whether it be the highest highs or lowest lows from a physical perspective, he could handle it all through Christ who was his core and strength.

**3. Apply the main point (with prayer)**

- Be content, with Christ as your core, whether you are in abundance or suffering.  
- Philippians 4:4-7 helps show us how to be content. Rejoice/praise - especially in the midst of trials (and especially in times of abundance). Give your prayers to God, and put the things that cause you anxiety on him. Christ knows what it is like to suffer, and he is with you in the midst. Pray for the strength of Christ that can bring peace beyond what you can imagine. Think about the good things within all circumstances (Phil 4:8-9). Give thanks – list the abundance that you do have. We can list out what God has given us. We are never ever left with nothing to be thankful for. You always have Christ, who is worth more than all else (Phil 3:7-8).