**A Plague in the Church**

Text: 2 Timothy 2:15

Idea: Biblical illiteracy is a plague upon the church.

I. Introduction:

 Last summer in Southern California, the sky was blood red because of raging wildfires. Now picture with me a fireman standing near a wildfire watching it burn and doing nothing to stop it. Although we know that scene wouldn’t happen, allow me to give you this illustration: In many ways, the problem of biblical illiteracy in the Church is like a fireman standing on the periphery of a wildfire and doing nothing to fight it. Without intervention, the sky would remain blood red as the fire continued to rage.

II. The unhealthy condition of the Church is the root problem of biblical illiteracy today.

 A. The **seeker sensitive** movement focused on reaching the lost at the expense of

 neglecting the discipleship of those who were already Christians.

 B. The **Emergent** Church of the 1990s sought to have a conversation about making

 disciples but divorced itself from teaching sound, biblical doctrine.

 C. In today’s **contemporary trend** in the church, many people think that because they

 know the Bible or facts about the Bible, they are “spiritual.” The problem with this

 so-called “spirituality” is that it takes ideas from other religions and melds the Bible in

 with them. Another erroneous concept of this trend is that it causes people to keep

 their faith to themselves because they think “living and preaching faith publicly is not

 culturally acceptable.” (Dave Jenkins, Editor of Theology for Life Magazine.)

III. What should we do about the problem of biblical illiteracy?

 A. The **Fivefold Ministry’s** responsibility to the church (Ephesians 4:11-13):

 1. Help develop mature believers.

 2. Equip believers to do the work of the ministry.

 3. Build up the Body of Christ.

 B. The **Believer’s** responsibility (2 Timothy 2:15):

 1. Study God’s Word in order to be approved by the Lord.

 a. The Bible is God’s primary way of talking to us.

 b. If we want to hear God speak, we must read our Bibles.

 c. If we want to hear God speak out loud, we must read our Bibles out

 loud.

 2. Become proficient in handling the Word of God.

 C. The **Church’s** responsibility (Matthew 28:19-20):

 Fulfill the Great Commission by proclaiming the Gospel and making disciples.

IV. An opportunity to overcome biblical illiteracy:

 This fall, New Life Church in Canton, Georgia will begin a School of Discipleship to

 help believers overcome biblical illiteracy and equip them to do what God has ordained them

 to do.