

II TIMOTHY 3:16-17
ALL SCRIPTURE!
PART 1

Please turn in your Bibles this morning to II Timothy chapter 3 as we continue our in-depth study of Paul's second letter to his son in the faith, Timothy!

This is an important study because the focus here is the Word of God, the Bible. Not to say other parts of the Scriptures are less important, but if you begin to doubt that the Bible is the inspired Word of God, then the other parts of the Scriptures you will begin to doubt! And then it is up to you what you want to believe and not believe, and many have gone that route today!

I have called our study this morning – *ALL SCRIPTURE*, and you will see why as we go through this study!

I think we can understand why skeptics, who come to put down the Bible, feel that no one knows who the author of the Bible is and even when it does say who the author is, they negate that and say we really are not sure!

Not only do they put down the writers of the Bible, believing we do not know who they are, but they say that the Bible is not the inspired Word of God or God did not inspire men to write the Bible!

And it is amazing how much they attack something that they don't believe in, but they do.

They will tell you that the Bible was written by ignorant and uneducated men, and they wrote things that they truly knew nothing about and now that we have the facts today, we see that they were wrong.

In other words, in putting that all together, they are telling us we can't trust the Bible at all!

If what they are saying is true, then there is no Jesus, there is no sin, there is nothing we can put our trust in regarding the Bible. It is just a bunch of stories or fables! That is not true, and we will see that as we go through our study this morning.

But if you believe that way, then you are in a pretty hopeless situation. Where are you going to put your trust, where is your hope in this life and the one to come based upon?

And the answer is – ***NOTHING!*** In fact, they end up being fables that they believe in because they have nothing that can substantiate what they say they are believing!

The results of these skeptics and atheists that keep putting down the Word of God, getting people to doubt the Word of God, is alarming.

Let me show you what I mean. We are told,

A record-low 20% of Americans now say the Bible is the literal word of God, down from 24% the last time the question was asked in 2017, and half of what it was at its high points in 1980 and 1984.

Meanwhile, a new high of 29% say the Bible is a collection of “***fables, legends, history and moral precepts recorded by man.***”

This marks the first time significantly more Americans have viewed the Bible as not divinely inspired than as the literal word of God.

- <https://bit.ly/4a1r2ij>

Because of this attack on the Bible, we are going to do a series looking at why we can trust the Bible, how the Bible even came together. I think this is very important for us to understand so that we can give people the answers for the hope that we have!

You see, without the authority of the Scriptures guess what you have?

You have the authority of man and thus, man makes the rules, man tells you what you can and can't do, and man tells us the way to God, the way to heaven!

And so, is this a big deal?

You bet it is!

And it truly all boils down to this. A church that is without the authority of the Scriptures, a church that negates that the Scriptures are the Word of God is like a crocodile without teeth.

You see, it can open its mouth wide, and it can open its mouth often, but who really cares!

Don't take the teeth away from God's Word; don't negate what God has said.

And the truth of the matter is this. I think that is why the church today can make all kinds of noise, but no one really seems to care because the church has negated the Word of God and thus, the world does not want to hear them anymore because there is no authority in what they are saying, they have lost their teeth!

I think we need to be honest here and say that we are seeing a separation between those that believe in the authority of the Scriptures and those who reject it, and those who reject it, for the most part, they are apostate.

Think about it. If you reject the authority of the Scriptures, then you are picking and choosing what is of God and what is not!

Think of it like this. You have all heard of the Continental Divide and so, as water flows on one side of the Continental Divide it flows, for the most part, into the Atlantic Ocean.

Water that flows on the other side of the Continental Divide flows into the Pacific Ocean.

And here's the thing. Once the water starts flowing down one side or the other, there is no turning back, its outcome you might say is determined, it will reach the destination from which it is flowing from.

And the same is true with errancy, or the Bible has errors in it and inerrancy, or the Bible is without error in the original writings.

Depending on what you believe regarding the Word of God truly determines where you will end up!

My prayer as we go through these studies is that you would leave here totally confident that what you have in your hands, the Bible, is the inerrant, inspired Word of God from Genesis through Revelation!

I have broken down the verses we will be looking at this morning into the following main points. They are,

FROM GOD – II TIMOTHY 3:16a

IS PROFITABLE – II TIMOTHY 3:16

END RESULT – II TIMOTHY 3:17

With that as our introduction, let's begin reading in II Timothy chapter 3, beginning in verse 16 and let's see what the Lord has for us as we study His Word and look at this topic – ***ALL SCRIPTURE!***

II TIMOTHY 3**VERSE 16a**

This is our battle today, the inspiration of the Scriptures, of the Bible. Is it – ***FROM GOD!***

Why is this such a battle?

Because many are rejecting it, saying that it contains the Word of God but not every passage is from God.

What I mean by that is that they change this verse that says, “**All Scripture is given by inspiration of God**” and they change it to, “**All Scripture *that is* inspired by God**” or “**All Scripture *inspired by* God.**”

That is a huge difference!

What they are saying is that some of the Bible is inspired by God and some isn't!

What is the problem with a statement like that?

First of all, that is not how the text is written! In doing this they are being dishonest to the text!

Also, now we have opened up a can of worms because what they are saying is that some parts of the Bible are not inspired by God.

If that were true, and it is not, then the Bible would be worthless, we could not trust it for truth because we don't know what God is saying and what man has written. It would leave it open for every person to decide for themselves what is from God and what is not from God.

And we do see that today as people negate the judgment of God, that we are sinners, and they focus on the love of God, that is what God has spoken!

Please understand that the words of men could never transform a person's life, only the words of God because, as Paul wrote in Hebrews 4:12, "**For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.**"

Did you see that?

It is the Word of God that transforms our lives, plain and simple!

Others say that God's Word is symbolic.

What is the problem with that?

If that is true, if it is all symbolic then we have to determine what it means.

What happens then is everyone has a different idea of what the passages mean, and we end up making the Bible say what we want it to say instead of what God is speaking forth!

Let me make this really simple for you regarding the Word of God and what God has to say about it.

In Psalm 138:2, David wrote, "**I will worship toward Your holy temple, And praise Your name For Your lovingkindness and Your truth; For You have magnified Your word above all Your name.**"

What's my point?

My point is this.

David is saying that God has placed His Word above His name, and His name is all that He is.

That means if we can't trust God's Word, then we can't trust God because He is nothing!

Do you see how important this is and that is why we will take a few weeks looking at the topic of the Bible and seeing why we can trust in it!

Now listen again to what Paul says here in II Timothy 3:16.

Paul tells us that “**All Scripture is given by inspiration of God**” and that phrase “**given by inspiration of God**” in the Greek is *THEOPNEUSTOS*, (teh-op'-nyoo-stos) and it literally means “*God-breathed.*”

Now some would argue and say that Paul was speaking about Timothy's conversion to Christ and how the “**Holy Scriptures**” brought him to saving faith or made him “**wise for salvation.**”

So when Paul speaks of “**All Scripture**” he must be speaking of the Hebrew Scriptures, the Old Testament and only that!

Here's the thing and again, look at what is written. You see, if Paul meant the exact same thing here as what Timothy learned as a child, he might have said “*Those Scriptures*” referring back to verse 15, or he might have just repeated the exact phrase, “*Holy Scriptures.*”

But that is not what Paul did. Paul changed his wording here because he recognized that what God uniquely brought forth from the apostles and prophets in his time was also Scripture, that it was also the God-breathed Word of God.

In fact, Paul wrote in Ephesians 2:20, “**having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief cornerstone.**”

We see that now, but keep in mind that when Paul wrote this letter to Timothy, not all the Scriptures were written yet, they were coming together.

I hope you are seeing that Paul is not just speaking of the Old Testament or the Hebrew Scriptures here, but from Genesis and ultimately through the book of Revelation.

Let me show you what I mean.

In I Timothy 5:18 Paul quotes out of the Gospel of Luke stating that it is Scripture.

In II Peter 3:16 Peter tells us that Paul's writings are part of the Scriptures.

And thus, the entire Bible is God's Word to us!

I believe, without a doubt, that every single word in the Bible is there because God wanted it there and there are no exceptions!

Now I know that some would argue this point. They might say, "***This statement doesn't mean anything because it is self-referential. Anyone could write a book and say that it is inspired by God.***"

That is very true.

And yes, the Bible is self-referential because God speaks of His Words as the Holy Scripture, that these words are given by the inspiration of God!

And if God did not say that then the critics would argue that there is nothing in the Bible that says it is inspired by God

Again, instead of listening to what the critics are saying, let's look at the evidence.

First of all, some would argue that this book was written a long time ago and passed on from generation to generation, and thus, there must be many errors in the Bible. It can't be accurate.

Well, let's look at the history.

- The Bible was written over a 1500-year time span.
- More than forty different authors from all walks of life – from kings to peasants, wrote it.
- It was written on three different continents – Africa, Asia and Europe.
- It was written in three different languages – Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek.

- There are a variety of literary styles.
- It addresses hundreds of controversial subjects and yet there is harmony.
- And it is the unfolding story of God's love for sinful man.

Not only that, but prophetically speaking, it is awesome because what God has said would take place, has or it will.

And God does not just make predictions, we can look and see that what He has said has come to pass.

There are over 300 prophecies of Christ's first coming and all of them were fulfilled down to the tiniest detail.

But like I have said, some argue that the Bible, over the years has many errors as it was copied.

Look at the facts. The New Testament alone we see not more than one-one thousandth of the text is in question and not one significant doctrine is in question.

Yes, the original writings were perfect, we have copies and those copies that we do have, when you see that only one-one thousandth of the text is in question, some of these are related to spelling errors or a change in a word that does not change the context of the text is amazing. So it is accurate!

The Old Testament is no different.

Thus, God's Word is accurate, it is truth!

But don't believe me, let me show you what I mean.

I want you to see how accurately the Old Testament Scriptures have been preserved.

When we compare the scroll of Isaiah, found in a cave in the Qumran community back in 1947 that dates to 100 B. C., with a text of Isaiah from 916 A. D.

And as we examine those 1292 verses, 37,044 words, the integrity of the text has held up over a 1,000-year time span.

We see that 95% of the text is identical, and the 5% variation were mostly variations in spelling and did not change the context of the text one bit!

Keep in mind that this scroll is 24 feet long!

Now, let's take a look at the New Testament and its accuracy.

- We have over 24,000 manuscript copies of the New Testament in existence today.
- We have 5,300 known Greek manuscripts.
- There are over 10,000 Latin Vulgate manuscripts.
- We have over 9,300 other early versions of manuscripts of the New Testament.
- The New Testament has about 20,000 lines of text and of that only 40 lines (or 400 words) of the New Testament are in doubt.

Of that, only about one-sixtieth can be called “*substantial variations.*”

Think about that for a minute. That would give us a text that is approximately 98% perfect, pure!

And think about this for a minute. The New Testament is not based upon one Scripture, but the totality of the Scriptures.

Thus, if something is in question, we can check in other Scriptures to see if it is right or not!

Again, only 40 lines or 400 words of the New Testament's 20,000 lines of text are in doubt!

New Testament scholar F. F. Bruce put it this way. He said, *“The variant readings about which any doubt remains . . . affect no material question of historical fact or of Christian faith and practice.”*

Listen to these words, not from a Christian publication, nor from Christian writers, but from Time magazine, dated December 30, 1974.

We read, *“After more than two centuries of facing the heaviest scientific guns that could be brought to bear, the Bible has survived - and is perhaps better for the siege. Even on the critics’ own terms - historical fact - Scriptures seem more acceptable now than they did when the rationalists began the attack.”*

Good luck finding any magazine or news reporter who would say something like that today, even though it is true. They tend to be a slant on things that disprove the Scriptures and yet, when you look at the evidence, it is overwhelming that we can trust the Word of God!

Make no mistake about it, what we have in our hands is the Word of God, we can trust it, it is truth.

Now some may argue, foolishly argue, that anyone can write a book and say that it is inspired by God!

My response to them is simple. ***PLEASE DO!***

Write something that is inspired, that compares to the Bible, with prophecy, with the ability to change lives, not just outwardly, but inwardly that then is manifest in outward actions. Not just change but transform lives!

The great critic or professor or skeptic is surely smarter than a Galilean fisherman 2,000 years ago, having all the qualifications, all the culture, all the brainpower necessary. It should be *easy* for them to write something greater than the Bible.

But they will not be able to. And when you look at how the Bible came together, it is not just all the writers from various backgrounds putting something together.

What they wrote is a story of God's love for sinful man and how He came to save man from His sin. It is just one unfolding story, and it is inspired. You doubt that. Let me show you what I mean because this is so important that you understand this. That this was inspired by God and, well, you will see what I mean.

Did you know that the Gospel is given to us in the Old Testament. In fact, in the book of Genesis we see it a couple of times. I will share this one with you because it is way back in Genesis chapter 5 and, as you will see, God put this together, not man.

In Genesis chapter 5 we see the genealogy from Adam and onward and their names play a very important role in this picture. Let me show you what I mean.

ADAM = MAN

SETH = APPROVED

ENOS OR ENOSH = SUBJECT TO DEATH

CAINAN = SORROWFUL

MAHALALEEL = FROM THE PRESENCE OF GOD

JARED = ONE COMES DOWN

ENOCK = DEDICATED

METHUSELAH = DYING HE SHALL SEND

LAMECH = TO THE POOR AND LOWLY

NOAH = REST OR COMFORT

Now, why did God devote a whole chapter to these men who begot and be-gone, or they died?

Listen carefully to how this plays out as I list the meanings of these men.

It goes like this.

The man approved to death, sorrowful. From the presence of God, one comes down, dedicated. Dying, he shall send to the poor and lowly, rest and comfort!

That is the Gospel message given to us thousands of years before Christ came.

Adam, man sinned, and the death process began, and man was sorrowful because he was separated from God. But God came down, the Incarnation and died for our sins. He died for the poor and lowly and in his death, he brought rest and comfort to man because now man has been reconciled to God!

That is amazing!

You can also look at our study in Genesis chapter 22 where we see Abraham, as God the Father, offer up his son Isaac as a sacrifice, who represented the Lord.

Now we know that God did not allow Abraham to do this, but we are told when Isaac asked his father where the sacrifice was and Abraham responded by saying, “**... ‘My son, God will provide for Himself the lamb for a burnt offering.’...**” Genesis 22:8.

Listen to how the Complete Jewish Bible puts this verse, it is a lot clearer. It says, ***“Avraham replied, ‘God will provide himself the lamb for a burnt offering, my son.’”***

And that is exactly what we see in the Gospel, that God became flesh, dwelt among us, went to the cross of Calvary to pay for our sins and rose from the grave on the third day. It is the Gospel message! Jesus is the Lamb of God who came to take away the sins of the world! (John 1:29)

One more point, sorry, this is so exciting to me.

The Holy Spirit says that Abraham came down from the mountain, but nothing about Isaac. Why is that?

Well, Isaac came down but what the Holy Spirit is doing is showing us what happens next with our Lord.

You see, the next time we see Isaac, who is a picture of Jesus, is when Eleazer the servant, who is a type of the Holy Spirit, goes and gets a bride for Jesus.

And the next time we see Isaac is when he meets his bride, and the next time we will see Jesus is when He comes for His Bride, the Church, we call it the Rapture!

Only God can do that and there is a lot more I can show you and will show you over the next few weeks so that you see these are the Words of God!

So we have looked at that the Scriptures are – ***FROM GOD!***

Next, we will be looking at why this is so important to us or that the Word of God – ***IS PROFITABLE!***

VERSE 16

Notice what Paul is saying here.

First, all of the Scriptures, from Genesis through Revelation are given by the inspiration of God or they are from the very breath of God and written down by men. The Holy Spirit moved men to write down these words and we see that is exactly what Jesus said in the New Testament.

In John 14:26 Jesus said, “**But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all things that I said to you.**”

What we see Jesus telling His men is that the Holy Spirit would give them what they needed to carry on the work and what they did was lay down the foundation of our faith through their inspired writings!

Today, we do not have new revelations, but the Holy Spirit teaches us and helps us to remember the things we need as we are talking with others about Jesus or just what we need for the various situations we face!

That means that the Word of God is important to us, at least it should be. And Paul puts it like this, that the Word of God “**... is profitable ...**” and he lists four ways that the Word of God is profitable to us.

They are profitable to us for . . .

- **DOCTRINE** – God’s Word tells us what is right.
- **REPROOF** – God’s Word tells us what is wrong.
- **CORRECTION** – God’s Word tells us how to get right when we have gone astray.
- **INSTRUCTION IN RIGHTEOUSNESS** – God’s Word tells us how to stay right.

I want to look at these four points because, as I have said, the Bible is profitable, valuable, advantageous or beneficial to our reading and learning and thus, let’s dig in!

So the first thing that Paul speaks of regarding the Bible being profitable is –

DOCTRINE!

Doctrine is just teaching, and we need correct teaching if it is going to be helpful or profitable to us.

Let’s face it, there are volumes of teaching that is out there and most of it is not healthy for us and yet, many partake of it, and it weakens them, spiritually speaking!

But what about the Word of God, what do the writers tell us regarding it being healthy or true?

In Proverbs 30:5-6 we are told by Agur, **“Every word of God is pure; He is a shield to those who put their trust in Him. Do not add to His words, Lest He rebuke you, and you be found a liar.”**

Agur was just wondering how he can understand, know God, and now he tells us, by the Word of God.

And notice what he is saying here. How much of God’s Word is pure?

It is **“Every word of God”** that is pure! May we understand that! There is no room to pick and choose what you like and what you don’t like.

And that word **“pure”** speaks of being tested, being refined in the fire, it is perfect, it is correct, it is inerrant!

Look at Psalm 19:7-8 as David tells us, **“The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul; The testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple; The statutes of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart; The commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes.”**

The Hebrew word that David uses for **“perfect”** is *TAMIYUM*, (taw-meem’) and it speaks of being without blemish, that it is complete, that it is full, it is without spot, it is undefiled, it is uprightly whole.

What does that mean?

It means that it is perfect; from Genesis through Revelation, we have the correct, the inerrant Words of God! That is a fact, it is not fiction!

Let me share with you some New Testament verses that deal with the Word of God, that the teaching is important.

Paul tells Titus in Titus 2:1, “**But as for you, speak the things which are proper for sound doctrine.**”

In other words, he is telling Titus, “*Don’t waste your time on things of no prophet but speak forth sound doctrine or healthy doctrine. Speak forth those things that will be beneficial to people!*”

Also, in Titus 1:9 Paul wrote, “**holding fast the faithful word as he has been taught, that he may be able, by sound doctrine, both to exhort and convict those who contradict.**”

Not the philosophies of the world but the Word of God, sound doctrine, healthy doctrine will exhort people in the faith, and it will bring conviction to those who are moving away from God, moving towards sin or false teaching to bring them back!

Paul also gives warning for those who reject sound doctrine, move away from it. We are told in II Timothy 4:3, “**For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine, but according to their own desires, because they have itching ears, they will heap up for themselves teachers.**”

They no longer want to hear sound doctrine, healthy doctrine but they will look for teachers that will tell them what they want to hear and not what God is saying!

One writer put it like this. He wrote,

Scripture is the divine plumb line by which every thought, principle, act, and belief is to be measured.

Paul reminded the Corinthian church what he doubtless had taught them many times. ***“We are not like many,”*** he said, ***“peddling the word of God, but as from sincerity, as from God, we speak in Christ in the sight of God. . . . We have renounced the things hidden because of shame, not walking in craftiness or adulterating the word of God, but by the manifestation of truth commending ourselves to every man’s conscience in the sight of God”*** (2 Cor 2:17; 4:2).

Luke commended God-fearing Jews in Berea because they ***“were more noble-minded than those in Thessalonica, for they received the word with great eagerness, examining the Scriptures daily, to see whether these things were so”*** (Acts 17:11).

As every preacher and teacher should be, Paul and Silas were not offended but were greatly pleased that everything they said was measured against God’s Word.

- John MacArthur, 2 Timothy 3

Yes, everything must be measured against the Word of God and not by experience or by what others are saying, but by the Word of God!

It is that important!

Now, because of the importance of the Scriptures, look at what Paul said to the Ephesian elders in Acts 20:17-27. We are told, **“From Miletus he sent to Ephesus and called for the elders of the church. And when they had come to him, he said to them: ‘You know, from the first day that I came to Asia, in what manner I always lived among you, serving the Lord with all humility, with many tears and trials which happened to me by the plotting of the Jews; how I kept back nothing that was helpful, but proclaimed it to you, and *taught you publicly and from house to house*, testifying to Jews, and also to Greeks, repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ. And see, now I go bound in the spirit to Jerusalem, not knowing the things that will happen to me there, except that the Holy Spirit testifies in every city, saying that chains and tribulations await me. But none of these things move me; nor do I count my life dear to myself, so that I may finish my race with joy, and the ministry which I received from the Lord Jesus, to testify to the gospel of the grace of God. And indeed, now I know that you all, among whom I have gone preaching the kingdom of God, will see my face no more. Therefore I testify to you this day that I am innocent of the blood of all men. *For I have not shunned to declare to you the whole counsel of God.*”**

Paul taught them from house to house, he declared to them the whole counsel of God, verse-by-verse, expository preaching! He didn’t just pick the hot topics of the day, but covered all the issues, even the controversial ones!

Why is this so important?

Because the next three points flow from correct teaching, the teaching of God’s Word!

The next point is – ***REPROOF!***

Doctrine or teaching tells us what is right, and reproof tells us what is wrong!

Again, this is very important, or it is profitable to know what is wrong.

The Greek word for “**reproof**” is *ELEGMOS* and it carries with it the idea of conviction regarding misbehavior or false doctrine.

As you study God’s Word, as you read God’s Word you are building up a foundation of truth that will expose any error you are confronted with.

Why?

So you don’t go down that path!

I think we have all experienced this in our own life. You are reading the Bible, or you are listening to a teacher on the radio, or you are hearing a pastor preach a message and all of a sudden you feel the conviction of God upon your life!

Now we have a choice at this point. We can listen to what God is saying or we can reject it, but the choice is ours. But God has warned us!

And what happens is if you reject what God is saying to you is that you begin to stop reading the Bible. You don’t spend time with your Christian friends. You don’t go to church.

Why?

Because you don’t want to be convicted, you want to remain in your sin!

Some of you are not believing me on this, but listen to what Jesus said in John 3:20, “**For everyone practicing evil hates the light and does not come to the light, lest his deeds should be exposed.**”

Listen to how The Amplified Bible puts this verse, “**For every wrongdoer hates (loathes, detests) the Light, and will not come out into the Light but shrinks from it, lest his works (his deeds, his activities, his conduct) be exposed and reprov**ed.”

Now we like to apply that to the unsaved and that is true, it does fit what they do. But also, this is for the saved who want to live in sin and they will avoid the light because it will expose their darkness!

Make no mistake about it, the Bible will destroy or tear down those things that are sinful, those things that are false and it will also build up what is right, what is good, what is not sinful in our lives.

It all depends on what we do with it, repent and get right with God or reject what God is saying and stay in sin!

So we have seen that God's Word is profitable because it gives to us *DOCTRINE* or correct teaching.

God's Word is profitable to us because it gives to us *REPROOF*, or it shows us what is wrong.

And also, God's Word is profitable because it gives to us – *CORRECTION!*

We did cover this with reproof or showing what is wrong a bit, but correction helps us to get back on track when we have gone astray.

The idea of this Greek word is the restoration of something back to its original and proper condition.

In secular Greek literature it was used of putting an object upright that had fallen down.

I think that fits very well. We can fall down in sin, but God's Word helps us to get back up and be restored to where we were at!

Make no mistake about it, God is in the business of restoration and thus, when God exposes our sin, when we come to see our sin, we can get back up by repenting and returning to the Lord!

So we have seen that doctrine is the right teaching.

Then we saw how reproof shows us what is wrong as compared to the truths of God found in the Word of God.

Then we looked at correction, or how to get back up on our feet when we have gone astray.

And lastly, we will look at ***INSTRUCTION IN RIGHTEOUSNESS!***

The idea here is once you know what is right, once you have corrected your error, now walk accordingly in the things of God!

Peter said in I Peter 1:23-25, **“having been born again, not of corruptible seed but incorruptible, through the word of God which lives and abides forever, because ‘All flesh is as grass, And all the glory of man as the flower of the grass. The grass withers, And its flower falls away, But the word of the Lord endures forever.’ Now this is the word which by the gospel was preached to you.”**

This is how you grow, how you walk accordingly, by taking in the Word of God, by fleeing those things that will hinder your walk or cause you to stumble.

David put it like this in Psalm 119:9-11, **“How can a young man cleanse his way? By taking heed according to Your word. With my whole heart I have sought You; Oh, let me not wander from Your commandments! Your word I have hidden in my heart, That I might not sin against You.”**

There it is all summed up for us. If you want to walk according to the high calling by which you have been called, take in God’s Word, read it, study it and then apply it to your life.

That is what Paul spoke of in Ephesians chapter 4. He spent three chapters given them and us doctrine and then in Ephesians chapter 4 onward he speaks of how we are to walk.

He put it like this in Ephesians 4:1-6, **“I, therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you to walk worthy of the calling with which you were called, with all lowliness and gentleness, with longsuffering, bearing with one another in love, endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism; one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all.”**

You know what God desires, Paul is saying and now you need to walk accordingly, and he shows us what that is all about, what should be manifested in our lives as we walk with the Lord!

But, once we move away from the plumb line of God’s Word, our life will be crooked, it will be off!

We have seen that the Bible is – ***FROM GOD!***

We have seen that the Bible – ***IS PROFITABLE!***

And we will close by looking at the – ***END RESULT!***

VERSE 17

Why is this even important to us?

First of all, the Bible, God’s Word is for the unbeliever to bring them to saving faith. That is what Paul wrote in Romans 10:17, **“So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.”**

As unbelievers hear God’s Word, the Holy Spirit opens up their hearts to Jesus and they have a choice to make. To repent of their sins and come to Jesus or to reject the work that the Holy Spirit is doing in their lives.

As true as that is, that is not what Paul is speaking of here.

Listen again to what Paul wrote. Paul said, “**that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.**” II Timothy 3:17.

Paul is speaking of believers here or “**the man of God**” and once again, it is the Word of God opened up to us by the Spirit of God that helps us to grow in our walk with God!

What is interesting to me is that Paul warned us in Colossians about the philosophies of the world leaving us empty while in Christ, we are complete, just as Paul is saying here to Timothy!

This is what Paul wrote in Colossians 2:8-10, “**Beware lest anyone cheat you through philosophy and empty deceit, according to the tradition of men, according to the basic principles of the world, and not according to Christ. For in Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily; and you are complete in Him, who is the head of all principality and power.**”

You see, God’s Word makes us complete, it equips us for service.

As you read God’s Word, as you apply it to your life, by the power of God’s Spirit, a believer will be able to meet the demands of righteousness, he will know what God desires of him and he will be able to stand strong, not for salvation but as evidence that a person is saved.

Thus, Satan leads pastors and people away from God’s Word because God’s Word is living, and it is powerful, and it will transform our lives if we allow it to.

Paul’s warning to Timothy and to us is to be students of the Word of God if you want to stand strong against the perilous times and the perilous men that have come in and are coming in these last days!

What a powerful lesson for us!

Several years ago, someone was complaining about sitting in church and hearing sermon after sermon and he could not remember any of them, so what is the point. We spend way too much time being taught, was what this person was saying.

I think the opposite is true. We don't spend enough time being taught, digging into the Scriptures and thus, we open ourselves up to being deceived!

Maybe you agree with this person and if you do, well, think of it like this.

A critic once wrote a letter to a magazine saying, ***“Over the years, I suppose I’ve gone to church more than 1,000 times, and I can’t remember the specific content of even one sermon over those many years. What good was it to go to church 1,000 times?”***

The next week, someone wrote back: ***“Over the past many years, I have eaten more than 1,000 meals prepared by my wife. I cannot remember the specific menu of any of those meals. But they nourished me along the way, and without them, I would be a much different man!”***

The Bible will do its spiritual work in us, if we will let it.

And the Holy Spirit will bring to remembrance the things we need to remember in the situations we find ourselves in. But if you don't read, study, know the Word of God, then the Holy Spirit can't bring to remembrance what was not there in the first place!

Let me give you an example of how powerfully the Word of God can work in people's lives.

This story was written some thirty-six years ago, but it still applies to us today. We are told,

One of the most dramatic examples of the Bible's divine ability to transform men and women involved the famous mutiny on the ***“Bounty.”***

Following their rebellion against the notorious Captain Bligh, nine mutineers, along with the Tahitian men and women who accompanied them, found their way to Pitcairn Island, a tiny dot in the South Pacific only two miles long and a mile wide.

Ten years later, drink and fighting had left only one man alive - John Adams.

Eleven women and 23 children made up the rest of the Island's population.

So far this is the familiar story made famous in the book and motion picture.

But the rest of the story is even more remarkable.

About this time, Adams came across the "***Bounty's***" Bible in the bottom of an old chest.

He began to read it, and the divine power of God's Word reached into the heart of that hardened murderer on a tiny volcanic speck in the vast Pacific Ocean - and changed his life forever.

The peace and love that Adams found in the Bible entirely replaced the old life of quarreling, brawling, and liquor. He began to teach the children from the Bible until every person on the island had experienced the same amazing change that he had found.

Today, with a population of slightly less than 100, nearly every person on Pitcairn Island is a Christian.

- Signs of the Times, August 1988, p. 5

I pray that you take these lessons to heart and let them help you to grow in your walk with the Lord.

Understand that the Bible is – ***FROM GOD!***

We saw some of the evidence to show that the Bible was not written by man but by the inspiration of God to man and then it was given to us!

Not only is the Bible from God, but it – ***IS PROFITABLE!***

And we saw how the Bible is profitable to us, because it is from God, and it helps us know what is right, what is wrong, how to get right when we have gone astray and how to stay on course!

And lastly, the – ***END RESULT!***

We saw how the Bible transforms our lives. In fact, we are a witness to that fact with our own lives!

As I bring this study to a close, we are going to spend a few weeks looking at the Bible because there are many critics out there who will try to discourage you from trusting in it.

There are many pastors out there who will put the Word of God down!

But I am here to tell you that we can trust God's Word from Genesis to Revelation, and we need to trust it and apply it to our lives!

And I will close with the verses we have studied this morning, from II Timothy 3:16-17, and this is from The Amplified Bible. We are told, **“Every Scripture is God-breathed (given by His inspiration) and profitable for instruction, for reproof and conviction of sin, for correction of error and discipline in obedience, [and] for training in righteousness (in holy living, in conformity to God's will in thought, purpose, and action), So that the man of God may be complete and proficient, well fitted and thoroughly equipped for every good work.”**

May we believe it and grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ!