

10/13/24 - 2 Tim. 3:16-17 - "This is God's Word"

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Date: 13 October 2024

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[0 : 00] Please turn with me to 2 Timothy chapter 3, and the verses today are 16 to 17, but I will start with verse 12 for context. Indeed, all who desire to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted, while evil people and imposters will go on from bad to worse, deceiving and being deceived.

But as for you, continue in what you have learned and have firmly believed. Knowing from whom you have learned it, and how from childhood you have been acquainted with the sacred writings, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus.

All scripture is breathed out by God, and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work.

This is the word of the Lord. Thanks be to God. What a great Sunday. We have food, and they called me on stage.

And all the other guys. That's great. I don't know. I'm scared of getting acid indigestion. I love you guys so much.

[1 : 18] I appreciate everything. Everything. And the sermon today, I've been looking forward to this passage.

We sit down as elders, and we kind of like chart out the series and what's coming up in verses. And we had a little, it was like a little, I would say a visual arm wrestle of who would preach this one.

Because it's a great one. And they withdrew. I know. But hopefully they'll get in the pulpit for another.

I think Rick might be up next week unless something else happens. But this is a great passage. And great focus. Great emphasis.

Great structure. And I am just delighted to walk through this passage with you today. This is a great passage. And I'd like to tell a story, a true story, looking back into history.

[2 : 28] And there was once a wealthy and stable woman named Anna Bartlett Warner.

And at age 22, her and her family were forced to sell their New York mansion and move to an old Revolutionary War era farmhouse near West Point, New York.

And due to their unexpected financial collapse as a family, she started writing to help bring in income. And during this period, Anna found herself at the West Point Cadets.

This is an academy that Dwight Eisenhower is known to have attended. And Anna's uncle was the chaplain at this academy, the West Point Cadets.

And she began using her writing skills to not only write stories for the cadets, but also to write fresh hymns for Sunday school class.

[3 : 30] And she even began to dive into writing novels. And she often co-authored many novels with her sister. And Anna wrote under the name Amy Lothrop.

And she wrote 31 novels, including Robinson Crusoe's Farmyard, Dollars and Cents, and In West Point Colors. And she and her sister co-authored together.

They wrote together in total 106 children's books. And 18 of those were co-authored, like Witch Hazel, Mr. Rutherford's Children's, and The Hills of Shaddamuk.

And at age 33, within one of those 106 children's books, one of those novels was titled Say and Seal.

And the teacher of this novel, Mr. Linden, comforted his dying students, named Johnny Fax, by singing the words of none other, Jesus loves me.

[4 : 41] For the first time ever, Jesus loves me, this I know, for the Bible tells me so. For the first time was ever put in ink within this novel.

First ever pen. And it became so catchy that the tune and the chorus were added to Dr. William Bradbury just two years later.

And he published that hymn into a work alongside of hymns that he wrote as well, like He Leadeth Me, Just As I Am, and Sweet Hour of Prayer.

And if you could imagine, those young cadets at the academy on duty would be taught this song of comforts, that would bring them comforts throughout this entire academy.

Today's passage will help inform us why this is profoundly true and comforting to our souls today.

[5 : 50] So I invite you to pray. Father, thank you for this book that we are going to look into today as it was read this morning.

This is no ordinary book. Supernatural. Changes hearts, changes lives by the power of your spirit. And thank you for a text that helps us understand how that really works and how you use your word in our lives.

Help this be illuminated today for us, expounded upon, expounded today. Do this work well, Lord. In Jesus' name. Amen. Amen.

So the sermon title today is, drumroll. This is God's Word. I've been pretty straight to the point.

And there you go. This is God's Word. And what we're going to be doing is breaking this up into three different sections, according to a couple aspects of emphasis that this passage has, and that I want to really expose today for our benefits and God's glory.

[7 : 04] And so the first section and first point is what I'm going to be making. Three points today is that all scripture is breathed into by God. All scripture is breathed into by God.

Just as it was read in verse 16, all scripture is breathed out by God. And this, in the original language, you would actually read it like the point states.

All scripture is breathed into by God. And this basically says that the Bible is not just an ancient text.

It's not just another book on the bookshelf that's one of the old within the collection. But this book has within it the very breath of God.

With that, that means it's divinely inspired. Right? But it's unlike any other religious writing.

[8 : 04] It's not like the Vedas of Hinduism. It's not like the Quran of Islam. It's not like the writings of Jehovah's Witness and the Watchtower.

All of which they claim was sort of breathed out by God in some sort of subjective experience of one way or another. But the Bible stands unique not just in its inspiration.

Because other people are claiming that too. But it also stands apart as unique because of the evidence to support such a statement.

If it is breathed out by God, prove it. Right? And so with that, that inspiration is supported with historical accuracy.

Evidence continues to support the events of the Bible. The Dead Sea Scrolls was a huge discovery. And thousands of manuscripts consistently aligned.

[9 : 05] You have to go to seminary to really study that and understand that. But it is true. Inspiration is supported by the fulfillment of prophecy. Specifically revolving around the coming of Jesus Christ.

The inspiration is supported with internal consistencies between the two bookends. That the Bible is 66 books of over 40 human authors from kings to fishermen over the span of 1500 years.

Internally consistent in message. And that inspiration is supported with evidential transforming power. There's something about this book. The Bible is the source of transformation from ethics, morality, and hope that transforms our lives.

Especially transforming Western culture as we know it. Inspiration is supported with endurance even over time. Right? It survives centuries despite avid opposition, persecution, suppression, and criticism.

And it's still the top selling book. Maybe after all, this is the breath of God that he's preserving. Could this book be the very breath of God?

[10 : 39] The evidence is overwhelming in favor of such a divine breath. Overwhelming. And surveying through scripture, we discover that if the evidence is true and this is the breath of God, this is actually how God empowers.

It's through his breath. We go back to Genesis chapter 2 verse 7. That God breathed life into Adam. And John chapter 20 verse 22.

Jesus breathed on the disciples and said, Receive the Holy Spirit. In 2 Peter chapter 1 verse 21.

We're told that prophecy never had its origin in the will of man. But men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit.

Carried along by that breath of God. In other words, God breathed into the text through the hands of man.

[11 : 47] You see, the truths of scripture are described as coming directly from God. God's will. Not man's will. Trust me, it would be probably a little bit more better stories about Peter in the Bible had he had anything to do with it.

It wouldn't be so self-condemning of humanity. Let's be real. We want to boast. We want to make ourselves feel good, right? It's not the will of the writers.

But the will of God that God used to record them. It's God's breath. In other words, scripture is inspired. Divinely inspired. Every word.

Every form. Every word placement. Found in the Bible's original manuscripts. Greek and Hebrew. Obviously. They're divinely inspired.

Intentionally written. And to think about this. I mean, you ever stop and think for a moment, like, about that entire concept?

[12 : 55] What a miracle this is. That a holy God desired to communicate to us. And he breathed into a book.

A book to make known who he is. To know the redemption that he desires for us to be brought to according to salvation.

This is a miracle. God wanted to communicate to his creation. And all scripture says what God desires to say to humanity within the 66 books.

Peter also notes that Paul writes with the wisdom that God gave him in 2 Peter 3.15. Now, this is tough. Alright?

Because then, having a low view of scripture, having a low view of scripture, is the epitome of Christian peril.

[14 : 04] Demise. Disaster. Failure to take heed to scripture's instruction and messages. Like the evangelical deconstruction movement.

Which is toxic. It's like committing Christian suicide. With the deconstruction, you deconstruct the very nature and the very content of the Bible.

According to how God has revealed himself to us. In other words, if you don't have the word, you don't have the breath. If you don't have the breath, you don't know the one who inspired the word.

The very breath of God through the Bible is humanity's essential nourishment needed for life, for peace, for restoration, and for comfort.

And a slew of other things that could take us into the afternoon of how it benefits. But most of all, the Bible is trustworthy.

[15 : 07] It is trustworthy. The Christian with a high view of scripture will inevitably enter into this divine dietary plan.

That God ordained. We're in diet kicks. Enter that diet plan. Be fed. Be nourished. All of which God intends for his church to flourish, to be led, and to grow.

And with that, we naturally are led into the additional verses that follow. Which leads to the second point. That all scripture guides our hearts, hearts and lives.

And so, because scripture is the breath of God, it's inspired, and is set apart from other religious texts.

What a profitable book this is, right? That's why he goes on to say, it's profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness.

[16 : 17] And so, for teaching, the entire tapestry of scripture is God's plan for our instruction. From Genesis, all the way to Revelation.

This is the tapestry of God's plan for our instruction. And you'll probably notice that even in Steel Valley Church, because we take that very seriously as elders.

We'll go through a big gospel narrative, and then we'll take a break at different seasons, because we need to continue the other dietary plan within the whole council of scripture.

It's actually in my job description, if you want to know about it. So, I'm actually bound to it, according to my duty and my calling here, is to preach the whole council of God.

And so, yeah, we go through a series with 50 messages, but we take our time through that, and then we also take some time to pause at different times, and go into another genre or another point of scripture.

[17 : 14] And also, it's for reproof. Think about that, for reproof or a rebuke, in a certain sense. Now, obviously, if scripture is profitable for teaching, obviously, teaching would have something to do with sound doctrine, sound doctrine leading the way.

That would only naturally be the metric used to identify any teaching that would deviate, and naturally rebuke, right? Like, people like bankers know the counterfeit, because they know the original very, very well.

They can spot a counterfeit, because they know the original. And so, the same is true for scripture. That if you know the teaching, if you know the scriptures and what it says, that it would naturally rebuke anything that strays away from the line in the metric of scripture.

And this teaching and rebuking, this instruction and correction, and everything being emphasized in this, was a vital element in the early church.

All throughout the centuries, it's still something relevant that exists even today. Teaching sound doctrine is God's method of rebuking false teaching. That's how he rebukes false teaching, is by sound doctrine.

[18 : 34] And that naturally leads to what? Correction. Look, and profitable for teaching, for reproof, and then for correction.

This Greek word here means straight. It straightens us out. So, if we're getting taught the scripture, anything that comes against scripture is rebuked or reproofed, and then straightened out.

Am I the only one in here that needs straightened out once in a while? So, this might be a good time to do our confession again.

It straightens us out. And those who accept its teachings and reproof are straightened out. Those who submit themselves to the imperatives and the instruction of scripture as an inspired book, no ordinary book, are straightened out by it, naturally.

It's like the Invisalign for the Christian life. Right? Thinking about me, when I'm rotten, when I'm being selfish, when I'm being self-centered, fixes me, transforms me in order that I may be effective for service and for teaching.

[20 : 01] Each and every Sunday that I prepare a message, it deals with my heart. And that's for your benefit. Because if my heart is not dealt with before I expect it to be dealing with yours, I've duped myself.

I need to be changed by this first. And man, if you're not in Christ today, faith comes by hearing. And hearing the words of Jesus Christ, that breath.

And if every Christian realizes that we can't fix ourselves, if everyone in here can say that they need straightened out, if you're non-Christian, welcome to the party. We ain't got it together.

That's why we're Christians. So how do you think that it's possible for you to fix your own life apart from God? What gives you that confidence that you can do it? Because you see, when we try to fix ourselves, things naturally tend to get worse, don't they?

When we try to fix ourselves. That's the reality of our own efforts as we try to take things into our own commands and live our lives our way. And so, we can't fix our lives.

[21 : 11] We can't mend the vast separation that we have against God because of our sin. We can't straighten out that which is broken, but Jesus Christ can. He fixes things.

And how so? Well, how do we know? According to the inspired word of God. According to what it tells us. The inspired word tells us that we need to be saved.

That we can't do it. It tells us that we cannot save ourselves by trying to be good or being religious. No, it tells us that God sent Jesus to die in our place.

And that's the good news of the gospel. It tells us that through the death and the resurrection of Jesus Christ, the punishment that sin deserves has been born upon him. And it invites repentant sinners into a relationship with himself.

This is the good news of the gospel. So, if you're not a believer today, do you know that God, the God who breathed into this text is breathing out of this text today?

[22 : 17] This isn't a TED Talk. This isn't a lecture. This is God's word, God's breath. Do you know that God's calling you to believe today in Jesus Christ?

Do you know that the God who formed you and made you and of whom you are alienated from as a result of sin, this God is seeking to have a relationship with you through Jesus Christ, the creator of the universe.

This creator has paid the ransom upon the cross and seeks to draw you to himself. So come. Jesus loves you.

This I know. For the Bible tells me so. As Romans 5.8 says, God shows his love for us that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

If you place your faith in Jesus Christ today, you are saved. How do I know? The Bible declares it and that the righteous will live by faith according to Romans 1.17.

[23 : 30] And so God's word trains, it rebukes, it corrects. Let's remember at the remainder, let's remember as we look to the remainder of this passage and what the word accomplishes according to God's plan and intention of his word in the last verse and the last point is that all scripture wholly equips and unifies the church.

all scripture wholly equips and unifies the church in verse 17. It says, that the man of God may be complete. What is the word accomplished?

That the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work. And so as we systematically kind of lay things out and piece the passage together, we are certain that God's word is inspired and it guides our conduct, being trained, being straightened out as we all need to be.

And it guides our conduct according to sound doctrines, doctrines, sinner and saint alike. And now what type of picture does this paint of God's plan and his mission that he has for Timothy?

Remember this letter is in the prison cell that Paul is writing to a young pastor going to Ephesus to complete a work and to be called to this work.

[25 : 03] He says, this is how you continue. Don't trust in your own ways. Trust in the word.

Trust in sound doctrine. And what does it have for us? Here's the picture. Repentant sinners bought by the precious blood of Christ united together as one body.

The word accomplishes this. Jesus Christ being the head, complete, this passage says. The man of God may be complete. In other words, the word of God unites the church.

No wonder there's the longest psalm in all the psalms, Psalm 119. That's all about dwelling in the word. Jesus even said in John 15, verse 10, if you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love just as I have kept my father's commandments and abide in his love.

Now, this isn't to say that Christians have arrived and we're just a bunch of know-it-all and Gnostics with our heads all big and knowing some secret knowledge. That's not it at all. But our usefulness, we know this, is contingent upon our dependence upon God.

[26 : 25] But a sense of completion here is that we don't need anything else than the word of God. That the word of God is the highest priority as a Christian.

It's a high view of scripture. That if the man of God is complete, it's because the word completes him. It completes Timothy's pastoral ministry in Ephesus.

And it completes us lacking nothing here at Steel Valley Church. David Howell, one of my most influential expositors, says that biblical exposition does the heavy lifting of building up a church.

church. And so, if the word is central to the church, she, the bride of Christ, will be most equipped to reach the world.

If you don't have the word central, you can kiss evangelism goodbye. It's just social efforts. It's just a party with loud music down the road where y'all can come and hang out.

[27 : 37] It's all we have to offer them. It's our friendship. We don't have hope to offer them. You guys thought that the pulpit was central in this building just by chance.

No. But here's a statement. The word is sure. The word is central. And when God's word says it will not return void according to Isaiah 55 verse 11, we have to take that seriously.

God's work will accomplish that which it intends. We must abide in his word just as sponges absorb water. Why?

Because if God's word will accomplish what he wants it to, this means it demands our faith to be placed in his word.

To trust the breath of God. And so the word, this word, will keep you, will complete you, it will equip you.

[28 : 43] What a blessing of a letter that Timothy could have ever received by Paul. It calms your short nerves with your young children as they keep pressing that last nerve.

They're really good at that. It stills that raging storm internally of emotions, of anger, of bitterness, of hatred that our sin loves to marinate in.

It renews your mind from worldliness of ungodly sexual desires leading to lust, adultery, pornography, often resulting in divorce or other disasters.

It comforts a broken heart from the pains of life, whether that being a loss of life, betrayal of a friend, or maybe past church hurts from a pastor or other church members.

It repairs relationships, not just salvifically between you and a holy God, but also relationally, horizontally, forgiving others as Jesus Christ has forgiven you.

[29 : 55] And by the power of the Holy Spirit that inspired the word, it is the constant current in the Christian life that pulls us downstream until we're carried home.

you see, the Bible is supremely inspired, deserving of our trust. Supremely inspired, deserving of our trust.

And so when we hear that song, Jesus loves me, this I know, we know that this is true, for the Bible tells me so.

You don't question it. What a truth. Let's pray. God's love. Scripture Labrall How ■ God Life Have Lief No Me Have Soon I'll Lake