

2 Timothy 3:16-4:5

Chapter 3

Verse 16:

--All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness,

--Paul had just encouraged Timothy to abide in ***the Holy Scriptures*** and now reminds him that ***All Scripture*** is inspired of God. That would include both OT and NT. The early church knew they were writing Scripture on par with the OT.

****2 Peter 3:1-2+15-16: Beloved, I now write to you this second epistle (in both of which I stir up your pure minds by way of reminder), that you may be mindful of the words which were spoken before by the holy prophets, and of the commandment of us, the apostles of the Lord and Savior (1-2). . . as also our beloved brother Paul, according to the wisdom given to him, has written to you, as also in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things, in which are some things hard to understand, which untaught and unstable people twist to their own destruction, as they do also the rest of the Scriptures (15-16).****

--Paul, in his first epistle to Timothy, also quotes from Luke's gospel and Deuteronomy and calls both Scripture. He even commanded his epistles to be read (**Col. 4:16; 1 Thess. 5:27**).

****1 Timothy 5:18: For the Scripture says, "You shall not muzzle an ox while it treads out the grain," and, "The laborer is worthy of his wages."****

--Paul knew what he was writing was authoritative and was reminding Timothy of the deposit passed on to Him as a trust.

--***All Scripture*** is also ***given by inspiration of God***, which is just one word in the Greek (*theopneustes*), which literally means *God-breathed*.

--The Bible is not just "inspiring." All Scripture is inspired. Every book and verse is all God wanted it to be! The Bible does not "contain" the Word of God. The Bible is the Word of God. That is what the Bible claims about itself.

--But didn't human beings write it? Don't we have a bunch of missing books? Isn't the whole thing corrupted? What do a bunch of fishermen actually know?

****2 Peter 1:20-21: knowing this first, that no prophecy of Scripture is of any private interpretation, for prophecy never came by the will of man, but holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit.****

--God wasn't *pulled down* and moved by men. Men were *pulled up* and moved by God. The inspired biblical writers wrote what God-breathed into them. Nothing more. Nothing less.

--This is what the church has always believed about the Bible!

DeYoung (Taking God At His Word, 119-120): This high view of Scripture as the inerrant, God-breathed word of God has been the position of Christians from the beginning. Clement of Rome (30-100) described 'the Sacred Scriptures' as 'the true utterance of the Holy Spirit' and wrote that 'in them there hath not been written anything that is unrighteous or counterfeit.' Irenaeus (120-202) claimed that the biblical writers 'were filled with perfect knowledge on every subject' and were 'incapable of a false statement.' According to Origen (185-254), 'the sacred volumes are fully inspired by the Holy Spirit, and there is no passage either in the Law or the Gospel, or the writings of an Apostle, which does not proceed from the inspired source of Divine Truth.' Augustine (354-430) explained in a letter to Jerome, 'I have learnt to ascribe to those Books which are of the Canonical rank, and only to them, such reverence and honor, that I firmly believe that no single error due to the author is found in any of them.' Jerome (393-457) declared the Scriptures to be 'the most pure fount. . . written and edited by the Holy Spirit.' Aquinas (1225-1274) argued, 'The Author of the Holy Scripture is God.' . . . Until fairly recently, Christians of every tradition have assumed the complete trustworthiness and comprehensive truthfulness of Scripture. Holding to the highest view of inspiration—as originated with God himself—was not the invention of any tradition, theologian, or school. It was simply part of what it meant to be a Christian.*

--The Bible is not like any other book because all Scripture is God-breathed! Why else would it be banned on some level in nearly 50 countries, if it is all fables and stories? How else could it be written by forty authors of all different backgrounds, over a period of 1500 years, and still be one cohesive, infallible, and harmonious story?!

--The Bible, as the breath of God, is its own apologetic.

-Should we study the Scripture in its historical, geographical, scientific, and theological aspects? Yes.

-Is it helpful to have those who teach the history of the canonization of the Bible? Yes.

-Is it helpful to have men and women studying the various aspects of ancient texts and manuscripts? Yes.

-But would the Bible stand on its own authority without our help? Yes!

--The issue is simple. Is the Bible of God or man? If it is divine, it is sufficient. If it is of man, it is insufficient. It cannot be both! Do you believe the Bible is God-breathed?! This will be our most important question moving forward.

--The Bible is alive. It is God speaking to men. It is the Word of the Creator to His creation. It is the heart of an Eternal being revealed to the heart of an eternal being. It is the voice of a Father to His sons and daughters. *What the Pharisees missed. Like Nicodemus with Jesus, expecting to get information or enlightenment instead of new birth and relationship!*

*Saphir (The Hidden Life): “God draws nigh in the Word. Do we know what it is to read the Bible in the original? It does not mean in Hebrew or Greek. God speaks neither Hebrew or Greek. This is the original language of Scripture—the love of God to the soul: ‘I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore with loving-kindness have I drawn thee.’ And all God’s vocabulary is summed up in Jesus—the Alpha and Omega, He is *the Word*. When God takes the written Word back from the paper into His own mouth, then we read the original; then it is again God-breathed, and the word which cometh out of His mouth shall not return void.”*

--When I realize the truth inspiration, I realize that obedience to Scripture is obedience to God. Faith in Scripture is faith in God. Disobedience to Scripture is disobedience to God. Unbelief in Scripture is unbelief in God. How I relate to the Bible is how I relate to God speaking to me.

--Being *God-breathed*, **All Scripture** is also ***profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness***. Which, in summary, is what’s right, what’s not right, how to get right, and how to stay right.

--The Scriptures teach us the truth. Reprove sin and lies. Correct us by putting us back into an upright position or on the right pathway. And train us to mature.

Verse 17:

--that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.

--The divine origin of Scripture assures its profitable nature for God’s purposes. And what is God’s purpose for each of us? To be a mature man or woman of God, ready for everything He would have us to be or do!

--Paul had just reminded Timothy about his childhood and how the Word of God brings about the new birth (**1 Peter 1:23**), but doesn’t leave that newborn child helpless. The Word of God is milk for babes to grow (**1 Peter 2:2**), strength for young men (**1 Jn. 2:14**), and solid food for mature men and women (**Heb. 5:12-14**). **All Scripture** takes us from being children of God to being men and women of God.

--That is why we teach the Bible book by book and verse by verse through the whole of God’s Word. There is no part of what is *God-breathed* that is unnecessary for the child of God.

--Do you want to be perfectly prepared for what God has for your life? Do you want to be ready to step into everything God has for you individually? Then feed on His Word! Pour it into your life! The Word will: set you free, grow you, cleanse you, sanctify you, illuminate you, guide you, build your faith, and solidify your life.

--It is in the context of this awesome reality of divine breathing that we have one of the most solemn charges in all of Scripture.

Chapter 4

Verse 1:

--I charge you therefore before God and the Lord Jesus Christ, who will judge the living and the dead at His appearing and His kingdom:

--Paul reminds Timothy of Christ as the Judge and the Sovereign King of a coming kingdom. The royal reality of Jesus' Lordship was something He commanded His apostles to preach!

****Acts 10:42: And He commanded us to preach to the people, and to testify that it is He who was ordained by God to be Judge of the living and the dead.****

--The Jews were apt to think of the earthly judgment of the Messiah, but not the eternal judgment of those who were dead. We are apt to remember eternal judgment after death, but forget about the Lord's judgment of the living on this earth!

****2 Thessalonians 1:7-9: And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power.****

--Heaven is slowly gobbling up all that is lovely and lasting in this world, and when the finest of this world's treasures—the souls of saints and martyrs—have been collected, heaven will spill over and overrun all of creation behind the King of Kings and Lord of Lords. Wonderfully dramatic, isn't it! It will be even more in reality!

--Even so, a solemn matter deserves a solemn charge. Paul is not playing things up.

Verse 2:

--Preach the word! Be ready in season and out of season. Convince, rebuke, exhort, with all longsuffering and teaching.

--Preach the word! Herald it! God's Word is to be declared.

--Pastors should preach and teach in the measure of grace given to each **(1 Peter 4:10-11)**.

--The word of God should be read, expounded, and applied **(1 Tim. 4:13)**.

--Sadly, this solemn command is not taken seriously. There is so much preaching that takes place that has little to nothing of God's Word in it. Preach the Word, not movies, books, jokes, snippets, relative social issues, politics, or your new book series! Even worse, false doctrines or false gospels. It is His Word, not ours!

--Why is this so important?

1) It is the Word of God, covered in prayer, and empowered through the Spirit of God that matures and equips for God's purposes. The preaching of the Word makes healthy/mature Christians. **Think of how many God has built up here through the years!**

--A good question is: *If I stayed in this church my whole life, how would I grow?* Too many churches are nothing more than fun nurseries for spiritual babies!

2) It takes a whole Bible to make a whole Christian. We cannot pick and choose what part of God's breath is necessary for others. We don't know what they need, and neither do they! But God knows what they need. Preaching the Word provides preventative maintenance.

--It also keeps pastors from staying on their personal hobby horses.

3) Preaching the Word gives us a whole God! By preaching the whole counsel of His Word, we are emphasizing God's priorities and not what we want, like, or think. God reveals Himself in His Word. He is the Living Word! *I am so thankful for this! I can't imagine my life with a partial revelation of God.*

--Paul tells Timothy, ***Be ready in season and out of season.***

--Timothy was supposed to be ready to do so on the spot, in the moment, under any type of condition, favorable or unfavorable. Easy times and hard times. *How he saw this in Paul's life! Just think of the Philippian jailor or Paul's witness before rulers.*

--***Convince, rebuke, exhort.*** . . The teaching of God's Word should show us our wrongs, faults, and failures. It should mark those as sinful, rebellious, and shameful in God's sight. The teaching of God's Word should then encourage us to repent, confess, and draw near to God!

--No one likes reproving or rebuking. We all need reproving or rebuking. We should appreciate the people in our lives who love us enough to reprove and rebuke us. Primarily God, through His Word, in the power of His Spirit! *God, please don't leave me in uncorrected sin!*

--***with all longsuffering and teaching.*** . . The reproving and exhorting teacher needs to have a sincere desire to see Christians grow and walk with God on the narrow path.

--The necessity of reproof should not embitter.

--All reproofs or corrections should be accompanied by teaching. To show the *why* of the darkness and the *how* of walking in the light.

--This particular job of a shepherd is never over! Timothy was going to convince, rebuke, and exhort with all longsuffering and teaching until the day he died, and so will every other faithful minister of the Word. *Sadly, they don't teach courses in godly and faithful correction in bible college or seminary, but they should!*

--This is what Paul wants Timothy to *do* with sound doctrine. Why is this task so important as to bring about this solemn charge?

Verses 3-4:

--***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; and they will turn their ears away from the truth, and be turned aside to fables.***

--Faithfulness will be required because ***they will not endure sound doctrine.*** Which means people will *not hold up against* the truth. They will cave, fold, and run from it.

--The faithful herald will not have faithful hearers. There will be a lack of results or negative results! Why?

--Paul makes it clear that ***their own desires*** are the driving reason for the refusal of God's Word. Truth is intolerable because it wounds the conscience and demands a life contrary to their desires. *We see this so often! How often people just disappear from gathering around God's Word!*

--If faithless hearers turn from truth, then what do they do? They don't forsake all forms of religion. ***Because they have itching ears, they will heap up for themselves teachers.***

--They find new teachers of "God's Word" who say exactly what they want to hear. These new teachers are chosen by anything and everything other than faithfulness to God's Word! *Do we choose our teachers for their biblical fidelity?*

--We can ***heap up. . . teachers*** in our day better than ever with TV, radio, podcasts, Youtube, and live gatherings of all types! You will always be able to find someone who tells you what you want to hear (But do they tell you the whole Word of God?). What is the end of this path?

--***and they will turn their ears away from the truth, and be turned aside to fables.*** The hearers no longer even care if what they hear is true, so long as it fits with their desires. They leave off truth for fables. Interestingly enough, these are often the same people who then call the truth a fable!

--The second use of ***turned*** is a stronger word in the Greek, which was used of a limb being twisted out of joint. How horrible when one who receives the truth rejects it and is willing to believe anything! *Ultimately, myths will be the dreamworld, and God's Word will be our unchanging, eternal reality.*

Verse 5:

--***But you be watchful in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry.***

--Paul encourages Timothy to:

- 1) ***Watch in all things:*** Sobriety of mind. Not intoxicated by anything. Steady and sane.
- 2) ***Endure afflictions:*** Suffer hardship. Hold up against afflictions in humble surrender.
- 3) ***Do the work of an evangelist:*** Paul seems to be speaking more about the character of the work than Timothy's specific gift. He is encouraging him to be evangelistic. Why does he need that encouragement? Because preaching the gospel is what would bring about the most trouble and affliction!

--(Note: the word for evangelist is only used two other times in **Acts 21:8; Eph. 4:11**. You would naturally think it would be much more prevalent in the NT.)

- 4) ***Fulfill your ministry:*** Means to leave nothing unfinished. His ministry was simply his service to the Lord. What greater goal can we have? *Paul moves on to speak about finishing his path of service.*

--What was Jesus' example?

****John 17:4: I have glorified You on the earth. I have finished the work which You have given Me to do.****

--What do you actually want from life? What is your actual calling (not just career, as Paul was a tentmaker by career)?