

# The Bible, part 2

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[ 0 : 0 0 ] Well, good morning again. Well, I'm not on now. I'm wired for sound. I think there we go. Well, if you would open your Bibles this morning to first Timothy, no scratch that. Let's try again.

Good morning. If you open your Bible to second Timothy chapter three, verse 16 through 17. If you're looking at that and you think to yourself, wait a minute, didn't we read that last week? And the answer is yes, we did. You cannot exhaust the word of God.

There was a story once told of D.L. Moody, who was preaching from John 3, 16 and preached something like 60 sermons from that one verse. You cannot exhaust the word of God. We're only going to preach two sermons from this. Second Timothy chapter three, verse 16 and 17. And hear the word of the Lord. All scripture is inspired or God breathed by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training and righteousness so that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work. Let's pray together. Father, we thank you for your word. And it is our prayer that you would help us to understand what your word says, what you inspired it to say.

Help us to get to that and then see how that applies to our life. And we pray for the illuminating work of the spirit to open our minds to the word. And then for the conviction of the spirit to show us where we're wrong and how we ought to live. We pray for your help. And we pray this in Christ's name.

And all God's people said, amen. So Michelle and I have done a fair bit of remodeling in our life.

[ 2 : 0 3 ] I won't bore you with the details of how much we've done and what we've done. But one of the things that happens to me when I begin to do a remodel project is that I begin to get a little tunnel vision. And particularly if I'm doing any demo work or any rough work, let's just say that I am not the engineer type. I'm not the planned out and careful type.

I'm a little bit more like, I don't know, a bull in a china cabinet kind. And so it invariably happens that I am working and doing and they're right in front of me is the need for a hammer. This is typically when it happens the most. There's a need for a hammer and I can never ever find my hammer. So whatever my hand grabs, you get where I'm going?

Yeah, that becomes the hammer. I cannot tell you the number of tools that I have broken because I use them the wrong way, but that's just what happens. I don't know why that's the way I do it, but that's just the way my mind works. I'm just a little bit wild. But you know, I was thinking about that because in relationship to the word of God, the word of God is a tool. And if we don't know how to use the word of God properly, we're not going to get from the word of God what we need to get. We will try to use other tools that are out there and other things that are out there that are good and right, but they are not the tool that God meant for us to use in the way that he meant for us to use his word. And so I want us as Christians to come to the place where we can wisely use our Bible, that we know how to use this. We know what it's supposed to do in our lives.

And so this is going to be, I think, and I hope, an immensely practical sermon for you as a believer this morning. And I think we can see how to use the Bible by answering two questions. Okay?

So we're going to ask and answer two questions. The first question is as we look at verse 16 and 17, the question is this, what's the big picture of this passage? What's the big picture of this passage?

[ 4 : 2 9 ] So you'll notice that in verse 16, it says that all scripture is, right? Now, let me just give you a little word here. When I read the text to you, like a while ago, I read the text. You don't have to have your Bibles open because I'm just reading right out of the Bible. But I guarantee you while I'm preaching, you ought to have your Bible open because you need to check me, right? You need to be a Berean and test to see if these things are true. So it says all scripture is, and then it gives two descriptions.

All right? Now, if you're looking at your Bible, I just want you to see if you can see what those two descriptions are. And then I'm going to tell you what they are. The first one is inspired. And the second one is profitable. Right? Oh, yeah, that's right. I forgot. It's up on the screen, isn't it? Okay. Don't have your Bible open if it's up on the screen. No. Have your Bible open so you can take notes. Whatever. Anyway, here we go. So the point is, is that it's inspired and it's profitable. Now, last week we talked about inspired. That is that the Word of God is breathed out by God, every part of it. There's no part of it that's not God's Word. It's all God breathed. Today, we're looking at that it's profitable or useful or beneficial. And then it gives four words, basically, that describe the profitability, right? It's profitable how? Do you see them?

Teaching, reproof, correction, and training in righteousness. Great. Now, here's the thing. What we want to see is we don't want to get so focused in on the bark of the tree that we miss the forest here because verse 16 and 17 have a big picture, right? That big picture, you can tell that it's there because in verse 17, you get the first two words. So that. Now, I love the Word of God and I love the small, tiny words. All the small, tiny words are the things that connect the big ideas and they help you to understand how all this fits together. If you think to yourself, when you read or look at a so that, you're thinking this is a purpose. This is a purpose. As a matter of fact, this Greek construction that's here is a purpose clause. There's a reason for this. There's a purpose for this. There's a purpose. There's a purpose for that too. I just don't know what it was. There's a purpose. There's a purpose for God's Word. And Paul is telling Timothy that all scripture is breathed out and profitable so that the man of God may be ready or adequate or equipped to do good works. So let me, let me, that, I know that that just sort of sounds like scripture and you're just like, yeah, I've heard that scripture before. Yeah, yeah. Let me say that in a different way.

[ 7 : 31 ] Let me turn that around backwards and say it in a different way because this is astounding. Here's the truth. Here's what Paul is saying. You will never be ready to do a good work unless the four uses of scripture are a reality in your life.

You will never, you will never be ready to do a good work unless these four uses of the scripture are a reality in your life. In other words, if you are not daily consuming the Word of God, then you are never going to be properly prepared to do any kind of good work at all.

Whew. That's tough. You let that sink in for just a little bit. Now, let me, let me define something here for us. Let's talk about what a good work is. And there's so much about this we could say, but we're just going to, we're just going to give the big picture here. A good work is only that which God has commanded us to do. Right? So don't just think New Testament, think also Old Testament, something God's commanded us to do. It's something that must be done by the power of the Holy Spirit.

And it is something that is for the promotion of God's glory and the gospel. That's what a good work is. Okay? Now there's lots of things we do that are nice and good, but we're not talking about those. We're talking specifically about the kinds of good works that are commanded by God, done by the Holy Spirit, the power of the Holy Spirit, and are for the promotion of the God's glory and the gospel. So let's, let's pick something that's easy for us to sort of see, right? The Ten Commandments. In the Ten Commandments, there is the, is it Fifth Commandment?

What's the Fifth Commandment? Is that shall not murder? Who knows off the top of your head? No. What is it? Sixth Commandment? Sixth Commandment is yes, shall not murder. They have, my daughters have the Ten Commandments listed and memorized in order because of songs. So we'll have to teach them to you. So we know that commandment and it would be easy for us as, as husbands to look at our wives and say, listen, I've done a good work. I have never murdered you.

[ 9 : 59 ] And for some of us, there's no need for the Holy Spirit to really help me in that because like, I just don't have that drive to want to murder my wife.

But Jesus said this, Jesus says in Matthew chapter five, verse 22, that if anyone is angry with his brother, he's guilty. In other words, the Tenth Commandment, the Ten Commandments are not just this thing that happens on the surface, but it's something that happens in the heart. And if I look at my wife and say, well, I've never been angry. Well, that would be breaking another commandment called You Shall Not Lie. If I want to do a good work, then I have to not get angry with my wife by the power of the Holy Spirit for the good of the gospel and for the glory of God.

This is what we're saying then that to live such a way, to live in such a way as to grow in my character, to grow in Christ's likeness, to do these good works can only be done if we are in the word of God constantly. And the word of God is feeding us and doing in us these four things.

If you're not into the word of God, you are not going to be doing good works. Sorry, it's just not going to happen. The Holy Spirit, by whom God inspired and breathed out the word of God, uses the word of God as his primary tool to help us to grow in him. Now that's the first question. So the second question then is this, very simply, what are these four uses of the scripture? And I just want to look at each word, just go through them. I'm not going to belabor any one of them terribly long. Maybe. Here they are.

The first one is teaching. The first one's teaching. This word in the Greek is also translated sometimes in English as doctrine. So this is not about the method of imparting knowledge. This is about the content of knowledge. So doctrine is a word that means a set of truths about God or his ways that's drawn from scripture in light of what the rest of the Bible says about that same topic. That's a mouthful.

[12:23] Let me say it again. Doctrine is a set of truths about God or his ways that's drawn from scripture in light of what the rest of the Bible says on that topic. I'll give you an example. John 3 16.

Does anybody know John 3 16? Oh, oh yeah, yeah. You know that. You remember the very first phrase? For God so loved, say it with me, for God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten son.

Now that right there is enough for us to give an example, okay? And I just want you to notice that that phrase gives us two things about God. The first that it gives us is it gives us that God is a God of love, right? We can see that. He loves the world. As a matter of fact, his love is so great that he gives his son. Now that doesn't say everything about God's love, but it tells us at least that much. What we just did is we read something and we made a theological reflection. We brought out a doctrine right there. God is a God of love. That's a doctrine. It's not everything about it, but it's at least what this passage is saying. There's a second thing, and that is that God has a son, right? And not only does he have a son, but he has an only son, and he has an only begotten son. Now some translations are going to say something like the only unique son. I would say that it's better to say only begotten, and that's a theological discussion for another time, all right? But the point is, is that we see from this passage that God is love and God has a son. It doesn't tell us everything, but what doctrine is, is pulling these things out, seeing what it says, understanding what it says, drawing conclusions, and putting it together with the rest of the Bible. So what we have to do as Christians is we have to grow in our doctrinal understanding. We need to know theology. This is perhaps one of the most difficult things for most people to come to grips with because there is a stigma about doctrine and theology that says it's boring, outdated, and nobody understands it. And a part of the reason is, is because pastors have a tendency to use all the theological terms that we've been taught in seminary and whatnot. And when you start talking about the hypostatic union of Christ or the interpenetration of the Trinity, everybody looks at you going like, what? I want you to understand that you need to study doctrine. You need to know doctrine, but that is not the same thing as learning all of these crazy esoteric words. Do you hear me? Because these words, they came from a culture and a time that didn't speak English. It came from a culture and a time that people were trying to understand what the Bible said and they just wrote in their language. And what English theologians have done is just bring that word over from that language or this language without interpreting it or translating it. For example, I just mentioned hypostatic union. That word hypostatic, that's a Greek word that's been brought into English. I don't even know what that word means. No, I do know what it means. But you see what I'm saying? You need to study doctrine, but you don't have to worry about the big words. You don't have to worry about things that are confusing and strange. You just need to get into the word.

And as you read the word, you need to ask yourself these questions. Ask, what does this say about God? Now, this past week, we on Facebook sent out and said, hey, why don't you read it through John's gospel, chapter one, two, three, four, and five. Next week, we're going to pick up verse chapter six, seven, eight, nine, 10. And as you read it, what does it say about God? That's all you got to do.

[16:24] You don't have to write down all of these big, crazy theological words, but what does it say about God? And as you see, what does it say about God? Then ask yourself this, what else does the Bible say about this same thing? What else does the Bible say about this same thing? And then the third question you could ask is what have other Christians said about this same thing? That's the way we study doctrine. That's what it's useful for. Let's go to the second thing. The second thing is reproof.

This word reproof is a confrontation with the purpose of persuading the one being confronted that they're wrong. Right? So if you are reproofing someone, you want to convince them that they're wrong. When the scriptures reprove us, it's convincing us that we're wrong and we can be wrong either in what we're thinking or in how we're acting. Right? It can, it can reprove your mind, your beliefs, or it can reprove your behavior. Let me give you one example and maybe this will be controversial.

Who knows? Yeah, it probably will be. That's okay. You love, you love, you know, I wake up every day believing that the whole world loves me. And by the end of the day, somebody said something ugly to me and I wake up the next morning, I've forgotten all about it. And I wake up thinking the whole world loves me. So it's okay if you want to be upset with me because I'm just going to forget about it come tomorrow morning. Okay? We've often been told this idea that when it comes to suffering, God will not give you more than you can bear. Now, I'm going to put up on the screen the verse of scripture that this idea comes from. It comes from 1 Corinthians chapter 10 verse 13.

You'll notice it says that no temptation has overtaken you, but such as is common to man. And God is faithful who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you're able, but with the temptation will provide the way of escape also so that you will be able to endure it.

Now, that is the only verse of the Bible that, that even says anything remotely like that in suffering, God will not give you more than you can bear. Here's the problem. The context of this passage starts in verse 6, where Paul is telling the Corinthian Christians, don't be like the Israelites as they came out of Egypt, and he starts talking about all their sin. He starts talking about how they would crave evil things, and then he tells the Corinthians, don't be idolaters like them, and don't let us act immorally like them.

[19:22] And don't let us try God or put God to the test like they did. And don't grumble, verse 10. And then he even says in verse 12, therefore, if you think you stand, take heed lest you fall.

So the whole context here is not about suffering, but it's about sin. And 1 Corinthians chapter 10 verse 13 is a precious, precious gift, gift, because what it means is that no temptation to sin has overtaken you, but such as is common to man. And God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted to sin beyond what you're able, but with that temptation, he himself will provide the way out of it.

You see, when I first read this verse in my life and looked at the context, and I had thought all my life, it's like God's never going to let me suffer more than I can handle.

I kept thinking to myself that if suffering came my way, it must mean that God thinks that I'm strong enough to handle it. And I was believing something that was not true because that's not what the word of God says. And one of the things that I have learned is this, is that if I can handle the suffering, what good is God to me? All you got to do is sit down with someone who's lost a loved one and ask, is this more than you can bear? Or can you handle this?

No, I can't handle it. I can't handle it. But we need to be reproofed by the scriptures. We need to see where we're thinking the wrong things.

[21:18] We need to see where we're living the wrong way. We need to be reproofed. And the Christian attitude is, Lord, please rebuke me. How many of you ever got up in the morning and prayed, Lord, I pray that you would rebuke me today. No, we don't say that because we don't like that. We don't like people telling us what to do. But you know what Hebrews chapter 12 verse 6 says? For those whom the Lord loves, he disciplines and he scourges every son whom he receives. The Christian attitude ought to be, I need to be reproofed. I need to be rebuked. Lord, by your word, show me where I'm wrong.

That's one of the uses of the word. The third word is the word correction. Now this word is actually a positive word.

It says correction and we kind of think to ourselves that it's going to be a little bit like rebuke. But in reality, here's the image I want you to think of. I want you to think of something that's broken and when it gets mended and put back together, it's been corrected. That's correction.

It's a mending of what is broken. So in reproof, we see that we're wrong in our thinking. We see we're wrong in our behavior and correction then brings us so that we're mended and we're made right.

It helps us to change. It helps us to be different. In other words, it's all about reformation and transformation. In correction, our behavior gets reformed and our heart gets transformed.

[ 23 : 00 ] I like to think of correction as the gospel in the middle of all of this. It's the gospel that mends us. Because see, here's what happens. We will get commands after commands after commands in scripture. It's like last Sunday. I said, you know, we need to be reading the word. We need to be reading the word. If you're not reading the word, if you don't love the word, if you're not into the word, then how can you be a Christian? And then I said, do you feel guilty about that? And everybody's kind of chuckling because you kind of feel a little guilty about that.

And that's what happens. That's sort of that rebuke. And if we just leave it there and we say, well, then try harder, then try harder, then try harder, then what that does is that puts us in this place of just being pressed down and oppressed by our own sinfulness. But what we need to see is we need to see the correction of the Lord that comes through the gospel. Let me give you an example.

In Colossians chapter 3, verse 1 through 3, Paul gives a lot of different commands, right? It's therefore, if you have been raised up with Christ, seek the things that are above where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. Set your mind on the things above, not on things that are on earth. Now just pause for a second and think about what he's saying there. This is a command. Set your mind on things that are above, not on things that are on earth, right? Be heavenly minded, not earthly minded. We know the idea sometimes we think to ourselves, somebody can be so heavenly minded, they're of no earthly good. That's an impossibility.

We're all a bunch of sinners, right? We are never that heavenly minded. I can tell you that. Paul says we should be. We should be heavenly minded. We should be thinking about things above, not things on the earth. But then he gives us sort of the why. He gives us the correction in the very next phrase. Look at it. For you have died and your life is hidden with Christ and God.

[ 24 : 58 ] Hey, you got your mind set on earthly things? Let's rebuke you. Set your mind on heavenly things. How do I do that? For your life is hidden with Christ and God. That's how you do it.

Because of what Christ has done upon the cross. We need the correction of the Lord. And this is an important thing for us to learn because one of the things that we do is we get law and gospel mixed up, right? There are some people that get law and gospel mixed up this way.

They think that they can obey the law and that will get them to God, right? And so they ignore the gospel. And there's some people that say, well, we want the gospel so we can get to God.

And they ignore the law as though once they have the gospel, they don't need to obey anything. But here's the perfect image of how the law works. Think about what happened to Israel in Egypt.

Think about what happened to the Egyptians. You remember the ten plagues that came upon them? You remember the destruction? You remember the mayhem? You remember even the last plague? The death angel that comes through and strikes down the firstborn?

[ 26 : 08 ] That is what you call the work of the law. What's the work of the law? Condemnation.

There was Egypt being condemned because they had broken God's law.

But God used that to rescue his people, right? They had to paint the blood on the doorposts. And because of the blood, the death angel passes over them. Then they get to the Red Sea.

They open up the Red Sea. It's almost like their baptism, right? They're covered in the blood. Now they get baptized. And now they go to Mount Sinai. And what do they do at Mount Sinai? They get the law.

You know what God did not do? He did not come to them through Moses and said, By the way, if you want to get out of Egypt, here's my law. Obey it. He redeemed them first and gave them a law to follow.

That's the proper place of the law in the life of the Christian. Is that we're saved by grace and grace and grace and grace alone. But we are to obey the Lord.

[ 27 : 20 ] The Bible, the Word of God, gives us that correction so that we understand both law and gospel. The fourth and final word is this training in righteousness.

It's interesting because this word training comes from the root word in the Greek for child or for infant. But over time, it began to be used for just child training.

Matter of fact, in our English language, we use the word pedagogy. Pedagogy, if you're a teacher, you know, pedagogy is sort of that system of the way you teach and how you're going to teach and laying out your teaching philosophy and ideas and patterns and all of that.

That's where this word comes from. And so what Paul is saying is that there's to be training in righteousness. There's to be a systematic instruction that helps us to grow in righteousness.

This is what Paul uses in Ephesians chapter 6 verse 4 where he tells fathers to bring their children up in the discipline or training and instruction of the Lord. For Paul, there's a need for a thorough education concerning the scriptures for God's people.

[ 28 : 32 ] His word is that thorough education that we need. We need to know all of it. It's profitable for this education that we might grow in righteousness.

Now, what is righteousness? Righteousness comes as a result of obedience to the commands of God. Now, you and I have no righteousness. Right?

You and I, when we were born to this world, we were born as sinners. And as sinners, we deserve death and hell. But God in his great love sent his son into this world to take our punishment for us. And so in our trusting him for salvation, here's the way I like to illustrate it. I want you to look at my fist for a second. My fist represents the human heart.

Right? And the human heart is hard and black and doesn't want to do what God wants it to do. But when a human, when one of us, when we trust in the Lord Jesus Christ, when we repent of our sin and turn towards him, he covers us with the righteousness of Christ.

[ 29 : 44 ] See, Jesus came and lived a perfect life. He obeyed his father perfectly. He had a perfect righteousness. And when we trust in him, he covers us with that righteousness. Right?

So that's why Martin Luther said we're at the same time both sinners and saints. We're covered. We're declared righteous by God. Now, I'm driving this point home because what we're talking about here is a training in righteousness.

So once we're covered, we need to grow in righteousness. And here's how that happens. All of our life, as we get into the word of God, we use the other tools that God has given us to grow.

The more we are obedient to him, the more that we know of him and we depend upon him in the gospel, our lives become conformed to the image of Christ.

And in being conformed to the image of Christ, we are growing in righteousness. So this is what God's word is for. God's word is for us to be able to do these good works.

[ 30 : 45 ] Here's what I want you to think about. We're right here at the end. Think about your own character. Think about your marriage.

Think about parenting. Think about being in school. Think about your job. Think about your friends. Think about your grandkids. Think about retirement. Think about what you're going to do in your free time.

Think about how you're going to act towards those who are poor, those who are less fortunate. Think about those who are lost and how we need to treat them. Everything in all of those areas has something that God has said in his word to deal with each one of those areas.

In other words, there's not an area in your life that you don't need to do good works in. You need to do, commanded by God, empowered by the Holy Spirit, for the sake of the gospel, things in your marriage, in your parenting, in your job, in your retirement, in your free time, with all of these people.

You need to do all of that that God has commanded in all of your life. There's not a single area of your life that God says, oh, by the way, this area is yours. You can do what you want. Right?

[ 31 : 56 ] He gets every area of your life. And because there are things he's commanded for every area of our life, the only way that I can be the husband, the father, the grandfather, the pastor, the friend, the neighbor, the community member that I need to be, is by the power of the word of God working in me to correct me, pardon, to rebuke me, to correct me, and to train me.

I cannot be the kind of pastor that this community and this church needs unless the word of God gets into me and rips me apart and puts me back together by the power of the Holy Spirit.

And that is the only way, that is the only way that anything that could happen here glorify God. And it's true for you as well.

If you're not into the word of God, if you're not being changed by the word of God, then the things that you're doing just store up wrath and displeasure from the Lord.

But you got to make yourself available to the word of God. I mean, you got to actually just pick it up and do it. If you don't pick it up, it's not going to do it by osmosis.

[ 33 : 24 ] I've never deer hunted. When I was little, for some reason, we just never went. And the older I get, the more I'm just like super scared that I'm going to do something wrong.

I have no idea what I would be doing. But I'm pretty sure that I get the idea that if you're going to hunt deer, you either need a rifle or a bow.

Now, there may be some special, you know, hill country voodoo where you can kill a deer in a different way than a gun and a bow. I don't know. I'm just not a hill country guy, right? So y'all may have something, but I'm pretty sure, by and large, your car.

Yeah. That's by accident, though. You and I both understand that, by and large, if you're going to hunt deer, you got to pick up the weapon.

It's never going to happen if you just sit in your house and never pick it up. You're never going to grow as a Christian if you don't pick it up.

[ 34 : 35 ] It's just not going to happen. God has given us such a precious treasure of his word. And my question to you is, will you make the commitment to read through your Bible?

I'm not encouraging you to try to read it in 90 days. I'm not even trying to encourage you to read it in a year. If you want to read the Bible in a year, I think it's a great thing. I just want you to be reading it always.

A chapter at a time, a paragraph at a time. It doesn't matter how little, how much, just don't go a day without reading and without asking, what does it say about God?

What does it say about man? And how do I need to think or live because of it? The only way that we become the light in this world and in this community that we need to be, the only way is if Christ shines through us.

And the only way that happens is if we use the word of God in these four ways, we grow in these things. Now, there's so much more that I could tell you. There's so much more we could deal. I'm just trying to give you the tip of the iceberg, the icing on the cake.

[ 35 : 51 ] There's meat and potatoes behind this. And if you want to know more, like, well, I just don't know how to read. I don't know what to read. I don't know where to start. And you have all these questions. That's why I have an office.

That's why I have a phone. That's why I have email. You may come by. You may call. Whatever you need. I'm here to help you answer those kinds of questions.

Today is just all about are you ready to lay aside the things that are getting in the way so that you can be committed to the word of God? Let's pray together.