

Living by the Book: Why Study the Book for Yourself (2 Timothy 3:15-17)

- The only reason we know we know our mission is to “make more and better disciples of Jesus Christ” is because God told us in His “word of truth”. In fact, everything we know about creation, the fall of mankind, the life and ministry of Jesus Christ, how we can be delivered from our sin, how this world will end, the purpose of life and so much more is revealed in God’s Word.
- If we are not able to understand God’s Word, we will fail to understand the vital truth about our Creator and how we need to relate to Him and each other.
- Paul shares four profound reasons why we need to learn how to study and understand the “word of life” for ourselves.

① Because it is a saving book (3:15)

- God’s Word reveals His salvation plan and has the power to transform sinners into saints (Rom. 10:17; Psalm 19:7; 1 Pet. 1:23; James 1:18, 21; John 6:63)
- His word gives us the wisdom about:
 - God is life’s greatest Person who created everything for His glory and revealed Himself as a holy, true, just, loving, gracious and merciful God.
 - Sin is life’s greatest problem which condemns us and makes us accountable without any ability to overcome by our own effort.
 - Jesus Christ is life’s greatest provision who “*came into the world to save sinners...*” (1 Tim 1:15) by His death for our sins and His bodily resurrection.
 - Forgiveness of sin and eternal life is life’s greatest promise and is a gift of God’s grace to anyone who puts their faith in Jesus Christ alone.

② Because it is a supernatural book (3:16a: “*All Scripture is inspired*”)

- There are two kinds of truth: natural (general revelation: what we discover by observation and deduction) and supernatural truth (special revelation: what God reveals to us in His Word)
- God’s Word is a God-breathed book (“*inspired*”). It is called the “*word of life*” (Phil. 2:16), a “*living and active*” word of truth (Heb. 4:12) that God spoke flawlessly through the intellect, personality, and style of flawed authors. It is the spoken and written words that are God-breathed, not the thoughts or ideas of the authors.

③ Because it is a success-shaping book (3:16b)

- Success is not what the world promotes, but what God describes as living to “*be pleasing to Him*” (2 Cor. 5:9) which is about being “*conformed to the image of His Son*” (Rom. 8:29)
- God’s Word is “*profitable*” (beneficial, useful, advantageous) in four ways that make you successful in the eyes of God:
 - The “*teaching*” connects you rightly to its doctrinal truth (what to believe and live out)
 - The “*reproof*” confronts you directly with its convicting truth (it exposes and rebukes your sins)
 - The “*correction*” corrects you effectively with its restorative truth (it gets you back on track pleasing the Lord)
 - The “*training in righteousness*” coaches you with its sustaining truth (it cultivates a strong, mature faith)

④ Because it is a sufficient book (v. 17)

- No one needs any other truth beyond God's Word to live a life that is pleasing to Him and will make you:
 - *"adequate"*: God's Word makes His children proficient and fit for usefulness.
 - *"equipped for every good work"*: God's Word thoroughly furnishes believers with all that is needed to do His will.