

X. Thy Word is Truth in Biblical Perspective  
*The Supremacy and Sufficiency of God's Word*  
"The Word of God – Its Origin"  
II Timothy 3:16–17  
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September 20, 2015 – Morning Sermon

We are learning God's Word together and we are in expositions from II Timothy 3 for the next eight studies. I hope we become very familiar with this text and its tentacles reaching out throughout the Scriptures. II Timothy 3:16–17 says, *[16] All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, [17] that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work.*

The grass withers, the flower fades, God's Word abides forever and by His grace and mercy may His Word be preached for you.

The first week of January after Dr. Barker got us started into the year, we started into our ministry theme that came from the Lord's Prayer. The Lord's Prayer you find in John 17, not the one that Jesus uses to teach the disciples to pray that we're used to calling the Lord's Prayer. In John 17, Jesus says 'I do not pray for the world but I pray for those whom You have given Me out of the world' and then He utters seven prayer requests for those who have put their trust in Him alone for salvation, His people. The fourth request, which is what the first three lead to and the last three grow from, is John 17:17 which says "Sanctify them in Thy Word; Thy Word is truth." This became our verse for the year.

Set them apart in the truth. Set them apart in the environment they are in, what fills them, frames them and fuels them is to be the truth and that is what saves them, sets them apart, grows them, matures them and keeps them in the power of the Holy Spirit. If the truth is that which saves us, grows us, and sanctifies us, where do you find the truth? John 17:17 then brings us the conclusion. Thy Word is truth. He doesn't say the Bible is the word of man about God. He doesn't say the Word of God becomes the Word of God when you encounter it. He doesn't say the Bible contains the Word of God. He says the Bible is the Word of God. Because it is God's Word, it is truth. It doesn't simply become truth or contain truth or human speculation about truth. It is God's Word and therefore it is truth.

So how did we get God's Word? How does the infinite (who is holy) get to the finite (who are sinners), the unfathomable truth of God? How does all of the light of God's truth come to those who are bound in darkness that they might receive it and see the light? I know the statement I made in the last study is arguable but I believe the two verses in II Timothy 3:16–17 are the most important verses in the Bible; *[16] All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, [17] that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work.*

A person might say what about John 3:16 which says *[16] For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life.* I agree that is a great message but how do you know it's true? It's in God's Word, but how do you know it's God's Word? How would God have gotten His Word

to you if it is God's Word? Another might bring up Romans 8:1 which says [1] *There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.* Again, how do you know it's true? So what about heaven? I love what the Bible says about heaven because I think it's true.

Over fifty plus years ago some men and women under the leadership of the founding pastor of this church planted this church and many of those people are being shepherded onto promotion, going on into heaven. I have talked to people at these recent funerals who don't know Jesus and have had the privilege to tell these people where these people are – absent from the body is to be present with the Lord. Then I tell them why they are with the Lord and all I'm telling them is what the Bible says. If the Bible is not true then that was meaningless. So how do I know the Bible is true? It is God's Word but how do I know it is God's Word? Yes it is uniquely bearing one message over a 1600 year period which is the glory of the Triune God revealed in the preeminence of Jesus Christ as Creator, Redeemer and Sustainer. How would I know it's the truth and believe it's the truth?

In other words, the Bible says a lot of things but the reason I built my life on it and have given my life to preaching, teaching, sharing and to give comfort to people with is because I believe the Bible is true and where it came from. Thy Word is truth. So how does God's Word get to us? We said this was important and that is why we're taking these eight weeks to look at this. This is the second study of eight studies to take these two verses. In the last study we looked at the importance of them and in this study we are looking at the origin of where the Bible comes from, why we believe it comes from there and how it got to us.

We learned in the last study that the Bible is the very Word of God and we learned four things about it. Because the Scripture is the very Word of God it is the truth. The first thing we learned is the Scripture is our only supreme and sufficient rule for faith and practice. That is what we believe and how we're supposed to live. What do I believe about marriage, sexuality, worship and salvation? I will go to the Bible for all of these. Why do you know you need a Savior or that Jesus saves sinners or where sinners are headed when they are saved? It is because the Bible tells me so. How do you know there is a hell to lose and a heaven to gain? It is because the Bible tells me so and the Bible is true because it is the Word of God. It is the truth.

The second thing we learned is while all truth is not in the Scripture, all of the Scripture is the truth. In three different places in the book of John it mentions that if all the things Jesus said had been recorded the world couldn't contain all the books. Every time Jesus preached, was it the truth? It was but all of it didn't get recorded in the Bible. So the Bible doesn't contain all truth but everything the Bible has is the truth and it has all that I need to know Him savingly to grow with Him and for Him in the Lord.

Thirdly, you can never know God and His Word exhaustively, but you can know God through His Word increasingly, accurately, intimately and savingly. [8] *For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, declares the LORD.* (Isaiah 55:8) [16] *"For who has understood the mind of the Lord so as to instruct him?" But we have the mind of Christ.* (1 Corinthians 2:16) Even the 66 books of the Bible contain truths that I can't fathom not only in this life but in eternity. So I have great news; you're going to learn forever without research papers, and you can grow in the knowledge of Christ. Accurately God's Word is true and doesn't contradict itself.

God's Word brings us into a personal relationship with Him, intimately. Savoringly, we have a relationship with Him that we might be with Him, and He in you and with you.

Fourthly, we learned you can know the Word of God and not know God, but you cannot know God and not know the Word of God. [17] *So faith comes from hearing, and hearing through the word of Christ.* (Romans 10:17) So what do I believe about the Word of God? I believe it's the truth. What do I believe is the truth? I believe it's the Word of God. You believe the truth is the Word of God so why would you believe the Scriptures are the Word of God which is the truth? John 17:17 says "Sanctify them in the truth; Thy Word is truth." If it's God's Word that means it is true. If it is true that means it is consistent with and found under the rubric and framework of God's Word. God's Word is the Scriptures holding them.

The Bible is compiled of 66 books over a 1600 year span with 40 plus human authors and I believe that is the Word of God. Why do I believe that? It is because of how we got it and the Bible tells us how we got it. All Scriptures is inspired by God. As we get into this study I am going to ask three questions and then I will give you a takeaway. Here is the first question.

Why do we have the Word of God? I want to give you four reasons. The first reason is because of the grace of God. God was under no obligation to speak to us and give us that Word. We didn't want Him. We need His Word but we didn't want His Word. God is under no obligation to reveal Himself to us but God has revealed Himself to us through that which can save us – His Word and He did that because of His grace. He loved you and because He loved you He gave you His Word. He loved you because of His glorious grace and mercy. He has given to you and me the Word of God. I can't be saved without the Word. God thank You that You gave me the Word. I wouldn't have known that I needed a Savior without the Word. God, thank You for Your Word. I wouldn't have known about the Savior by which I am saved without the Word. Thank You Lord, for Your Word. I wouldn't have known how to live my life for my Savior without Your Word. I wouldn't have known about what a marriage is supposed to be or what a husband and wife are supposed to do and how to raise children in and for the Lord without the Word. I wouldn't have known how to worship or about sexuality or how to eat and drink to the glory of God without the Word.

It is not by intuition but by Divine revelation. God has instructed me, communicated to me and revealed to me that I'm a sinner. I can't save myself. He loves me and there was no way for me to be saved but He made a way and that way satisfies My holiness and shows you My love. At the cross the love of God kisses the holiness of God and saves sinners to the glory of God but I would have never known of this unless He had revealed it to me in His Word. Why did You do that God? It is because He loved me. It is the grace of God. I didn't want it or Him and He didn't need me even though I needed Him but He wanted me, has come to me and revealed Himself to me.

The second reason we have the Word of God is because of the nature of God. In I John 1:5 it says that God is light and it is His nature to reveal Himself and dispel darkness. Thy Word is a revelation of our God. Psalm 119:105 says [105] *Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path.* First of all God reveals Himself in general revelation as the creation shouts the glory of God. Day after day, all around us, is pouring forth knowledge. God is glorious. God reigns. God is to be glorified and I've made you in His image and that's what He proclaims throughout the creation. I would

never know that God dwells as Father, Son and Holy Spirit without that Word. I would never know that Father loves me so much that He would give His Son to go to the cross to die for me without His Word. I would never know I needed a Savior and can't save myself without His Word. Creation holds me accountable and proclaims His majesty but it's His Word that sends me to a Savior. It's His Word that gives me the full knowledge of the intricacies of His grace, mercy, holiness, justice, patience, kindness, and His unfathomable, relentless, unstoppable love for His people.

Three, I have His Word because of the wisdom of God. Not only is the Bible a compilation of God's wisdom, though not exhaustive, but God gave me His Word through His Wisdom. God knew what we needed and out of the wisdom of God we receive the Word.

Fourthly, I have the Word of God because of the power of God. God supernaturally, miraculously, gloriously has given to us His Word. God is able to give us His Word in this world. So that is why I have the Word of God now let's ask another question.

What is the Word of God? The simple answer is that the Word of God is the Scriptures. Why would I believe the Word of God is the Scriptures? II Timothy 3:16a says *[16a] All Scripture is breathed out (inspired) by God...* So what are the Scriptures? There are so many passages I could show you on this but I had to do some editing here for the sake of time. We will look at a couple of passages to understand what the Scripture is. Jesus says in John 5:39, *[39] You search the Scriptures because you think that in them you have eternal life; and it is they that bear witness about me.* The point of the Scriptures is not for you to trust the Scriptures for life but for you to trust the message of the Scripture which brings you to Christ who is your life. When Jesus was saying that 'you search the Scriptures' what was He referring to? He was referring to the Old Testament. How do I know that?

Here is another one in Luke 24:27 (and 44) which says *[27] And beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, he interpreted to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself.* He just gave you the Old Testament and Jesus says that the Scriptures are the Old Testament. So the 39 books in your Old Testament are Scripture. So what about the New Testament? I have to be selective on the passages but let's first look at I Timothy 5:17-18 which says *[17] Let the elders who rule well be considered worthy of double honor, especially those who labor in preaching and teaching. [18] For the Scripture says, "You shall not muzzle an ox when it treads out the grain," and, "The laborer deserves his wages."* Some people like myself have a double honor for we not only have the honor of being an elder but we get the honor of support so that we can work hard at preaching and teaching. It's not that they are more important, it's just because of what they do for faith comes by hearing and hearing the Word of God. Preaching is so important that the normal course of life is relieved from them so that they can give themselves the time they need in the Word so they can preach and teach for you for that would be beneficial to you.

Scripture alone is our only rule of faith and practice. So Paul then calls all preachers an ox in I Timothy 5:18. I would have so much more appreciated a text that said something like 'you shall give the grain to the thoroughbred.' On the contrary it says that you shall not muzzle the ox and then he says 'the laborer deserves his wages' and that is not in the Old Testament. It is a quote from Luke 10. So here is one of a

number of places I can go to and show you that the writers of Scripture believe not only that the Old Testament but the Gospels to be Scripture. The Old Testament pointed to Jesus and the Gospels records the life and ministry of Jesus.

So what about the Epistles? I could go to multiple passages here but I'm just going to use one and that is in II Peter 3:14–16 which says *[14] Therefore, beloved, since you are waiting for these, be diligent to be found by him without spot or blemish, and at peace. [15] And count the patience of our Lord as salvation, just as our beloved brother Paul also wrote to you according to the wisdom given him, [16] as he does in all his letters when he speaks in them of these matters. There are some things in them that are hard to understand, which the ignorant and unstable twist to their own destruction, as they do the other Scriptures.* Peter is not only saying what he is writing is Scripture but what Paul is writing as Scripture. So now we have the Epistles also affirmed as Scripture that is God given wisdom to the Apostles to us.

What does Paul say about this? Paul says that all Scripture, every Scripture is inspired by God – the Old Testament, Gospels, Epistles. I want to show you one other passage in I Thessalonians 2. Paul is writing to them commending them in a number of areas and one area in particular. I Thessalonians 2:13 says *[13] And we also thank God constantly for this, that when you received the word of God, which you heard from us, you accepted it not as the word of men but as what it really is, the word of God, which is at work in you believers.* So the Apostles are giving us through the Scriptures the Word of God. So what is the Word of God? It is the Scriptures. The church does not make the Bible. We receive the Bible that has been revealed by God.

So how did we receive the Word of God? Let's look at II Timothy 3:16a which says *[16] All Scripture is breathed out by God...* Our English Bible contains a lot of words that weren't in existence until they translated the Bible. When they translated the Bible in 1560 there was no word expiation, propitiation, mediation or atonement. It was when they were translating the Bible that they had these rich Greek and Aramaic words in the New Testament and Hebrew and Aramaic words for the Old Testament that we had to put it into this bankrupt thing we call the English language.

For instance there are six words in the Greek language for love. Some are agápe, éros, philía (brotherly love) and storgē (family love). The way I say I love you to my wife is not the same as I would say it to a brother of mine. In the English language we're all tone and utterly bankrupt. The Bible was written around this wonderfully, rich, passionate Greek and Hebrew language. Perhaps it was the sovereignty of God that had this great language in place to teach us the depth and knowledge of God.

Paul had to actually make up a word for even the Greek language didn't have it. You will find the concept of this word in other places but you won't find this word anywhere else in the Bible or anywhere outside of the Bible. The word is *theopneustes*. It is translated rightly in the English Standard Version, God-breathed. Most have the translation that says All Scripture is inspired and the only problem is that it is really expired (not meaning out of date) where God breathed it out. It is not the authors that are inspired though they are, and it's not the Bible that is inspirational though it is, but the point is that the Scriptures themselves are the result of God's breath.

How do you get a word? You breathe it out. You can't speak without breathing. Theo means God. Pneustes is where we get the word pneumonia, pneumatic, wind, breath, and air from. We get the Scriptures from the breath of God. The writers are the

lips of God through which He is speaking and they are really people but every word of Scripture came from God and that's why we say it is infallible and inerrant. God is the original Author, the ultimate Author and the final Editor. God is the Archivist and Preserver. God-breathed is how we got the Word of God, through the Prophets, Apostles, over 1600 years, over 40 plus authors to get this glorious message of a Triune God revealed in the preeminence of Christ as Redeemer, Creator and Sustainer.

I want you to see this. Let's look at John 14:25–26 which says [25] *These things I have spoken to you while I am still with you. [26] 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 that I have said to you.* So Jesus reveals Himself through the Apostles and then He gives the Holy Spirit so they will recall and write all that He puts out. This is what He gives to us. That is why John will say that we write that our joy may be made full. Paul says 'I thank the Lord through the wisdom give to me that you have received the Word of God, not the word of man.' Peter will so declare that this Word is the glorious Word of God that has been given by the hand of God and we see that in II Peter.

II Peter 1:19–21 says [19] *And we have the prophetic word more fully confirmed, to which you will do well to pay attention as to a lamp shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts, [20] knowing this first of all, that no prophecy of Scripture comes from someone's own interpretation. [21] For no prophecy was ever produced by the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit.* Interestingly, that word 'carried along' is a verb and if I went to the noun form it would be the word ferry, like a ferry boat. The Holy Spirit ferried these men along giving them the Word. This reminds me of my favorite group growing up – Jerry and the Pacemakers. They did the song Ferry Crossed the Mercy. He takes them and through them ferries to us and lands on the shore of your heart – the Word of God in the Scriptures.

I want to give you a biographical instance and then we'll close in prayer. Let's look at Jeremiah 1. I could use so many more passages on this but I'll just use this one – the prophet of lamentations. Jeremiah 1:4–9 says [4] *Now the word of the LORD came to me, saying, [5] "Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, and before you were born I consecrated you; I appointed you a prophet to the nations." [6] Then I said, "Ah, Lord GOD! Behold, I do not know how to speak, for I am only a youth." [7] But the LORD said to me, "Do not say, 'I am only a youth'; for to all to whom I send you, you shall go, and whatever I command you, you shall speak. [8] Do not be afraid of them, for I am with you to deliver you, declares the LORD." [9] Then the LORD put out his hand and touched my mouth. And the LORD said to me, "Behold, I have put my words in your mouth."*

That is what God does to give us His Word. His Word through the mouths and lives of the Prophets as He prepares them He says 'Before I called you to be My instrument and before you ever existed, I formed you in the womb for this. I gave you the family I wanted you raised in so you would be raised in that family for the calling I've given you. I called you, placed you, prepared you and empowered you because I'm doing it through you.' This isn't magic. There are a couple of times God writes it out on the wall and on stone tablets but 99.5% of your Bible is the Word of God coming through men who are really thinking their way through it, as real men working through real situations. God has prepared them. It is not through dictation.

If I dictate a letter you don't know anything about the one through whom I'm dictating. The writers of Scriptures are not secretaries for they are really engaged and it's dynamically coming through them so they are talking in language that they knew. You can hear the lawyer training in Paul's writings. You can find that fisherman coming through in I and II Peter and in Mark. That is what you begin to see and what you begin to hear. God is giving you His Word through them. So what does this mean?

Here is your takeaway. The Scripture is the Word of God and therefore the truth from God because it is God-breathed through the original authors in the original languages of the original manuscripts. We don't have the original languages. We have copies of the copies but we have so many of them that all you have to do is put them on top of each other and you can get back to the original. Why didn't God save the original? If we had it we would end up worshipping it. He is not only the final Author, Editor, Archivist but He is the Preserver. Then He raised up men like William Tyndall, John Huss and Wycliff that were willing to die so you could have your Bible and it could be preached to you. You can read it and study it. Why were they willing to die? It was because they knew the Bible, the Scriptures are the Word of God and the Word of God is the truth.

You and I need that truth to be saved. When you have that truth you have the final Word of faith and practice because the Scriptures are God-breathed. They are the very Word of God. Because it's the Word of God it is the truth, inspired, inerrant, infallible, supreme and sufficient for all that we believe and all we practice. So when the world says here is what marriage is or sexuality is or this is worship or this is salvation, we say no here is what the Bible says. In other words Martin Luther said "Here I stand I can do no other" and that comes to us every day of our life. Here is the Word of God by the grace of God, dependent upon the Spirit of God and here I stand for I can do no other. It is the final rule of faith and practice because it is God's Word that has come to me, into my life and I now have the very Word of God. I do not have the product of human reasoning. I have the gift of Divine revelation – the supreme and sufficient rule for what I believe and practice.

I give it to you. Come to the One who gave it to you for that's why He gave it to you, so that you would come to Him. Read God's Word and smell the breath of God for it is sweet to your heart and soul. Let's pray.

Prayer:

Father, thank You for the moments we could be together in Your Word. Now put Your Word in us. If there is anyone reading this that doesn't know Christ and came looking today because You brought them here, may they come from Your Word by Your Spirit to the God of the Word, Jesus Christ. Go to Jesus and say 'Jesus I come.' He loves you so much that He'll take you right here and He loves you too much to leave you here. He will grow you and take you to glory. Father, for those who have surrendered to Christ, may we day by day, through the power of the Holy Spirit, with utter dependence upon You, go to this Word preached, read it, study it, memorize it and meditate on it. Thy Word have I hid in my heart that I might not sin against You. Then Father, give them the joy of their salvation as they grow in the grace of their Savior and frame us with this Word I pray, glory to the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, Amen.

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## Power Point

Because the Scripture is the very Word of God it is the Truth, therefore...

- The Scripture is our only Supreme and Sufficient rule for faith and practice.
- While all truth is not in the Scripture, all of the Scripture is the Truth.
- You can never know God and His Word exhaustively, but you can know God through His Word increasingly, accurately, intimately and savingly.
- You can know the Word of God and not know God, but you cannot know God and not know the Word of God.

## Questions

- I. Why do we have the Word of God?
- II. What is the Word of God?
- III. How did we receive the Word of God?

## LIFE TAKEAWAY

The Scripture is the Word of God and therefore the Truth from God because it is God-breathed through the original authors in the original languages of the original manuscripts.