

G R O W

Get focused, Read, Observation, Worship

What is the Bible? 2 Timothy 3:16

Have you ever played the game “telephone?” It’s the game where something is whispered to one person and they in turn whisper to another person, and it works its way around the room to see if what was originally said was faithfully or funnily transmitted? Many think that the Bible is like this game. That the Bible we have is the result of poor transmission and preservation. Now, to be fair, Moses wasn’t at Creation, so how did he know what happened to write in down in Genesis? We believe that God revealed it and that is was passed down. But it was not like the game of telephone. In the game, things are only said once in a whisper, in the hopes that it won’t be faithfully transmitted; it’s fun to see how the message will be changed. We have so many manuscripts, over so many years, that we know that God’s word was meticulously transmitted and preserved. They took extreme care to get the message right, so that we would know what God had revealed. And 2 Timothy 3:16 speaks to this and much more, so that we can know the Bible is God’s Word.

GET FOCUSED

“If we want to get the most form our Bible reading, we need to get focused, where we turn down the noise of the world and within ourselves, where we are focused and ready to listen to Him” (Grow Guide). Take a few moments a quiet any distractions and prepare your mind.

READ

There are many great translations of the Bible, but many serve different purposes. Some translations are careful to translate every word in ancient manuscripts while others try to sum up the message in modern language; both have their purposes and advantages. For study, we do recommend what’s called a “literal” translation, like ESV or NASB. But perhaps you would benefit from reading the verse in multiple translations. What’s most important is to take time to read the verse; don’t just skim it.

OBSERVATION (COMB through the text)

In addition to reading our main passage, read the verses around it to understand the **context**. We see that the Apostle Paul is writing to Timothy, his protege and companion (2 Tim. 1:1-2). In chapter 3, Paul is reminding Timothy that in life there will be trials and attacks. That there are people who will

be deceived and that there are those who want to trick and hurt others, so it's vitally important for us to know God's Word and to be trained and shaped by it.

Now, let's **observe** the key words and phrases: scripture, breathed out by God, profitable for teaching, reproof, correction, and training, righteousness.

To help understand the **meaning** of these words and phrases, invest in a good study Bible or utilize online tools like netbible.org. Scripture is a word that refers to sacred writings. It is a term that was used by Jews and Christians to refer to the Old Testament, and New Testament writers used it to refer to their writings (2 Peter 3:15-16). Jesus often quoted the Old Testament and referred to the collective work of the OT as the scriptures, as God's Word (Luke 24:27), so we can have confidence that the OT is scripture. And we can see that the New Testament writings are scripture too, given through the Apostles and Prophets (Eph. 2:20). So, our Holy Bible is God's Word.

The phrase "breathed out by God" shows us that God is the source of the scriptures. The breath of God points back to Genesis 2:7 where God breathed into man and he became a living being. The scripture writers are not stenographers, rather they are carried along by the Holy Spirit to write God's message for us (2 Peter 1:21).

And God's Word is profitable for us to know, to be taught by, to be corrected by, to be trained and shaped by. His Word makes us wise, gives us strength, gives us right perspective and values. His Word leads us into truth and into God's Will (Psalm 19:7-11, John 17:17). God's Word leads us to righteousness, which means that we have right standing before God and right relationship with God.

So, what's the **bottom-line**, how would you sum all this up? The Bible is God's Word and it is good for me to be shaped by it.

WORSHIP

The worship step leads us to further meditate on the Word, thinking about how we are to live it out. Worship is so much more than songs and music. Songs and music are good and help us focus on the Lord and praise Him, but worship is most truly seen in our lives. So, spend some time thinking about this passage and what it means for your life; how can you honor God and show His worth in your life? Likely you will be led to think about how you can read and study His Word more, so that it will shape your life more and more. How will you develop the good habit of Bible reading and study? Maybe you're led to beliefs, thoughts, values, or actions in your life that are contrary to God's Word. How will you repent of them and align yourself with God's Word?