



Scotts Hill Baptist Church

DEEPER • WE STUDY GOD'S WORD • 2 TIMOTHY 3:16-17; HEBREWS 4:12-13 • 11/3/2024

MAIN POINT

Only through the study and application of God's Word do we learn how to live for God and share His love with the world.

INTRODUCTION

As your group time begins, use this section to introduce the topic of discussion.

If you could learn how to master one field of study, what would it be and why?

How are the teachings of the Bible distinct from all other teachings we receive?

In your own words, what is the purpose of the Bible? Why is studying it important for the Christian?

How have you seen the Bible be the catalyst for life-change in your life and in the church?

In our information-driven culture, people want to know more about everything. People are interested not only in gaining new skills to use in a rapidly changing work environment but in learning more to grow personally. Unfortunately, many people lack a spiritual hunger for God's Word, and many who do have the desire to study the Bible haven't developed the discipline to make Bible study as profitable and life transforming as it can be.

UNDERSTANDING

Unpack the biblical text to discover what the Scripture says or means about a particular topic.

Foundational to the study of Scripture is the belief that the Bible is inerrant, that it is the perfect, inspired Word of God. The apostle Paul encouraged the younger disciple Timothy with this truth in his second letter.

| HAVE A VOLUNTEER READ 2 TIMOTHY 3:16-17.

In his encouragement to Timothy Paul instructed him to hold firmly to what he had learned in Scripture, which he had studied since he was young. The task which God had for Paul and Timothy was rooted in the authority of the Scriptures. Because the Bible is our primary tool for growing as Jesus' disciples, it is crucial that we believe the Word of God is totally accurate, free of error, and inspired by God Himself.

Verse 16 teaches us that all Scripture is God-breathed. What does this imply?

Why is the divine inspiration of Scripture important? What would change if you didn't believe Scripture was divinely inspired?

Paul reminded Timothy that Scripture instructs Christians on how to believe, grow, and serve the Christian community. Paul appealed to Timothy concerning the inspiration and usefulness of Scripture in daily life. He first noted to Timothy that Scripture is inspired by God. The complete contents bear God's stamp of approval.

What words in these verses emphasize the importance of studying Scripture?

In what areas of your life has Scripture proven profitable? How? Have you noticed a change in these areas when you haven't been actively studying God's Word?

What does Scripture equip us to do? How does this work?

The Bible is a guide that teaches us how to grow in our faith and how to live as disciples. It's profitable for teaching, so it's profitable for learning. Rebuking and correcting also make it useful for prevention—there's no need to be rebuked or corrected if you never did something in the first place. "Training in righteousness" points us to Christ; we can't be righteous apart from Him. The Bible, when actively read, provides us all we need to mature in our faith, a process that God designed to happen in the community of His church. The writer of Hebrews also affirmed the power of God's Word to make Him known and shape the behavior of His people.

| HAVE A VOLUNTEER READ HEBREWS 4:12-13.

In this section of Hebrews, the writer was making the point that his readers needed to give close attention to obeying God's Word. In these two verses he stated the reason.

What similarities do you see in this passage and the passage from 2 Timothy 3?

How is the Word living and active?

How is the Word of God sharp like a two-edged sword? What is an example from your life when you've experienced the Bible in this way?

What does God's Word have the power to do in our lives, according to this passage? How have you seen this to be true in your life?

The living God speaks His living Word. God's Word is not confined to a distant past but comes to us now with freshness, power, and clarity. God's Word judges the ideas and thoughts of the heart. It reaches into the center of a person's being and correctly perceives motives and intentions. God's Word lays bare any faithlessness, disobedience, and indifference or complacency in advancing toward spiritual maturity. Bible study is one of the main ways God speaks to Christians. It is the way we learn about God and His will for our lives. Bible study provides the spiritual food for growing believers into Christlikeness.

APPLICATION

Help your group identify how the truths from the Scripture passage apply directly to their lives.

**What is one thing that distracts you from daily studying the Word of God?
What habit or routine needs to change in order for you to make the study of the Word a priority?**

How does your knowledge and understanding of Scripture impact your interactions with nonbelievers? Are you prepared to share the truth of the Word of God at any time? What can you do to be better prepared?

What do we lose if we choose to only study Scripture on our own, rather than being an active part of a biblical community where we can be taught the Word of God? What do we lose if we only ever study in groups and not on our own?

Will you commit in advance to being a part of our churchwide scripture reading plan in 2025?

PRAYER

Close in prayer, asking God to increase our appetite for His Word. Pray that our group will be better students of God's Word, not just to increase our knowledge but to conform us to His image. Also pray that we will have the boldness to share the Word with other people in our lives.

COMMENTARY

| 2 TIMOTHY 3:16-17

Verses 16-17. The Bible is God-breathed or inspired by God. Paul did not discount the role of human instruments in producing these books (see 2 Pet. 1:21), but God's role was primary. Inspiration is defined as "the act of God by which He superintended/guided the human authors of the 66 books of the Bible so that using their own individual personalities they composed and recorded without error, His revelation to man in the words of the original." (Daniel Akin, *Christian Theology: An Overview*)

Paul identified several ways the Bible is useful or profitable for believers. "Teaching" refers to the Bible as the basis of sound doctrine. Because of the prominence of heresy among his readers, Paul emphasized the importance of sound teaching. "Reproof" may refer to both exposing the errors of false teachers (doctrinal) and also showing someone the error of his or her ways (personal). Either way, the Bible shows us our wrongs and leads us to forgiveness and peace. "Correction" suggests that God's Word helps people restore their doctrine or practice to a right state they had forfeited. "Training in righteousness" means the Scriptures act as a disciplinarian that leads people to a holy lifestyle. If Timothy would nurture his life in the Scriptures, he would be complete and equipped for every good work. He would be both prepared and qualified for every task God assigned him.

The Greek word rendered "competent" (v. 17) has the sense of being capable, proficient, or able to meet all the demands placed upon a person. In the Bible it carries the force of a person who, through diligent study of Scripture, has progressed spiritually to being able not only to discern the will of God but also to abide in it consistently. As a result, the complete Christian is fully engaged, either as layperson or leader, in serving God. Whatever God calls complete Christians to do, they are ready to follow God's commands

because of their dedication to the study of the Word and their obedience to God's teaching.

| HEBREWS 4:12-13

Verse 12. In the larger context of this passage (3:7–4:13), the writer is warning against neglecting God's word by failing to obey Him. He used the example of the exodus generation of Israelites. They refused to believe and obey God and therefore not were not permitted to enter the promised land (3:18; 4:6). We must be faithful to hear and obey God's word. The consequence of disobeying God's word is judgment.

In the Greek text "living" is the first word in verse 12, making it emphatic. The living God speaks His living word. God's word is not confined to a distant past but comes to us now with freshness, power, and clarity. That word is effective or energetic, powerful. His Word causes things to happen. Additionally, the word of God is active, an emphasis virtually identical in meaning with the term living. God's Word is not something we passively hear and then ignore. It actively works in our lives, changes us, and sends us into action.

What did the writer mean by God's word being a sharp two-edged sword that pierces into the depths of people's beings? One view is that he meant the word's thoroughness. The living word permeates every aspect of a person's being. It affects the whole person. A second view is that the sharp sword penetrates and divides the whole person similar to the way a surgeon's scalpel lays bare the organs inside a person. This view emphasizes judgment. God's word judges the ideas and thoughts of the heart. It reaches into the center of a person's being and correctly perceives motives and intentions.

In light of verses 12-13, the latter interpretation seems to be the writer's meaning. He well may have meant that God's word lay bare in the Hebrew believers any faithlessness, disobedience, and indifference or complacency in advancing toward spiritual maturity.

Verse 13. The activity of God's Word is an extension of the activity of God Himself. The word of God exposes our innermost thoughts and intentions. The Greek word translated "exposed" literally means "to grip the neck," "to bend the neck back" to make bare the throat. We get the English nouns trachea and tracheotomy from the Greek verb. The term was used of wrestlers who seized opponents' necks and bent their heads back, exposing their throats. Basically, the word means "to lay bare to view." It conveys the idea of uncovering something. Here the term emphasizes that God's sovereign power brings a

person's whole being into full view in God's eyes. Those who dare to examine their lives in the light of God's Word discover their true moral and spiritual condition.