

# THE CONTRASTING MARKS OF GODLY BELIEVERS

## 2 TIMOTHY 03:10–13

### *Introduction*

This passage is a contrast with the former passage which dealt with the godless marks of the last days. Here we have the contrasting marks of godly believers.

- I. Mark 1: following a godly example (v. 10).
- II. Mark 2: enduring persecution (v. 11-12).
- III. Mark 3: guarding against evil men (v. 13).

### **I. Timothy 03:10 Testimony of Godliness**

A godly person follows a godly example. This is a sharp contrast from the godless marks of false teachers (v. 1-9). Timothy had known (parakoloutheo) and had closely observed and followed the godly example of Paul. Kenneth Wuest points out that the Greek word means to follow a person so closely that one is always by the person's side, conforming his life to the person (*The Pastoral Epistles*, p. 148). It means to join oneself to the person, to become his disciple and to follow his example. Paul had lived a godly life, and Timothy had followed in his footsteps. Paul mentions seven things about his life that stand out as a dynamic example, eight things that a person must focus upon and follow if he wishes to live a godly life.

1. There is *teaching*. What was the source of Paul's teaching? What was it that Paul had taught? The Scriptures, the very Word of Christ and of God. Paul declared this time and again.

**Rom. 1:1-4** *Paul, a servant of Christ Jesus, called to be an apostle and set apart for the gospel of God — the gospel he promised beforehand through his prophets in the Holy Scriptures regarding his Son, who as to his human nature was a descendant of David, and who through the Spirit of holiness was declared with power to be the Son of God by his resurrection from the dead: Jesus Christ our Lord.*

**Rom. 1:16** *I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes: first for the Jew, then for the Gentile.*

**1 Cor. 15:1-4** *Now, brothers, I want to remind you of the gospel I preached to you, which you received and on which you have taken your stand. By this gospel you are saved, if you hold firmly to the word I preached to you. Otherwise, you have believed in vain. For what I received I passed on to you as of first importance: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures.*

---

**1 Th. 2:13** *And we also thank God continually because, when you received the word of God, which you heard from us, you accepted it not as the word of men, but as it actually is, the word of God, which is at work in you who believe.*

**2 Tim.3:16** *All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness.*

**Tit. 1:9** *He must hold firmly to the trustworthy message as it has been taught, so that he can encourage others by sound doctrine and refute those who oppose it.*

**Tit. 2:1** *You must teach what is in accord with sound doctrine.*

The point is this: the godly person must follow the teaching of godly teachers. He must have nothing to do with the teaching of false teachers (v. 1-9).

=> A person cannot live godly unless he knows godliness.

=> A person cannot teach godliness unless he follows after godliness.

A godly person closely observes and follows after those who live godly lives. He is a disciple of godly examples. He follows the godly teaching of godly people.

2. There is *godly behaviour* and conduct. Paul practiced what he preached. He lived what he taught. He professed to be a follower of Christ; therefore, he followed Christ.

=> He did not live in sin; he lived in righteousness.

=> He did not profess one thing and do another.

Timothy was to do the same, and so are all other believers. A godly person is to behave himself — to conduct his life like he should. He is to live what he professes. He is not to pull down what he teaches by what he does. The believer is to teach godliness, *but first* he is to live godly.

**Acts 20:35** *“In everything I did, I showed you that by this kind of hard work we must help the weak, remembering the words the Lord Jesus himself said: ‘It is more blessed to give than to receive.’”*

**1 Cor. 4:16** *Therefore I urge you to imitate me.*

**1 Cor.11:1** *Follow my example, as I follow the example of Christ.*

**Phil. 3:17** *Join with others in following my example, brothers, and take note of those who live according to the pattern we gave you.*

**Phil. 4:9** *Whatever you have learned or received or heard from me or seen in me - put it into practice. And the God of peace will be with you.*

**2 Th. 3:7** *For you yourselves know how you ought to follow our example. We were not idle when we were with you.*

**2 Tim. 1:13** *What you heard from me, keep as the pattern of sound teaching, with faith and love in Christ Jesus.*

3. There is *purpose* or what Donald Guthrie calls a person's "chief aim in life" (*The Pastoral Epistles*, "Tyndale New Testament Commentaries," p. 160). The chief aim of believers is to be one thing and one thing only: Christ and His great mission — the mission of saving people from sin, death, and judgment and of ministering to people. Eternal life — the glorious privilege of never dying and of living forever — is now possible. Christ made it possible. That was His every purpose for coming to earth — to die for man and to set man free from the terrible sufferings and evils of this corruptible world. Just imagine! Every person on the face of the earth can now be delivered from suffering and evil and live forever. But they have to know how. This was the mission of Christ: to tell them how. And it is to be the mission of the believer: to tell people how to conquer evil and to live forever. The believer's very purpose for living — his chief aim in life — is to proclaim the glorious news of salvation: there is deliverance from death and evil; man can now live and live forever.

**Thought 1.** William Barclay has some very practical questions to ask:

*"As individuals, we should sometimes pause and ask ourselves: what is our aim in life? Have we got one at all? As teachers we should sometimes ask ourselves: what am I trying to do with these people whom I teach? Once Agesilaus, the Sparta king, was asked, 'What shall we teach our boys?' His answer was: 'That which will be most useful to them when they are men.' Is it knowledge, or is it life, that we are trying to transmit? As members of the Church, we should sometimes ask ourselves: what are we trying to do in the Church? It is not enough to be satisfied when a Church is humming like a dynamo, and when every night in the week has its own crowded organisation. Sometimes we should be asking: what, if anything, is the unifying purpose which binds all this activity together?"* (*The Letters to Timothy, Titus, and Philemon*, p. 225f).

As Christian believers, the unifying purpose of our lives is set: it is Christ and His great mission of life, life now and life eternal (Jn. 10:10; Jn. 3:16).

**Mt. 20:28** *"Just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many."*

**Mt. 28:19-20** *"Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."*

**Mk. 16:15** *He said to them, "Go into all the world and preach the good news to all creation."*

**Lk. 19:10** *"For the Son of Man came to seek and to save what was lost."*

**Jn. 3:16** *"For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life."*

**Jn. 10:10** “The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full.”

**Jn. 20:21** Again Jesus said, “Peace be with you! As the Father has sent me, I am sending you.”

4. There is *faith* (see notes, 1 Tim. 6:11).
5. There is *patience* or *long-suffering* (makrothumiai), which means bearing and suffering a long time, persevering, being constant, steadfast and enduring. Patience or long-suffering never gives in; it is never broken no matter what attacks it.
  - => Pressure and hard work may fall upon us, but the Spirit of God helps us suffer long under it all.
  - => Disease or accident or old age may afflict us, but the Spirit of God helps us to suffer long under it.
  - => Discouragement and disappointment may attack us, but the Spirit of God helps us to suffer long under it.
  - => Men may do us wrong, abuse, slander and injure us; but the Spirit of God helps us to suffer long under it all.

Two significant things need to be noted about patience or long-suffering. Patience or long-suffering never strikes back. Common sense tells us that a person who is attacked by others could strike back and retaliate. But the Christian believer is given the power of patience — the power to suffer the situation or person for a long, long time.

The point is this: a godly person closely observes and follows after those who are patient. A godly person is a disciple; he follows after those who know how to plough through the trials and problems of life. He learns from the long-suffering of others.

6. There is *love* (see *Love*, 1 Th. 3:12).
7. There is *endurance* (hupomone). Endurance means fortitude, steadfastness, constancy, perseverance. The word is not passive; it is active. It is not the spirit that just sits back and puts up with the trials of life, taking whatever may come. Rather it is the spirit that stands up and faces life’s trials, that actively goes about conquering and overcoming them. When trials confront a man who is truly justified, he is stirred to arise and face the trials head on. He immediately sets out to conquer and overcome them. He knows that God is allowing the trials in order to teach him more and more endurance.

The godly person follows the example of those who persevere, who endure by walking through the trials of life, conquering all for Christ.

- => He learns to endure with people no matter what they do.
- => He learns to endure in trials no matter how severe they are.

**Lk. 21:19** “By standing firm you will gain life.”

**Rom. 12:12** *Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer.*

**Heb. 10:36** *You need to persevere so that when you have done the will of God, you will receive what he has promised.*

**Jas. 1:2-4** *Consider it pure joy, my brothers, whenever you face trials of many kinds, because you know that the testing of your faith develops perseverance. Perseverance must finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything.*

**Jas. 5:7** *Be patient, then, brothers, until the Lord’s coming. See how the farmer waits for the land to yield its valuable crop and how patient he is for the autumn and spring rains.*

## II. **Timothy 03:11–12 Enduring Persecution**

A godly person endures persecution. Note two points.

1. Paul suffered severe persecution and affliction. He mentions three experiences that Timothy knew about.
  - => In Antioch the civil leaders of the city had risen up against Paul and expelled him from their city (Acts 13:50).
  - => In Iconium a large mob with the city officials set out to arrest and to stone Paul. He had to flee for his life (Acts 14:4-6).
  - => In Lystra a rioting mob stoned Paul and dragged his limp body out of the city thinking that he was dead. Apparently God worked a miracle and raised him up (Acts 14:19-20).

Paul was constantly persecuted, attacked time and again. But the Lord delivered him. Paul never failed to witness for Christ; therefore, Christ never failed to deliver Paul. But note: deliverance does not mean *deliverance from persecution, but deliverance through persecution*. God strengthens and carries the believer through persecution, not out of persecution. This is what Paul is declaring.

2. The believer will suffer persecution; he cannot escape it, not if he is a genuine believer. (See 2 Tim. 1:8; 1:8-10.) Believers suffer persecution because they are not like the world; they do not live like the world lives. Therefore, the world persecutes them. Scripture gives four specific reasons why believers will suffer persecution.
  - a. Believers will suffer persecution because they are not of this world. They are *called out* of the world. They are in the world, but they are not of the world. They are separated from the behaviour of the world. Therefore, the world reacts against them by ridicule and mockery, by verbal and physical abuse, and by discrimination.

**Jn. 15:19** “If you belonged to the world, it would love you as its own. As it is, you do not belong to the world, but I have chosen you out of the world. That is why the world hates you.”



- b. They will suffer persecution because believers strip away the world's excuse for sin. They live and demonstrate a life of righteousness and they do not compromise with the world and its sinful behaviour. They live pure and godly lives, having nothing to do with the sinful pleasures of a corruptible world. Such living exposes the sins of people, and this exposure stirs them to react against believers.

**Jn. 15:18, 22** *“If the world hates you, keep in mind that it hated me first...If I had not come and spoken to them, they would not be guilty of sin. Now, however, they have no excuse for their sin.”*

**2 Tim. 3:12** *In fact, everyone who wants to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted.*

- c. They will suffer persecution because the world does not know God nor Christ. The ungodly of the world want no God other than themselves and their own imaginations. They want to do just what they want — to fulfil their own desires, not what God wishes and demands. However, the godly believer dedicates his life to God, to His worship and service. The ungodly wants no part of God; therefore, they oppose those who talk about God and man's duty to honour and worship God.

**Jn. 15:21** *“They will treat you this way because of my name, for they do not know the One who sent me.”*

**Jn. 16:3** *“They will do such things because they have not known the Father or me.”*

- d. They will suffer persecution because the world is deceived in its concept and belief of God. The world conceives God to be the One who fulfils their earthly desires and lusts (Jn. 16:2-3). Man's idea of God is that of a *Supreme Grandfather*. They think that God protects, provides and gives no matter what a person's behaviour is, just so the behaviour is not too far out. They think God will accept them and work all things out in the final analysis. However, the true believer teaches against this. God is love, but He is also just and demands righteousness. The world rebels against this concept of God.

**Jn. 16:2-3** *“They will put you out of the synagogue; in fact, a time is coming when anyone who kills you will think he is offering a service to God. They will do such things because they have not known the Father or me.”*

**Jn. 15:20** *“Remember the words I spoke to you: ‘No servant is greater than his master.’ If they persecuted me, they will persecute you also. If they obeyed my teaching, they will obey yours also.”*

**Jn. 16:1-4** *“All this I have told you so that you will not go astray. They will put you out of the synagogue; in fact, a time is coming when anyone who kills you will think he is offering a service to God. They will do such things because they have not known the Father or me. I have told you this, so that when the time comes you will remember that I warned you. I did not tell you this at first because I was with you.”*

*1 Th. 3:3* So that no one would be unsettled by these trials. You know quite well that we were destined for them.

*Phil. 1:29* For it has been granted to you on behalf of Christ not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for him.

*2 Tim. 3:12* In fact, everyone who wants to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted.

*1 Jn. 3:13* Do not be surprised, my brothers, if the world hates you.

*1 Pet. 4:12-14* Dear friends, do not be surprised at the painful trial you are suffering, as though something strange were happening to you. But rejoice that you participate in the sufferings of Christ, so that you may be overjoyed when his glory is revealed. If you are insulted because of the name of Christ, you are blessed, for the Spirit of glory and of God rests on you.

### III. Timothy 03:13 Guarding against the Ungodly

A godly person guards against evil men and imposters.

- => Evil men refers to those who actively oppose righteousness and morality; those who live immoral and ungodly lives — who curse, lie, steal, cheat, injure and live in carnal pleasures and immorality.
- => Imposters refers to imposters and deceivers; those who live hypocritical lives - who call themselves Christians and join the church for what they can get out of it. They join the church seeking acceptability, a good image, friends, fellowship, popularity, business clientele, self-image, a following and a host of other benefits.

The point is that both evil men and imposters will grow worse and worse. Men will become more and more evil, more and more...

- ungodly      • addicted to drugs      • lawless      • party-minded
- selfish      • pleasure-minded      • recreational-minded      • foul-minded
- immoral      • murderous      • unclean      • violent

Men will also become more and more of an imposter religiously. They will be religious, professing belief in God, but they will deny the power of godliness. (See Tim. 3:5.) Note: they will deceive themselves and deceive others. They will think that they are acceptable to God, and others will even think they are acceptable to God. But both they and their friends are deceived; they are not acceptable to God.

*1 Jn. 3:23* And this is his command: to believe in the name of his Son, Jesus Christ, and to love one another as he commanded us.

The only way to be acceptable to God is by believing in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. Believing means to follow Christ — to live soberly, righteously and godly in this

present world and to love others even as Christ loved them — to love them to such a point that we give all that we are and have to minister to their desperate needs. But note the point: men will become more and more religious, but as imposters — as men who use religion for their own selfish purposes and for a livelihood and profession.

**Mk. 13:22** *For false Christs and false prophets will appear and perform signs and miracles to deceive the elect — if that were possible.*

**Acts 20:30** *Even from your own number men will arise and distort the truth in order to draw away disciples after them.*

**Rom. 16:17-18** *I urge you, brothers, to watch out for those who cause divisions and put obstacles in your way that are contrary to the teaching you have learned. Keep away from them. For such people are not serving our Lord Christ, but their own appetites. By smooth talk and flattery they deceive the minds of naive people.*

**2 Cor. 11:13-15** *For such men are false apostles, deceitful workmen, masquerading as apostles of Christ. And no wonder, for Satan himself masquerades as an angel of light. It is not surprising, then, if his servants masquerade as servants of righteousness. Their end will be what their actions deserve.*

**Eph. 4:14** *Then we will no longer be infants, tossed back and forth by the waves, and blown here and there by every wind of teaching and by the cunning and craftiness of men in their deceitful scheming.*

**1 Tim. 4:1** *The Spirit clearly says that in later times some will abandon the faith and follow deceiving spirits and things taught by demons.*

**2 Tim. 3:13** *While evil men and impostors will go from bad to worse, deceiving and being deceived.*

**1 Jn. 2:26** *I am writing these things to you about those who are trying to lead you astray.*

**2 Jn. 7** *Many deceivers, who do not acknowledge Jesus Christ as coming in the flesh, have gone out into the world. Any such person is the deceiver and the antichrist. ■*



# THE GODLY MARK OF LIVING IN THE SCRIPTURE

## 2 TIMOTHY 03:14–17

### *Introduction*

Christians have always stressed the importance of the Bible or of the Scripture. Why? What is the importance and value of Scripture? This passage explains, declaring in no uncertain terms: the godly mark of a believer is that he lives in the Scripture.

- I. A believer must live in the Scripture (v. 14).
- II. Scripture makes a person wise for salvation (v. 15).
- III. Scripture is God-breathed, inspired by God (v. 16).
- IV. Scripture is useful to man (v. 16).
- V. Scripture equips a man for every good work (v. 17).

### **I. 2 Timothy 03:14 *Live in the Scripture***

Believers are to live in the Scriptures. Timothy had been taught the Scriptures all of his life. When he was only a child, his mother Eunice and his grandmother Lois had rooted him in the Scriptures (2 Tim. 1:5; 3:15). They were both strong believers in the Lord. Paul had also grounded Timothy in the Scriptures. But note a most critical point:

- => it is not enough to have learned the Scripture.
- => it is not enough to be assured that the teachings of Scripture are true.
- => it is not enough to know that your teachers teach the truth.

Timothy knew all this. He had learned the Scriptures and he had found the Scriptures to be true. The claims and promises of Scripture had worked in his own life. Timothy also knew his teachers; their lives bore testimony to the truth of Scripture. But this was not enough.

Note the word “continue” (mene). It means to abide, dwell, remain and stay in the Scripture. Simply stated, Timothy had to *live* in the Scripture — live, move and have his being in the Scripture. And more, he had to *live out* the Scripture — continue to walk and live in the truths of the Scripture. He had to do what Scripture said.

**Thought 1.** Note four significant points in this verse.

- 1) A person is to learn the Scripture.
  - 2) A person is to be assured of the Scriptures, apply them to his life, and experience the truth and assurance of them.
  - 3) A person is to know his teachers — make sure that they teach the truth of the Scripture.
  - 4) A person is to continue in the Scripture: abide and dwell, remain and stay in the Scripture. He is to live and move and have his being in Scripture.
-

## II. 2 Timothy 03:15 *Scripture and Salvation*

Scripture makes a person wise for salvation. If man needs anything, he needs wisdom, wisdom about how to be saved. Death and every other evil imaginable rushes about and floods the world of man. The strongest among men are swept about and drowned by...

- drugs
- pride
- envy
- crime
- conceit
- jealousy
- lawlessness
- indulgence
- murder
- disease
- license
- war
- accident
- power
- death
- immorality
- prejudice
- gossip
- broken homes
- selfishness
- murmuring
- loss
- extravagance
- grumbling
- broken health
- discrimination
- emptiness
- bad habits
- greed
- loneliness
- enslavements
- gluttony
- purposelessness
- lusts
- drunkenness

There is no end to the evil that is drowning man and his world. What man and his world need is wisdom, the wisdom to save himself and his world. Is such a wisdom available? This is the glorious message of this verse, “Yes!” The Holy Scriptures are able to make man wise for salvation. The Holy Scriptures can save man and his world. How? “Through faith in Christ Jesus.” It is the Holy Scriptures that tell us about God’s great plan of salvation for man, about how God saves man through faith in His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ. It is the Holy Scriptures alone and no other book...

- that tells us that God loves the world — that He loves the world so much that He sent His one and only Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, into the world to reveal and tell us the truth.
- that tells us that Jesus Christ has taken care of the problem of righteousness and perfection — that He lived a perfect life and secured the ideal and perfect righteousness for man — that when a man believes in Jesus Christ, God takes that man’s faith and counts it as righteousness.
- that tells us that Jesus Christ has taken care of the problem of sin and death — that He took all the sins of men upon Himself and bore the penalty and punishment of those sins — that He died for man — that when a person believes in Jesus Christ, God takes that person’s faith and counts it as the death of Christ — that God counts the person as having died in Christ and thereby he never has to die.
- that tells us that Jesus Christ has taken care of the problem of living forever — that He has been raised from the dead to live eternally in the presence of God the Father — that when a person believes in Jesus Christ, God takes that person’s faith and counts it as the resurrection of Jesus Christ — that the person is counted as having been raised in Christ and is thereby given eternal life.

The point is this: the Holy Scripture tells us how we can be saved through God's Son, the Lord Jesus Christ. No other book reveals this to man. The only wisdom that can ever save this world is the wisdom of God Himself, and that wisdom is found in His Holy Scriptures, the Holy Bible.

**John 15:3** *"You are already clean because of the word I have spoken to you."*

**John 17:17** *"Sanctify them [set them apart to God] by the truth; your word is truth."*

**John 20:31** *But these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.*

**Rom 1:16** *I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes: first for the Jew, then for the Gentile.*

**Rom 15:4** *For everything that was written in the past was written to teach us, so that through endurance and the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope.*

**1 Cor 10:11** *These things happened to them as examples and were written down as warnings for us, on whom the fulfilment of the ages has come.*

**2 Pet 1:19** *And we have the word of the prophets made more certain, and you will do well to pay attention to it, as to a light shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts.*

**1 John 5:13** *I write these things to you who believe in the name of the Son of God so that you may know that you have eternal life.*

**Psa 119:9** *How can a young man keep his way pure? By living according to your word.*

**Psa 119:105** *Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light for my path.*

**Psa 119:130** *The unfolding of your words gives light; it gives understanding to the simple.*

### III. **2 Timothy 03:16 God–Breathed Scripture**

Scripture is God-breathed, inspired by God. This is an extremely important verse in understanding the nature of Scripture, that is, in understanding just what the Scripture is, its nature and authority. Note several facts.

1. Paul was, of course, referring to the Old Testament Scriptures; the New Testament Scriptures had not yet been completed. However, this passage is certainly applicable to the New Testament.

William Barclay says: "If what Paul claims for Scripture is true of the Old Testament, how much truer it is of the still more precious words of the New Testament" (*The Letters to Timothy, Titus, and Philemon*, p. 229).

A.T. Robertson, the great Greek scholar, says: "There is no doubt that the apostles claimed to speak by the help of the Holy Spirit (1 Th. 5:27; Col. 4:16) just as the

prophets of old did (1 Pet. 1:20f.)... Peter thus puts Paul's epistles on the same plane with the O.T." (*Word Pictures in the New Testament*, Vol. 6, p. 179).

The point is this: all Scripture — both the Old and New Testament — is inspired by God.

2. Scripture is God-breathed, inspired by God; (theopneustos). What does this mean? What does it mean to say that *God-breathed* the Holy Scriptures? No one can say for sure, but this much can be said.  
=> The idea is that *God breathed out* the Scripture or *God produced* the Scripture somewhat like He did creation.

***Psa 33:6*** *By the word of the Lord were the heavens made, their starry host by the breath of his mouth.*

Note: it is the Scripture that is inspired, not the man. The Bible does not claim to be written by inspired men. It does claim that the writing is supernaturally given or breathed by God. The Scripture is *breathed out by God, not breathed into by God*. The meaning is this: the writing is supernaturally given or breathed by God. The Bible claims to be the Word given by the creative breath of God.

The great Greek scholar A. T. Robertson again says: "God-breathed...[this] is in contrast to the commandments of men" (*Word Pictures in the New Testament*, Vol. 4, p. 179).

The great Bible expositor Mathew Henry says: "It [Scripture] is a divine revelation, which we may depend upon as infallibly true. The same Spirit that breathed reason into us breathes revelation among us: For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man, but holy men spoke as they were moved or carried forth by the Holy Ghost, 2 Pet. 1:21. "The prophets and apostles did not speak from themselves, but what they received of the Lord that they delivered unto us" (*Mathew Henry's Commentary*, Vol. 5, p. 846f).

The excellent preacher Oliver Greene says: "God Almighty is sovereign; and if we are saved through the power of the Gospel; if the Gospel makes us wise unto salvation; if it is not God's will that any man perish but that all come to repentance, we can rest assured that He has preserved and protected His holy Scriptures down through the centuries!... Any thing we need to know about our relationship to God and His relationship to us is found in the Bible. We need no added books, and we cannot afford to take any away. If we add to or take from His Word, God will take away our part out of the book of life. All Scripture is given by inspiration of God. 'Given by inspiration of God,' according to the Greek dictionary, is one Greek word, meaning 'God-breathed'" (*The Epistles of Paul the Apostle to Timothy and Titus*, p. 355).

3. The accuracy and dependability of Scripture is clearly seen when one studies what Scripture has to say about itself. (See *Word of God*, 1 Th. 2:13; *The Bible, Scripture*, 2 Pet. 1:19-21.)

- a. The Holy Spirit is the author of the Scriptures (2 Pet. 1:19-21, esp. 21). The *word of the prophets* is more accurately translated *prophetic word*. The origin of Scripture is not found in the will of man, that is, in his attempt to find truth and to interpret truth. But it is found in the Word of the Holy Spirit who reveals truth to man (cp. Jn. 16:12-15; 1 Cor. 2:9-10).
- b. The writers of the Old Testament claim that the Bible is the Word of God (2 Sam. 23:1-3; Isa. 8:1, 11; Jer. 1:9; 5:14; 7:27; 13:12; Ezk. 3:4-11; Mic. 3:8; Jer. 23:29; Hab. 2:2; Zech. 4:8). They refer to Scripture as “the Word,” “the Statutes,” “the Law,” and “the Testimonies” (cp. Psa. 19:1f; 119:1f). “This is what the Lord says” or an equivalent phrase is used over two thousand times in the Old Testament alone.

The writers of the New Testament confirm the claims of the Old Testament writers (Heb. 1:1; cp. Mt. 1:22; 2:15; Acts 1:16; 28:25; Eph. 4:8; Tim. 1:18-20). They show the high authority of the Scriptures when they use phrases such as, “It is written” and “Scripture says.” They expected the readers and hearers to be bound by Scripture.

- c. The writers of the New Testament claim that the Bible is the Word of God (Acts 15:28; 1 Cor. 2:13; 3:1; 11:23; 14:37; 15:1-4; Gal. 1:11-12; 1 Th. 2:13; 1 Pet. 3:2). Paul affirmed on behalf of all the apostles that their words were divinely taught (1 Cor. 2:13, note the word *we*). Peter asserts the same level of authority for the writings of the apostles as for the Old Testament Scriptures (2 Pet. 3:2). The view of inspiration was clear in the early church: the first church council stated that the conclusions of the council were given by the Holy Spirit through the leaders (Acts 15:28f).
- d. Jesus Christ claims that the Bible is the Word of God. He contrasts the Scriptures and the commandments of God with the traditions and instructions of men (Mk. 7:6-13). He equates the word of Moses with Scripture and His own word with the word of Moses and both as the Word of God (Jn. 5:38, 45-47). He says, “the Scripture cannot be broken” (Jn. 10:35). He validated the most minute portions of Scripture (Mt. 5:18; Lk. 16:17). He continually argued the validity of Scripture (Mt. 4:4, 10; 22:29, 32, 43; Mk. 12:24; Lk. 4:4, 8). He saw Himself as the focus and fulfilment of Scripture (Lk. 24:25-27). He asserted that what was written must be fulfilled (Lk. 22:36-37). He predicted and approved the New Testament and assured His apostles that they would be kept from error (Jn. 16:13).
- e. The Bible is absolutely trustworthy (Mt. 24:35). “The Scripture cannot be broken” (Jn. 10:34-35).

**1 Th 2:13** *And we also thank God continually because, when you received the word of God, which you heard from us, you accepted it not as the word of men, but as it actually is, the word of God, which is at work in you who believe.*

**2 Tim 3:16** *All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness.*



*2 Pet 1:21 For prophecy never had its origin in the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit.*

## 1 THESSALONIANS 02:13 WORD OF GOD

*And we also thank God continually because, when you received the work of God, which you heard from us, you accepted it not as the work of men, but as it actually is, the word of God, which is at work in you who believe. 1 Thessalonians 02:13*

The Bible claims to be the Word of God (see 2 Tim. 3:16; 2 Pt. 1:19-21).

=> The unity of Scripture indicates an origin that could come only from one mind, God's mind (see note 2 Pt. 1:19-21).

=> Scripture has changed millions of lives for God.

=> Fulfilled prophecy and archaeology substantiate a divine origin. (See Lk. 3:23-38).

In fact, the unique feature of the Bible is that it has always been exhaustively substantiated to be the Word of God by any approach of investigation that is serious and honest. But note: both seriousness and honesty are necessary for the truth to be received. No less evidence could be expected from the mind and providence of God. For God can speak only the truth, and any pure investigation of truth can only substantiate His Word. But in saying this, it is necessary to recall that faith is an element in substantiating anything. Therefore, in accepting the Bible as the Word of God, faith is involved; it is one of the elements required.

However, the supreme authority for accepting the Bible as Word of God is Jesus Christ. If we believe in the divine mission of Christ and His apostles then we must believe that the Bible is the Word of God (Jn. 5:39).

That Jesus Christ was a historical person is fact.

=> That Jesus Christ claims to be the Son of God is fact.

=> That Jesus Christ is the Son of God is faith.

That the Bible is an historical book is fact.

=> That the Bible claims to be the Word of God is fact.

=> That the Bible is the Word of God is faith.

*1 Cor 2:12-13 We have not received the spirit of the world but the Spirit who is from God, that we may understand what God has freely given us. This is what we speak, not in words taught us by human wisdom but in words taught by the Spirit, expressing spiritual truths in spiritual words.*

**1 Th 2:13** *And we also thank God continually because, when you received the word of God, which you heard from us, you accepted it not as the word of men, but as it actually is, the word of God, which is at work in you who believe.*

**2 Tim 2:15** *Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a workman who does not need to be ashamed and who correctly handles the word of truth.*

**2 Tim 3:16** *All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness.*

**Heb 1:1** *In the past God spoke to our forefathers through the prophets at many times and in various ways.*

**1 Pet 1:11** *Trying to find out the time and circumstances to which the Spirit of Christ in them was pointing when he predicted the sufferings of Christ and the glories that would follow.*

**2 Pet 1:20-21** *Above all, you must understand that no prophecy of Scripture came about by the prophet's own interpretation. For prophecy never had its origin in the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit.*

**2 Pet 3:2** *I want you to recall the words spoken in the past by the holy prophets and the command given by our Lord and Saviour through your apostles.*

**Rev 1:1** *The revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave him to show his servants what must soon take place. He made it known by sending his angel to his servant John.*

**Rev 14:13** *Then I heard a voice from heaven say, "Write: Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from now on." "Yes," says the Spirit, "they will rest from their labour, for their deeds will follow them." □*

## 2 PETER 01:19–21 THE BIBLE, SCRIPTURE

“Word of prophecy” is better translated prophetic word, referring to the whole prophetic message centred in Jesus Christ. The prophetic word did not begin or originate in the mind of man, but in the mind of God. However, God used men as instruments and authors to communicate His message to the world.

Over a period of some 1500 years He chose kings, soldiers, peasants, farmers, scholars, priests, statesmen — approximately thirty-five authors from different nations, professions, and social strata. The original manuscripts were written in three different languages — Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek.

1. The word Bible comes from the Greek word biblos, meaning a book. The Bible is also called “the Scriptures” (1 Cor. 15:3-4) and “the Word of God” (Heb. 4:12). The Bible is divided into two parts:

- => The first part, the Old Testament, was written before Christ.
  - => The second part, the New Testament, was written after Christ came. The word testament means a covenant or an agreement. Therefore, the Bible is God's covenant, an agreement He has made with man. The Old Testament is His covenant with man before Christ came, and the New Testament is His covenant with man after Christ came.
2. The Old Testament has thirty-nine books which were designated as "the Law, the Prophets, and the Holy Writings or Psalms" (Lk. 24:25-27). The books are sometimes divided as follows:
- => Five Law Books: Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy. These five are known as the Pentateuch.
  - => Twelve History Books: Joshua, Judges, Ruth, I and II Samuel, I and II Kings, I and II Chronicles, Ezra, Nehemiah, and Esther.
  - => Five Poetic Books: Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and the Song of Solomon.
  - => Twelve Short or Minor Prophetic Books: Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi.
  - => Five Long or Major Prophetic Books: Isaiah, Jeremiah, Lamentations, Ezekiel, and Daniel.
3. The New Testament has twenty-seven books which are sometimes divided as follows:
- => Four Gospels which cover the life of Christ: Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John.
  - => One History Book which deals with the early believers and early church: Acts.
  - => Fourteen Pauline Letters or Epistles written to specific churches or individual Christians: Romans, I and II Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, I and II Thessalonians, I and II Timothy, Titus, Philemon, and perhaps Hebrews.
  - => Seven General Letters or Epistles written by other men to specific groups, each bearing the author's name: James, I and II Peter, I, II, and III John, Jude.
  - => One Prophetic Book: Revelation.
4. The Bible has one central theme: Jesus Christ. He is the key to understanding what God reveals. He is the focal point of human history. In Him God reveals His purpose and program for the ages (Heb. 1:1-2).
5. The unity of the Bible is a miracle of God. Think of the facts: thirty-five different authors from unbelievably diverse backgrounds wrote over a 1500 year period.

Think of the number and diversity of subjects, yet look at the harmony of purpose and theme. There is only one explanation. God has spoken and has preserved an authoritative record of His message: “Men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit” (2 Pet. 1:21).

6. The Bible claims to be the record of Jesus Christ (Jn. 5:39), and it claims to be the written Word of God (2 Pet. 1:21). As such it is inseparably linked with the living Word of God, Jesus Christ (Heb. 4:12; 1 Pet. 1:23). Jesus Christ is the living Word of God and the Bible is the written Word of God. The written Word testifies to the living Word even as the living Word [Christ Himself] testified to the written Word. □

#### **IV. 2 Timothy 03:16 Scripture is for Man**

Scripture is profitable to man. The word useful (*ophelimos*) means profitable, beneficial and helpful. Simply stated, the Bible is for man; God gave it to help man. There are four very specific helps found in the Bible.

1. The Bible is useful for teaching. God wants man to know beyond doubt who God is; who man is; and the beginning, meaning and end of all things. The Scripture reveals the truth — the nature, meaning and significance of truth. The Bible gives man the principles and rules for life. It gives him the teachings and doctrines for the foundations of life.

**John 5:39** *“You diligently study the Scriptures because you think that by them you possess eternal life. These are the Scriptures that testify about me.”*

**John 7:16-17** *Jesus answered, “My teaching is not my own. It comes from him who sent me. If anyone chooses to do God’s will, he will find out whether my teaching comes from God or whether I speak on my own.”*

**John 8:31-32** *To the Jews who had believed him, Jesus said, “If you hold to my teaching, you are really my disciples. Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.”*

**Rom 15:4** *For everything that was written in the past was written to teach us, so that through endurance and the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope.*

2. The Bible is useful for rebuking. God wants man to sense conviction and to be rebuked when he is disobedient to God’s will. The Scripture reveals God’s will and the consequences of disobedience to His will.

**John 16:7-8, 13** *“But I tell you the truth: It is for your good that I am going away. Unless I go away, the Counsellor will not come to you; but if I go, I will send him*

*to you. When he comes, he will convict the world of guilt in regard to sin and righteousness and judgment: But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all truth. He will not speak on his own; he will speak only what he hears, and he will tell you what is yet to come.”*

**Heb 4:12** *For the word of God is living and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart.*

**Jer 5:14** *Therefore this is what the Lord God Almighty says: “Because the people have spoken these words, I will make my words in your mouth a fire and these people the wood it consumes.*

**Jer 23:29** *“Is not my word like fire,” declares the Lord, “and like a hammer that breaks a rock in pieces?”*

3. It is useful for correcting. God wants man to be set aright when he is wrong. The Bible teaches obedience by teaching a person to discipline himself, even to the point of suffering (Heb. 5:8).

**John 15:3** *“You are already clean because of the word I have spoken to you.”*

**John 17:17** *“Sanctify them by the truth; your word is truth.”*

**Eph 5:26** *To make her holy, cleansing her by the washing with water through the word.*

**1 Pet 1:22** *Now that you have purified yourselves by obeying the truth so that you have sincere love for your brothers, love one another deeply, from the heart.*

**Psa 119:9** *How can a young man keep his way pure? By living according to your word.*

4. It is useful for training in righteousness. God wants man to know the right things to do, to think and to say. The Bible reveals how to live “self-control, upright and godly lives in this present age, while we wait for the blessed hope — the glorious appearing of our great God and Saviour, Jesus Christ” (Tit. 2:12-13).

**2 Tim 2:14-15** *Keep reminding them of these things. Warn them before God against quarrelling about words; it is of no value, and only ruins those who listen. Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a workman who does not need to be ashamed and who correctly handles the word of truth.*

**1 Pet 2:2-3** *Like newborn babies, crave pure spiritual milk, so that by it you may grow up in your salvation, now that you have tasted that the Lord is good.*

**Deu 1:18** *And at that time I told you everything you were to do.*

**Psa 119:11** *I have hidden your word in my heart that I might not sin against you.*



## V. 2. *Timothy 03:17 Scripture Completes Man*

Scripture equips — thoroughly equips — a man for every good work. By “thoroughly” (*artios*) is meant complete, matured, filled. No person is complete or mature apart from Scripture. Man was made for God and he is to live by the Word of God. If he tries to live without God and His Word, man fails in life. He lives an incomplete, immature and misfitted life. This is particularly true of the *man of God*, the person who claims to be a minister or teacher of God’s Word.

**Thought 1.** Scripture alone, the very Word of God itself, can make a person thoroughly complete and equip him for every good work. William Barclay’s comments on this point pierce the heart and need to be *heeded* by everyone of us:

*“The study of the Scriptures trains a man in righteousness until he is equipped for every good work. Here is the essential conclusion. The study of the Scriptures must never be selfish; it must never be simply for the good of a man’s own soul. Any change, any conversion which makes a man think of nothing but of the fact that he has been saved is no true change and no true conversion. He must study the Scriptures to make himself useful to God and useful to his fellow men. He must study, not simply and solely to save his own soul, but that he may make himself such that God will use him to help to save the souls and comfort the lives of others. No man is saved unless he is on fire to save his fellow men”* (The Letters to Timothy, Titus, and Philemon, p. 232).

What a convicting statement: “He must study... that God will use him to help to save the souls and comfort the lives of others. No man is saved unless he is on fire to save his fellow men.” What an indictment that every *man of God* must heed. We must study more and more — we must allow the Scripture to stir us more and more so that we will reach out to save souls and to minister more and more.

**Mat 28:19-20** *“Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.”*

**John 5:39** *“You diligently study the Scriptures because you think that by them you possess eternal life. These are the Scriptures that testify about me.”*

**Acts 17:11-12** *Now the Bereans were of more noble character than the Thessalonians, for they received the message with great eagerness and examined the Scriptures every day to see if what Paul said was true. Many of the Jews believed, as did also a number of prominent Greek women and many Greek men.*

**Rom 15:1-4** *We who are strong ought to bear with the failings of the weak and not to please ourselves. Each of us should please his neighbour for his good, to build him up. For even Christ did not please himself but, as it is written: “The insults of those who insult you have fallen on me.” For everything that was written in the past was written to teach us, so that through endurance and the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope.*

**Deu 17:19** *It [God’s word] is to be with him, and he is to read it all the days of his life so that he may learn to revere the Lord his God and follow carefully all the words of this law and these decrees. ■*