

## **2 Timothy 3:14-4:4 – The Bible is Enough**

Intro: bored with the Bible. Poor workman blames his tools. Start a new job or activity, etc., with great zeal, but we lose our devotion, our discipline, our diligence, start justifying our downturn because our determination is overcome by our situation. We need to remain convinced that the thing we wanted to have and/or to do is worth it.

**We need to recognize the authority, finality, and sufficiency of Scripture.** Paul told Timothy about these things, and said that difficult days were ahead (3:1-9). Paul wouldn't be there personally to lead and guide him (4:6-9). So what would Timothy have to guide him? He would have the teaching Paul gave him, and the life which underscored that teaching (3:10-13). He would have the grounding in Scripture that his believing grandmother and mother had given him from infancy (3:14-15, cf. 1:5). Paul insists that this would be sufficient to make him wise. He needed to lead the church and find others who would follow his lead and teach others (2 Timothy 1:13, 2:2, 15, 1 Timothy 4:13-16).

Then, in 2 Timothy 3:16-17, Paul speaks of *all* Scripture. Now some might say that in Paul was referring only to the OT, but that isn't true, because most of the scriptures were already complete. Peter brings the OT and NT together by saying that words of the Apostles were also authoritative (2 Peter 3:2), specifically referring to Paul's writings as scripture (2 Peter 3:15-16). Paul uses the term he used earlier in 1 Timothy 5:18, where he quotes Luke 10:7 (Deuteronomy 25:4), so the gospels are included. Timothy would have had access to these writings (2 Timothy 4:13). Paul is saying that the Word of God, including the Old Testament retrospectively and the New Testament prospectively, including his own writing (1 Thessalonians 2:13) represents the very words of God, and thus tells us everything we need to understand in order to know and serve God (cf. 2 Peter 1:3-4).

He tells Timothy that since he has the Word, the very thing needed to fulfill his ministry, he must endeavor to always "preach the word", which, by looking at the context, clearly means the inscripturated word. Paul warns Timothy to contend for the faith (cf. Jude 3) because others will become bored with the Bible and seek to hear new things. Many back then and today look for words from outside the Word (cf. Colossians 2:18 / Isaiah 8:20 / 1 John 4:5-6). That is why we are to judge their message by the standard of the Word that has already been given (cf. Acts 17:11). No new words are being given, we have all we need; otherwise the Bible isn't what it says it is, and it claims to be sufficient for every good work.

When people don't get rooted and grounded in Scripture, and when they do not have their foundation for faith and practice established, they will use the Bible like a magic book, or an encyclopedia. They will become hard of hearing and ignorant of the truth, all the while thinking that they believe the Bible, but they will incorporate compromise into their understanding by seeing the Scriptures through the lens of their life, instead of seeing their life through the lens of Scripture. They twist the Scriptures to their own destruction (2 Peter 3:16-18). It is time to get rooted, grounded, established, it is time to grow up; enough is enough.

There are many who might agree with all that has been said here, but who nevertheless do not understand the need and the urgency for true Biblical understanding and true preaching today. It

is easy to understand, however, in a church world that is bored with the Bible, downplays doctrine, and puts down preaching, that we can get very discouraged very quickly.

It was the same in Timothy's day, and that is why Paul is writing him. Remember that Paul was telling Timothy what he should focus on and why. If you read through both 1 and 2 Timothy, you will see Paul's concern is that Timothy sticks with the work at Ephesus and sticks to the Word of the Scriptures (1 Timothy 1:3-4). We think we aren't Timothy, but he could get just as discouraged as we get.

If you see the outline of what Paul is saying, it becomes apparent that Timothy was having a hard time and that he seemed to want to give it up (2 Timothy 1:6-11), but Paul tells him that this is what ministry often looks like, as it did for him (2 Timothy 1:12-15, 3:10-13). Paul was faithful and fruitful, and sometimes God had men who comforted him (2 Timothy 1:16-18), but at times he was deserted when it came to persecution and prison (2 Timothy 4:16). Paul tells Timothy to keep working with the tools he has been given, that they are enough, we have the ultimate tool, and it can make us the ultimate tool, but it must be used properly (2 Timothy 2:15).

2 Timothy 2:2 – Paul exhorts Timothy to guard what has been entrusted to him, to pass it on down the line, Paul to Timothy to faithful men to others who teach. Paul knows that there will be seasons where people in the professing church will be poisoned (2 Timothy 3:1-9) and false teachers will be promoted (2 Timothy 4:3-4). That is why Paul tells Timothy, and us, the ones who the truth has been passed down to, that the priority is always on the preaching of the Word (2 Timothy 4:1-2), whether people seem to be listening or not. The need for true preaching is as important today as ever, and the world, the flesh, and the devil are against it as much as ever.

When we are tempted to give in, and try the new fads and frauds of the so called church today, when we aren't seeing as much supposed fruit as the other guy who is doing other things, we need to stay with the Scriptures. When we are tempted to give up, we need to remember what Paul told Timothy. The Bible is enough, so preach it, and believe it. We have the ultimate tool but if we don't use it rightly we can become the ultimate fool.