

INTRODUCTION

1. This morning we are beginning a new series that I have entitled, "Foundations."
2. If anything that I have been learning these past 3 years is that we are to continue to build on the proper foundation.
3. To do that we must frequently examine what we're building on.
4. So this morning I would like to begin our study in 2 Timothy 3:15-17.
5. Paul says to Timothy, "All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness; 17 so that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work."
6. There is no other passage in the Word of God that speaks so concisely of the nature and work of God's Word in salvation and sanctification than this one.

Foundations: God's Word
2 Timothy 3:15-16
Dr. Steve Hereford, Pastor-Teacher
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7. It is here where we see the transforming power of Scripture delineated.
8. As we look at this passage, I want to consider with it verse 15.
9. Because taken together we see it's work in 2 ways.
10. First, we see that *Scripture provides instruction for salvation* (v.15).

I. Scripture Provides Instruction for Salvation (v.15)

A. It is the Source of Saving Truth

1. The psalmist noted this when he said in Psalm 19:7, “The law of the LORD is perfect, converting the soul.”
 - a) The *law*, here referring to the Scriptures, not just the Law of Moses, is able to totally transform the inner person

Here we see that the “Holy Scriptures” “converts the soul,” that is, that it turns it from the ways of sin to holiness.”

Albert Barnes notes, “The glory of the works of God - the heavens, the firmament, the sun, as described in the previous verses - is, that they convey the knowledge of God around the world, and that the world is filled with light and life under the genial warmth of the sun; the glory of the law, or the revealed

truth of God, is, that it bears directly on the soul of man, turning him from the error of his ways. and leading him to pursue a life of holiness. It is not said of the "law" of God that it does this by its own power, nor can there be any design here to exclude the doctrine of the divine agency on the soul; but the statement is, that when the "law" of God is applied to the heart, or when the truth of God is made to bear on that heart, the legitimate effect is seen in turning the sinner from the error of his ways. This effect of truth is seen everywhere, where it is brought into contact with the heart of man” (Albert Barnes’ Notes on the Bible).

- b) James 1:21 says “Therefore lay aside all filthiness and overflow of wickedness, and receive with meekness the implanted word, which is able to save your souls.”

Here in this case we see the Word is

already “implanted.” James wanted his brethren to “receive” it “with meekness” because it is able to “save” or “deliver” your souls.”

2. The Scriptures are what led Timothy to faith in Jesus Christ (2 Tim.3:15)
 - a) Literally from infancy (“childhood” - Gr.brephos, “an infant”), he had been taught and had known the Holy Scriptures

The “Holy Scriptures” is Gr. Hieros grammata, “the Sacred Writings.”

“Among Greek-speaking Jews, of which there were many in the time of the early church, the Jewish Scriptures (our Old Testament) were often referred to as hieros grammata (the sacred writings)” (John MacArthur, 2 Timothy, p.138).

- (1) It was on these sacred writings that the faith of Timothy’s grandmother

Lois and his mother Eunice was built

- (2) They had “genuine faith” and passed that to Timothy through the Old Testament Scriptures (1:5)

“Jewish parents normally began instructing children in the Scriptures from their fifth year” (The New American Commentary: 1, 2, Timothy, Titus) or “as soon as the children could speak distinctly.” There was “great stress...laid on the Torah, or the Law of Moses” (Herbert Lockyer, *All the Children of the Bible*, p.32).

- b) The Old Testament Scriptures gives the wisdom for salvation – they “are able to make you wise for salvation.”

“From Genesis through Malachi, that wisdom reveals the holiness, majesty, and lovingkindness of God and His

gracious offer of forgiveness and redemption from sin for those who trust in Him and not themselves and seek His grace and mercy” (John MacArthur, 2 Timothy, pp.138-139).

- (1) Jesus said in John 5:46 - “For if you believed Moses, you would believe Me; for he wrote about Me.”
 - (2) He also said in Luke 24:44 - “Then He said to them, “These are the words which I spoke to you while I was still with you, that all things must be fulfilled which were written in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms concerning Me.”
- c) The Old Testament Scriptures spoke of Jesus, who was the coming Messiah
- (1) Gen.3:15 - “And I will put enmity Between you and the woman, And

between your seed and her Seed;
He shall bruise your head, And you
shall bruise His heel.”

- (2) Deut.18:18 - “I will raise up for them a Prophet like you from among their brethren, and will put My words in His mouth, and He shall speak to them all that I command Him.”
- (3) Isa.7:14 - “Therefore the Lord Himself will give you a sign: Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a Son, and shall call His name Immanuel.”
- (4) Isa.9:6-7 - “For unto us a Child is born, Unto us a Son is given; And the government will be upon His shoulder. And His name will be called Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Of the increase of His government and peace There

will be no end, Upon the throne of David and over His kingdom, To order it and establish it with judgment and justice From that time forward, even forever. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this.”

“Every sacrifice made under the Old Covenant depicted the ultimate, perfect, and complete sacrifice of the coming Savior, Jesus Christ” (John MacArthur, 2 Timothy, p.139).

Hebrews 10:11-14 - “And every priest stands ministering daily and offering repeatedly the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins. But this Man, after He had offered one sacrifice for sins forever, sat down at the right hand of God, from that time waiting till His enemies are made His footstool. For by one offering He has perfected forever those who are being sanctified.”

Even the moral law was given as a
“tutor to bring us to Christ, that we
might be justified by faith” (Gal.3:24).

3. The Gospel of John reveals that those living under the Old Covenant looked for the Messiah and the information they had was from the Old Testament Scriptures
 - a) The Jews sent “priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask [John the Baptist] ‘Who are you?’ questioning whether he was “Elijah” or “the Prophet” (John 1:19-21)
 - b) Andrew went to his brother Peter and told him, ““We have found the Messiah’ (which is translated the Christ). And he brought him to Jesus” (John 1:41-42).
 - c) The next day Philip was called by Jesus to follow Him. He went to Nathaniel and said, “We have found Him of whom Moses in the Law, and also the prophets, wrote – Jesus of Nazareth, the

Son of Joseph” (John 1:43-45).

4. In Acts 8, Philip met a eunuch from Ethiopia sitting in his chariot reading Isaiah the prophet. The place where he was reading was Isaiah 53:7-8. Verse 35 says that Philip “opened his mouth, and beginning at this Scripture, preached Jesus to Him.”

The purpose of the Old Testament was not just to give us the history of the Jewish people but it was given to teach us about salvation that is “through faith which is in Christ Jesus” (2 Tim.3:15).

There is a very important principle contained in 2 Timothy 3:15 as we see it in relation to Timothy and his grandmother and mother.

B. It is to Be Taught From Infancy

1. Timothy was acquainted as a child with the Scriptures
2. We need to teach our children in the same

manner

- a) Israel was told in Deut.6:4-9 - ““Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one! You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your strength.

“And these words which I command you today shall be in your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, when you walk by the way, when you lie down, and when you rise up. You shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes. You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates.”

- b) The Proverbs are filled with instruction on teaching your children the Scriptures in order to fear God

(1) Proverbs 1:4 says that their purpose

is to “give prudence to the simple,
to the young man knowledge and
discretion.”

- (2) Verse 7 says they are given to teach you “the fear of the LORD.”
- (3) Therefore, verses 8 and 9 say, “My son, hear the instruction of your father, And do not forsake the law of your mother; For they will be a graceful ornament on your head, And chains about your neck.”
- (4) Chapter 2 says if you want to understand “the fear of the LORD,” you will have to “receive my words...treasure my commands...incline your ear...apply your heart...cry out...lift up your voice...seek her as silver...search for her as for hidden treasure...then you will understand the fear of the LORD and find the knowledge of God” (vv.1-5).

- c) Luke 2:22 reveals Joseph's and Mary's obedience to the Law of Moses by having him circumcised and presented "to the Lord."
- (1) Verses 39-40 tell us "So when they had performed all things according to the law of the Lord, they returned to Galilee, to their own city, Nazareth. And the Child grew and became strong in spirit, filled with wisdom; and the grace of God was upon Him."
- (2) After they realized he wasn't with him after they left Jerusalem, they found "Him in the temple, sitting in the midst of the teachers, both listening to them and asking them questions. And all who heard Him were astonished at His understanding and answers. So when they saw Him, they were amazed; and His mother said to Him, 'Son, why have You done this

to us? Look, Your father and I have sought You anxiously.’ And He said to them, “Why did you seek Me? Did you not know that I must be about My Father’s business?” But they did not understand the statement which He spoke to them. Then He went down with them and came to Nazareth, and was subject to them, but His mother kept all these things in her heart. And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and men” (Luke 2:46-52).

3. Just as Timothy was taught the Word of God as a child so we must do the same with our children. Since the Scriptures are “able to make you wise for salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.”

“Like many Christians in the early church, Timothy and his mother and grandmother believed under both covenants. They had repented and sought the grace and mercy of

forgiveness from the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, of Moses, David, and Elijah. And when they heard the gospel of Jesus Christ, then-like Joseph, Mary, Simeon, and Anna-they knew that God's great promise of the Messiah Redeemer had been fulfilled, and they immediately believed in Him as Savior and Lord.

Just as were the men and women mentioned in Hebrews 11, every Old Testament saint was saved through faith which is in Christ Jesus.

Although their spiritual understanding was limited, they were like their "father Abraham, [who] rejoiced to see [Christ's] day, and he saw it and was glad" (John 8:56), and like Moses, who considered "the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt" (Heb. 11:26).

Whatever they may have known or not known about the coming Messiah (cf. 1 Peter 1:10-12), they understood that He

would come to suffer for their sins as the sacrifice that would satisfy God.

John summed up godly Jewish anticipation when, upon first seeing Jesus, he exclaimed, "Behold, the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!" (John 1:29)" (John MacArthur, 2 Timothy, pp.141-142).

II. Scripture Provides Instruction for Sanctification (vv.16-17)

A. The Inspired and Inerrant Scripture (v.16a)

1. "All Scripture" is a reference to the New as well as the Old Testament
 - a) Verse 15 refers to the Scripture as "the Holy Scriptures" Gr. Hieros grammata, "sacred writings." This refers to the Hebrew Scriptures (the Old Testament)
 - b) Verse 16 uses a different word for Scripture and it is the word graphe. This word was commonly used in the early

church not only of the Old Testament but also of God's newly revealed Word, in what came to be called the New Testament.

2. "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God" has been suggested to be translated as "All Scripture inspired by God is..." which would leave open the possibility that some Scripture is *not* inspired by Him.

That "rendering would make the Bible worthless as a reliable guide to divine truth, because we would then have no way to determine which part of it is inspired by God and which is not.

Men would be left to their own finite and sinful devices and understanding to discover what part of the Bible may be true and which may not...Paul's thought is that the Scripture that gives salvation must therefore be inspired by God. The words of men could never transform the inner person (Ps.19:7)" (John MacArthur, 2 Timothy, p.142).

The first predicate adjective that describes Scripture, namely, its being inspired by God, focuses on the authority of His written Word.

Theopneustos (inspired by God) literally means, “breathed out by God,” or simply, “God-breathed.”

The ESV correctly translates the verse: “All Scripture is breathed out by God.”

- a) God sometimes breathed His words into the human writers to be recorded much as dictation.

He said to Jeremiah: "Behold, I have put My words in your mouth" (Jer. 1:9).

- b) But, as clearly seen in Scripture itself, God's divine truth more often flowed through the minds, souls, hearts, and emotions of His chosen human instruments.

- c) Yet, by whatever means, God divinely superintended the accurate recording of His divinely breathed truth by His divinely chosen men.

In a supernatural way, He has provided His divine Word in human words that any person, even a child, can be led by His Holy Spirit to understand sufficiently to be saved.

- 3. It is of utmost importance to understand that it is Scripture that is inspired by God, not the men divinely chosen to record it.
 - a) When speaking or writing apart from God's revelation, their thoughts, wisdom, and understanding were human and fallible.
 - b) They were not inspired in the sense that we commonly use that term of people with extraordinary artistic, literary, or musical genius.

- c) Nor were they inspired in the sense of being personal repositories of divine truth which they could dispense at will.

- d) Many human authors of Scripture penned other documents, but none of those writings exist today, and, even if discovered, they would not carry the weight of Scripture.

We know, for instance, that Paul wrote at least two other letters to the church at Corinth (1 Cor. 5:9; 2 Cor. 2:4), but no copies of those letters have ever been found.

The letters doubtless were godly, spiritually insightful, and blessed of the Lord, but they were not Scripture.

- e) Many men who wrote Scripture, such as Moses and Paul, were highly trained in human knowledge and wisdom, but that learning was not the source of the divine truth they recorded.

- f) David was a highly gifted poet, and that gift doubtless is reflected in the beauty of his psalms, but it was not the source of the divine truths revealed in those psalms.
4. Scripture first of all and above all is from God and about God, His self-revelation to fallen mankind.
- a) From Genesis through Revelation, God reveals His truth, His character, His attributes, and His divine plan for the redemption of man, whom He made in His own image.

He even foretells the eventual redemption of the rest of His creation, which "also will be set free from its slavery to corruption into the freedom of the glory of the children of God" and which "groans and suffers the pains of childbirth together until now" (Rom. 8:21-22).

b) The Bible is not a collection of the wisdom and insights of men, even of godly men. It is God's truth, His own Word in His own words.

(1) The psalmist declared, "Forever, O Lord, Thy word is settled in heaven" (Ps. 119:89).

God's Word is divinely revealed to men on earth and divinely authenticated in heaven.

(2) Peter declared, "Know this first of all, that no prophecy of Scripture is a matter of one's own interpretation, for no prophecy was ever made by an act of human will, but men moved by the Holy Spirit spoke from God" (2 Peter 1:20-21).

Those God-given, humanly recorded words became God's written Word, inerrant and authoritative as originally given.

5. During His earthly ministry, Jesus gave powerful and unambiguous testimony to the divine authority of both the Old and New Testament
 - a) In John 10:35 He declare that the “Scripture (graphe) cannot be broken” specifically a reference to Psalm 82:6 therefore referring to the Old Testament.
 - b) In Matthew 5:17-18, He said, ““Do not think that I came to destroy the Law or the Prophets. I did not come to destroy but to fulfill. For assuredly, I say to you, till heaven and earth pass away, one jot or one tittle will by no means pass from the law till all is fulfilled.”

“A "jot" refers to the smallest Heb. letter, the yohd, which is a meager stroke of the pen, like an accent mark or an apostrophe.

The "tittle" is a tiny extension on a Heb. letter, like the serif in modern

typefaces” (John MacArthur, The MacArthur Study Bible).

- c) But in John 12:48-50 He said, “He who rejects Me, and does not receive My words, has that which judges him— the word that I have spoken will judge him in the last day. For I have not spoken on My own authority; but the Father who sent Me gave Me a command, what I should say and what I should speak. And I know that His command is everlasting life. Therefore, whatever I speak, just as the Father has told Me, so I speak.”

The words of the incarnate Christ are the words of God the Father; therefore, to reject Jesus’ words is to reject God’s Word.

- 6. The writers of Scripture understood each other’s writing as Scripture
 - a) In 1 Timothy 5:18, Paul wrote, “For the

Scripture (graphe) says, “You shall not muzzle an ox while it treads out the grain,” and, “The laborer is worthy of his wages.”

It is important to note that the first quotation is from the Old Testament (Deut.25:4) and the second is from Jesus’ own lips (Lk.10:7), that is, from the New Testament.

- b) Peter claimed Paul’s epistles were Scripture (2 Pet.3:14-16)
 - c) Jude also understood Peter’s writings as Scripture (Jude 1:17-18)
7. All Scripture, both the Old and New Testament, is inspired by God

“The Pentateuch (The first five books of the Old Testament) contains at least 680 claims to divine inspiration.

Such claims are found 418 times in the

historical books, 195 times in the poetic books, and 1,307 times in the prophetic books.

The New Testament contains more than 300 direct quotations and at least 1,000 indirect references from the Old Testament, almost all of them declaring or implying that they were God's own Word.

The book of Hebrews opens with the declaration "God, after He spoke long ago to the fathers in the prophets in many portions and in many ways, in these last days has spoken to us in His Son" (Heb. 1:1-2).

The writer was speaking of both testaments, God's speaking through "the prophets" representing the Old and His speaking through "His Son" representing the New" (John MacArthur, 2 Timothy, p.146).

The second predicate adjective Paul uses to describe Scripture is "profitable." This focuses on the

sufficiency of God's written word.

“Profitable” Gr. *ophelimos*, means, “beneficial, productive, sufficient” (Ps. 19:7-13).

Scripture is also complete (see Jude 3; Rev. 22:18-19). There are groups today that claim their books as being divinely inspired:

The Book of Mormon makes this claim and more so than the Bible “because they view that book as being a latter-day, updated revelation from God.”

Christian Science views *Science and Health, With a Key to the Scriptures* in the same way.

Some charismatics claim to have received special revelations from God, which, if genuine, would carry the same divine authority as the Bible.

“For most of the twentieth century, a large percentage of members and a higher percentage of clergymen in most major Protestant denominations have not recognized the Bible as being wholly revealed by God and inerrant. Those views and many

others like them share the common heresy of considering Scripture to be incomplete or inadequate.

It is because of such distorted and destructive views of Scripture within professing Christendom that biblical believers must, more than ever before, "contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints" (Jude 3).

As in the early church, the greatest danger to the church has always been from within. Paul warned the godly, mature church at Ephesus, pastored first by the apostle and then by Timothy, and led by godly elders, "I know that after my departure savage wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock; and from among your own selves men will arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away the disciples after them" (Acts 20:29-30, emphasis added).

In the remainder of verse 16, Paul declares that Scripture is profitable for believers in four important ways: for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness.

B. The Teaching Scripture (v.16b)

Paul says the Scriptures is “profitable for doctrine” (v.16b)

1. The early church did four things. They “continued steadfastly in the apostle’s doctrine and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in prayers” (Acts 2:42).
2. The Apostles said that were to “give [themselves] continually to prayer and to the ministry of the word” (Acts 6:4).
3. This they did as they “daily in the temple, and in every house, they did not cease *teaching* and preaching Jesus as the Christ” (Acts 5:42).
4. Paul told the elders at Ephesus that he had “not shunned to declare to you the whole counsel of God” (Acts 20:27).
5. In Paul’s first letter to Timothy, he told him that those who desire to be overseers must

be “able to teach” (v.2). To Titus he said they were to hold “fast to the faithful word as he has been taught, that he may be able, by sound doctrine, both to exhort and convict those who contradict” (Tit.1:9).

6. There is a danger to believers who are untaught. Paul said they would be “children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine” (Eph.4:14).
7. This is the purpose then of the pastor-teacher that’s mentioned in Ephesians 4:11. He is to equip “the saints for the work of the ministry” by using his gift of teaching. What is he to teach? The Word of God or as Paul states it, “the whole counsel of God” (Acts 20:27).

John MacArthur says, “It goes without saying that it is impossible to believe, understand, and follow what you do not even know. It is completely futile, as well as foolish, to expect to live a spiritual life without knowing spiritual truth. Biblically

untaught believers, especially those in biblically untaught churches, are easy prey for false teachers. They are spiritual "children, tossed here and there by waves, and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, by craftiness in deceitful scheming" (Eph. 4:14). Throughout most of redemptive history, God could have said what He said in Hosea's day: "My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge" (Hos. 4:6). It is for that reason, as well as for the even greater reason of honoring the Lord, that regular, systematic, and thorough study of the doctrine in God's Word is imperative for God's people" (2 Timothy, p.155).

A second work of the Word in the life of believers is that of reproof.

C. The Reproving Scripture (v.16c)

“For reproof” (v.16c)

Elegmos (reproof) carries the idea of rebuking

in order to convict of misbehavior or false doctrine.

1. As with teaching, Scripture's work of reproof has to do with content, with equipping believers with accurate knowledge and understanding of divine truth, in this context divine truth that exposes falsehood and sin, erroneous belief, and ungodly conduct.

Richard Trench says *elegmos* refers to rebuking "another with such effectual wielding of the victorious arm of the truth, as to bring him not always a confession, yet at least to a conviction of his sin."

Regular and careful study of Scripture builds a foundation of truth that, among other things, exposes sin in a believer's life with the purpose of bringing correction, confession, renunciation, and obedience.

2. Scripture is the divine plumb line by which every thought, principle, act, and belief is to

be measured. In it we are told to:

- a) Fear the Lord (Prov.1:7)
- b) Love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul, mind and strength and your neighbor as yourself (Mat.22:37-39, cf. Deut.6:5).

- c) Hate evil - Prov.8:13

“The fear of the LORD is to hate evil;
pride and arrogance and the evil way
and the perverse mouth I hate.”

- d) Love one another (John 13:34-35)
- e) Not to grieve the Holy Spirit (Eph.4:30)
- f) To put away “all bitterness, wrath, anger, clamor, and evil speaking...with all malice” (Eph.4:31).
- g) To be “kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another,

just as God in Christ also forgave you”
(Eph.4:32).

- h) “Speak...exhort, and rebuke with all authority” (Tit.2:15)
- i) “Preach” it in season and out of season.
“Convince, rebuke, exhort, with all longsuffering and teaching” (2 Tim.4:2)

D. The Correcting Scripture (v.16d)

“For correction” (v.16d)

“Correction” Gr.epanorthosis is used only here in the NT and refers to the “restoration of something to its original and proper condition.”

In secular Greek literature it was used of setting upright an object that had fallen down and of helping a person back on his feet after stumbling.

After exposing and condemning false belief and sinful conduct in believers, Scripture then builds

them up through its divine correction.

1. Correction is Scripture's positive provision for those who accept its negative reproof
 - a) 1 Pet.2:1-2
 - b) Ps.119:9-11
 - c) 1 John 1:9

2. As with reproof, godly believers, especially pastors and teachers, are often the channel through which the Word brings "correction."
 - a) Earlier in this letter, Paul said to Timothy in 2:24-26, "And a servant of the Lord must not quarrel but be gentle to all, able to teach, patient, in humility correcting those who are in opposition, if God perhaps will grant them repentance, so that they may know the truth, and that they may come to their senses and escape the snare of the devil, having been taken captive by him to do his will."

b) Gal.6:1

E. The Scripture That Trains for Righteousness
(v.16e)

“For instruction in righteousness” (v.16e)

“Training” Gr.paideia, which had the original meaning of bringing up and training a child (paidion), but it came to be used of any sort of training. Here the meaning is directed at the ideas of “instruction and building up” (MacArthur).

God’s Word instructs and trains us “in righteousness.”

1. Titus 2:12 says that the “grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men, *teaching* us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in the present age.”
2. Timothy was told in 1 Tim.6:11 to “pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love,

patience, gentleness.”

3. Peter said to add it to your faith in 2 Peter 1:5-7:

“But also for this very reason, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue, to virtue knowledge, to knowledge self-control, to self-control perseverance, to perseverance godliness, to godliness brotherly kindness, and to brotherly kindness love.”

F. The Enabling Scripture (v.17)

“That the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.”

The Bible can be of great value to an unbeliever.

Most important, as already mentioned, it will lead to salvation those who come to trust in the Savior and Lord it proclaims.

But Paul is speaking here of Scripture's special

value for preachers, who are able, with the Spirit's guidance, to understand and to proclaim the truths of God's Word.

The apostle is addressing the man of God, a technical phrase used only of Timothy in the New Testament. In the Old Testament it is frequently used as a title for one who proclaimed the Word of God. In this context, man of God refers most directly to Timothy and, by extension, to all preachers.

Artios (adequate or complete) refers to persons who are complete, capable, and proficient in everything they are called to be or do. In Christ "you have been made complete," Paul tells Colossian believers (Col. 2:10). The preacher who carefully studies and sincerely believes and obeys the truths of Scripture will stand strong in living and defending the faith.

“Thoroughly equipped for every good work” could be paraphrased, "enabled to meet all demands of righteousness."

By his life he will affirm the power of the Word to lead men to salvation and to equip them for righteous living and for faithful service to the Lord.

When the man of God is himself equipped by the Word, he can then equip the believers under his care.

Just as "we are [the Lord's] workmanship," Paul explains, we also should be doing His work. We are "created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them" (Eph. 2:10).

CONCLUSION

1. Christ says to all those who belong to Him what He said to the Twelve: "We must work the works of Him who sent Me, as long as it is day; night is coming, when no man can work" (John 9:4).
2. Whether our purpose is to lead men and women to saving faith in Jesus Christ, to teach God's truth to believers, to refute error in the church, to correct and

rebuild erring believers, or to train believers to live righteously, our supreme and sufficient resource is God's Word. It not only gives us the information to teach but also shapes us into living examples of that truth.

3. One cannot help wondering why so many evangelical pastors of our day, like many Christians throughout history, have lost sight of that foundational truth.
4. Every church, everywhere and in every time, should be totally committed to preaching, teaching, and implementing the Word, thereby pleasing and exalting the gracious and sovereign God who has revealed it.
5. Through the convincing and convicting power of the Holy Spirit, Scripture is God's own provision for every spiritual truth and moral principle that men need to be saved, to be equipped to live righteously in this present life and to hear one day in the life to come, "Well done, good and faithful servant,... enter into the joy of your Master" (Matt.25:21).

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6. Let's pray.