

Why the Word is Essential

2 Timothy 3:1-17

Introduction

(Slide 1 – beginning)

Good morning, Lighthouse! Are you ready for the Word of God this morning? Well, I'm glad to hear that, because that is exactly what we'll be preaching this morning. If you can see the title of today's message, you will notice a word used that you probably have heard quite often. You want to know something far more essential than all those things? You might have guessed it, the Word of God.

God's Word today is needed more than ever. According to Christianitytoday.com statistics, Life-Way Research study found only 45% percent of those who regularly attend church read the Bible more than once a week. Over 40% of the people attending read their Bible occasionally, maybe once or twice a month. Almost 1 in 5 churchgoers say they never read the Bible—essentially the same number who read it every day. Christianity in the United States has been blessed with easy access to God's Word. There are unnecessarily hundreds of translations in the English language, but approximately 2200 other languages that do not have a Bible. There is a video on YouTube where Chinese Christians receive Bibles for the first time. They are all embracing it and crying with tears of joy. It is a shame how little the majority of those who profess faith in Jesus value God's Word. To be clear, when we are talking about Scripture and what God's Word is, we are referring to the Bible – 66 books – 39 Old Testament – 27 New Testament.

Life-Way Research also found 90% of churchgoers agree with the statement "I desire to please God in everything that I do." The issue is not that those who claim to be Christians hate

God's Word or do not want to please God; rather, the issue lies with not prioritizing the time to read and study it. The excuses are often "I am too busy", "I do not have enough time." Well, consider this question if this is your mindset. How much TV did you watch this week? I hear all about the Netflix and Hulu binge-watching shows. Somehow, we find the time to watch hours of TV, yet, no time to read God's Word. The problem is not the television or time, but with the human heart.

Just how essential is God's Word? Answer this: Is there anything higher than the name of the Lord?

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Consider Psalm 138:2: I will worship toward thy holy temple and praise thy name for thy lovingkindness and for thy truth: **for thou hast magnified thy word above all thy name.**

I think you have your answer on just how essential the Word is. This is most unique compilation of books ever written. 66 books and about 40 different human authors, over period of 1600 years, 3 different continents, 3 different languages. Its content is beyond its time with total accuracy and somehow it comes together in perfect harmony without error. I think we know who the one true author is.

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Background

Today, we will be in the 2nd letter written to a young man by the name of Timothy. This Epistle written by Paul is categorized as a "Pastoral Epistle" along with 1 Timothy and Titus because they are addressed to individuals with pastoral oversight of churches and discuss issues of Christian living, doctrine and leadership. 2 Timothy was written shortly before Paul was put to death by Nero in A.D 67.

Scripture

(Slide 4-10 – read along and click next)

2 Timothy 3:1-17

- (1) This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come.
- (2) For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy,
- (3) Without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good,
- (4) Traitors, heady, highminded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God;
- (5) Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away.
- (6) For of this sort are they which creep into houses, and lead captive silly women laden with sins, led away with divers lusts,
- (7) Ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth.
- (8) Now as Jannes and Jambres withstood Moses, so do these also resist the truth: men of corrupt minds, reprobate concerning the faith.
- (9) But they shall proceed no further: for their folly shall be manifest unto all men, as theirs also was.
- (10) But thou hast fully known my doctrine, manner of life, purpose, faith, longsuffering, charity, patience,
- (11) Persecutions, afflictions, which came unto me at Antioch, at Iconium, at Lystra; what persecutions I endured: but out of them all the Lord delivered me.
- (12) Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution.
- (13) But evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived.
- (14) But continue thou in the things which thou hast learned and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned them;
- (15) And that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.
- (16) All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness:
- (17) That the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works.

Outline

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I. Perilous times rooted from disobedience to the Word, vv. 1-9.

A. The warning of perilous times to come, v. 1.

1. Paul writes “in the last days.”

a. There has been many speculations when these last days are.

b. However, if you give a comparison to our times today, we either are here, or we are getting close.

2. The word translated “perilous” here has the idea of troubles, difficulty, and stressful situations.

a. This sort of atmosphere will mark the last days.

b. In ancient Greek, the word was used to describe something that cannot be tamed such as a wild beast and raging sea.

c. It is used only two times in the NT. Its only other occurrence is in Matthew’s account in Gergesenes of the two demon possessed men who were as savage and untamed as wild beasts are described as exceeding fierce, so that no man might pass by that way. Of course, Jesus was powerful enough to cast these demons out into the swine.

3. These times are inevitable, be ready.

4. These times are also not marked by financial hardship or natural disasters, while this may be involved; it is marked by human behavior.

5. In reality, these times are a result of disobedience and hostility towards the Word of God.

B. The description of human depravity in the perilous times, vv. 2-6.

1. Men shall be lovers of themselves

- a. The phrase here is one word that literally means “self-lover.”
- b. This is certainly characteristic of our present age, when men and women are encouraged to love themselves above all things. People are told to love themselves unconditionally and that such self-love is the foundation for a healthy human personality. When according to God’s Word, self-centeredness is the root of unhealthy personality and relationships.
- c. We don't need to be encouraged to love ourselves; we naturally have such a love. Neither should we be taught to hate ourselves. We must see ourselves as we really are - both the bad of what we are in the flesh and the glory of what we are in Jesus Christ.
- d. It is no coincidence that the first of these qualities will be a life that is self-centered.

2. Men will be covetous

- a. The word here means “fond of silver.” Some render to be lovers of money.
- b. The idea is “always desiring more.” Their life is marked by discontentment. This is nothing new, but the means to pursue it is more than ever.

3. Men will be boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy. . .

- a. Notice these characteristics. These are rooted in in self-centeredness, disobedient to God's Word. Ultimately, it's a lifestyle without Jesus.
- b. Each of these characteristics say "You don't matter, and God does not matter. All that matters is me."
- c. These are not new, but much more predominant in today's age.

4. Men will be "without natural affection."

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- a. This phrase is a single word in Greek. ἄστοργος
- b. It is derived from the word we use for love in relation to family members.
- c. This word literally means "without family love"

G794

ἄστοργος

astorgos

as'-tor-gos

From G1 (as a negative particle) and a presumed derivative of στέργω stergō (to cherish affectionately); hard hearted towards kindred: - without natural affection.

d. It breaks my heart to see all the reports out there of abuse of a child and abuse of a spouse. God has put in our heart a certain natural love as a parent for a child and family. It is unnatural to have such as hate and disregard for family.

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5. Men shall be “trucebreakers”
 - a. How many times have you heard the vow “for better, for worse, for richer, for poorer, in sickness and in health, to love and to cherish, until death do us part”; and yet, the high divorce rate.
 - b. We are in an age where covenants and promise breaking is no big deal.
6. Men shall be “false accusers.”

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a. The Greek used here surprised me. It’s διάβολος.

G1228

διάβολος

diabolos

dee-ab'-ol-os

From G1225; a traducer; specifically Satan (compare [H7854]): - false accuser, devil, slanderer.

- b. The same word used for “devil” to talk about Satan.
 - c. His name means “the accuser of saints.”
 - d. Just like the devil, men shall be false accusers.
7. Men shall be incontinent (without self-control), fierce, despisers of those that are good.

a. If there is a characteristic that stands out the most. It is this one:

“Despisers of those that are good.”

b. Just like Isaiah 5:20 says:

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“Woe unto them that call evil good, and good evil; that put darkness for light, and light for darkness; that put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter!”

c. If there is a dominant age where evil is called good and good is called evil, it is now.

8. Men shall be traitors, heady, highminded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God;

a. Again, these characteristics are rooted in self-centeredness.

b. Lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God. I want to note that there is nothing wrong with having pleasure. I believe that God intended you to have pleasure, but when it comes before God, that is where the issue lies.

c. We don't have to choose between pleasure and God. Serving God is the ultimate pleasure.

9. Form of godliness but denying the power thereof.

a. These are spiritual frauds. They feel free to be very “spiritual,” but sense no obligation to be Biblical.

b. They’ll appear to be godly but deny the source of the power.

c. From such, we are to turn away from.

d. The simple responsibility of Christians is to turn away not only these attitudes, but also from the people who do these things. Many think it is

enough if they themselves are not like this, but if we fellowship with these, we will become like them ourselves.

10. For of this sort are they which creep into houses, and lead captive silly (gullible) women laden with sins, led away with divers lusts.

a. These deceive gullible women and lead them away by their various lusts.

b. They are con-artists and defraud people.

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C. The destination of the corrupt ones, vv. 7-9.

1. They are always learning (willing to soak in any teaching) and leads them to not accepting the truth – that is the Gospel.

2. Jannes and Jambres are not named in the Exodus account, they are magicians who opposed Moses.

a. They were able work real miracles, but by a dark power.

b. When Moses cast down his rod and it turned into a serpent, turned water into blood, brought forth a plague of frogs, they could do the same. Eventually, their power was shown to be inferior to God's power.

c. We should not be surprised when a miraculous spiritual power comes from a demonic source.

3. Just like Jannes and Jambres, the characteristics of the perilous time resist the truth, have corrupted minds, and are reprobates concerning the faith.

4. Sooner or later, their schemes will be exposed.

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II. Persecution is inevitable for those obedient to the Word, vv. 10-13.

A. The example of Paul, vv. 10-11.

1. Paul then shifts his contrast to commend Timothy. He followed the example of Paul in doctrine (teaching), manner of life, purpose, faith, longsuffering, charity, and patience. This is quite the contrasts to the perilous times.
2. Not only these things, but persecution too. For those who attend Wednesday nights during our walkthrough in Acts, these cities may sound familiar.
 - a. In Antioch, where Paul was driven out of the city for preaching the Gospel (Acts 13:50).
 - b. In Iconium, where Paul was almost executed by stoning (Acts 14:5).
 - c. In Lystra, Paul was stoned and left for dead (Acts 14:19).
 - d. All of them had one thing in common though, the Lord delivered him.

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Psalm 34:19 Many are the afflictions of the righteous: but the LORD delivereth him out of them all.

- e. Even if it means death, the Lord delivers.

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B. The expectation of the godly and ungodly, vv. 12-13.

1. All who will (desire) to live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution.
 - a. The word will here is the word used for desire.
 - b. This is one of those promises we don't like to shout "amen!" to.
2. Those who live in Christ Jesus will suffer some form of persecution; physical or social.
 - a. In America, you may not suffer physical persecution, but around the world, our Christian brothers and sisters face death and intense

persecution because of their faith in Jesus.

b. You will face some form of opposition though if you have not already.

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1 Peter 4:1-4 (1) Forasmuch then as Christ hath suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves likewise with the same mind: for he that hath suffered in the flesh hath ceased from sin; (2) That he no longer should live the rest of his time in the flesh to the lusts of men, but to the will of God. (3) For the time past of our life may suffice us to have wrought the will of the Gentiles, when we walked in lasciviousness, lusts, excess of wine, revellings, banquetings, and abominable idolatries: (4) Wherein they think it strange that ye run not with them to the same excess of riot, speaking evil of you:

c. Don't expect the world to speak well of you or to applaud you for living a godly life and taking a righteous stand.

3. The ungodly in contrast will get worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived.

4. I hope no one here is waiting for the world to become a better place, it is only going to get worse until Jesus comes back.

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III. Persistence in the Word is essential for God's people, vv. 14-17.

A. The exhortation for Timothy to continue in what he has learned, vv. 14-15.

1. Paul then encourages Timothy to continue in the things he learned.

a. Timothy learned not only from Paul, but his mother Eunice and grandmother Lois.

b. He does not only know, but he is assured – he is confident.

2. Since Timothy was a child, he has known the Holy Scriptures.

a. The Scriptures would be referring to the OT.

- b. These Scriptures Paul speaks are able to give wisdom for salvation through faith in Jesus.
- c. An application we can derive from this is to teach our kids the Scripture young. Not to indoctrinate them as some like to accuse, but to protect them from a lot of garbage out there. I am so grateful to have been taught the Bible at a young age.

3. In contrast to the characteristics in the perilous times, Paul urges Timothy to continue in what he has learned – continue in the Word of God.

B. The equipping of the believer is by the inspired Word of God, vv. 16-17.

- 1. One of the most famous passages when discussing the Bible itself.
- 2. All Scripture is “given by inspiration of God.”
 - a. I want to take attention to this phrase “given by inspiration of God.”

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- b. The word Paul uses is θεόπνευστος. This is a unique compound word in the Greek language and only appears once. It literally means “God-breathed.” The idea is its divinely inspired, not that God gave the people a good thought or idea.
- c. Most believe Paul invented this word. This reminds me of how Pastor Dill likes to create new words – How many of you remember “spiritantomy?”

G2315

θεόπνευστος

theopneustos

theh-op'-nyoo-stos

From G2316 and a presumed derivative of G4154; divinely breathed in: - given by inspiration of God.

3. The Word of God is His means by how He speaks to people.

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Hebrews 1:1-2 (1) God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, (2) Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds;

4. Note that Hebrews says “By His Son” – Jesus. Since Jesus is the Word, that means that way God speaks to us today is by His Word!

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John 1:1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

- a. I have once heard “I love Jesus, but I really don’t love the Bible.”
- b. This is total nonsense! To love Jesus is to love His Word! And vice-versa.

5. The Scriptures are also not men’s opinions; the men were moved by the Holy Spirit.

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2 Peter 1:16-21 (16) For we have not followed cunningly devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eyewitnesses of his majesty. (17) For he received from God the Father honour and glory, when there came such a voice to him from the excellent glory, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. (18) And this voice which came from heaven we heard, when we were with him in the

holy mount. (19) We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts: (20) Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation. (21) For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.

6. The Scriptures are profitable for doctrine (teaching) for reproof, for correction and instruction in righteousness.

- a. What am I to believe about God and man? What am I to believe about sin? What am I to believe about the future, life, or death, or life after death? The scriptures are profitable to establish the foundation of what we are to believe. They're profitable for doctrine. I can base my beliefs upon what God has said because it is indeed God's word.
- b. How often the word of God has brought correction to my life? Too often I falter and lose course, but the word of God brings a balance, it brings correction, it brings proper perspective.
- c. It instructs me how to know Jesus, how to live right.
- d. The Scriptures are far more beneficial to us believers than we can imagine, so that the man of God can be equipped and thoroughly furnished unto all good works.

7. The same Word is to be preached.

- a. I am going to a test something here.

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2 Timothy 4:2 Preach; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine.

- b. Notice anything wrong? I hope you noticed right away.

c. The charge is not to preach, the charge is to preach the Word!

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2 Timothy 4:2 Preach the word be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine.

d. See how those 2 words can make all the difference?

e. No man of God is called to just preach, he is called and commanded to preach THE WORD – preach THE GOSPEL.

8. What is you like most about your Pastor's preaching? Is it because he is witty and tells the best jokes? Is it because he is a great storyteller and knows how to get your attention? Or is it foremost that he communicates the Word of God?
9. If you only get the Word of God on Sundays in your life, there is a problem. If you're getting the Word throughout the week, but not on Sundays from your \ Pastor, there is an even bigger problem.
9. A major issues in our local churches today is there are Pastors and preachers who do not preach the Word, instead, they give into itching ears?
10. If it not for the Word of God, I would be out of job here. I've only been on staff for going on 2 years now and would've run out of ideas. That's just once a month!
11. Lighthouse Baptist Church, we need the Word of God more than ever today!

Application

A Psalmist proclaimed that he would hide the Word in his heart so that he won't sin against God. So how can someone hide God's Word in this heart if they do not know it? How can someone know God's Word if they do not read and study it? We are in perilous times for sure. One of the things I won't take for granted is during this pandemic where we are to stay at home and quarantine is how much more time we have been given to be in the Word of God. The Word is how God speaks to us today, it essential for our growth in Christ. We are privileged and blessed to have easy access to God's Word, so let us use that freedom to know God more and make His Word priority in our lives.

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If there was 1 favorite passage in the Bible, I had to consider my favorite, it is this one.

Psalm 119:92 "Unless thy law had been my delights, I should then have perished in mine affliction."

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To close with some application questions:

1. Do I consider myself a student of the Word?
2. Is the Word essential to my life? Or is it just another book?
3. Do you agree with the statement: "I treasure God's Word" if yes, how does your life reflect this?
4. What steps can I take to prioritize spending time in the Word in my life?

*****Prayer*****