

# 2 Timothy 3 (Part 2):10-17 • Our contrasting Christian life

Teacher: Pastor Paul LeBoutillier  
Calvary Chapel Ontario

We are in 2 Timothy chapter 3, the second part of that chapter. You guys remember last week's message and what we covered in the first 9 verses? Paul begins in verse 10 of 2 Timothy chapter 3 and says, *“<sup>10</sup> You, however, have followed my teaching, my conduct, my aim in life, my faith, my patience, my love, my steadfastness, <sup>11</sup> my persecutions and sufferings that happened to me at Antioch, at Iconium, and at Lystra—which persecutions I endured; yet from them all the Lord rescued me. <sup>12</sup> Indeed, all who desire to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted, <sup>13</sup> while evil people and impostors will go on from bad to worse, deceiving and being deceived.*

*<sup>14</sup> But as for you, continue in what you have learned and have firmly believed, knowing from whom you learned it <sup>15</sup> and how from childhood you have been acquainted with the sacred things (correction writings), which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. <sup>16</sup> All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, <sup>17</sup> that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work.”*

Let's pray. Heavenly Father, as we dig into these scriptures today, and as we look at what they're saying to us, it is our desire to have open hearts. To allow Your Spirit to speak to us at the deepest level and to speak to us, Lord God, at the place of our greatest need. I thank You, my Father God, that You know every person here and You know them intimately. You know what they need to hear most. And I pray, Father God, that as I'm sharing and teaching these things, that You would be the teacher and the instructor to every heart. We thank You, Father, for the Word that goes forth from You. In Jesus' name, amen. Amen.

Well, you'll remember in the first 9 verses of this chapter, the Apostle Paul kind of outlined what the world is going to be like in the last days, and we made the point that it's not for us what the world is going to be like it's what the world is like. We talked about how those first 9 verses are a very accurate description of the world that you and I live in right here, right now. So, these...those first 9 verses, are not prophetic in the sense that we are waiting for them to be fulfilled.

They have been fulfilled in our culture. But now Paul turns, beginning in verse 10, to speak to Timothy about how his life is to be lived in contrast to what he had outlined earlier as the characteristics of the world. And that's why he begins by saying in verse 10, "*You, however...*" and that word, however, says, even though the world is going to be like this, it is your life that needs to be like this.

So, this is all about contrasts. You understand contrasts. We like contrasts for the most part. Contrasting colors, contrasting ideas, contrasting results. We like to see those sorts of things and Paul is giving us a contrast. First, he talked about the way the world lives.

He says, but "*You, however* (And then what does he say? He says, well you) *have followed my teaching, my conduct, my aim in life...*" And he goes through those various things that he lists. And this is a sharp contrast to what he's been talking about, related to the characteristics for the world, and you'll remember what those characteristics were.

If you just skip ahead or skip up above where we were, look at what we looked at last week. Just very briefly up, beginning in verse 2, remember what he characterized the world to be and what it is for us? He says, "<sup>2</sup> *For people will be lovers of self,* (We talked about that last week, what that means.) *lovers of money, proud, arrogant, abusive, disobedient to their parents, ungrateful, unholy,* <sup>3</sup> *heartless, unappeasable, slanderous, without self-control, brutal, not loving good,* <sup>4</sup> *treacherous, reckless, swollen with conceit, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God,* <sup>5</sup> *having the appearance of godliness, but denying its power.*" Man, I tell you, you know, you can read through those verses and practically give you a headache.

That's the world that we live in. But in order to emphasize now the contrast that Paul is to, (correcting himself) or Timothy is to be living, and all of us are to be living. Paul begins to use his very own example. The example of his own life to speak to Timothy about a life that is lived not for self, but rather for the Lord.

And by the way, let me just start off by saying this. How comfortable would you feel if you were exhorting someone about living life today after Christ? How comfortable would you feel about giving the example of your life? Would you be able to say, like the Apostle Paul, follow my example? He actually says it elsewhere, using those very words. Follow my example as I follow Christ. Well, that's a pretty, pretty crazy thing to say. And that's exactly what he does here. He lays out the example of his own life to Timothy. Let me put these on the screen for you so we can see them together. He talks about these various things that we looked at here.

- **My teaching**
- My conduct
- My aim in life
- My faith
- My patience
- My love
- My steadfastness
- My persecutions and sufferings endured

And you'll notice he begins by saying, you know, you <sup>40</sup>...*have followed my teaching...*” And that is the Greek word “Didaskalia”, and it means instruction is where we get our word didactic or systematic teaching of the Word of God. He says you have followed that.

Well, for you and me, that's the Bible. That's the majority of the New Testament because what Paul taught, he wrote down, and we have in our New Testament. And so really, he's saying to you and me, he's talking about following the Word of God. But what he's talking about here, as he's contrasting the ways of the world, he's talking about where you get your truth.

Where do you get your truth? Who do you look to? Who do you listen to, to determine what is true? You might say, well, I don't listen to anybody. I get truth from myself. Yeah, that's exactly what the world does. That is precisely what the world does. That's where they get their truth. There's a passage at the very end of the book of Judges that I think says this very clearly. Judges 21, the last part of verse 25 says,

**Judges 21:25b (ESV)**

*Everyone did what was right in his own eyes.*

Is that or is that not an apt description of the world again in which we live? Everyone does according to what they believe is right. What does that mean? You boil that down and what it means is, I make my own truth.

And we've taken it to absolutely ridiculous levels today to the point where if I believe, you know, that I'm a banana, you have to respect that. You see, because it's my truth. I decide what I am, who I am, what I identify with. And you have to respect it. Why? Because that's the world in which we live.

We make our own truth. What I say is true, is true for me. Period. And you can't argue with me. And now we're passing laws that say you can't argue with someone, or even disagree with them, or you're being abusive. We've stumbled into ignorance and ridiculousness, but see, this is an opportunity now for that contrast for us who are called by the name of Jesus Christ because you see, we don't get our truth from our own hearts.

We understand that our hearts are deceitful and they're wicked beyond cure. And so, we get our truth from the Word of God and if it's not there then we're just making it up as we go along. And how we live differently in this world, how we contrast our lives with the lives of those lived outside of Christ, begins with what we believe as true. This is true. This is not and so forth.

And for us, of course, what is true is outlined in the Word of God. It is more than just, you know, the Bible. It's our standard. It's our understanding of what is in fact true. The next thing Paul brings up as an example from his own life and a contrast from the life of the world is what he calls <sup>40</sup> *...my conduct...*

- My teaching
- **My conduct**
- My aim in life
- My faith
- My patience
- My love
- My steadfastness
- My persecutions and sufferings endured

Your Bible may have a different word here, but he's talking now about how you take what is true and live it out or walk it out or carry it out in your lives. It's what you put into practice. Because, you know, it's one thing to know God's Word and it's another thing to put it into practice, isn't it?

There are big differences between the two. You can know the Bible. People say that to me all the time. I've got this brother or uncle or whatever. Man, he knows the Bible forwards and backward. People always like to say that, and you know how I feel about that. It's like, who cares? The question is, is he living it? Is he walking it out? Is he applying it to his life? That's what makes the difference.

Paul says it's my conduct that is going to make a difference in terms of the contrast to the ways of the world. How I live. Because you see, we are called to live differently. We're called to live with a focus on God. What was the primary element of what Paul gave in those first few verses of the chapter?

He says the world lives with a primary focus on self. It's all about me. Right? But that's not to be the way we are to live. Our conduct is predicated upon our focus on God and that's hard. Because we are not naturally focused on God. We are naturally focused on self. Well, okay, I'll just say it. I'm naturally focused on myself. That's me.

So, to live this way, to conduct myself this way as a contrasting behavior to the world, I have to rely on God. I have to rely on what He is doing inside of me and allowing Him that freedom to express His heart through my life, you know. And that's...that's challenging, but you know, that's our calling we're called to live differently. We're called to be different and to live that contrast to the world.

- My teaching
- My conduct
- **My aim in life**
- My faith
- My patience
- My love
- My steadfastness
- My persecutions and sufferings endured

I love the next one too. He says, “<sup>10</sup>...my aim in life...” Your Bible may say my purpose. Without speaking out your answer, let me just ask the question. What is your aim in life? What's your aim? What is your purpose?

We know the world has only one purpose essentially, and that's to be happy, slash (/), self-fulfilled. You see it in every movie or TV show or whatever. And the reason that the, you know, it's all the world has, and it's the reason that it's the only thing they have is because their lives are meaningless.

The people in the world, their lives are meaningless. And what I mean by that is what they've been, what they've been raised with. You know, we've taught the last couple of generations of kids that their lives are a cosmic mistake. You have no purpose. There was no intellect behind your beginning, we tell them.

It's all part of the evolutionary process. You don't have a purpose to your life. You just, you're here. We're all just here by accident. And so, when you carry that sort of an idea along into life, what else is there than to live my life to make myself happy? There's nothing. There's, it doesn't, you know, that's it.

If my life is the result of random processes, rather than any kind of an intelligent purpose or plan, then who cares the way I live? And that's what the world believes. They believe it because they were born by random chance. They live without purpose, and they die and go into oblivion. What else is there?

I might as well simply live with my own happiness as my highest aim. And we talked last week about the fact that an unhealthy dose of that particular philosophy has made its way into the body of Christ. We have to fight it every day. So, I'll ask you again, what is your aim? What is your purpose? You know, we've all learned very well from the world how to live for ourselves.

My purpose is to live and work, make money so I can buy things and go on vacation and give myself pleasure, but that's all very worldly, isn't it? It's all very attached, and that's not contrasting at all. You live that way; you're not going to live in a way that contrasts the world. You're going to live just like the world.

They're going to, they're going to think you're just one of them. So, what is our aim in life? What is our goal in life? Paul wrote to the Corinthians and addressed this in 1 Corinthians chapter 6. He starts off by saying, first of all, as a believer,

**1 Corinthians 6:19-20 (ESV)**

*...do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, whom you have from God? You are not your own, for you were bought with a price. So glorify God in your body.*

*“...do you not know that your body is (an actual) temple of the Holy Spirit within you, whom you have from God? You are not your own, (to live however you like or for your own pleasure) for you were bought with a price. (So, here's the conclusion) glorify God in your body.”*

And there you have it. There's our purpose, our aim in life. It's to bring glory to God. So, if anybody asks you from now on, you know how to answer that. If they say, “What's your purpose in life?”

Say, “You know what, to bring glory to God. I am here to glorify God. And what I say, what I do, who I am, that is my purpose.”

So, what else does Paul lay out here as his example for Timothy to take note of? He says, you've also seen <sup>10</sup> *...my faith...*”

- My teaching
- My conduct
- My aim in life
- **My faith**
- My patience
- My love
- My steadfastness
- My persecutions and sufferings endured

He reminded him of the life he lived by faith. I'm kind of wondering if you were talking to a young believer and you were talking about things that they needed to lay hold of, could you use your faith as an example? Could you say, well, you need to have faith like me? Could you do that? That's a pretty challenging thing to say, isn't it?

Well, how's your faith doing? That's the question we have to ask. How's your faith doing? Is your faith doing, okay? Is it good? Is it bad? Is it just kind of, eh? You know, how's it doing? You know, way...I remember way back in our study of Matthew. Almost ten years ago, we started in Matthew. And I was talking at the time about how cool it would be if we could come up with a faith meter.

Somebody could devise a faith meter to plug into your heart and have a little gauge on there to tell you how your faith is doing, you know. Are you like way down here in the yikes category or are you kind of just surviving or are you thriving, you know? I mean, where's the needle going to fall, you know? When you measure your faith and the health level of your faith, well, I've never come up with a faith meter.

But you know what? A good old-fashioned pandemic does the job quite nicely. You ever noticed that? Or if not a pandemic, you just go through some kind of rotten circumstances that are painful and challenging. That'll tell you right away where your faith is at. It's not fun, but it's true. We find out. We find out where people's faith is.

When they're going through a challenging circumstance, when life begins to fall apart, or when the world is absolutely going out of their mind, globally. So, where's your faith? How is your faith doing? Well, sometimes you go through a situation, or you've just gone through a pandemic or something like that, and you come to the realization your faith isn't probably what it should be.

So, what are you going to do? Just kick yourself. Man, my faith isn't very good. Listen, when you come to the realization that your faith isn't as strong as it

should be, that is the time that we ought to plunge, and I mean headfirst, plunge into the Word of God, and literally immerse our hearts. I mean saturate your heart with the Word of God, and I'll tell you why.

It's written for us in Romans chapter 10.

**Romans 10:17 (ESV)**

*...faith comes from hearing, and hearing through the word of Christ.*

Because “...*faith comes from hearing, and hearing (by) through the word of Christ.*” That is how your faith is built up. And if you're one of those people who finds it difficult to really get a lot out of the Bible when you're just reading it through, listen, I've got all 66 books of the Bible in my teachings on our website.

You're welcome to them whenever you need to. And you know what? You always need to. I always need to. It's there. We should be taking advantage of it. Not just on Sunday. Not just on Wednesday. Every single day. You should be going through the Word of God. Every single day. Because that's how your faith is going to get built up.

You know, I get two kinds of communication most often from people. One who's...one side of the thing is people who write me, and their lives are falling apart; because they've just gone through something, whether it was the pandemic or something else, you know, loss of work, loss of health, whatever, loss of family, whatever the thing might be.

And they're very...it's very challenging to get those kinds of communications because they're usually very desperate for answers and they want very much to see change take place in their lives. But the other communications that I get that are very encouraging are people who have recognized the fact that their faith was not what it should be, and so they dove into the Word of God.

And some of them started reading through the Bible, and then they ran into some issues, so they got online to kind of find some help, and they just happened to find us. And so, they started going through the Bible, and I'll get a note from somebody and say, you know, Pastor Paul, I started in the book of Genesis with you, and I just finished the Old Testament book of Malachi, and I cannot believe how dynamic and growing my faith is.



Do you guys understand that's not me? That's God's Word. It's God's Word that creates faith in our hearts. And there's probably not one of us here, you know, who couldn't use a good booster shot of faith. So, we need to be in the Word every day. Allowing the Word to do what it does so well, build our faith.

And you know what? That's going to create a contrast between you and the people who are unsaved in the world. Because they don't know what to put their faith in. Then they bounce around from thing to thing to thing, and they think for a while they can put it in the government, and then that doesn't work out.

And then they try to put it in science, and then science changes their mind. And they're wondering who in the world am I going to put my faith in or what am I going to put my faith in? And you have that rock-solid contrast. The Word of God, which does not change. Because it is based on the character of God, which does not change.

It gives you great stability. It's a stability that the world is desperately seeking for today. And you have it or at least you have the capability of it, whether you've laid a hold of it completely is a different issue altogether. I hope you have. But it is what makes you stand in contrast to the world.

I'm going to take the next three examples that Paul gives altogether.

- My teaching
- My conduct
- My aim in life
- My faith
- **My patience**
- **My love**
- **My steadfastness**
- My persecutions and sufferings endured

<sup>10</sup>...*my patience, my love, my steadfastness...*” Paul lists these things for Timothy, and he says, these are things you've noticed about me. And the reason I'm taking them together is because these are what we call, theologically, part of the communicable attributes of God.

What that means is, God is patient, God is love, God is steadfast. And He communicates those to us, His children, by the agency of His Holy Spirit. Okay? And that's an important thing to remember, these things don't exist naturally in the world. They're not naturally occurring in the world. In fact,

they're not naturally occurring in you, even as a believer, naturally. They are supernaturally occurring. And that means that for you and me, to have patience, to have love, and to have steadfastness, faithfulness, perseverance, those things, we got to rely on God, who bestows these as a communicable attribute.

You know what communicable means? We talk about it with diseases all the time. You catch somebody's cold or whatever, it's because it was a communicable disease. Well, God has attributes. Well, He has some attributes that are simply His and His alone, right? But He has other attributes which are communicable, meaning He'll pass them along to you and so forth. And these are three, and three very important ones.

So, if you're low on patience, for example, or there's somebody that you know God wants you to love, but you just can't. It's like, God, I'm sorry, I just don't love this person, or steadfastness and faithfulness, those sorts of things and it's just not happening. Well, don't get down on yourself, realize that these are communicable attributes from God, and you have to lay hold of them through the Spirit and invite the Spirit in your heart to do that work of communicating those things to you.

And the best thing I have found to do is to come before the Lord in honesty and just say, hey, Lord, I just want you to know, I am not a patient person. And you know, when it comes to loving people who are unloving, I just, I don't have the goods. And steadfastness, faithfulness, that sort of thing, it just ain't there.

So, I need You to do that work in me. I need You to do that work in me, Lord, and bring these attributes to the surface. Why? Because I want to be a contrast to the ways of the world. Because the world is the opposite. They are impatient, they are unloving, and they're faithless. And we are called out of the world to live differently, to be different than this world.

- My teaching
- My conduct
- My aim in life
- My faith
- My patience
- My love
- My steadfastness
- **My persecutions and sufferings endured**

Finally, the last contrasting example that the apostle gives are his "*11 ...persecutions and sufferings...*" which he endured. And he's not as much

making the point about the fact that he's gone through those things, as much as he endured them. That's what he wants Timothy to understand.

These things are going to come, but I have endured them. We don't talk a lot about enduring because it's not as fun as talking about having victory. You know, we like to...and I believe in victory. I do. I truly do. I believe that God gives us victory. But when it comes to persecutions and sufferings and things that we go through in life sometimes, sometimes God wants us to endure, and that is the victory. And we have a hard time figuring that out sometimes.

You remember how when the Apostle John began to write that lovely book that we call the Book of Revelation? Where was he at the time? He was in a penal colony. That's a fancy name for a floating prison. It was called the Island of Cyprus (correction Patmos). And he was...or Patmos, excuse me...and he was just like Australia, you know, was used as a penal colony, the British used Australia.

They used to take criminals and put them on the island, because they couldn't get away, you know. You got to have a boat to get away. Well, it was the same thing at the Island of Patmos. And so, he's on this penal colony island and he's talking, he begins the Book of Revelation by saying, John, your brother and faithful companion in the suffering and kingdom and patient endurance that are ours in Christ Jesus. (**Revelation 1:9 ESV** “*9 I, John, your brother and partner in the tribulation and the kingdom and the patient endurance that are in Jesus...*”)

Did you catch that? The patient endurance. Yeah, that's hard stuff to even think about. To patiently endure and wait for the Lord doesn't sound like much fun, but I'll tell you one thing, it'll set you apart from the world. It will set you apart. And the reason that Paul patiently endured the difficulties of this life is because he expected them. He expected them.

And that was an important message to give to a young man like Timothy. Because if you don't tell Timothy, and other young ministers of the Gospel, to expect difficulty it's going to catch them by surprise, and they're going to give way to frustration and disappointment, and even feel like giving up. And we're to expect them too.

And that's exactly why he says what he does in verse 12. Look with me in your Bible in verse 12. It says, “*12 Indeed, all who desire to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted...*” And why are you going to be persecuted? Jesus explains it for us, John chapter 15. Let me put this on the screen for you.

### **John 15:19 (ESV)**

*If you were of the world, the world would love you as its own; but because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, therefore the world hates you.*

He says, listen to this (paraphrasing) “If you were of the world, they would love you then because you'd be just like them. You would be one of them. But, because you are my children, and you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, therefore the world hates you.” That's it. There's the simple explanation.

Why does persecution come to believers? Because you've been called out of the world, and you belong now to Him. And you stand, your life stands, in stark contrast to the way they live but instead of appreciating you, they just hate you. Okay. Whatever. But expect it. Expect it. And that way you're not going to get caught off guard. And that's why Paul says in verse 14, look with me in your Bible.

*“<sup>14</sup> But as for you, continue in what you have learned... ”* And that's, boy, that's, we all need to do that. Just keep going through the Word. I think I told you I had a gal write to me and tell me that she had gotten through the entire Bible, finally in her life. She says, now what should I do? I said, start again.

Just keep going. That's what I do. That's what I actually wrote to her. I said you should do what I do. When I get done teaching through the Bible, I start over again and we go back to Genesis, and we start again. And that's what he's saying, *“<sup>14</sup> ...continue in what you have learned and have firmly believed, knowing from whom you learned it <sup>15</sup> and how from childhood you have been acquainted with the sacred writings, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus.”*

I don't know if you circle or underline words in your Bible, but there's a key word in that verse 15 concerning being wise for salvation and it's the word **able**. The word of God is **able** to make you wise for salvation. It doesn't mean that knowing the Word you will automatically be wise for salvation; because you know you can know the Word without putting it into practice or embracing it by faith.

There's a lot of people who know the Word of God and they are not wise for salvation. So that does not come automatically. Knowing the Word is not enough. It's putting it into practice, embracing it, and so forth. So, in other

words, when I hear God's Word taught, I need to embrace it for myself, not for somebody else.

Have you ever had your spouse, or somebody maybe a brother or sister or whatever, you're hearing the Word of God being taught on a Sunday morning and all of a sudden you get an elbow in the ribs and they're seeing if you're paying attention? Do you hear what he said? You need to pay attention right now because he's talking to you.

No. The Word of God is for me. It's for me. If there's something going on in my life that's just messing with everything and turning everything upside down, I need to get serious about the Word of God for me and not sit and look at the other people in my life and think about what they're not doing right.

And man, if they'd just get their act together, things would be better around here. Going to listen to the Word of God for me. And then, as we go on to verse 16, Paul gives probably one of the best descriptions of biblical inspiration. He says, “<sup>16</sup> *All Scripture is breathed out by God...*” Isn't that good?

That's actually what the original Hebrew says, “*...breathed out by God...*” and that's a great definition. We have different examples of God breathing, you know, in the Bible. When Adam was created, the Bible says, (**Genesis 2:7 ESV**) He “*...breathed into his nostrils the breath of life...*” When Jesus rose from the tomb on that very night of the resurrection, what did he do? (**John 20:22 ESV**) “<sup>22</sup> *...he breathed on them and said to them, 'Receive the Holy Spirit.'*” and they received eternal life and the indwelling presence of the Spirit.

It's a wonderful thing God gives us these pictures of Him breathing on, you know, situations and bringing them to life, making them alive. He made Adam alive and all the others who were, when Jesus breathed on them, they became born again with life, right? Isn't that beautiful?

Well, guess what He's also breathed into? His Word. The Word has been breathed into and it's alive. What does It say about Itself? (**Hebrews 4:12 ESV**) “<sup>2</sup> *For the word of God is living and active, sharper than any (double-edged) two-edged sword...*” Right? It's alive! It's living!

I always used to use that weird example of acidophilus in yogurt. It's alive when you eat it. You're eating real germs that are alive. I used to really get grossed out and for years and years, I didn't eat yogurt. And now I can't get enough of it, I realize, well, it's good germs. It's okay. It just didn't sit right with me when

somebody said, there's something living in there. That just, I thought, forget it. I'm not going to put that in my mouth. But it does good.

And the Word of God, when you put It in your heart, It's alive and It makes an impact and It's powerful. Now, I have to tell you though, there are some people who object to the Bible declaring Itself to be inspired and they say, well, now, wait a minute, that's not fair. The Bible can't say that It is inspired. Because that's circular reasoning, that's tooting your own horn, that's, you know what I mean? That's, the Bible can't claim Itself to be inspired.

I love David Guzik, some of you know who he is. He's a colleague of mine. He's written an online commentary. He's from the Calvary Chapel Movement. He's got a great response to this. Let me put it on the screen. You'll love this. He says,

*...to the critic who claims, "Anyone could write a book and say that it is inspired by God" we simply say, please do. Write your book, give it every claim of inspiration, and let's see how it compares to the Bible in any way you want to compare. We invite the smarter critics of the Bible to give us another Bible, something more inspired, something with more life-changing power. The great critic or professor or skeptic is surely smarter than the Galilean fisherman 2,000 years ago, having all the qualifications, all the culture, all the brainpower necessary. It should be easy for them to write something greater than the Bible.*  
**–David Guzik**

So, I love it. It's great. Somebody goes, well, the Bible can't say it's inspired. I say, all right, fine, you do it then. Go ahead, write a Bible, we'll wait. Just go ahead. Do you need some paper? Just go ahead and write the Bible. Do something better.

Oh, wait a minute. Here's some things you've got to kind of follow. You've got to understand something about the Bible, first of all, that we have. It was written over a period of 1,600 years. So, you need to fit that in somehow. And it was written by 40 different authors and in the time span of 1,600 years and 40 different authors over different cultures, it never once contradicts itself.

How well do you think you'll do on that score? You know, eh, something to think about. But, you know, surely you can write something better. Oh, and here's what you need to write about, alright? You need to write about God. You need to write about the origin of the universe. You need to write about the origin of mankind. You need to write about the introduction and consequences

of sin. You need to write about morality, how a person can be saved, and what happens after we die. That's all. Now go, write the Bible. Have fun.

And amazingly, with all those incredibly challenging subjects, the Bible not only speaks of them but speaks of them without contradiction. God is always the same God, sin is always the same sin, and the way to life is always the same way to life. So, Paul ends this chapter by showing the benefits of learning and growing in the Word.

Look at verse 16, he says, <sup>16</sup> *All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for* (then he lists those things,) *teaching* (that's what we're doing here this morning), *for reproof* (reproof means warning, right? And the Greek word carries the idea of something has been exposed in your life. Have you ever read the Bible, and something was exposed in your heart? And you, that...that was God reproving you through the scriptures. He says it is profitable...), *for correction* (That's what happens, by the way, after you've been reprovved and you decide to change course, correct your course because you've been warned or reprovved. He says it is profitable for...), *training in righteousness*, (It teaches us how to live a God-honoring life, why?) <sup>17</sup> *that the man of God* (verse 17) *may be complete, equipped for every good work.*"

And that is such a beautiful thing *"equipped for every good work."* The Word of God equips us for what we've been called to do and how we've been called to live. And you know, I don't understand the relationship between the Word and the Spirit. I really don't. I wish I did, but I don't. I probably have to live another few hundred years to begin to understand that relationship, that dynamic relationship between the living Word of God and the living Holy Spirit and how They come together to empower and enable us to live the life that we've been called to live for Christ.

But all I know is They do. They come together and They do it and They are able, and that's what Paul says here, that the Word of God is able to equip us for every good work and He will do it. Amen. Let's stand together.

So, called to be different, called to live in stark contrast to the ways of the world, the thoughts, and the attitudes of the world. I'm looking right now at the people who've been called to live differently. So, let's rely on God's Holy Spirit to enable us, amen.

Father, thank You so much for Your Word. We need You, Lord. We need You to empower us every single day. Lord, help us to be in the Word, to immerse ourselves, to saturate our hearts with the Word of God. Help us, Lord God, to be

consistent and to be the kind of different that the world needs to see, because Lord, I believe that there are many people in the world who are longing for different.

They just haven't found it yet. Lord, I pray in Jesus' name that we would live to glorify Your name by pointing people to You and showing them that there can be a different. There's another way. There's another way to live and there's another One to live for and His name is Jesus. Help us to be that example. We ask that you would do this, Father, unto the glory of Your name in Jesus' name and all God's people said together, amen.

If you need prayer, come on down front. God bless you.