

The Power of the Word, Study 5

The Divine Purpose of the Word, Part 2

In the last study on II Timothy 3:15, we looked at the 1st divine purpose of the Word of God. That verse tells us that the Bible is able to make us wise for _____ through faith in Christ. II Timothy 3:16-17 gives us 6 more divine purposes for the Word of God. In the next 4 studies, we'll look at the 4 divine purposes listed in verse 16. Before beginning the study, take some time to pray, asking the Holy Spirit to teach you and to use His Word to help you grow in your relationship with Him.

List the four divine purposes in vs. 16:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____

We looked at these 4 powerful purposes of the Word in Study 2. In that study I suggested there's a progression here. Like the 5-step process from the last study that brings us to faith, our all-wise Teacher, the Holy Spirit, uses the Word He Himself has breathed out to mature our faith through this ongoing 4-step process.

We'll look at each of these words first through the definitions of the Greek words that are used (from https://biblehub.com/parallel/2_timothy/3-16.htm) and then through the lens of other Scriptures.

1. Here is the Strong's Concordance definition of the first of those Greek words:

διδασκαλίαν (didaskalian) = instruction, teaching, doctrine, something that is learned by being taught

From this Greek word we have derived the English word *didactic*, which means "instructional, educational, informational, intended to teach." Doctrine is something we learn by being taught. Someone more knowledgeable must instruct and pass on their knowledge to those under them. Being taught "doctrine" may sound a bit stuffy or overly theological, but sound doctrine was very important to Paul and the other New Testament writers. And since they wrote as they were moved by the Holy Spirit, we can conclude that sound doctrine is very important to the Holy Spirit of God. Learning sound doctrine is the first priority in our Christian lives. It is the foundation upon which we base the whole of our beliefs and consequent actions.

Titus 1:9 is part of a list of qualifications for bishops or overseers in the church. What does it say about sound doctrine? _____

What does Paul tell Titus to do in Titus 2:1? _____

The Power of the Word, Study 5

The Divine Purpose of the Word, Part 2

What does Paul tell Timothy about sound doctrine in II Timothy 4:3? _____

What is Paul's exhortation to Timothy in I Timothy 4:16? _____

Why? _____

In I Timothy 1:10, what kinds of things does Paul say are contrary to or opposed to sound doctrine? _____

What does Paul say about those who don't agree with sound doctrine or who try to change doctrine to fit their own ideas and desires in I Timothy 6:3-5? _____

What do they cause in the church? _____

We can see from this sampling of Scriptures that sound doctrine is very important. One of the most important doctrines the Bible teaches is the one we looked at in Study 2: that the Bible was written by the Holy Spirit or "God-breathed." This doctrine is known as "the verbal inspiration of Scripture." If this foundational doctrine is removed, people begin to pick and choose what they think is right in Scripture and discard what they don't like. This is at the root of all "liberal theology." It is a slippery slope and has stripped the Word of God of its power.

But if the Scriptures have been verbal inspired by the Holy Spirit, we can't decide what we want to accept and what we'd prefer to reject. It's either God's Word in total or it's not. "Verbal inspiration" makes Scripture authoritative. God is telling us what's right and wrong, who He is, what is true about the origins of the world, what is true about who we are, and what principles history and the universe are based upon. We must align ourselves with His truth. Questioning the verbal inspiration of the Bible is reflective of the same temptation Satan used on Eve: "Did God really say...?"

Sound doctrine is foundational to our faith, and it is based on the authority of God's Spirit-written Word. We can't afford to be careless about sound doctrine; our lives and character are based upon it. For this reason, it is very important who we listen to and from whom we learn doctrine. This is why Paul said to Timothy in II Timothy 3:14, "knowing from whom you have learned them."

Let me tell you a little story of my own that happened as I was studying for the writing of this lesson. I did a Google search of II Timothy 3:16 and pulled up several websites. One of the websites was a very lengthy commentary on this verse. The author interpreted the first part of the verse in a completely different way than I have

The Power of the Word, Study 5

The Divine Purpose of the Word, Part 2

described in the paragraphs above or in Study 2. His study sounded very credible and highly educated, using both the original languages and historical references. His interpretation, if true, was a theological bombshell. I sent the link to several very knowledgeable people I know. Their genuine expertise in Biblical interpretation and original languages counseled me and affirmed the historic interpretation of the “God-breathed Scriptures.” Further research revealed that the author of the commentary was part of a cult! And by his own admission, he knew nothing of Hebrew or Greek and very little Latin except dim recollections from his high school days though he wrote as if he were well versed in all of those languages! Oh, how grateful I was for the Body of Christ, for the gifts of the Spirit, and the promise of Christ that His Spirit would guide us into all truth! This highlighted for me in the most practical and relevant way the importance of sound doctrine and “knowing from whom we have learned it.”

The New Testament letters of I & II Corinthians, Galatians, Colossians, II Thessalonians, I & II Timothy, Titus, Hebrews, James, II Peter, I & II & III John, and Jude all deal with the problem of false teachers espousing false doctrine. These erroneous teachings led to divisions and all kinds of ugly attitudes and actions.

Protecting ourselves from false doctrine comes in two ways: by being people of The Book ourselves, reading, studying, and praying over the Bible daily; and by being in fellowship with other godly believers who are pursuing God and His truth.

Jesus told His disciples on the night before He died that the Holy Spirit would guide them into all truth, and He taught us in the Lord’s Prayer to pray that we would not be led into temptation but be delivered from evil and the evil one. This is a good prayer to pray for ourselves, for our families, and for our churches. May God guard us from wandering into false doctrine. As you end this study, take a few minutes to pray. Ask God to give you a daily commitment to His Word and to His people, and ask Him to protect you from all that is false and to guide you into all truth.