

# Christianity 101

## The Purpose of The Bible?

A Bible Study of The Mount Zion Church

Written by  
Pastor Ken Patterson



As we study and become more acquainted with the mind of God through scripture, we are reading a book that guides our understanding. This book, The Bible, contains the written Word of God and provides for us accounts of God's action, thoughts, expectations, feelings, and concerns for mankind. Further, the Bible traces God's plan for mankind throughout history and shows us what the future holds for those who believe and accept and for those who do not.

While the Bible does not hold every single historical event or every single step of God's communication with mankind, it does clarify how God moves, what God intends, why God does what He does, and how mankind can come to know Him and relate to Him.

The following lesson is intended to help students to understand the purpose of The Bible. Upon completion, students will have the ability to know that the holy scriptures are not just stories written for our entertainment, rather they are living words with the ability to bring life to us. This is especially needed in times such as the ones we live in where people are hurting and longing for answers to life. The Bible provides the answers we seek and gives us hope that a holy God loves us more than we can ever imagine.

### The Faith Statement—All or Nothing

In 2 Timothy 3, Paul writes to his mentee about the behaviors of people. Verses 1-9 present a picture of the sinful behaviors Timothy would experience and then Paul transitions and tells him to remember to pattern himself after what he learned from the word. Paul then makes an important statement about God's word. He says in verse 16 that what we follow as scripture does not have its origin in us. Scripture, all scripture has its origin and beginning in the mind of God. Why is this important? It presents a foundational stance that we must take in our studies. Either I believe all of it, or I believe none of it. Believing some of it will not work.

Read the beginning phrase of 2 Timothy 3: 16 s" **16** All Scripture *is* given by inspiration of God"

What does all mean to you?

---

Which part of scripture originated in the mind of man? \_\_\_\_\_

Many detractors of those who believe in God will attack the validity of scripture and will seek to challenge what is in The Bible. One will hear arguments from a variety of standpoints such as:

1. Cultural disbelief—it was not written for people of one culture or another
2. Social disbelief—it was written to hold some in subjugation and elevate others
3. Ethnic disbelief—the Bible says some are better than others and by ethnicity they are considered better
4. Academic disbelief—the Bible is merely a book of fables and cannot be explicitly proven

These and other challenges to what we believe require one simple response from those who claim Jesus as savior. Notice what verse 16 supposes. In this first phrase, one can see the absolute faith required. Each of us must come to the gospel with faith that what we have as the Word of God is the Word of God. If we do not have faith in God's word, all of God's word, then none of it is true. It is either all or nothing.

Discussion Questions:

1. Why do you think it is important to have faith that all of what God has given us in His word is true?

To have an unwavering faith in God's word is essential for us because it gives us the assurance of what we have believed and in whom we have believed.

2. How does God help you to trust His word?
3. How does the enemy try to get you to lose faith in God's word?
4. What do you do in those instances when you are challenged in what you believe about God's word?
5. What can you do to grow your faith in God's word?

## The Investment in God's Word

The next phrase presented by Paul describes the benefit one receives from knowing God's word. Remember, Paul was writing to a younger mentee to encourage him in his study and adherence to God's Word. Paul recognized the tendency Timothy had (and we have) in becoming a bit lazy as it relates to our interaction with scripture. Paul suggested that an "investment" in the study of God's word pays dividends. Notice, Paul wrote that it is profitable for doctrine. In the first nine verses of chapter 3, Paul recounts what it looked like in their day for people to live against God's expectation. Sound doctrine is the ideas of principles of behavior and beliefs. Here in verse 16, he pronounces that the Word teaches us how to behave. Thus, this phrase indicates that God's Word is beneficial because it directs us in Godly behaviors.

The chapter begins by showing the non-Godly behaviors.

What behaviors does Paul list in the first verses of chapter 3?


Paul describes these lifestyles as identifiers of perilous times. It should not be surprising that we continue to see these behaviors expressed in modern times. The Word of God prophesied this would be the case! Unfortunately, many do not realize the world's behaviors and attitudes are an investment in destruction. In verse 15, Paul reminds Timothy that the scriptures reveal to us the total picture of salvation in Christ Jesus. Our salvation in the short term seems to position us for persecution (opposition to and from the world) but those who spiritually invest in God's word are "perfected and able to do the work of God."

## The Correction of God's Word

One of the most challenging aspects of The Word is that it highlights when we are living outside of God's will. Here we see the term reprove and correction. These words, we hate! We do not like to be corrected. But, when taken correctly, we find that we should actually thank God for His correction.

Romans 7: 7-8 identifies that God shows us sin so that we can avoid it! He is not like our enemy who likes to stand afar and mock us for our failures. No! God seeks to protect us like a loving father.

**Activity:** Think back to your "parenting" of children. What are some of the rules you gave them? List them below. What was your intent behind these rules?

Top 5 Safety Rules for Children	Why Do We Teach These?

We share rules with our children because all good parents want safety for their children. Verses such as Proverbs 3: 5-6 and Psalm 32: 8 indicate that we have a caring and concerned heavenly father who desires us to experience safety daily and eternally. How do we learn the boundaries? His word! The Word identifies the boundary and shows us what we are to do and what we are not to do.

## **The Direction of God's Word!**

The final phrase in 2 Timothy 3: 16 is that the Word of God is profitable for instruction in righteousness. This phrasing is connected to the characteristics of the culture that Paul identified. Righteous living or righteousness is the outward example of the impact of the Word. When we come to understand that God's Word is real, that it benefits our lives, and that we are to be earthly examples of a heavenly father, then our outward example of what to do will be considered righteous. In short, the word should direct us in what not to do as mentioned in the previous section, but it also should direct us in what we should be doing.

As followers of Christ, we are not simply to not sin. We have a mission that we have been called to complete. The Word directs us in that mission and those actions promote God's Kingdom (Thy kingdom come). We are to be the mouthpieces of God so that others will understand the purpose of His word. Righteousness always has a behavioral component to it. This is why the writer James said, "Don't just be hearers of the Word, be doers" (James 1: 22). As we make The Bible (God's Word) active in our lives we will grow to become the children God can be proud of and can promote!

**Big Aha Moment**...If you are not in study, how will you ever be able to live for God? How will you ever know what that means? How will you ever know what to do?