

October 20, 2013
Pentecost 22

"All Scripture Is God Breathed"

2 TIMOTHY 3:14-4:5

But as for you, continue in what you have learned and have become convinced of, because you know those from whom you learned it, ¹⁵ and how from infancy you have known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. ¹⁶ All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, ¹⁷ so that the servant of God, may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.

In the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who will judge the living and the dead, and in view of his appearing and his kingdom, I give you this charge: ² Preach the word; be prepared in season and out of season; correct, rebuke and encourage—with great patience and careful instruction. ³ For the time will come when people will not put up with sound doctrine. Instead, to suit their own desires, they will gather around them a great number of teachers to say what their itching ears want to hear. ⁴ They will turn their ears away from the truth and turn aside to myths. ⁵ But you, keep your head in all situations, endure hardship, do the work of an evangelist, discharge all the duties of your ministry.

"All Scripture is God-breathed!" "God-breathed" is very literal translation of the Greek word theopneumatos, a combination of the word for God (and the word for breath or spirit. We are thankful the NIV translates this word "God-breathed" rather than following the King James Version that translates this "inspired." It helps us appreciate how God breathed into the writers of the Scriptures the very words and thoughts he wanted them to write. 2 Peter 1:21 says, "Men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit."

All Scripture is God breathed. The word "all" is all inclusive. There are some who say the Bible contains God's Word. This implies that part of the Bible is God's Word and part of it is just the words of people in the form of myths and legends. Some so called Bible scholars claim they have the deeper knowledge that allows them to separate the parts that come from God and the parts that are human in origin. They look at the Bible like a cob of corn that has to have the husks removed before you can eat it.

The Apostle Paul wanted his young pastor friend Timothy to believe with all his heart that all Scripture is God breathed. He wanted him to continue in these God breathed Scriptures and fearlessly proclaim these Holy Scriptures to others.

What a blessing it is to know Scripture is God breathed

"But as for you, continue in what you have learned and have become convinced of, because you know those from whom you have learned it, and how from infancy you have known the holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus." Timothy began his journey in the Scriptures from infancy. The Greek word used here is "brephos." It is used to describe the baby John leaping in womb of his mother Elizabeth, the baby Jesus lying in a manger, and the little children that were brought to

Jesus. Early in this letter Paul wrote, "I have been reminded of your sincere faith, which first live in your grandmother Lois and your mother Eunice and, I am persuaded now lives in you also." His mother Eunice and his grandmother Lois held him in their arms and spoke the Scriptures to him, the Holy Scriptures that are God breathed.

The greatest privilege a mother or father can have is to bring their little child in their arms to know about Jesus through the blessing of Holy Baptism and the blessing of the Holy Scriptures. Jesus said we should baptize all nations in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit and then teach them everything he has commanded us. The Lord told his Old Testament people to take the Words he had given through Moses and "Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up."

A few weeks ago we had the opportunity to spend a little time with the grand children in Santa Barbara. Susan reads books to Wyatt and I get to read books to two year old Elijah. She is in one room and I in the other. The little fellow brought out two small books about animals. Then he went into the bed room and brought out a big book. It was this Bible Story book from Concordia Publishing House. He listened as grandpa showed him the pictures that were based on Scripture and talked to him about creation and about Jesus. Timothy learned the Scriptures as a child and Paul wanted him to stay in those Scriptures.

I remember learning how to read when I was in first grade. I loved my first grade teacher Miss Kappelman. I can still remember learning the "S" sound by saying, "Sam, sat in the sun, the sun is good for Sam." Here you and I are today still learning. Even when you reach the age of 90 you are still constantly learning. Way at the top of all the things you have learned is what you have come to know in the Bible.

It is through these Holy Scriptures that you have a window into the mind of God. You can learn from these Scriptures how much God cares about you loves you. As Paul told Timothy you have known the Holy Scriptures which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. It is through these words of the Bible that I can discover the most important questions of life such as where I came from, why I am here and what is going to happen to me when I die. Here in this book I discover how the world began not through a process of evolution but through God's creation. Here I gain the understanding of what sin is, and how it came into the world, and how it ruins my life and makes me unacceptable to God. It is in this book I learn how God rescues me by giving me the gift of his Son. I can spend my whole life think about John 3:16 and never exhaust the comfort of knowing, "God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son that whosoever believes in him should not perish but have everlasting life." Through this book I am drawn close to Jesus. You never grow weary of the words he speaks to you, or his blood that was shed for you, or his hands that hold the nail prints after his resurrection from the dead.

"All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work." Notice this important little word "ALL!" Our God has chosen to reveal himself to us in real words that were breathed into people and guided by the Holy Spirit. These writers used their words and their style of writing and even gathered information from different sources as Luke tells us in the beginning of his gospel. Then God breathed into these people the very thoughts and words they were to write. They were carried along by the

Holy Spirit.

Last Friday night at our Atascadero Bible Study we came across this amazing verse at the end of Deuteronomy chapter 29. It says, "The secret things belong the Lord our God, but the things revealed belong to us and to our children forever, that we may follow all the words of this law." There are things about God that remain hidden and secret to us. We may not have all the details on exactly how he carried on the process of creation, but he tells us in clear words that even a child can understand, "In the beginning God created the heavens and earth." Everything God revealed to us in his Word was God breathed. With this important little word "ALL" we can understand why the Revelation ends by warning us not to add or subtract anything the words of the prophecy of this book.

These God-breathed Scriptures are useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness. I am born into this world captivated and motivated and stimulated and exhilarated by my perceived ability to manufacture the righteousness necessary for God to love me and bless me and take me to heaven. These God-breathed Holy Scriptures devastate me. They knock me down. They tell me the truth of how far my righteousness falls falls God and falls short of his glory. They even reveal to me in Isaiah 64 that my righteousnesses are like filthy rags. The Scriptures show me that even my best moments of life, those shining moments, when I seem to excel in being better than most people my righteousness is tainted with sin.

It is only in this book that you and learn how we are saved by God's grace with a righteousness outside of ourselves that comes through Jesus Christ. The Holy Scriptures lead us to say with the prophet Isaiah, "I delight greatly in the Lord; my soul rejoices in my God. For he has clothed me with the garments of salvation and arrayed me in a robe of righteousness."

What a blessing it is proclaim the God-breathed Scriptures to others

Paul did not want Timothy to keep these Scriptures to himself. He actually puts him under an oath and pleads with him to preach the Word boldly and confidently. "In the presence of God and of Christ Jesus who will judge the living and the dead, and in view of his appearing and his kingdom, I give you this charge, "Preach the Word." The Greek word for preaching has the thought of announcing something, heralding it, proclaiming it. This is to be done in season and out of season. That means the Lord will give you and me the right times and season when we can proclaim the truths of his God-breathed Holy Word to others whether it is our children or grand children or friends and just people we happen to meet one day in our community.

The time is coming when people will not put up with sound teaching. "Instead, to suit their own desires, they will gather around them a great number of teachers to say what their itching ears want to him." Did you ever get a bug or small fly in your ear? You know how that can make your ears itch. We all have itching ears. We like to hear what we want to hear. We have powerful filters that cause us to filter out parts of God's Word that direct us to Christ alone as the source of our salvation. It is part of sinful nature to enjoy myths and stories more than the clear truth of God's Word. With myths and fables the sinful human heart can form our its own opinions based on feelings and emotions rather than on the clear Word of God that is God-breathed.

I recall a pastor in Santa Barbara in the 1970's who was serving at UCSB as the Lutheran campus pastor. He stopped by to invite college students from our congregation to join his new class on Genesis. He handed me a brochure with the title "Genesis and Myth." I asked Bruce if he was going to teach the students that the early chapters of the Bible were myth and he said "Of course!" We asked how he could work with students who were seeking answers in life by raising further doubts in their minds about the truthfulness of Scripture. His answer was that by creating doubt you actual cause them to agonize over their faith and it strengthens them. Then he said, "Steve, if you ever find this new way of looking at the Bible, you will be like a thirsty camel going for water." He find great joy and delight in spinning certain parts of the Bible as myths and fables. Paul told Timothy he should keep his head in all situations, endure hardship, do the work of the evangelist and discharge all the duties of his ministry. That starts with believing all Scripture is God-breathed. Help me close this sermon by joining me saying these amazing words "all Scripture is God-breathed." Amen.