

Grow Up: Scripture Is Our Teacher
By Senior Pastor Tom Harrison
2 Timothy 3:10-17
June 14, 2021

Key Focus: *God's Word is profitable for teaching.*

We all need to learn so that we can grow. When we love the subject matter—learning is enjoyable. I'm reminded of the Paul Simon song, "Kodachrome," when he recalled all the stuff he had to learn in high school and concludes, "... it's a wonder I can think at all." I remember intentionally trying to forget the material after some tests in college classes. In my immaturity, I thought it might waste space in my brain. It was trivial information to me. Since it had no application, I was not motivated. My spirit was not teachable in these classes. My attitude was, "What's the least amount of work I have to do to pass this class?" I believe "Humility is the essential virtue; pride is the essential vice." A teachable spirit opens doors to growth and opportunity. A teachable spirit unites. It recognizes that: *I do not know it all. I need others to help me grow.* Not only do we need to learn, but we also need to teach. This philosophy aligns with our mission statement of *Helping Others Follow Jesus*. It's not enough just for us to follow Jesus, but we should be helping others follow, too. We can teach the scriptures to others in a wide variety of ways. Parents have a great opportunity to be teaching their kids. If we don't teach children God's Word, they will learn from other things that are often opposed to the teachings and tradition of the Christian faith.

APPLICATION: What am I learning? Who or what am I learning from? How is it affecting me? Who am I teaching? Asbury has many opportunities to learn and to teach. The study, "Grow at Home: A Beginners Guide to Family Discipleship" by Winfield Bevins is recommended for families. Asbury is making these available to you.

How to study the Bible. Always ask 2 things:

- 1.) "What's the **CONTEXT**?" Failing to look at what goes before and comes after, can lead us astray. Some contextual questions are: Who is writing? (Paul) To Whom? (Timothy) Why? (Paul is about to die).
- 2.) "What's the **CONTENT**?" What is Paul telling Timothy?

2 Timothy 3:10-17 (Pew Bible p. 1182)

All Scripture = OT." Paul did not carry NT – However, some of his letters were used in the early church. OT looks forward to Messiah. NT recalls/celebrates Messiah's coming.

All scripture is:

- 1) **breathed out by God** "Theopneustos" = Gk word Paul prob coined. "Theos" = "God." "pneustos" = "breath" (i.e. "pneumonia"). When God spoke, He breathed out words. Gen 2:7 *Then the Lord God formed the man of dust from the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living creature.* As God formed human beings by His breath, so He has breathed His spirit into the completion of scripture.

2) **and profitable** for 4 things: **for teaching** (today's focus). Next Sunday = "**reproof, correction**" and "**training in righteousness.**" June 27 = the purpose of teaching – **competent and equipped for every good work.**

To be "**profitable**" means "**advantageous, beneficial, helpful, rewarding, useful, valuable, worthwhile.**"

*I did not shrink from declaring to you anything that was **profitable** and **teaching** you in public and from house to house, testifying both to Jews and to Greeks of repentance toward God and of faith in our Lord Jesus Christ. Acts 20:20-22*

*I want you to insist on these things, so that those who have believed in God may be careful to devote themselves to good works. These things are excellent and **profitable** for people. But avoid foolish controversies, genealogies, dissensions, and quarrels about the law, for they are unprofitable and worthless. Titus 3:8-10* There are "profitable" and "unprofitable" pursuits and investments. Spend your life on that which helps and doesn't hinder or harm. This is an invitation to learn, grow, and get better. It is something worthwhile. Some parts of scripture will be more profitable than others.

"Teaching" Paul told Timothy: *You, however, have followed my teaching, my conduct, my aim in life, my faith, my patience, my love, my steadfastness, ¹¹ my persecutions and sufferings" v 10 **my teaching*** is listed first. Timothy's faith didn't begin with Paul, but with his grandmother and mother: *from childhood you have been acquainted with the sacred writings, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus* Someone taught us everything we've learned: how to walk, talk, read, work. My parents taught me how to answer the telephone, to use manners, to play baseball, to ride a bicycle, and to go to church. It's not only family who teaches us, but teachers, coaches, and people we meet at church. My youth sponsors at Rose Hill (along with my parents) are why I'm here today. Furthermore, friends have taught me so much. One of my favorite sayings, "*Show me your friends and I'll show you your future,*" means our friends influence us a lot.

1.) We need to develop a **teachable spirit**. Having a teachable spirit means being willing and eager to learn.

"Orthodoxy" = "ortho" means "right" and "doxy" means "thinking" or doctrine/beliefs. Some of our doctrine is difficult to understand. Having a teachable spirit means we are willing to learn and to invest time and effort in this pursuit.

2.) **We need to teach others.** Paul told Timothy in his first letter, *if you put these things before the brothers, you will be a good servant of Christ Jesus, being trained in the words of the faith and of the good doctrine that you have followed. (1 Timothy 4:6).* Timothy was to teach others in the faith. This is one of the reasons I want you to know the Apostles Creed. Not only memorize it but understand it. Teaching happens in a classroom. Those who are teachers should be prepared, know scripture and doctrine, select relevant topics with application, and learn to be great communicators. Teachers are always learning.

We can have all the info in the world, but we may not apply it. Knowing something and practicing it are two different things. I may know that exercise and diet will help me lose weight and live longer, but I may choose not to practice it. The Christian life is not just about believing the right things, it's about practicing them, too. "**Orthopraxy**" is the right practice of doctrine: ¹⁷ *that the man of God may be competent, equipped for every good work.*

Overwhelmingly, most teaching does not happen in a classroom. It happens by our example. We teach when we are humble and not arrogant. Teaching should happen in the context of humility, too. I believe the most important thing part of all of life is what will you do about Jesus? However, if all I ever do is talk about Jesus to my friends who may not be a follower of Jesus, it may not be attractive, it may be a turnoff. Kind and not angry, give others the benefit of the doubt and not be judgmental, when we exercise discipline and exercise and eat right, when we show hospitality to others and welcome them in the name of Jesus, when we pray for others instead of criticize them, when we get out of bed and come to worship instead of sleeping in or doing the wash. All of us are always teaching others about what we feel is important about life.

The best way to teach is to learn. The best place to learn is the Bible. And the best way to learn the Bible is to discover the stories of the Bible. There's Abraham and Sarah, this elderly couple God told to leave their native land and go to the land He would give them – and when they were very old, this childless couple was going to have a baby. There's Abraham's great-grandson, Joseph, who endured such sibling rivalry from his brothers and was mistreated in every way, showing us how to forgive. There's Moses, who lost his leadership nerve, being restored and empowered, and making a nation out of a rag-tag demoralized group of slaves. There's Ruth, showing such love and compassion for her mother-in-law, that she said, "*Where you go, I will go. Where you stay, I will stay. Your people shall be my people, and your God my God. Where you die I will die, and there will I be buried.*" Her great-grandson, King David, was a man after God's own heart, even with some tragic flaws. Nehemiah was courageous. There's one more: *For Ezra had set his heart to study the Law of the Lord, and to do it and to teach his statutes and rules in Israel.* Ezra 7:10. Ezra does 3 things: **study** the Law, **do** it (application), and to **teach** it. However, these actions follow the crucial part: **For "Ezra had set his heart."** Setting our hearts determines our actions. We become what we set our hearts upon. We become like what we love. If we love entertainment, exercise, fashion, health, sports, we will devote ourselves to those pursuits. What we set our hearts on determines our outcome. Jesus said, "*where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.*" Jesus said, "*Seek 1st the Kingdom of God.*" When we set our hearts on something, we have results. If you love your job, you have an outstanding opportunity to be successful. You'll go the extra mile. I heard one guy say this week, "I love my job so much, I'd work for free." Hopefully, his boss doesn't know that, but that's the enthusiasm that carries the day. Jesus said, "*If you love me, you'll obey my commandments.*" Jesus said, "*You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul, mind, and strength.*" But it doesn't end there. "*And you shall love your neighbor as yourself.*" The end of teaching is not simply for my acquisition of additional knowledge.

I keep returning to May 30 when we scrolled those 89 names of members of Asbury who went to be with the Lord since Memorial Day 2020. I saw so many traits in them: gentle, kind,

loving, determined, faithful, consistent, servants. Basil, Barbara, Bill, John, Dee, and Kathryn, to name just a few. It gives us pause to ask a vitally important question: "Who am I becoming?" What are we choosing?

All scripture points us to Jesus. As we give our lives to Jesus, His Spirit teaches us to be like Him. He leads us into all truth. Now is the time, this is the day, to choose life by letting Jesus come into your heart.