

2Timothy 24-12-22b

We're ready now to resume our study here in 2 Timothy and it is apropos at any season, including Christmas, when the Lord Jesus is the Word made flesh and we are here talking about the value of the Word, its profitability. There is a quick issue that is brought up. If you want details and examples, you can look at the New Treasury of Scripture Knowledge.

There is a great note to which I will refer here. As we come to verse 16, all scripture is given by inspiration of God and is profitable. You will notice the word is in italics.

If you left it out, it would read, all scripture is given by inspiration of God and profitable. This is the Greek grammar. Let me just say that these two descriptions of all scripture are linked by the word and, and they are equal, they are coordinate, they are the same kind of construction.

So it says, all scripture, theonouustos, all scripture, God breathed, all scripture, profitable, God breathed and profitable. But, and you need to pay attention to this because it is happening in the world today. They got the idea.

You remember in the 1800s, late 1800s is when you started having JEPD, the Yahwist, the Eloist, the priestly redactor and the Deuteronomist had written different parts of the law of Moses. And so they started chopping it up and saying, well, this is the priestly guy talking, this is the Deuteronomist talking. And they, they sliced and diced the Pentateuch and blunted it of its divine force and its inspiration in endeavoring to say that it was a composite pastiche, crazy quilt from four different redactors.

All scripture is God breathed and profitable. But in 1881 in the English, they changed one of these predicate adjectives. You know what a predicate, remember your English back in school? What is a predicate adjective? You get the subject.

Then you have a verb of being is, are, was, were, be, am, been, seem, become, stand, grow, continue, turn, remain. One of your stasis verbs, right? And then you have either a predicate nominative or a predicate adjective. So these are predicate adjectives.

Scripture is, which is implied in Greek. You don't have to have it. Inspired and profitable.

They are two descriptions, both applying to scripture. But what they did is they changed the second one and you watch out because this is widespread today. It's tricky.

It's sneaky. It's deceptive. It is false and it is dangerous.

And you can go back to 1881 when this liberal German false theology started becoming prevalent. They changed one of these predicate adjectives to an attributive position. And all that means is the translation came out, every scripture inspired of God is also profitable.

Now think about this. It's important. Seems like trivial.

Seems like minuscule. It's not. They changed it to read.

And this has been followed by other translations since then. Your new American standard Bible has a marginal note saying that this is a possible alternate reading and it's not possible. It's impossible.

And it is the devil's own medicine. They said every scripture inspired of God is profitable, is also profitable. So if a scripture, if a writing is inspired by God, it's profitable.

This opens the door to saying not every scripture is inspired. The inspired ones are profitable. Do you see it? The inspired scriptures are profitable for doctrine, reproof and so on.

But it makes you think, well, now what I have to do is figure out which ones are inspired and which ones are not. So Joshua's conquest of Canaan, that's not inspired. Samuel hacking Agag in pieces, that's not inspired.

And so on. The inspired scriptures are profitable. And it is the devil's own lie.

That is not what it says. It says every scripture is inspired and profitable. They are coordinate.

They are the same. It's not, well, if it's inspired, it's also profitable. And that's what they did.

And it's in the 1881 revised version. And that was followed by some later versions. The new American standard from 1960.

I think, I don't know if they fixed this in the, I think in 85 or something, they updated the new American standard. But as of 1960, new American standard had this reading in the margin as could also be read this way. And it is wrong, false, bad.

You don't go judging scripture and deciding, well, this one's inspired. So that's going to be profitable. I don't think this is inspired.

All of this hate on certain kinds of people or certain kinds of practices. That's not inspired. So that's not profitable.

I can safely ignore that. No, sorry. This is the subtlety that is the slight out of level, slight not plum that by the time you get to the second and third story of your understanding of scripture, you are a couple of feet off of true and right and proper.

So be sure you underline it in your Bible. Every scripture, all means every, every scripture is inspired. The scriptures are in this book.

God has allowed manuscripts to contain errors. Copyists, scribes, printers have made mistakes, but the scripture itself, the books, the passages are where they are supposed to be. There's no apocryphal books that are supposed to be in here and are not.

There's no books in here that shouldn't be in here, not to be thrown out. What God has ensured

is that all scripture was collected in the old testament canon and was recognized well before the time of Christ. The scribes in Israel, probably starting with Ezra during the captivity and in the post captivity years, they, everybody knew that the Pentateuch was inspired from the time that Moses handed it to Joshua and Joshua finished it.

The first five books of the Bible, no question. And not until the JEPD, I'm sure there were a few earlier guys, but there was no widespread belief that the first five books might not be inspired until the Germans. And you know, I love the Germans.

I'm married to somebody that's half German, but you got to watch their theologians. Those guys will lead you down a path. Got to watch them.

If you got a little German dog, you got to watch them. I don't know what they might do, but all scripture is spoken verbally, breathed out by God. We tend to think inspired that God has put some special inspiration into it.

That isn't actually what this says. It doesn't say there's no word for in, you know, it doesn't use the Greek preposition that means in or, or into it's Theos new stocks. It is spoken with the breath of God.

It is communicated from the throne and it isn't talking about so much a special power that it has intrinsically as its authority. It is sourced in God. He thought it, he spoke it with his breath.

It has been communicated with the authority of the divine throne in heaven. That's its power is its authority. The power comes to the scripture from the Holy spirit, the Holy spirit bringing to our minds, the word of God, that is its power.

It doesn't have magical power. You can't write it on a scrap of paper, put it in a phylactery and strap it to your hand or your forehead or nail it to your doorpost and their special power. Some people think that inspiration, I'm going to, I'm going to speak this word.

I'm going to recite this verse. And it's got a, a formula of an incantation. It's got some sort of mystical, magical power, just speaking it.

No, that's not it at all. It is Theos new stocks. It is God's heart communicated through his mouth with his breath.

And this is why there's such a close connection between the Holy spirit and the word of God, because the Holy spirit is new man. He is wind. He is breath.

And he is the expiration. If you will, you could almost say all scripture is expired by God. It's expelled.

It is breathed out by God, but expired has come to mean a whole different thing. All scripture is inspired by God. Every scripture is God breathed and every scripture is profitable.

Every scripture, Jesus wept two words. It's inspired and profitable. Any part of the genealogies, any minor detail in the narratives, any phrase in the prophetic sections, any Psalm, any proverb, apples of gold, pictures of silver.

It is inspired and profitable. We may not understand it. We may not benefit from it, but it is absolutely an intrinsic property.

It is a definitional property. Scripture is inspired. That which is not scripture is not inspired.

Our dreams, our visions, our thoughts, our extrapolations, our interpolations, our imaginations don't count. It is the scripture and it is up to us to rightly divide the word of truth to make sure that we are handling it properly. We're not misusing it.

Anything can be misused. If you ever watch forensic files and some of these investigation of murder programs that are documentary in nature, one of the things that strikes me is the variety in murder weapons. You can kill somebody with almost anything.

I was taught as a young Marine how to kill somebody with a number two pencil. You can use almost anything. Bash somebody on the head with any heavy object, anything that's got a sharp edge.

You can take anything and you can misuse it for an ill purpose, and that includes scripture. Scripture is easily misused. You chop it up and throw it in a blender.

You isolate one phrase or one verse or two verses. Take them out of their context. Take them away from their divine purpose.

Take them away from the legitimate application, and you can make scripture say anything. You look at some of the videos where they take prominent people in politics and they chop up their speeches and paste them together and make them say things that are antithetical. For a funny example of this, you can go on YouTube and find where they've taken Star Trek The Next Generation and they've made Let It Snow, the Christmas song Let It Snow, into Captain Picard saying Make It So, but they take one or two words from different characters in different scenes and they've pasted together into the Let It Snow, Make It So song.

Well, the significance of that is people do this with scripture in much the same way, and it is to be alert and to be watchful and not be taken in by misunderstandings and misapplications. They can be very persuasive, but all scripture is God-breathed. If God didn't say it, it's not so, and don't make it so.

If it's not God-breathed, if it's your imagination, if it's your wishful thinking, I just wish we could all get along. I wish we could just embrace and be accepting and overlook and big tent and come on you Buddhists, come on you whatever flavor of degeneracy or depravity or perversity. Oh, we don't want to be off-putting.

The Lord Jesus said, I have not come to bring peace but a sword, and that sword is going to divide people into those who want and the who want, and they can even be in the same household. I have come to bring a sword and it is going to cut what people actually think, what they believe, what they pursue, what they prioritize. The Lord Jesus is not the great uniter.

He is the ultimate divider. There are those who are going into the eternal future with God and those who are going into the lake of fire. There are those who are laying hold of righteousness by faith and those who are perpetrating evil by faithlessness, and we are here to represent the Lord Jesus Christ, and we have to identify who we are, why we're here, what we should be doing and what we should not, and the way we do it is with all Scripture that comes from God's mouth, not what people would like it to say, not what people wish it would say.

All Scripture is spoken by God, and what God says goes for us, and profitable. What is profitable? Well, it says for four things, right? And take a look at this. This is something you may not have seen before.

You know this verse backwards, forwards. You can speak it in your sleep. You can say it in your dreams, but look at this.

What are the four things? Say them out loud with me. Doctrine, reproof, correction, and instruction in righteousness. Look at chapter 4, verse 2. Where is Paul going with this? He says, these are the properties of Scripture.

This is how you know something is inspired by God. It is profitable for doctrine, reproof, correction, and instruction in righteousness. Look at verse 2. Timothy preached the word.

Be ready in season, out of season. Now, how many things do we have here at the end of verse 2? Convince, rebuke, exhort with patience, and teach. Now, draw a line back up, at least mentally.

Convince, that's doctrine. Rebuke, that's reproof. Exhort, that's correct.

Teach, that's instruction. The properties of Scripture define Timothy's communication mission. Because Scripture is profitable for doctrine, Timothy is to convince, to preach from Scripture.

This is the word of God. These are our doctrinal understandings. This is what Scripture says is right, proper, and true.

This is what is wrong, improper, and false. Doctrine. How should we then live? Convince, persuade.

This is why sermons are longer than the passage. We don't just get together, read the Scripture, and go home, because it is the pastor's job to convince. Here's why our understanding of this passage is what it is.

Because look at this passage over here. We compare Scripture with Scripture. We look at the Old Testament antecedents.

We look at the New Testament expressions and applications and illustrations. Convince. The pastor's job is to convince.

Well, he has to be convinced before he can convince. There's nothing worse than a half-hearted salesman who doesn't believe in his product. It comes through.

If somebody doesn't believe in a thing, you can tell. Their heart's just not really in it. The pastor has to be convinced himself.

This is why Paul starts with, Timothy, you've known these Scriptures since you were young, and they make you wise for deliverance. You are convinced. You are equipped.

You are enabled and empowered. You are in the process of, day by day, being delivered from the pressures of being half-Jewish and half-Greek, of being looked down on because you're young, of being dismissed and object of suspicion because you're associated with Paul, who is a criminal. He's a convicted felon, that Paul, and you're associated with him.

You consider him your spiritual father, and look at him. He's been arrested any number of times. The Jews have punished him.

The Greeks have punished him. The Romans have punished him. Everybody's after this guy.

They run him out of town. They stone him and leave him for dead. This is your guy.

These are pressures for Timothy, but he is delivered from drawing wrong conclusions, from fading out, giving up, going a different way by the Scriptures that he is known and is convinced of. We need to be convinced and know that we stand on solid ground when we make our decisions, when we implement our personal policies, when we express love in the various areas based on the conditions that we have learned in 1 Timothy, we've learned in Titus, we've learned in 2 Timothy. We know the limits of one another love.

We know the limits of neighbor love. We know the limits of those who are outside love, and we know the nature of enemy love, what it does and what it does not do. We learn this from the Scripture.

That's our doctrine. We are persuaded. We are convinced, and the job of the pastor is to convince.

If you go to church and you're not convinced, you come away saying, I still don't know what that Scripture means. Get you another pastor, and if I am failing, find another guy. You need to have confidence that your understanding of Scripture is correct, and you can with boldness and confidence come before the throne of grace for help in time of need, and you can boldly and with confidence live a life that represents the Lord Jesus, lays hold of righteousness by faith,

lays up treasure in heaven, equips us for service and function now and in the ages to come.

You have to be convinced. You have to know. Isn't it great? All of you, I can think of every single one of you, and all of you have areas where you have absolute knowledge.

You've learned it. You have experience. You've done it for a while, and when you go to that task, you know what you're doing, and nobody can tell you, wait a minute, that's not the way to tune a piano.

The last piano tuner I saw, he used a piece of felt and stuck it down between, and you don't even have a piece of felt. Are you sure you know how to tune? Listen, I know how to tune a piano. I've been tuning pianos for eight years, and I can tune a piano.

Nobody's going to tell me I can't tune a piano. I know it. I know the causes, conditions, successions, relations.

I know why it's not working. I know how to fix it if it's not working. It is a known entity.

I know it as well as it can be known by a piano tuner. So I have confidence. I am fully persuaded, and when I leave a piano, I know I did a good job.

There's no doubt in my mind. I listened to a recording last night. A customer of mine live-streamed a player piano, a modern player system, and a Chickering & Sons piano, and that piano was singing opera.

It sounded gorgeous because I know what I'm doing when I tune. This is the level of confidence that we should have in our Christian life. I wonder if I should pray or not pray in this way.

I wonder if I should say or not say. I wonder if I should do or not do. If you don't have confidence, the Scriptures are able to make us wise for deliverance in that situation.

There is nothing the Scriptures cannot do by way of letting us know how we should operate. I know what is Scripture and isn't Scripture, and when I go to what is Scripture, I have confidence. I know what it says, and I am therefore going to step out.

If I have a question about the specific application, what do I do? We have the Holy Spirit. We can come boldly before the throne to find grace to help in time of need. That's Hebrews chapter 10.

By the new and living way, the torn flesh of the Lord Jesus, through the veil, into the Holy of Holies. God is not just the judge on the throne. He's our Heavenly Father.

Does He want us to know and do the right thing? Is it His will that we know and do the right thing, that we have clarity, that we have confidence? Is it God's will or would God like us to twist slowly in the wind and be confused and be unsure? Confidence, doctrine, be convinced. My job is to present the Word of God in a way that is convincing because it's true and it's right and it's correct. And if there is any doubt, go to the Father.

Lord, I listened to somebody preach this passage. I think I know what it says, but I'm not at that level of confidence. Shine a light on my path.

Do you think that God, if you ask Him for bread, He's going to let you try to eat a rock or a snake or a scorpion? If you, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more your Heavenly Father will give what is good to those who ask Him? If there's any doubt, if I fail to make something clear, if I confuse it, if you come away unconvinced, go over my head. In the power and presence of the Lord Jesus, go to the Father and say, Father, I'm not sure I've got this right. This is going to be a bold step.

This is going to be consequential if I move in this direction. I think this is what's right, but I'm just not convinced enough to do it with confidence. Pray.

Expose yourself further to the Word of God. Wait for the Holy Spirit to impress it on your heart, to shine a light on the path. God will always answer prayers for guidance and light on the path with a yes.

He never turns that down. If we have met the conditions for guidance, it is a conditional promise. Purge me with hyssop that I may be clean.

Wash me that I am whiter than snow. Try me. See if there be any evil way in me.

Show me my secret faults. I want to know. I want to fix it.

I want to be qualified for guidance. I want to fully and confidently represent the Lord Jesus in this life. God will always answer.

He is canvassing the earth looking to answer that prayer with a yes. There are not that many believers that are that committed to pleasing God, whatever it takes. Look at the sacrifice the Lord Jesus made to come to earth as a baby, to grow up in the squalor and the detritus of human fallenness, a country under Roman occupation and oppression, not well off, not dwelling in a palace, not with advantages.

He gave up everything that He possessed to be our Savior. Can we not sacrifice whatever it takes to represent Him while He is at the throne interceding on our behalf? We can be representing Him on this earth and shining a light, reflecting the glory that will draw others to the Father. But we don't do it by compromise.

We don't do it by confusion. We don't do it by uncertain steps. We can't be a ship without a rudder, blown about by every wind of doctrine.

Doctrine should be something we confidently hold, that we're clear on, no doubts, no second guessing. Those who are blown about by every wind of doctrine haven't got solid doctrine because they're not in the Word. They're listening to somebody extrapolate and make stuff up.

Postmodern Christianity is replete. It is characterized by this kind of mishandling of the Word.

Be convinced.

So look at the correspondence here of 4.2 with 3.16. The inspired Word of God is profitable for doctrine. So be convinced of that doctrine. It is profitable for reproof.

So when the pastor communicates the Word of God and it is a rebuke, what does a rebuke do? What's the nature of a rebuke? Rebuke in two words is, that's wrong. What you're doing, what you're saying, what you're thinking, that's wrong. That is not right.

Rebuke is pointing out error. If somebody's doing well but not well enough, if they're kind of getting there but you don't rebuke them, you encourage them. Somebody who has got their heart in it, if they're making a little mistake here or there or they forgot a step, what's the response to somebody that is on the right road but is fumbling and stumbling a little bit? That is met with encouragement.

That's good, but don't forget this. You're on the right track, but think about it. You really need to do this.

When someone is really endeavoring, there is encouragement. And we have encouragement from the scriptures that feeds our hope, which is our motivation. And it's like, well, you know, I didn't get that exactly right, but it's way better than I would have done not long ago.

There is encouragement. The Holy Spirit, the paraclete, is the comforter. He is the encourager.

And He encourages us. But there is a time when we're not quite of that attitude and at that level of striving to do well, and we've turned a corner. We've momentarily had an impulse.

The sinful nature raises its head, and we are wrong. Anybody that's been around little children, raised little children, parented little children, watched little children for more than five years, five minutes, many times they will try to be helpful, and you encourage them. But there are other times when they get very self-willed, and they want what they want.

And if another child has a toy, it becomes more desirable because the other child has the toy. It was laying in the floor neglected. One child picks it up.

Even dogs do this. Our two dogs will do it. There's a rawhide bone in the floor.

Nobody's paying any attention. One dog goes to get it. The other dog immediately goes to pounce and take it away from the first dog.

Well, that needs rebuke in the human realm. Not much you can do about dogs, but it's the old dog nature. But for people, we occasionally need rebuke.

Wait a minute, that's wrong. And this is another thing the Holy Spirit does for us, is to convict us of sin. How does He do it? He brings to our mind communicated truth from the Word of God.

It comes to our mind. The Holy Spirit says, wait a minute, I think what I'm doing is out of line. Didn't I just hear about this in a recent Bible class? So the second element here, the Word of God is inspired and profitable for reproof.

This is, stop me and turn me around and get me back on the right road. And if there is not reproof in the message that a pastor brings, if it doesn't contain rebuke, this is not personal rebuke. This is not finger wagging at individuals, but an accurate communication of the Word of God will intrinsically carry rebuke.

And we play poker. We take it in. We keep an ironic face.

I'm like the Sphinx. I'm inscrutable. I'm like a China man.

You can't look at my face and tell anything, the old ancient China men. I don't know what their faces are like now. But they used to be notable for their poker face.

Couldn't tell what a lot of people from the Asian persuasion were thinking. They just were impassive, unreadable. But when the Word of God is striking us in the soul, that's rebuke.

It's reproof. And we need to hold that thought, go to our closet, get in private, get one-on-one with our Heavenly Father, and start communicating. God has spoken.

We want to speak back. We want to have a conversation. We want to clear the air, figure out what ought to be happening, confess what shouldn't be happening, and ask God for the grace and the power and the insight to do different.

Reproof and rebuke only work when there is a positive response to it. Our nature is to reject, to deflect, to explain, to shift blame. Well, that wasn't me.

That was you. That was your fault. I wouldn't have done that if it wasn't for you.

The thieves that break in and say, well, if you had better security, I wouldn't have taken all the stuff off your security video. They run in, snatch and grab, and run out. Well, if you had better security, I wouldn't have been able to do that.

That was your fault. You weren't ready for me. That's not right.

And we need to be those who pray for the humility and the balance to receive and respond to reproof and rebuke in a positive way. It happens for a reason. It's not to make us feel bad.

It is to improve our witness for Christ, our opportunities to do all of those wonderful things that Christ died to make possible for us. That's the second one. The third one is correction.

And you look down at verse two, convince, rebuke, exhort. This is the positive encouragement. After rebuke comes correction.

It is not enough to rain all over somebody for doing it wrong or to point out that something is

incorrect, erroneous, harmful, bad. You want to continue on with correction. Here's how to do it right.

I don't want to just be told I messed up. I want somebody to show me how I should be doing it, what is proper. Again, after rebuke should come correction.

This is true in any walk of life, whether we are the learner or we are the trainer. To point out what is incorrect should immediately be followed with that which is correct. There is reproof or rebuke.

Now here is correction. So Timothy is to exhort. Exhortation is do it the right way.

Here's the path. Here's the procedure. It ought to be clear.

If it's not clear, let's keep looking at it until it's clear. And I encourage you, here are the reasons. Here is the hope, which is the motivation.

If you do it correctly, not only will you not have the harmful effects for which you needed to be rebuked or reproofed, but doing it right has these benefits. I encourage you. I exhort you.

Remember Romans 12, 1 and 2. I quote almost every Bible class. I beseech you, brethren, by the mercies of God to present yourselves. That is an exhortation.

I exhort you. I urge you. We've seen it in the pastoral epistles.

Paul says, I urge you, Timothy, stick with it. Don't be deflected. Don't be discouraged.

And then finally, in the fourth element here, instruction in righteousness in verse 16 is met in 4 verse 2 with long-suffering and teaching, patience and more instruction. If it wasn't clear the first time, let me review. Let me illustrate.

Let me find parallels and other examples. What a wonderful gift from God the Word is to profit us, to deliver us by giving us doctrine, giving us reproof, giving us correction, giving us instruction in righteousness. And it is embodied fully in the Lord Jesus Christ at the birth, at the incarnation.

He is the Word. He is the fullness of deity in bodily form. The Word became flesh and dwelt among us.

And we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth. We should similarly embody grace and truth. We do it through the scriptures, in the presence and power of the Holy Spirit, to internally become wise, to be aware of doctrine and fully convinced of it, to be reproofed by it, to be exhorted and corrected by it and to be instructed in what is righteous by it.

God has given us every resource. He is the source of power. He is the source of strength and

guidance.

He is the one who is glorified and He is the one who will be able to express His love toward us and reflect His glory in and through us in greater and greater ways as we more closely conform ourselves to the image of Christ. That is our Christmas message in this year of our Lord, 2024. I wish everyone a wonderful season and time of fellowship and encouragement.

We will see you next Sunday. We'll close here in a word of prayer. Father, thank You for the Word, both in its written and in its incarnate form.

We thank You for our Savior, His wonderful example of patience, of faithfulness, of purposefulness in always being aware of Your will and His role in fulfilling it as we should in our own lives. We pray that God the Holy Spirit will impress these things in our hearts, help us to see clearly, to be convinced, to be corrected, to be encouraged by what Scripture teaches so that we can live our lives in a way that pleases You and glorifies the Lord Jesus.