

3ABN SABBATH SCHOOL PANEL
004 - LESSON – Monday – April 20

Scripture, the Authority

The Bible’s authority and function are clearly declared within its pages. Read and copy out 2 Timothy 3:15–17. Take note of what these verses tell you about the function of the Bible.

When it comes to personal Bible study, we must be careful not to expect the Bible to serve our purposes or perspectives, which are not always the same as God’s. For example, we shouldn’t use the “close my eyes and point to a text” method, because this isn’t how God wants to communicate with us through His Word. God is not a puppet on a string, waiting to serve our needs and will. His ways and thoughts are so much higher than ours (*Isa. 55:9*), and so we should never try to control His words to us. Neither should we pick and choose only the parts of the Bible that feel comfortable to us. Instead, we should see the Bible as a whole package rather than reading the easy, familiar passages and leaving out the confronting or challenging ones. If we truly want God to speak into our lives, we must take the Bible as a whole and use sound methods when we engage in careful Bible study, trusting that God will reveal what we need to hear when we need to hear it.

2 Timothy 3:15-17 (NKJV) “(15) and that from childhood you have known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. (16) All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, (17) that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.”

What does 2 Timothy 3:15–17 Reveals About the Bible?

1. The Bible Is God’s Instrument of Salvation

“The Holy Scriptures... are able to make you wise for salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.”

— 2 Timothy 3:15

The Bible is not merely informational; it is **transformational**.
It does not save by knowledge alone, but by **leading us to Christ**.

Key insight:

- Scripture reveals the plan of salvation
- Faith in Christ is the means
- The Bible is the *channel* God uses to awaken saving faith

Supporting texts:

- **Romans 10:17 — “Faith comes by hearing... the word of God.”**
- **John 5:39 — “These are they which testify of Me.”**

2. The Bible Is Divinely Inspired, Not Human Opinion

“All Scripture is given by inspiration of God...” — 2 Timothy 3:16

“**Inspired**” (Greek: *theopneustos*) literally means “**God-breathed.**”

Scripture originates from God, even though it came through human writers.

Key insight:

- Authority rests not in the author, culture, or reader
- Authority rests in **God Himself**
- To reject Scripture’s authority is to reject its Source

📖 Supporting texts:

- **2 Peter 1:20–21 — Holy men spoke as moved by the Holy Spirit**
- **Psalms 119:160 — “The entirety of Your word is truth”**

3. The Bible Is Sufficient for Doctrine and Correction

“...and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness.” — 2 Timothy 3:16

Paul lists **four functions** of Scripture:

1. **Doctrine** — what is right — **Reproof** — what is wrong
2. **Correction** — how to get right — **Instruction** — how to stay right

Key insight:

- Scripture does not merely expose error—it restores
- Truth and transformation are inseparable

Supporting texts:

- **Hebrews 4:12 — The Word discerns the heart**
 - **Hebrews 4:12 (NKJV) “For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.”**
- **Psalms 19:7–9 — The law of the LORD converts the soul**
 - **Psalms 19:7-9 (NKJV) “(7) The law of the LORD is perfect, converting the soul; The testimony of the LORD is sure, making wise the simple; (8) The statutes of the LORD are right, rejoicing the heart; The commandment of the LORD is pure, enlightening the eyes; (9) The fear of the LORD is clean, enduring forever; The judgments of the LORD are true and righteous altogether.”**

4. The Bible Fully Equips the Believer for Life and Ministry

“That the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.” — 2 Timothy 3:17

The Bible is not lacking. It does not need supplementation by:

- Tradition alone, Culture, Philosophy, Personal experience

Key insight:

- Scripture is **complete in purpose**
- It prepares believers not just to believe—but to **live and serve**



Supporting texts:

- **James 1:22** — Be doers of the word
- **Joshua 1:8** — Success flows from meditation on the Word

Human reason, however, is still *human*—capable of error and deception. It's *never* infallible. It's possible for human reason to push God aside to try to work things out on our own, which places self as equal to, or above, God when it comes to thinking.

People can approach Scripture with an arrogant and critical spirit, thinking they've heard it all before and that there is nothing new. It's when we feel important, confident, self-sufficient, and in need of nothing that we neglect our relationship with God and rely on our own limited knowledge and faulty reasoning.