

False Doctrine in the Church: The Scriptures, III

By Tom Hill

Bible Text: 2 Timothy 3:14-17

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2 Timothy 3:14-17:

“But continue thou in the things which thou hast learned and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned them; {15} And that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto 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 perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.”

Divine aim of the Scriptures

Finally, our text presents the divine aim of the Scriptures. The Scriptures give that knowledge of God and His will for humanity’s most crucial problem: God’s plan for mankind’s salvation from sin, and the function of Scripture in living out the Christian life in daily practice.

The text states that the “...(Scriptures) are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.” The Bible reveals three great truths that make one wise unto saving faith in Christ: the poverty of mankind, the plan of God, and the provision in Jesus Christ for sinners.

The Scriptures present the true condition of humanity, our spiritual poverty. They declare, first, the inherent sinfulness of all people. Because of the sin of Adam, the sinful nature passed to all individuals (Romans 5.12). Thus, every human being possesses a sinful nature, a darkened understanding, and alienation from God (Ephesians 4.18). It plagues every human creature thoroughly and completely, without exception, so that they are spiritually dead (Romans 3.10; Ephesians 2.1).

In addition, this inherent sinful nature produces sinful practices and behavior. People practice sin because they are sinners (Romans 3.9, 23). In fact, the inherent sinful nature prevents humans from practicing anything but sin, incapable of any good thing.

Thus, they cannot earn their salvation by any good works, because they cannot perform them. In short, humanity’s spiritual poverty renders them helpless, spiritually dead, before a holy God, without hope of satisfying a holy God.

In grace God created a plan to justify sinners before Him. It is a plan of grace, because He is under no requirement to make any provision for sinners. In pure justice, He could have given all people eternal damnation because of their sin.

As an expression of His great love, He devised a plan for the redemption of sinners and chose out from all sinful humanity a people for Himself (Ephesians 1.4; 2 Thessalonians 2.13). In the Garden of Eden, God promised a Savior (Genesis 3.15). The prophets foretold His coming and described how He would make atonement for the sins of God's chosen people (Isaiah 9.6; Psalm 2; Isaiah 53; Daniel 9.24). Then, He could be just and the justifier of sinners (Romans 3.26).

At God's appointed time, His provision, Jesus Christ, the promised Savior, appeared in fulfillment of His promise. The Bible gives ample evidence that God satisfied His promise in Jesus Christ. The Angel who announced Christ's birth to Mary, Jesus Himself, and the apostles pointed to Jesus as the Savior of sinners (Matthew 1.21; John 5.39; Acts 10.43; 1 Corinthians 15.3-4; 1 Peter 1.10-12).

Jesus made the promised payment in full for the sins of those whom God gave to Him. His substitutionary death on the cross satisfied God's righteous anger (Matthew 20.28; John 10.15; Romans 3.25; Hebrews 9-10; 2.17; 1 John 4.10). In His death, Christ reconciled God's chosen people to the Father and redeemed them from the curse of the law (Romans 5.10; 2 Corinthians 5.20; Galatians 3.13).

God further proves His grace and mercy by calling His chosen people to faith in the One Whom He gave for them. Those whom God chose, He called (Romans 8.28-29). By the work of the Holy Spirit, the Father draws sinners to the Jesus and brings them to repent and believe on the Savior of sinners to the saving of their souls (Mark 1.15; Luke 13.3-5; Acts 16.31; Ephesians 2.8-9).

Further, the text reveals another aim of the Scriptures by emphasizing their effect in life. They are profitable in the lives of those who believe and obey them. They convey the truth, convict of sin, correct from sin unto righteousness, and complete the believer thoroughly "...unto all good works."

Not only does all saving knowledge come from the Bible. It is the only rule by which believers may know God and how to glorify Him in life and practice.

Diligent application

Yes, we live in a day of rebellion against the authority of God's word. Therefore, the truths stated in our text require diligent application. It identifies four fruits of God's word in the life of the Christian: it clarifies the truth, it convicts of sin, it corrects from sin, and it completes the child of God unto good works.

I pray that the Holy Spirit will bring these truths to fruition in your life today.