

¹⁴But as for you, continue in what you have learned and have become convinced of, because you know those from whom you learned it,¹⁵and how from infancy you have known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus.¹⁶All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness,¹⁷so that the servant of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.

⁴In 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:²preach the word; be prepared in season and out of season; correct, rebuke and encourage—with great patience and careful instruction.³For 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.⁴They will turn their ears away from the truth and turn aside to myths.⁵But you, keep your head in all situations, endure hardship, do the work of an evangelist, discharge all the duties of your ministry.

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In 1967, a 20 year-old athlete by the name of Kathrine Switzer made history by becoming the first woman to run the Boston Marathon wearing an official race number. Despite there being no specific reference made to gender in the marathon rule book, it was widely understood that only men were allowed to participate. Consequently, Kathrine registered for the

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- Collectively, 1 and 2 Timothy and Titus are known as 'The Pastoral Epistles'
- The Apostle Paul, the author of 2 Timothy, was in prison in Rome, awaiting trial and probable execution
- Paul had a close relationship with Timothy, whom he described as 'his true son in the faith', (1 Timothy 1.2) and his 'dear son' (2 Timothy 1.2)
- In 2 Timothy, Paul passes on his parting instructions to Timothy regarding what he believed should be the life and work of believers
- Paul exhorts Timothy: 'What you heard from me, keep as the pattern of sound teaching' that Paul had taught him, (2 Timothy 1.13) and tells him to 'Guard the good deposit that was entrusted to you.' (verse 14)
- In 2 Timothy 2, Timothy is encouraged to be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus (verse 1) and pass on Paul's teachings 'to reliable people who will also be qualified to teach others' (verse 2). Paul warns Timothy to avoid false teachings (verses 16–18) and

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The Apostle Paul has already addressed the sinful way in verses 1–9, but that's not the way he expects Timothy to live. Instead, Paul urges Timothy to remain faithful to the teachings he has learned, some from infancy (verse 15). It's likely that these truths had been passed down to him by his grandmother Lois and mother Eunice, (2 Timothy 2.5). The lives of these women bore witness to the fact that the Holy Scriptures are no ordinary texts; in fact they 'make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus' (verse 15)

H I N G O H I N K A B O :

- Chapter 3 offers two ways of living; a sinful way and a biblical way. Have you decided to live God's way?
- For those who have been raised in Christian families, what might it look like to 'continue in what you have learned' (verse 14) from Scripture? What about those who were not raised in Christian families? From whom might they learn and who are their role models? To whom might we pass on the truths of Scripture?
- 'Knowing the Holy Scriptures' (verse 15) is vital for the spiritual health of every Christian, as this is how we get to know what God is like, how he operates, and what his plan is for humankind. What do we need to do in order to engage more regularly and more deeply with the Bible? Set a reminder on our phone to spend time in the word? Get a Bible reading plan? Be accountable to others?

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'All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness...' says Paul in verse 16. This is a hugely important and significant verse, cited regularly by Christians to support the fact that all Scripture is inspired by God himself. It re-affirms what we learned in verse 15, which is that we are not dealing with an ordinary text here. Scripture is useful, or 'profitable' as some other translations put it, for 'teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness.' As well as charting the story of the people of God from creation onwards, and God's plan for our redemption and restoration, it covers teaching on a myriad topics, such as identity, relationships, friendships, finance, rest, work and so many others. It rebukes and corrects us by challenging us to become more like Jesus, by training us in righteousness. There is a purpose for us knowing Scripture, in that it equips us for every good work (verse 17).

H I N G O H I N K A B O :

- If, as the Bible says, 'All scripture is God-breathed', how do we deal with the parts that we disagree with or don't understand? Do we simply ignore them, or do we grapple with their context and meaning?
- Reading the Bible in community, such as in a prayer triplet, Bible Study group or home group situation can be an excellent way of going deeper into God's word, as it provides us with the opportunity to learn from one another and ask difficult questions
- The word of God is described in Hebrews 4.12 as being 'alive and active' in that we can read the same passage a number of times, yet the Holy Spirit can illuminate something different to us each time we read it. Consider sharing an example with the congregation where you have found this to be true
- Bible Society believes that the Bible is God's gift to the world. We share it because we want everyone to discover its message for them and because we believe it changes lives for good. We collect testimonies of how the Bible changes lives here, biblesociety.org.uk/latest/mybible Please feel free to share one or more of these stories with your congregation.





Later in 2 Timothy 4, Paul talks about having 'finished the race, and kept the faith.' (verse 7). Marathon runner Kathrine Switzer would be fully aware that running a race requires discipline, training and perseverance. Reading the Bible also takes all three!

It takes discipline to set aside time every day to read an