

Staying God's Person. 2 Timothy 3:10-17

A Challenging world

It might strike an observer odd, perhaps strike you as odd, that in the midst of a Covid pandemic, on a weekend where we are remembering 9/11 and the destruction of the twin towers – that is, where there are pressing present issues to occupy our minds with

That we spend our time looking at what someone, Paul, wrote to his younger colleague and friend Timothy almost 2,000 years ago

It's always worth remembering the weirdness of what we do week by week, so that we can remember why we do it

Why we think this is what we ought to be giving our attention to

The reason is in what we heard read from 2 Timothy

Here, in a world that is challenging, a world where much is not right, we can learn what we need to do to have life, the life and immortality the gospel of Jesus promises to all who repent and put their trust in Him, the living Jesus, risen from the dead, God's promised ruler of the world.

That life, in a world where all die, is worth more than all

And here, as we will see tonight, in Paul's instruction to Timothy about how he can continue faithfully after Paul's departure, we learn how we can persevere in our challenging world as faithful followers of Jesus, persevere with the work He has entrusted to us, of making disciples through the preaching and teaching of the gospel

And here we pause to listen to a Word unlike any other, a Word given by the living God that is active to do His work in His people

Timothy's world, like ours, presented a lot of challenges to that perseverance in being unashamed of the gospel of Jesus.

He like us, was living in the last days when people would love themselves, money, pleasure – instead of God – with all the consequences for society that rebellion against God brought - conflict, inequality, the destruction of relationships

And like us he also had to face False brethren who would have the appearance of being followers of Jesus – but none of the Spirit empowered reality

And False teachers peddling their speculations for profit

He faced Those who would oppose his ministry

Others who would become contentiously preoccupied with the unimportant and marginal, just as we do

Timothy also knew, better than us, the reality of suffering

And the challenge to be hard working and self denying in the service of Jesus

And to all this would soon be joined the grief of soon losing his friend and mentor Paul

As the years after Paul's departure went by

In a changing world What does Paul say will keep him faithful to the task entrusted to him, of being unashamed of the gospel, of guarding its truth, and passing it on to the others who would in turn teach and preserve the message of Jesus

Stop him from being carried away by popular error, overwhelmed by opposition, withdrawing in resigned defeat, giving up in the face of suffering

Where in Paul's absence does Paul direct him to find continuing help, guidance and renewal?

What will keep us unashamed of the gospel of Jesus, faithful to its truth, and committed to making disciples

Stop us from being carried away by popular error, overwhelmed by opposition, withdrawing in resigned defeat, giving up in the face of suffering

Where, in a world where the apostles are long gone, will we find continuing encouragement, guidance and help to live as followers of Jesus

People who can bring a word of comfort or encouragement to the weary and discouraged

who can persevere in doing good

who can give a defence of our hope

Who can live a self denying life in an indulgent culture

Paul says that for Timothy and us the answer to going on in the gospel year after year, going on after he has gone, is staying put

2 Timothy 3:¹⁴ But as for you, continue in what you have learned and firmly believed. You know those who taught you,

Remain

The word translated 'continue' has the basic meaning of 'remain', abide. In the face of all the challenges he faces Timothy is to remain in, stay put in, what he has learnt and firmly believed.

Just as a tree planted by water grows and remains fruitful by staying rooted where it is, so Timothy will grow and stay fruitful by staying put in the truth he has learnt and believed

Timothy is not a newcomer to the faith. He has been working with Paul for at least fifteen years by now.

He has had time to test what he has heard – to test it intellectually, and to test it practically.

He has lived the Christian life, relied on the promises, he knows its truth.

This is what he has to stick with.

More, he has seen it tested in the lives of those from whom he learnt it.

Their faithfulness, love and endurance have commended what he has learnt

But who are they?

And what, in particular, does Paul have in mind when he speaks of what Timothy has learnt?

In this passage the answers to those two questions are intertwined

Those who have taught Timothy are Paul, but also his mother Eunice and grandmother Lois who have taught him the scriptures from childhood. [1:5]

And Paul in referring to what Timothy has learnt from them has in mind

First – what he has learnt from Paul about Christian ministry and life vv. 10-13

And Secondly v. 15, what he has learnt from all three, and probably others, about the fulfilment of the Old Testament's promise of salvation in the Lord Jesus.

What Timothy has learnt from Paul

2 Timothy 3:¹⁰ But you have followed my teaching, conduct, purpose, faith, patience, love, and endurance,¹¹ along with the persecutions and sufferings that came to me in Antioch, Iconium, and Lystra. What persecutions I endured—and yet the Lord rescued me from them all.¹² In fact, all who want to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted.¹³ Evil people and impostors will become worse, deceiving and being deceived.

What can Paul confidently say Timothy has learned from him and must continue in?

In contrast to the false teachers and pseudo believers of vv. 5-9 Timothy knows and is committed to Paul's pattern of teaching, life and ministry.

You have followed – that is not 'follow' as you might follow a footy team, a spectator with an emotional investment in your teams ups and downs

The sense of follow is understood and committed yourself to, the following of a player who understands and puts into practice the coach's instruction.

Timothy has made his own Paul's teaching, his conduct, and his purpose

Paul can in these few words summarise his whole life and ministry because Timothy was so intimately familiar with Paul's ministry

He knew Paul's teaching – Timothy is listed as a co-author of Paul's second letter to the Corinthians [2 cor. 1:1], and his letters to the Philippians, Colossians and Thessalonians. In many contexts he had been entrusted with explaining, defending and applying that teaching.

And Timothy had had ample opportunity over years to examine closely Paul's conduct. Paul could say that Timothy had served with him like a son with a father in the gospel [Phil. 2:22]. He had seen Paul become all things to all people to by all means save some, Paul putting the interests of others ahead of his own, acting transparently in the collection and handling of money, working with his hands so as to not burden those whom he was teaching, his modelling that it was more blessed to give than to receive

And he knew Paul's purpose, that Paul lived to please the Lord Jesus, that, in Paul's words to the Ephesian elders in Acts 20:24, he 'considered my life no value to myself. My purpose is to finish my course and the ministry I received from the Lord Jesus, to testify to the gospel of God's grace.'

Acts 20:²⁴ But I consider my life of no value to myself; my purpose is to finish my course and the ministry I received from the Lord Jesus, to testify to the gospel of God's grace.

Timothy was committed to a ministry that was the very opposite of the self seeking and grasping for money that characterised the false teachers

And Timothy was also committed to the godly character Paul modelled

To the same Faith – a life of trusting God shown in faithfulness to God

Patience – in dealing with others, especially believers

Love – that first fruit of the Spirit, seen over and over again in Paul's service of believers, his giving himself, expending himself, suffering for their benefit

The faith and patience and love Paul has already called for from Timothy [2:22, 24]

And he knew Paul's Endurance, his steadfastness under trial

Timothy knew that in a genuine servant of Jesus there could be no separation of doctrine from godly living

All this Timothy was committed to.

This is what he had learnt and must continue in.

But there is more

Paul explicitly mentions his persecution and suffering

In fact highlights what happened to him at the beginning of his missionary journeys in Asia Minor in the cities of

Antioch, Iconium, Lystra [Acts 13:50, 14:3, 5; 14:18.]

This is the area Timothy came from [Acts 16:1]. He knew the concerted opposition Paul had faced – how he had been driven out from Antioch, that they had tried to stone him in Iconium, and that his opponents had stoned him and left him for dead in Lystra.

Paul highlights this persecution and suffering Timothy knew to remind him that

Opposition to and suffering for the gospel were there from the beginning.

not an anomaly, not exceptional

And that persevering through this opposition, as Timothy had seen, was the prelude to and condition of great fruitfulness, the fruitful ministry Paul had known and Timothy had shared in in Asia and Greece

And he also highlights the persecution to encourage

From them all the Lord rescued me

The Lord who had called Paul to ministry did not keep Paul from trial, but He delivered him out of it

The Lord can be relied, and even at the end Paul was confident the Lord would still rescue him, rescue him eternally

2 Tim. 4:¹⁸ The Lord will rescue me from every evil work and will bring me safely into his heavenly kingdom. To him be the glory forever and ever! Amen.

Timothy and we can serve the Lord Jesus knowing no opposition will stop our Lord from keeping us and fulfilling His purpose for us.

And we need that encouragement for believers should expect persecution.

¹² In fact, all who want to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted. ¹³ Evil people and impostors will become worse, deceiving and being deceived.

The godly life is the life of all those committed to living Jesus' way, who live in the sphere/space of allegiance to Jesus. It is the life of genuine believers, disciples who do all that Jesus teaches

Our Lord taught His followers to expect persecution

John 15:18-20, Matt. 10:16-22, 24-25, Matt. 24:9-11

John 15:¹⁸ "If the world hates you, understand that it hated me before it hated you. ¹⁹ If you were of the world, the world would love you as its own. However, because you are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of it, the world hates you. ²⁰ Remember the word I spoke to you: 'A servant is not greater than his master.' If they persecuted me, they will also persecute you. If they kept my word, they will also keep yours.

Matthew 24:⁹ "Then they will hand you over to be persecuted, and they will kill you. You will be hated by all nations because of my name.

If we are going to persevere in following Jesus, in teaching His word – we should expect persecution.

It's intensity may vary - from mocking and exclusion to active opposition to imprisonment – from time to time and place to place, but we should expect it and not to be shaken by it

And Paul reminds Timothy of this because the life the false teachers seek and praise will be different

They will advance – be seen to be making progress, gaining a following and influence, and it can be easy to be discouraged by their acceptance and often material success

Of the world, the world will love them – at least for a while

But their advance is only in their error

Advancing from bad to worse

In their seeking the approval of men, not God, they will seek deeper and deeper into error, go further and further away from God.

Timothy will be equipped to persevere unashamed by remaining in what he has learnt from Paul
His life and teaching, His ministry, His godly character, his endurance in suffering

It is so good for Timothy, entrusted with guarding the gospel to have such a model

Paul, who shared not just words, but life

So that Timothy could see and test, become convinced of, what he was taught

And it is a Blessing to us if we have someone like that, who shares their faith and life with us in the service of Jesus

But it is even better if, by God's grace, we can be that person for another.

But Paul is going

And so he reminds Timothy that he has not just learnt from him

What Timothy has learnt from the Scriptures through Paul and others

2 Timothy 3:¹⁴ But as for you, continue in what you have learned and firmly believed. You know those who taught you,¹⁵ and you know that from infancy you have known the sacred Scriptures, which are able to give you wisdom for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus.

Timothy has had other teachers from his earliest days, those like his mother and grandmother who had taught him the scriptures in his childhood

And through their teaching and through the teaching of Paul The Sacred Scriptures, which for Tim as for other Greek speaking Jews was the term for our Old Testament, the Scriptures themselves had become

A more abiding teacher – present before Paul, and continuing after Paul

Teaching from the Old Testament was a staple of Paul's ministry. In Thessalonica, for example, it says he reasoned in the synagogue from the Scriptures [Acts 17:2-3] 'explaining and proving that the it was necessary for the Christ to suffer and rise from the dead.'

Acts 17: As usual, Paul went into the synagogue, and on three Sabbath days reasoned with them from the Scriptures,³ explaining and proving that it was necessary for the Messiah to suffer and rise from the dead: "This Jesus I am proclaiming to you is the Messiah."

But Paul is not just directing Timothy to the Old Testament on its own

'It is the sacred scriptures that are able to give you wisdom for salvation through faith in Jesus'.

Paul is directing Timothy to continue in the teaching of The Old Testament read in the light of its fulfilment in the gospel of our Lord Jesus

The Old Testament points us to faith in Jesus. But when we read it with faith in Jesus, as completed in the gospel, it does more

As you read the Old Testament through the lens of faith in Jesus It teaches you what it means to be saved through faith in Jesus – gives substance to that salvation, the nature and content of that salvation. And it teaches you the significance of the person and work of Jesus, helps you see Him as the One in whom God’s saving purposes reach their climax, the prophet, priest and King foreshadowed in Israel’s history.

‘wisdom for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus.’ tells us these verses are speaking of the Old Testament as always associated with the Gospel. Its good effect in the lives of believers is never divorced from the gospel – and what is said of the one here embraces, is true of, the other.

This reading of the Scripture through faith in Jesus, as pointing to Him and fulfilled in Him – starts with Jesus

John 5:39, 46, Luke 24:25-27, 44-47

Jesus who said to the Pharisees

John 5:³⁹ You pore over the Scriptures because you think you have eternal life in them, and yet they testify about me.⁴⁶ For if you believed Moses, you would believe me, because he wrote about me.

The risen Jesus who opened up the minds of His followers to the Scripture teaching

Luke 24:⁴⁴ He told them, “These are my words that I spoke to you while I was still with you—that everything written about me in the Law of Moses, the Prophets, and the Psalms must be fulfilled.”⁴⁵ Then he opened their minds to understand the Scriptures. ⁴⁶ He also said to them, “This is what is written: The Messiah will suffer and rise from the dead the third day, ⁴⁷ and repentance for forgiveness of sins will be proclaimed in his name to all the nations, beginning at Jerusalem.

Throughout Paul’s letters he shows us how the Old Testament helps us to understand the salvation brought by Jesus. If you want one example look at Galatians 3 where Paul quotes Gen. 15:6 – Abraham believed God and it was reckoned to him as righteousness – to show that salvation is by faith in Jesus, not works of the law

Timothy has learnt and firmly believed that this is the way to read the Old Testament, with Jesus as the fulfilment of its promise

And

Timothy is to continue in what he has learnt from the Scriptures about Jesus, the Scriptures that he has known, and whose truth he has confirmed, throughout his life.

Paul will depart, but this teacher stays with him

And this teacher will continue to equip him to persevere faithfully, to teach him how to follow Jesus in all the situations he will encounter, for

The Scripture’s ability to make us wise for salvation is not accidental. It is the expression of God’s purpose for His Word, a purpose which continues

The Continuing ministry of the Scriptures

2 Timothy 3: 16 All Scripture is inspired by God and is profitable for teaching, for rebuking, for correcting, for training in righteousness, 17 so that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work. CSB

[2 Timothy 3: 16 All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, 17 so that the servant of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work. NIV

2 Timothy 3: 16 All scripture is inspired by God and is useful for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, 17 so that everyone who belongs to God may be proficient, equipped for every good work. NRSV

2 Timothy 3: 16 Every scripture is inspired by God and useful for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, NET Bible

2 Timothy 3:16: All inspired Scripture has its use for teaching the truth and refuting error, or for reformation of manners and discipline in right living REB [attributive, suggesting that there is some Scripture that is not inspired, and the test is whether we find it useful]

Paul tells Timothy and us that the Scripture will be our abiding instructor

Important verses, and they take a bit of unpacking

Scripture is the Old Testament, a known body of written books. This word translated Scripture occurs about 42 times in the New Testament, and in every other instance, in the singular or plural, it refers to our Old Testament.

But we should not confine what is said here about God's Word to the Old Testament for as verse 15 tells us, Paul is thinking of the Old Testament as fulfilled in the gospel, of achieving its purpose only in association with the gospel.

The gospel word, the writings of the apostles, share the character and origin of the word they fulfill. They are given by the Spirit so what is said here applies equally to our Old and New Testaments

We see that in the NT itself where parts of our NT were early thought of as Scripture [e.g. 1 Tim. 5:18, 2 Peter 3:15-16] and Paul's letters functioned in Christian gatherings as Scripture, read with the Old Testament.

All Scripture

You will come across varying translations of the beginning of verse 16.

The majority – CSB, NRSV, NIV, ESV – will read 'all scripture' – that is, what Paul says about the Scripture is said about Scripture in its entirety.

Others like the NETranslation translate

2 Timothy 3: 16 Every scripture is inspired by God

This is saying basically the same thing, but emphasising that every part of the Scripture is inspired by God, that nothing in Scripture is not inspired.

But some – the NEB and its descendant the REB – translate –

2 Timothy 3:16: All inspired Scripture has its use for teaching ...

This is potentially misleading in that it could suggest that there are in Paul's mind some Scripture that is not inspired, and Paul is giving us a test to know which Scripture is inspired and which is not.

That which we find useful we can know to be inspired, but if it is not useful – then it won't be inspired Scripture.

This is not the most likely translation of the Greek [attributive versus predicative], and it goes against the flow of the passage. Paul is assuring Timothy of the ongoing usefulness of something known and defined – the Scriptures, not giving a test to discern Scripture.

So Paul is speaking of all Scripture and Scripture in every part – it is all 'inspired'.

God breathed

By 'inspired' Paul is affirming something about this written word. 'Inspired by God' is the traditional English interpretation and it does communicate that the Scriptures originate with God, they come from His initiative.

But the NIV has a more literal translation of a word that it looks like Paul coined – theopneustos. It translates this as 'God Breathed' and this is a better translation. 'By the word inspired you could think that Paul is saying something about the work of God in the human authors. But Paul is saying something about the product, the written Scriptures themselves.

These, he says, come from God, are breathed out by Him – with not a word about the process. You can find a little more on that in 2 Peter 1:20-21 but here Paul is saying that all the Scripture comes from God. It is His word, given by Him to us.

Profitable

And as God's word it will fulfill His purpose in the lives of His people. They will be profitable, and continue to be profitable, useful, in equipping Jesus' people for the service of Jesus as they do the work they are given to do – teaching, rebuking, correcting and training

Let's think of that work

The Scriptures will teach us sound doctrine. Here we can learn the truth of God, of the Lord Jesus, of ourselves, of the future. Here we can find light in our darkness, be equipped to discern truth from error. And here we will learn of the life God wants for His people, learn how to love, learn what righteousness is. And they will do that with unique authority, for they come from God. Coming from God they will be the test of every claim about God and what pleases Him.

Having a unique authority, they can also rebuke us, confront our errors in life and doctrine, and call us to repent, to change our minds to conform to the truth God has revealed, to change our behaviour so that we turn away from sin to do what pleases God.

They will correct us – they will improve our efforts, straighten out what is veering off course, improve what we are already doing so it conforms more closely to what God teaches us in His word

And they will train us in righteousness – through encouragement and exhortation keep us going in cultivating godly behaviour

They are our God given coach to help us persevere and grow in persevering.

Like, say, a swimming coach, they explain what needs to be done

They come down on our laziness and bad habits

They watch us in the water and correct our breathing or the way we are bringing our arms through
 And they keep us going – up and down the pool again and again until we perfect what they have
 taught us

The outcome

And the outcome in the lives of God's people as they continue to read the Scriptures?

¹⁷ *so that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work*

The person of God might be complete – the sense is proficient, capable, able to meet all demands

Equipped – thoroughly equipped – for what God calls us to do

For every good work

The works Eph 2 God has prepared us for

Ephesians 2:10, Titus 2:14, Titus 3:8, Matt. 5:16

Ephesians 2:¹⁰ For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared ahead of time for us to do

Titus 2:¹⁴ He gave himself for us to redeem us from all lawlessness and to cleanse for himself a people for his own possession, eager to do good works.

Matthew 5:¹⁶ In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven.

The works Titus 2 that Jesus expects His people to be eager to do, devoted to doing

The works Matt. 5 that bring glory to our heavenly Father

We are not told here what those good works may be for us, but we are assured that through the work of Scripture we will be prepared for them, whatever they may be. although we can learn them from Scripture.

Scripture's preparation is comprehensive – every good work

There is nothing that God wants us to do that the Scriptures do not equip us for as they do their work in our lives.

The Scripture is our sufficient instructor – it can do all that needs to be done to equip us for a life pleasing to God, to know the truth of God.

And we can be confident as we give ourselves to their instruction that they will do their work in our lives, for they are the word of God, and God has promised that His word will never fail of its purpose

Isaiah 55:10-11

Isaiah 55:¹⁰ For just as rain and snow fall from heaven and do not return there without saturating the earth and making it germinate and sprout, and providing seed to sow

*and food to eat,
¹¹so my word that comes from my mouth*

His word
*will not return to me empty,
 but it will accomplish what I please
 and will prosper in what I send it to do.”*

That is why we must diligently and humbly study it, and discipline ourselves to distinguish the words of Scripture from all other words, to distinguish the Word of God from all human words

I want to emphasise that sufficiency – the Scriptures, uniquely from God, are all we need to live a life pleasing to God, and nothing can be demanded of God’s people to be believed or done which is not taught in Scripture

This conviction of the sufficiency of Scripture is a source of a great divide

Some, like the Roman Catholic church, teach Scripture plus the teaching of the church is needed. They elevate the teaching of the church, of people, to be equal to the Word of God. Their human traditions, whether about Mary or the Mass or the Pope, displace the word of God, something Jesus condemns in Mark 7:5-13.

Others say you need Scripture plus prophecy to live a really fruitful life and create a dependency on charismatic leadership and elevate the doubtful and transient over the sure and eternal.

But it says the Scriptures will prepare us for ‘every good work’

While we have to understand the word and help each other to do so, the Scripture is uniquely God’s word and does not need supplementing by human words to do its work.

As the Anglican reformers said – and you can find something similar in the WCF

[WCF 1: VI. The whole counsel of God, concerning all things necessary for his own glory, man's salvation, faith, and life, is either expressly set down in scripture, or by good and necessary consequence may be deduced from scripture: unto which nothing at any time is to be added, whether by new revelations of the Spirit, or traditions of men.

Article 6: Of the Sufficiency of the holy Scriptures for salvation

Holy Scripture containeth all things necessary to salvation: so that whatsoever is not read therein, nor may be proved thereby, is not to be required of any man, that it should be believed as an Article of the Faith, or be thought requisite or necessary to salvation.]

What is promised of the God-breathed word is not promised of other words, and its authority is unique, which is why we must keep God’s word distinct from, unconfused with, human words.

Why last week I said to some of you that study bibles are potentially dangerous and I would rather the commentary was in a separate book, to avoid the possibility of confusing one with the other

The commentary is helpful, but it is merely human words

Helpful, like the teaching of those, past and present, gifted by God with understanding of His word – that we receive in talks and books

Helpful, like conversation with Christian friends over God's word

But not the Word of God, and always to be tested against the Word of God

Keeping on as the Equipped person of God

In a world full of challenges to both Timothy and our persevering in faithfulness of life and teaching, in persevering in unashamedly sharing the gospel

How can we keep on, not carried away by popular error, overwhelmed by opposition, withdrawing in resigned defeat, giving up in the face of suffering?

Like Timothy, it will be by staying in what we have learnt and firmly believed

The teaching and example of Paul, preserved for us in the New Testament

The teaching of the Old Testament Scriptures as they are fulfilled in the gospel of our Lord Jesus

The teaching of the Scriptures, Old and New Testaments, we are assured will always be useful to prepare us for every challenge and opportunity that we will encounter in our following and service of Jesus,

The Scriptures that are God breathed

We have those Scriptures, have them in our tongue, have the extraordinary privilege of a Word from God that we can understand, that will give us salvation, that can equip us for every challenge we will face in the Christian life

But of course the Scriptures will only do us good as we attend to them

As we read them

As we listen to them taught

As we meditate on them

So if you want life

If you want to be a faithful servant of Jesus

A child of God who knows and lives to please Her or his heavenly Father by doing the good works that honour Him

Be a student of Scripture

Give yourself to their study, individually and together

Humbly – Isaiah 66:1-2 –

Isaiah 66: This is what the LORD says:

Heaven is my throne,

and earth is my footstool.

Where could you possibly build a house for me?

And where would my resting place be?

² *My hand made all these things,
and so they all came into being.
This is the LORD's declaration.
I will look favorably on this kind of person:
one who is humble, submissive in spirit,
and trembles at my word.*

The Scriptures are the word of the living God, not a word for you to judge but the word that will either judge you or give you life at the last day

When you are handling them you are handling something that is holy, that belongs to God, and which He will vindicate

We should never stop trembling when we read or hear the Scriptures

Expectantly – come expecting that work, looking to be taught, rebuked, corrected, trained

Diligently – not as an afterthought, but passionately and persistently

Get a way of reading that works for you- a regular time of day, a regular pattern of reading

Find a way – read whole books

Or devotions

Or the bible in a year

Never tire

Thoughtfully and in community

Thoughtfully – as a good reader for God's word comes to us in human words, asking the questions you ask of anything you read – Who, what, when where why

ponder what you read. Don't dismiss it if you don't understand it the first time. Come back to it, consult Christian friends, teachers – present and past

Read it as it is – written in another time and place, written in another language and translated – but doing God's work today

And Written for us

Romans 15:4, 1 Corinthians 10:11

Romans 15:⁴ For whatever was written in the past was written for our instruction, so that we may have hope through endurance and through the encouragement from the Scriptures.

1 Corinthians 10:¹¹ These things happened to them as examples, and they were written for our instruction, on whom the ends of the ages have come.

Read it Thankfully, as the Psalmist says, as a lamp to our feet and a light to our path [Ps. 119:105], and light in darkness is so good – it is safety and certainty on our way

Read it knowing that the one who delights in God's word, who meditates on it day and night, is blessed by God

Read it and Teach it where you may

Timothy didn't just learn the Scriptures from Paul

Others, ordinary believers like his mother and grandmother, taught him the scriptures

We can also teach, and should – in our homes to our family, Sunday School, Youth Group, reading it with each other

Teach it so that others may be made wise for salvation through faith in Jesus

But more, pray that as you are equipped and changed by the Word you will, by God's grace – be a Model for other believers so that one day you can commend the truth of the gospel by saying – remain in what you have learnt

'knowing from whom you learnt it' – and know those words bring conviction and encouragement to that believer because they have seen the truth of God's word in you.