

According To Thy Works

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Scriptures from the KJV

I'd like to start today's message in 2 Timothy 3:16 (A very familiar verse too all of us, **[I'm sure]**)

2 Timothy 3:

16 *All Scripture is by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction & for instruction in righteousness.*"

(Talk about a verse that is literally packed with some deep & profound information, this particular one sure fits the bill - to say the least.)

(And no wonder, being this particular verse is addressing the Written Word of The Almighty God Himself; The Holy Scriptures and their purpose.

Yes, there is a lot of information & a lot of detail in this one verse, and, as I already mentioned, **[I'm sure]** we are all quite familiar with much of its deep & profound meaning.

But I want to dissect this verse a little bit this morning, just too refresh our memory of its important content (and then I have a question to ask.)

This verse starts by stating that: "*All Scripture is by inspiration of God*"

"Scripture" here, in the Greek means: Sacred writings – Holy Writ.

(It covers the entire Bible, from genesis to revelation, and is by inspiration of God)

Now the word translated "inspiration" is powerful. We can all tell stories about how we humans can be deeply influenced & motivated by inspiration.

We often hear stories of how someone who maybe came from some humble or sometimes impoverished childhood, and after being "inspired" by someone, were instantly filled with "motivation" & "determination", and began striving with all their might, to reach some great achievement in life, some grate goal. All because of someone's inspiration.

Well the "inspiration" spoken of here in this verse, can be "Super Powerful" inspiration, because this particular inspiration comes from The Almighty God Himself, and found in the Holy Scriptures.

The Greek translated "inspiration" in this verse comes from two Greek words – "**Theos**" meaning God & "pneo" **pa-na-o** meaning to breathe.

Yes, the Scriptures are "God Breathed" Yes, "Divinely Inspired." (And again, **[I'm sure]** we are all aware of that.)

God breathe, and “**profitable**” (another important word, in this deep & profound verse.

The Greek word translated “profitable” here, happens to be the last word in the Greek dictionary of the New Testament, and means = helpful or serviceable – advantageous.

Advantageous means = providing an advantage, beneficial, furnishing opportunity.

So this familiar verse (that we are kind of dissecting here) is telling us that the “God Breathe’ Scriptures are “profitable” & “beneficial” to us, and for a number of different reasons that are also listed in this verse:

There profitable for:

1. for doctrine meaning = instruction, teaching.
2. for reproof meaning = conviction - evidence - to prove again.
3. for correction meaning = a straightening up again, rectification “to put right by adjustment” (Like setting a fence pole (or any post for that matter) you put your level on it and adjust to get it right).
4. for instruction in righteousness meaning = Well the Greek for the word “instruction” here comes from the Greek word meaning “tutorage”

(Nothing like a good tutor, right?) How about having The Almighty God – The Creator of the entire universe for a Tutor, well, according to this verse, He places Himself at our disposal to tutor us with His Word 24/7.

Yes, there’s no doubt about it, this particular verse is literally packed with deep & profound meaning, filled with much important detail and information as it begins to disclose to us, the purpose of the Holy Scriptures.

And as I mentioned numerous time now, **[I’m sure]** we are all quite familiar with this particular verse, and all the “information” given in it.

But my question now is why?

Why does The Almighty God, the Creator of the entire universe, give us all this information concerning the Scriptures in the first place?

(For that matter, why the Scriptures “period”???)

Why all this motivation & inspiration? Is it something to just take note of, maybe jot down on piece of paper, and very neatly fold it up and tuck it in our pocket (or in the back of our mind) for safe keeping???

(Surely with all this inspiration, justification, and motivation set before us, there must be some kind of action required on our part.)

Maybe the Scriptures are there to motivate us into debate; there sure is plenty of that going around concerning the Scriptures, sometime even quite heated debate.

Or maybe the God Breathe Scriptures, with all their inspirational detail, are given to us to make us feel smug, & content, relaxed & complacent???

I think not. Usual when there's a long detailed list put in my hand (it's usually a grocery list from my wife, and believe me it's not a time for "procrastination" "hesitation" or "relaxation". It's a time for some serious motivation & with much acceleration. (Yes, action is required in the Scriptures!) The Scriptures are given to us to task – to take action.

The Scriptures are not there to make us feel complacent (complacency brews danger, brethren) the Scriptures are there to motivate us into action, performance.....

But what exactly is this task that the God breathe Scriptures impose on us???

Well to answer that, I'd like to turn to another Scripture this morning. It's a verse that **[I'm not so sure]** that we are all too familiar with, but it's a verse that tells us why, yes why the Creator gives us the inspiration and the motivation of the Holy Scriptures in the first place.

The verse I want to turn to is not too far from the one we just finished dissecting, fact is, it's the very next verse, although, as I mentioned, **[I'm not so sure]** we are quite as familiar with it.

(2 Timothy 3:17 please) (This verse not only tells us why God gave us the Holy Writ in the first place (and why He goes into so much detail, to motivate us into action) but it also tells us what the action is, that He is so powerfully inspiring us to perform.

(And it has little to do with confrontation or procrastination.)

2 Timothy 3:

17 tells us that He gives us the Scriptures *"That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly, furnished unto all good works."*

Yes, He gives us the Holy Scriptures brethren, to equip us to do "good works."

He gives us the Holy Scriptures to teach us, to correct us, to instruct us in righteousness, so that we may be "perfect" (at doing good works.)

And this particular Greek word translated perfect here is quite unique, fact is, this is the only place in the entire NT that it's used, and it means "complete" – "to be completely qualified".

(You know, to hold certain positions, one has to be "qualified.")

He gives us the Holy Scriptures, to teach us, to correct us, to instruct us in righteousness, so that we may be "perfect" (completely qualified) and "thoroughly furnished" (totally equipped, if you will) unto all good works.

Isn't that "the man of God's" destined purpose in the first place – to do Good Works?

To love the Lord Thy God, with all thy heart, with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and to love thy neighbor (which includes everyone on planet earth, both friend & foe) as thyself ???

The title of today's message is "**According to thy works**".

I want to talk a little about "works" today, a particular kind of "works".

It's this particular kind of "works" that has been lacking in the church of God for a long time.

In a recent message, I was talking about faith & works, and how faith can be so powerful, that even with a minute amount of faith, even as little as a tiny mustard seed, we can move mountains, right?

No, wrong. Brethren, one could have an entire truckload of faith, but unless our faith is coupled with "works" its dead faith – "***faith without works is dead***"!

(We have to have works brethren)

We need "employment". We need to be busy at work;

We need to be fixing up and expanding our houses, building ourselves bigger barns, plowing larger fields, and fishing with bigger nets!!!

Right? No, Wrong!

(As "men of God" we have a work to do, but a totally different kind of work than we were employed at in the past.)

We're first fruits brethren; we're disciples of Jesus Christ, Soldiers in His army. We need to be working the works in which we have been given to do by our commanding officer, and Elder Brother, Jesus Christ..

We have a calling now, a very High calling.

(Opportunity came knocking at our door, and we answered, remember?)

(Our previous ambitions changed when we took the plunge, and received hands... At that time, our occupation became a vocation.

We have no time for the cares of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, because those things only choke the Word, and choke our "work" causing us to become unfruitful.

Now the works we need to be involved in, and have coupled with our faith, is a particular kind of "work", and is has to do with our "calling" with our "discipleship".

Remember, He gives us the Holy Scriptures, to teach us, to correct us, to instruct us in righteousness, so that we may be "perfect" (completely qualified) and "thoroughly furnished" (totally equipped) (For what? For what purpose?) **unto all good works. (To do good works!)**

Well let's define "good works" (because "good works" is something that has been lacking in the church of God, especially lacking in its false leaders [which Christ & Peter & Paul & John & Jude, all warned us that there would be many, bringing in "damnable" heresies, even denying the faith.]

(We've separated ourselves from those false leaders, and what we're talking about here today, concerns more of the "getting back on track" more of getting back to the "faith once delivered to the Saints", which includes, getting back to doing "good works"...

Now the emphasis concerning "good works", is on the word "good"

This particular Greek word concerns “benevolence” a desire to do good to others. (Outgoing concern for others.) That’s the man of God’s destined purpose, to do good unto others.

(Mathew 5:16 please)

Christ told His disciple they are the *salt of earth & the light of the world.*)

And that they are not to looser their “saltiness” nor hide their light from the world, and for a specific purpose:

Mathew 5:

16 *Let your lights so shine before men, that they may see your “good works” and glorify your Father which is in heaven.*

(Ones “good works” are to glorify our Heavenly Father, and “good works” are so important for us to be doing, that we are instructed to provoke each other into doing them.) (Hebrews 10:24 please)

Starting in **Hebrews 10:**

23 *Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering (for He is faithful that promised)*

24 *And let us consider one another to provoke unto Love and to “good works”.*

(Titus 3:8 please)

We, as believers, need to maintain “good works” (and let us remember that those *sign follows* [that have been lacking in the church of God] were to *follow* those who believe, according to Mark 16:17.

Titus 3:

8 *This is a faithful saying, and these things I will that thou affirm constantly (“affirm constantly” here means that what is about to be said is positively fact) *that they which have believed in God might be careful to maintain “good works” these things are good & profitable unto men.**

(True believers practice doing good works – contrast to practicing sin.)

(There are many more places we could go that elaborate on the necessity for us to be performing good works, (Good works is even a qualification for a widow, to be a widow indeed) but for now, while we’re in Titus, let’s go to one more that pertains to all of God’s “*peculiar people*” and then I want to move on.)

(Titus 2:14 – lets start in verse 11)

Titus 2:

11 *For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men,*

12 *teaching us that denying ungodly and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world.*

13 *looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Savior Jesus Christ.*

14 *who gave Himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto Himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.*

Brethren, the ‘good works’ that the Scriptures inspire & encourage us to perform, the “good works” that need to be “coupled” with our faith, go hand in hand with being a true disciple of Jesus Christ.

That was Christ’s MO (The Head of the church – our Chief Corner Stone – the one we are to conform to, His MO was doing good to others, even to the point of dying for others.

The criteria for a true disciple of Christ (given to us by Jesus Himself) is that His true disciples will have “love, one to another” Yes, outgoing concern for one another.

“By this shall all men will know that ye are my disciples, if they have love, one to another.”

Do you think He’s going to allow us the power to toss mountains (and at our discretion) if we’re lacking in Agape Love? I think not!

I think we need to have a lot of “Christ” & “The Father” in us in order to qualify.

So let’s shift now into a higher gear, and elaborate on our “discipleship”

A true disciple of Christ, is one who “forsook” his fishing net, to follow his Master, as He teaches us to become fishers of men.

(Are we fishing for men, or are we still fishing for mundane things?)

Brethren, a “disciple” is not just a mere pupil, a disciple is an adherent!

An adherent is one who accepts the instruction given to him, and makes it his rule of conduct.

(As disciples of Jesus Christ, we have “good work” to do.)

(Our plate should be filled with “good works” not “worldly desires.”)

2 Timothy 2 please)

Paul wrote the book of 2 Timothy to encourage Timothy in the work of the ministry.

And let us always remember, “ministry” means “servant” We’re not talking “Idealized pedestals” here, were talking about “disciples” of Jesus Christ.

Christ told His disciples: “*whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant.*” (He’s talking “bond servant” here – a slave.

(And not a slave to the world (nor its Babylonian system, which so many of us in God’s church are still is dire need to come out of) (So we will no longer be partakers of her sins, nor partakers of her plagues)

We need to be slaves to Christ Jesus, the Head of the Body, the Head of the Church.)

(2 Timothy 2:3 please)

2 Timothy 2:

3 *Thou therefore endure hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ. No man that warreth entangleth himself with the affairs of this life; that he may please Him who hath chosen him to be a soldier.*

(When one becomes a soldier, his occupation changes, he now labors in pursuit of other things.)

(Barnes notes the following concerning 2 Timothy 2:3)

“A soldier is not to be encumbered with the affairs of this life. This is always a condition in becoming a soldier. He gives up his own business during the time for which he is enlisted, and devotes himself to the service of his country.

The farmer leaves his plow, and the mechanic his shop, and the merchant his store, and the student his books, and the lawyer his brief; and neither of them expect to pursue these things while engaged in the service of their country.

It would be wholly impracticable to carry on the plans of a campaign, if each one of these classes should undertake to prosecute his private business.

Roman soldiers were not allowed to marry, or to engage in any husbandry or trade. The general principle was thought that it would divert their minds from that which was to be the sole object of pursuit. So with the ministers of the gospel.

It is equally improper for them to "entangle" themselves with the business of a farm or plantation; with plans of speculation and gain, and with any purpose of worldly aggrandizement.

(“Aggrandizement” means the expansion of power, wealth, rank, or honor.)

The minister of the gospel accomplishes the design of his appointment only when he can say insincerity, that he "is not entangled with the affairs of this life; That he may please him who hath chosen him to be a soldier - That is, him who has enlisted him, or in whose employ he is.

His great object is to approve himself to him. It is not to pursue his own plans, or to have his own will, or to accumulate property or fame for himself. His will is absorbed in the will of his commander, and his purpose is accomplished if he meet with his approbation. (meaning approval – commendation)

Nowhere else is it so true that the will of one becomes lost in that of another, as in the case of the soldier. In an army it is contemplated that there shall be but one mind, one heart, one purpose - that of the commander; and that the whole army shall be as obedient to that as the members of the human body are to the one will that controls all.

The application of this is obvious. The grand purpose of the minister of the gospel is to please Christ. He is to pursue no separate plans, and to have no separate will, of his own; and it is contemplated that the whole "Corps" of Christian ministers and members of the churches shall be as entirely subordinate to the will of Christ, as an army is to the orders of its chief.”

(End of quote.)

Much of what was stated there sure echo's much of the qualifications of a disciple of Jesus Christ.

A true disciple of Christ no longer entangles himself with the affairs of this life, but instead forsakes all to follow Him.

Christ tells us in another place, that one must forsake all to be His disciple, even his own life.

(But true disciples are few and far between.)

In Luke 14:16 it speaks of a great supper that many have been invited to. This invitation comes from the very one who has called us into His church in the first place, the Father Himself.

But all with one consent began to make excuse. They were too busy with the cares of this life.

O they were involved in "works" but not the kind of "works" we have been employed to do. (Their "works" pertained to self ambitions.)

(How busy are we with self ambitions, and the cares of this life?)

One had purchased a piece of ground, and wanted to see it.

Another bought five yoke of oxen and wanted to prove them.

Another was totally dedicated to his wife.

Little did they realize that "opportunity" was knocking on their door, but they neglected to recognize its value, and rejected it.

How about us brethren, do we value our calling? Or are we too increased with goods like the Laodicean's, who have Christ on the outside of their door, knocking, wanting to come in with them, and sup with them?

Are we busy at "work" or are we true men of God, busy with the "good works" that the Almighty has inspired us to perform?

True disciples of Jesus Christ (Those who have an outgoing concern for others) are few and far between.

(Philippians 2: 19 please, as we begin wrapping this up)

(True disciples of Jesus Christ were few & far between in Paul's day, and are still few & far between in our day.) (Remember, Christ's flock is a little flock.)

(Are we part of His flock?) (The proof is always in the pudding, and in this particular case, the pudding needs to consists of "good works" "Out going concern for others."

Philippians 2:19-21 (Were cutting in here where Paul was telling the Philippians that even the majority of his companions were lacking in "good works" .

- 19 *“But I trust in the Lord Jesus to send Timothy shortly unto you, that I also may be of good comfort, when I know your state (Paul was like Christ, full of Agape Love & compassion, out going concern for others) (But not everyone had this mind set)*
- 21 *For all seek their own, not the things which are Jesus Christ’s.*

Brethren, are we committed to the work in which we have been called to perform, as soldiers of Christ Jesus? Or have we been marred by the cares of this life, and the untoward world in which we are living?

(We need to have “works” “good works.”)

Being a disciple of Christ is not always easy to endure. Although *His yoke is easy and His burden is light*, we need to exercise much caution, not to return to the life in which we once lived, and the concerns & cares thereof.

(Remember our brother Demas?) (Demas walked the walk for a while.)

He even traveled with Paul according to Colossians 4:14 (not turning.)

(But I would like to turn to 2 Timothy 4:10 please)

(Demas forsook Paul, and the love of doing “good works” because he was “lured” off track, by some pretty powerful bait.)

(We need to guard against this particular “bait” because it can be extremely appealing to us humans.)

2 Timothy 4:

10 *Demas hath forsaken me, having loved this present world, and is departed unto Thessalonica.*

(The cares & love of this world, can distract us from our destined purpose of doing “good works”.)

Much more could be said about the “good works” that the “*man of God*” has been inspired & encouraged by the God Breathed Scriptures to perform.

But for now I’m going to end in 1 Timothy 6 17-19, where we are admonished not to trust in “worldly riches” but in the “Living God” only.

This would include all of us living here in the USA, abounding in material wealth.

1 Timothy 6:

17 *“Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not highminded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy;*

18 *That they do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate;*

19 *Laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life.*