

**THE MARKS OF THE CHRISTIAN LIFE:
A LOVE FOR GOD'S WORD
2 Timothy 3:10-17**

I. WHY DO WE CALL IT "THE LIVING WORD?"

A. Paul used a distinctive phrase to describe holy scripture. ¹⁶*All Scripture is inspired by God.* The translation of the word inspired provides the picture of scripture as being God-breathed. At this writing, Paul would have been referring to the Old Testament scriptures. Later, Paul's writings would be given the same stature among the churches.

1. God used men and women of faith to record scripture.
2. It was used by men and women of faith and proved itself to be faithful.
3. Its authority was observed and ratified.
4. Translations have come as men have discovered a need to put the Bible into understandable language.

B. The Bible is living Word as we read it and open our hearts and minds to it. The Holy Spirit is our tutor in matters of understanding. In John, Jesus talked about the ministry of the Holy Spirit. ⁵*"But now I am going to Him who sent Me; and none of you asks Me, 'Where are You going?'"* ⁶*"But because I have said these things to you, sorrow has filled your heart."* ⁷*"But I tell you the truth, it is to your advantage that I go away; for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you; but if I go, I will send Him to you."* ⁸*"And He, when He comes, will convict the world concerning sin and righteousness and judgment; ⁹concerning sin, because they do not believe in Me; ¹⁰and concerning righteousness, because I go to the Father and you no longer see Me; ¹¹and concerning judgment, because the ruler of this world has been judged. ¹²"I have many more*

things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now. ¹³“But when He, the Spirit of truth, comes, He will guide you into all the truth; for He will not speak on His own initiative, but whatever He hears, He will speak; and He will disclose to you what is to come. ¹⁴“He will glorify Me, for He will take of Mine and will disclose it to you. ¹⁵“All things that the Father has are Mine; therefore I said that He takes of Mine and will disclose it to you. (John 16:5-15 NASB95) The Holy Spirit is able to take the timeless truths of God’s Word and apply them to our contemporary lives.

II. WHAT IS ITS FUNCTION IN MY LIFE?

A. Paul described the function of the living Word of God.

¹⁴You, however, continue in the things you have learned and become convinced of, knowing from whom you have learned them, ¹⁵and that from childhood you have known the sacred writings which are able to give you the wisdom that leads to salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. ¹⁶All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness;

B. The Bible has several functions in our lives.

1. It offers knowledge of the way to salvation.
2. It is good for teaching. Scripture offers us a revelation of God. From Genesis to Revelation, we see a picture of God. We learn about his character. We learn about his work. We learn about our relationship with him. There is no substitute for the Biblical text as our primary teaching tool.
3. It is good for reproof and correction. The Bible is effective in upholding the truth and exposing error.
4. It is good for training in righteousness. The Bible is not meant to be simply a reference book. It is a tool to be used to shape our lives to reflect the revelation of God. Our time in the Word should cause us to reflect the person of Christ in the world.

- C. Recently, the Pew Forum released results of a survey of 36000 people. The results of the study were enlightening. One of the primary findings was that the morals and values of people who claim to be religious are frighteningly similar to the morals and values of people who make no claim to be religious. The lives of Christians are often very similar to the lives of those who make no claims of religious affiliation. How can we explain the phenomenon of people who spend time in worship and Bible study behaving like people who simply absorb the values of the culture? We must be experiencing a plague of spiritual bulimia. Many people gorge on spiritual truth on Sunday and promptly disgorge what they have consumed. It is a distasteful picture, but it is also a distasteful reality. The study of the living Word of God should have a lasting and profound effect on our lives. We should be marked by the truth of God's word.

III. WHAT IS THE OUTCOME OF THE WORD IN MY LIFE?

- A. Paul described the outcome of the living Word. *¹⁷So that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work.* When we experience the teaching, correction, reproof, and training for righteousness of the living Word, we should experience spiritual maturity that results in Christian living.
- B. The outcome of the word is that we should reflect Christ. James said that there are three indicators of real religion.
1. We are advocates for the helpless.
 2. We are increasingly able to bridle our tongues.
 3. We keep ourselves unstained from the world.