

Pentecost 19 / October 19, 2025

2 Timothy 3:14

“the sacred writings... are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. All scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be competent, equipped for every good work.”

The Scriptures make us:
Wise for salvation. Equipped for good works

There is nothing more powerful than the word of God. When God speaks over His creation it is done, storms are stilled, the sea stops its raging. There is nothing more important than the words of God in sacred scripture. He speaks words that make us wise unto eternal life through faith in Christ Jesus. When God spoke His word creation came into being. When God speaks the physical universe responds immediately and without resistance. The only part of creation that resists God’s word is His human creation. Unlike any other earthly creature, humans have the capacity to resist and refuse to hear and heed the word of the Lord, but not to our betterment. Yet, that is not because of a defect or deficiency in God’s word. It is His allowance so that His chosen may respond to His call in faith and assent to His will in loving obedience. God allowed His human creation to disobey His word and fall away from Him in sin that He might display His mercy in forgiveness for those who receive His word with believing hearts and respond in the obedience of love.

God allows His human creation to close their ears to His voice and reject His call in order to show His patience, divine forbearance and His mercy in those, who like Paul, at first resist and finally come to believe. God allows the hardness of the human heart so that the power of His word would be manifest in the lives of those who receive it with believing hearts. In His wisdom God allows His human creation to reject His word and refuse His mercy, but a time will come when His word will go forth in the fullness of power and He will call all to stand before Him in judgement. Then the cost of rejecting His word will be evident in those who did not believe. Then His mercy will be made manifest in those who heard His word with eager ears and received it with believing hearts. God grant us all ears to hear and open hearts to believe His word that makes us wise unto eternal life through faith in Christ Jesus and equips for every good work in His service.

The bible is a book unlike any other. Although written by humans, it is a message from God. As Paul says, it is breathed by God, who through His Holy Spirit, inspired humans to write His thoughts and express His ways. God told Isaiah, *"My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are my ways your ways...as the heavens are higher than the earth so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts."* No sacred scripture was produced by the thoughts or will of men and women. On the contrary, those who put forward their thoughts as the word of God, without the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, were and are called, 'false prophets.' St. Peter writes, *"No prophecy was ever produced by the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit."* Most importantly the bible is written by human hands through the Spirit's inspiration to make us wise unto salvation through faith in Christ Jesus.

St. Paul had amazing experiences in his life with Christ. His conversion came in the most remarkable way. Jesus appeared to him in a vision of blinding light and called him to repentance. Nevertheless, Paul never called anyone to faith in Christ on the basis of his experience. He always directed them to the sacred scriptures as the source of God's self revelation and the bedrock of our faith in Christ. Peter was of the same opinion. After recounting his experience on the Mount of Transfiguration, where He saw Jesus' glorified in the presence of Moses and Elijah, he said, *"And we have something more certain, the prophetic word, to which you will do well to pay attention as to a lamp shining in a dark place."* The scriptures make us wise to salvation through faith in Christ Jesus and equip us for every good work in His service.

The bible is unlike any other book, because it tells us things about ourselves, about God and about salvation that only God could know. The bible tells us that sin is the cause of death and that death comes to everyone, because everyone is a sinner, in thought, word and deed, by what we have done and by what we have left undone. The bible tells us that even before we are capable of committing actual sins that we are conceived and born in a sinful condition with a sinful nature. The Holy Spirit moved David to confess, both for himself and for all people, *"Surely I have been sinful from birth, a sinner from the time my mother conceived me."* You won't find that information in any book written by human beings. In fact, people write books that say the opposite. We only find the knowledge of sin, death and salvation in the bible. It is the only book in which the Holy Spirit inspired men to write His thoughts and reveal His ways. Its great purpose is to make us wise to

salvation be revealing Jesus as our God and Saviour. It is written that we would believe Jesus is the Saviour and have life in His Name.

More than the knowledge of sin and death, the scriptures make us wise unto eternal life by showing us what God has done to forgive our sins, heal our broken relationship with Him, destroy death and bless us with eternal life. The bible reveals to us a God who loves and forgives. He by no means condones sin, but He knows our weaknesses and finds ways to heal and forgive. Human beings naturally see God as a judge and fear him in terror. The Holy Spirit showed the Psalmists a different way of seeing God; not in anger and judgement, but in steadfast love and forgiveness. They saw God in a different way and so they sang a different song saying, *"with you there is forgiveness, therefore you are feared."* God forgives for the sake of Jesus and the salvation He accomplished for everyone through the blood of His Holy Cross. The scriptures were written that we would be made wise unto salvation through faith in Jesus.

God brings His forgiveness to our souls through the words of scripture. Paul encourages Timothy to continue in the sacred scriptures which he has known since childhood, literally infancy. This is important, because we need to know God's word has a gracious effect in our spirits even when we are infants. We speak the words of scripture to children, even infants, even before they can understand because the Holy Spirit works in their hearts through scriptures. The Psalmist sang, *"You made me trust you even at my mother's breast."* Whether we are young or old, no matter how limited our capacity to understand, the Holy Spirit through the scriptures makes us wise to salvation by leading us to the mercy of God, expressed most fully in the cross of Jesus, where we see our Saviour and receive from Him forgiveness, healing, pardon, peace and the promise of sharing in His resurrection to everlasting life. The scriptures make us wise to salvation through faith in Christ Jesus and equip us for every good work in His service.

The sacred scriptures lead us to Jesus. He is the fullness of God in human form. He expresses the righteousness of God in the sacrifice of the cross and the forgiveness of sins. He is the author of our faith. He is the One who brings it to completion in eternal life. He is the One to whom all the prophets and apostles lead us. If we don't see Jesus in the scriptures, we are not seeing them right or understanding them properly. The Pharisees and Teachers of the Law didn't see Jesus in the scriptures. He said to them, *"You search the scriptures because you think that in them you have eternal life; and it is they that bear witness to me."* Jesus is the heart and centre of scripture. Moses, the Prophets, the Evangelists and

Apostles lead us to Him and bear witness that He is the Son of God, our Saviour and Lord. Those who see Jesus at the heart of the scriptures are made wise to eternal life.

We continue in the faith begun in us by the Holy Spirit working through the word, by continuing in the sacred scriptures. We might read a book and think we got it. We only need to read some books once, if at all. But no matter how often we read the bible there will always be something more to learn, something more for the Holy Spirit to teach us about ourselves and about God's love for us. God's Spirit speaks to our spirits in the scriptures encouraging our faith and equipping us for good works. We study the scriptures, because in them the Lord gives us encouragement and hope through His steadfast love in Christ Jesus. In Romans Paul wrote, *"For whatever was written in former days was written for our instruction that through endurance and through the encouragement of the scriptures we might have hope."* The scriptures show that our hope is in Christ Jesus our Saviour and Lord.

We might have read enough world history and think we know all we need to know. But we can never read enough about the history of God at work in the world and in the lives of human beings. We can never read enough about God and His love, which is for all people in Christ Jesus. We can never have enough encouragement in our faith to bear the trials and challenges of life. Take God's word to heart, read it, hear it and believe it! We find hope and receive encouragement in the scriptures, because they make us wise unto salvation and equip us with everything necessary in His service by bringing us to Jesus and bringing Jesus to us. Your word O Lord is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path. O Lord, lead us to Jesus, equip us with every gift necessary for service in your kingdom and make us wise unto eternal life through faith in Him. Amen.

May the Lord who has begun the good work of faith in our hearts, through the word and by the working of the Holy Spirit. bring our faith to completion in our share of His resurrection to life everlasting. In Jesus' Name. Amen