



The Reliability of Scripture (2 Timothy 3:15-17)

Theme: Sacred Scriptures are reliable because they are a gift from God thus they are good for us.

1. Introduction:

Scarborough Baptist Church's Article of Faith describes the Bible in the following words:

"We believe in the whole Bible as the inerrant Word of God, and the sole and absolute authority in all matters of Faith and practice, and in the Divine inspiration of the original writings of the Old Testament (OT) and the New Testament (NT) as set forth in Scriptures."

The Bible contains 66 Books. The Old Testament contains 39 books and the New Testament, 27. In our English Bibles, the first 5 Books of the OT (Genesis to Deuteronomy) are known by various titles: the Torah (Law), the Books of Moses, the Pentateuch. The next 12 Books in our English (Protestant) Bibles are historical Books (Joshua to Esther). After these there are the 6 poetic Books: (Job to Ecclesiastes, and Lamentations).

Then there are the 16 prophetic Books. The first four, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Daniel are known as the Major Prophets. These are called the Major Prophets not because they are more significant than the other prophets but because they contain more information than the Minor Prophets (Hosea to Malachi).

The first 5 Books of the NT are historical Books (Matt-Acts). The next 21 are Epistles or what we may call today, Letters (Romans to Jude). The final Book of the Bible (Revelation) is Apocalyptic.

Jesus divides the entire OT into three sections: The Law of Moses, the Prophets, and the Psalms (Lk. 24:44). The 66 Books of the Old and New Testaments are the *Word of God* (1 Pet. 1:23). This title emphasizes the verbal communication of God's word, that which was *spoken*. However, the most common title used by the authors of the Bible to define God's Word is "Scripture" (Matt. 21:42; Jn. 5:39). The word Scripture comes from the Greek verb *graphō* meaning "to write."

2. The Sacred Scriptures are reliable because they originate from God (2 Tim. 3:16).

- A) Scriptures are a gift from God (James 1:17).
- B) Scriptures are categorically Inspired by God in its entirety.
Note the "all" in the statement (2 Tim. 3:16).
- C) Scriptures are Inerrant.

3. The Sacred Scriptures are reliable because they are useful for us (2 Tim. 3:16-17)

Our knowledge of what is good and our sense of what is right is derived from God; to know what is good and right is equivalent to discovering God's will. This knowledge can therefore be reliably grounded only in God's self-disclosure or revelation.

- A) Scriptures are useful for us because they help us to Live righteously (v. 16a) What does it mean to live righteously?
It means to live in accordance with God's will.
- B) Scriptures are useful for us because they qualify us to do good work (v. 17)
Good works are the things we practice in relation to our fellow human beings. Good works are those things which are fitting or appropriate to our identity. For example, a good tree produces good fruit. Morally speaking our good works are the things we do that are fitting to our character as God's children; the things that we do to that would benefit others. That's what it means to love our neighbors. And it is the word of God that shows us what we ought to be doing as God's children in relation to others. What are some good works? For Timothy it included rightly dividing the word (2 Tim. 2:15). It is also the same for us.

May God give us the grace so that we can rightly divide the word of truth.

By God's Grace and for His glory,

Pr. Francis

Hymn: "The Christian's Guide"

(by Maggie W. Stratton, pub. 1897)

1. Holy Bible, how I love it! How it doth my bosom cheer,
When through trials and temptations It has always been so near!
It will surely guide my footsteps In the strait and narrow way,
If in trust I read its contents, If I always watch and pray.

Refrain:

Holy Bible, how I love thee!
Safest guide through this dark world;
Holy Bible, how I love thee!
See its banner now unfurled.

2. As I walk this narrow pathway That will lead to endless rest,
In the arms of my Redeemer, With my head upon His breast,
I cannot enough be thankful For the love He showed to me,
When He bore my sins of crimson In His body on the tree.

3. From the state of condemnation, Pride, and all formality,
And from selfish exaltation, Through Christ's word and blood I'm free;
Blessed Bible! what a comfort! Its dear pages shine so bright;
'Tis the way from earth to heaven— I am walking in its light.

4. When old earth shall cease to travel, And when time shall be no more,
With our loved ones we will gather Over on the other shore,
Where all sorrow will be over, Where all tears are wiped away,
Where with angel voices blending We shall sing in endless day.