

FWG - Week of 5/17/2020
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Song: *Word of God Speak* by Mercy Me
https://youtu.be/4JK_6osCH74

Prayer: Philippians 4:6 tells us to “...do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. Pray for the Lord to give you peace today. Take your worries and requests to Him. Praise Him for the blessings in your life. Ask Him to open your heart to hear His words and bring you close to Him.

Text:

“All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness.”
2 Timothy 3:16

Explanation:

Can't you just see Paul sitting in a cold damp cell in Rome? He has spent many years in prison because of his faith, and within his sight, is the finish line to his race. He knows his fate. Soon, he will be sentenced to die. Even so, with this knowledge Paul picks up his pen and begins to write to Timothy. Timothy, who to Paul started as a companion and brother in Christ, is now as dear to Paul as a son. I can imagine Paul pouring all of his heart into this letter as he writes to his successor.

You imagine that Paul would be fearful or discouraged as he begins writing to Timothy. We could understand if he frantically wrote for help or wished that his circumstances were different. However, this was not the case. No, because for Paul, to live was Christ, but he already knew that his dying was his gain. What we do see is a mentor writing to his beloved student, knowing it is time to pass on the torch. When we pick up in verse 16, Paul has reminded him to be strong in his faith, warned Timothy of future challenges and has reminded the younger pastor who he is in Christ. Right before Paul gives Timothy his marching orders for the last time, Paul arms him with a compass he will need to accomplish his goal: the scripture. He proclaims that all scripture is breathed out by God, and is useful in the disciple's walk.

Notice that Paul didn't say some of the scripture was useful, or the scripture that applied to his circumstance, or the parts that Timothy agreed with. No, he says all. Not only does he say that all scripture is applicable to Timothy, he explains that the reason Timothy can put his trust in scripture is because it is God-breathed. Otherwise, wouldn't there be room for human error? The Greek word used here is *theopneustos*, which means “God-breathed, inspired by God, due to the inspiration of God.” This disproves the doubts that this world throws at us. The Bible is not full of man-made mistakes, with information added to or lost in translation over time. It specifically describes it as being inspired by God himself, not influenced by man. If one is to breathe out, one must first be able to breathe in. If this is true, then the only explanation is the Holy Spirit alive and working

within each of the authors of the scriptures, breathing out each word for our benefit. Because of this, Timothy had a reliable, unchanging, guide in all aspects in his life. The good news is the same is true for us today. We have every letter and word that was breathed out by God. It is perfect, without error, and is the absolute authority over all things. How do we know this is true? Because the Bible tells us this is so. Holding tightly to the sword of the spirit we can walk confidently equipped with God's word to guide and direct us along the way.

“Every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of the heavenly lights, who does not change like shifting shadows” (James 1:17).

The Point: The Bible, including both Old and New Testaments, is inspired by God, is perfect, and is complete. It is useful for teaching the truth, revealing error, and giving instruction in our Christian walk.

Application: How does this text apply to each member of your family?

Pre-K & Elementary Age: Use an instruction manual for a car or instructions for operating an object. Show your child how an owner's manual or care instructions explain what an item is, its purpose, how to use and care for it, how to set it up, etc. Ask your child if they know what the manual is used for. Is it something useful, or something to just toss to the side? No! Even though some things are fairly easy to figure out, we sometimes need a manual to help us assemble correctly and operate them correctly. A manual is a guide that helps people build and use things. For the not-so-simple items, it's important that we learn and follow what the manual says; because if we don't, we will probably wreck the machine or put together furniture, like a cabinet, the wrong way. For example: What will happen if I don't know how to make a cabinet and it turns out wobbly?

We also have our own personal manual. The Bible is the word of God! The Bible is filled with instructions that help us live and do right. The Bible helps keep us out of danger and helps us avoid wrong things. God's Word helps us figure life out as we grow and go through life. As we learn Bible truths, the Bible teaches us what is true and helps us realize the wrong things we do and have in our lives. When we learn from God's Word, it corrects us and teaches us to do what is right.

Middle & High School Students: Students will often begin to be challenged in their beliefs during the middle and high school years. It is important to not only speak to your teens about what they believe, but also why do they believe it. Many may be confronted with the argument that the bible could not be perfect because it was written and transcribed by man throughout the years, and therefore subject to man made mistakes. God didn't actually personally write the Bible, but instead used certain men throughout history to write down His Word for us so that we could read it today. Men like Moses, Joshua, Isaiah, John, Paul, and many others were spoken to by God and wrote down what He told them to write. In other words, the Bible is inspired by God. A good way to illustrate this is to ask your teen to take out a piece of paper and have them write down whatever you say. You can say anything, like “Chocolate ice cream is best.” Then ask them who wrote those words? But whose

words were they? So, even though God used certain men to write down His Word, it was HIS Word they were writing. And God saw to it that, however His servants wrote His messages, they all said just what God wanted to say. Now, for us today, God's Word is complete. There is nothing more to be said.

Young Adult: Timothy grew up in a home where he was taught the scriptures from an early age. As he matured, he helped Paul in his work to spread the gospel. He was more than a co-worker to Paul. He became like a son. Who influences you in your walk? Do they speak truth into your life? Do they encourage you to read God's Word to guide and equip you? God created us for community. He knew that we would need one another. Look for your "Paul" in your life. Look for the mentor who will pray for you, pour into your life and speak truth. If you do not have that person, ask God to show you who you can serve along with and learn from.

Adult: You know what they say about best-laid plans? Nevertheless, we live in a world that tells us to plan. And have a plan and a back up plan, just in case. We plan what career we want to have, what kind of spouse we want to marry, how many kids we will have, and so on. It is easy for our plans to change, either by our own decisions or because of circumstances beyond our control. What happens when our plans go array? Do we react angrily, upset that we didn't get what we wanted? Does anxiety creep in and we worry about what will happen next? Do we rush to get advice from a friend or family member on how to proceed? I am pretty sure that at no point in his life Paul had prison and death by beheading in his five-year plan. How did he react to the change of his circumstances? Right now with COVID-19 we may be in the middle of the biggest examples of just how easily our plans may not always work out. Compare your reactions to unforeseen "bumps" to the truths found in scripture. The word of God is sharper than any two edged sword. Ask God to use His word to pierce our hearts and to open our eyes to help us submit and trust in Him.

Empty Nesters: Paul not only found contentment in his chains, he also used the opportunity to reach out to those who he had influence to reassure, encourage, and challenge them in their walk. He made sure to help guide Timothy in his Christian walk. Speaking truth and reminding others of where the truth can be found during trials is a part of discipleship. Right now, as Satan is using the events of the last several weeks to uproot, confuse, and instill fear, the world needs to hear the truth. God has given us his perfect, infallible Word to speak life into every situation. Find those who you can encourage, witness to, and disciple in the week ahead. Be somebody's Paul.

Song: *Your Word* by Hillsong Worship
<https://youtu.be/G9NEYy71lcU>

Prayer: Ask the Lord to give you a hunger and thirst for His Word. Ask Him to make it alive and active in your life, and for it to be a light to your path as we walk through this uncharted territory ahead of us. Thank Him for His love and mercy.