

THE BOOK OF BOOKS

God's Word - THE BIBLE

God's word consists of sixty-six books. God used about 40 writers over a span of some 1100 years to write the Book of Books. It is called the Bible.

Pastors admonish members to read the Bible through every year. Others teach to read the Bible daily. Do we?

Most don't. However, by letter, Paul teaches a young Timothy to "**Study to show thyself approved, rightly dividing the word of truth, 2 Timothy 2:15.**" Of course, Paul is writing to all Christians, as well.

Further, Paul instructs all of us that "**All Scripture is given by inspiration of God and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness**" (2Tim. 3:16).

It's all there! First, Paul mentions **Doctrine** (teaching). And, **doctrine** is something we can take a stand upon; because **doctrine** is by inspiration of God. **Doctrine** comes from the mind of God. God, the Father is teaching us.

But, if we don't take a stand, Paul adds (quickly, it seems) "**reproof;**" which means conviction. The Bible is not just a book. It's Scripture! And, every time we look at Scripture, we are exposed to God's righteousness. He is, and we are not; so, conviction **reproves** us and moves us, strongly.

When the heart is serious, we are corrected. **Correction** is Paul's next word to Timothy. We have to see "**correction**" occurring continually. That is, the Book **repeatedly** corrects us with each chapter and verse.

But, it doesn't stop there, the Book of Books corrects us continuously, without interruption. That's what is so good about Correction from God, it is ever ongoing. Even after the Book is put down, His words provide grace which walks with us where ever we go. Grace, in the honest heart, employs the kind of practice that's recorded in Psalms 119:11: **Thy word have I hid my heart, that we might not sin against Thee.**" As we go, we meditate upon Him.

The Book of Books instructs us in **doctrine**, **reproof** and the **righteousness** of God, as well. In His righteousness, we learn that it is quite different from the "**rudiments of the world**" (Col. 2:20) and "**the commandments and doctrines of men**" (Col. 2:22); which, "**perish with using,**" Paul teaches (Col. 2:21).

No matter how profound man may speak, when all is said and done, God will be standing, alone. All others (and, their teachings) shall have gone the way of the English tense, the **pluperfect**. They and theirs shall have perished; which means that it is already decreed by God. Man is not worth following.

God's **righteousness** means that He is **just**. Originally written as, '**rightwiseness**,' **righteousness** means that God's faithfulness and truthfulness is consistent with His own nature and His promises (taken from W. E. Vine).

God is **righteous!** And, as a Missionary Baptist Preacher, I have to mention the words of Jesus, at His baptism. "**Suffer it to be so now: for thus it becometh us to fulfill all righteousness. Then he** (John) **suffered** (baptized) **Him** (Jesus), Matthew 3:15.

After His baptism, Jesus went into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. Now, listen up! No one is capable of meeting anyone else unless he is sold out to God's total plan - His inspiration, His doctrine, reproof and correction! All these are incorporated within the instruction of in His **righteousness**.

And, back to baptism, man must put away all that he has; which, in the Scriptural sense, is the meaning of baptism. Baptism is a burial, It shows that you are dead and that you are to "**Set your affection on things above**" (Col. 3:1).

Concerning the Book of Books, we read that Jesus told the Jews to "**Search the Scriptures; for in them think ye that you have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me** (Jn 5:39).

Religion has its writings and Christians trust in the Book of Books. But, there's a lesson to learn from the Jews about the book. We must never allow the word to be more important the **Author** of the Word.

God's Book is inspired by Him. However, its profitability lies; not in its words, but in the **One** that spoke the words. To receive Him is to have faith. But, faith relies upon God, the author of faith. He's the **One** that told us what to do. Application of each passage that we memorize is to be '**walked**' out in faith or, we shall trip and fall short. The Christian course is to "**walk by faith, not by sight**" (appearance) 2 Corinthians 5:7.

The Book of Books must be read. But, in its reading, we have to look beyond the **letter** and see the **Spirit** of the **One** that inspired the letter. We must see God first; then, His doctrine; His reproof, correction and instruction.

While, Christians have a reverence for the Book of Books, they must learn to serve the God of the Book; not the book.