

The Life the Bible Gives Us
(Two Ways to Live & The Difference One Word Makes)

The Discipleship Wheel

2 Timothy 3:14–17

Big Idea: The Bible saves and sanctifies us. It is God's primary means to reveal himself, instruct us and mature us.

Introduction: Paul writes these words to Timothy near the end of his life, from imprisonment and under the shadow of impending death (2 Timothy 4:6–8).

It is a final, urgent appeal from a spiritual father to a trusted son.

Timothy is Paul's long-time companion, and representative has traveled with Paul, learned from him, suffered alongside him, and now bears pastoral responsibility in a difficult context marked by false teaching, cultural pressure, and spiritual instability.

Throughout this letter, Paul contrasts two paths:

- a) those who abandon truth and drift into deception, and
- b) Timothy, who has been patiently formed in the gospel.

Against a backdrop of moral decay and doctrinal confusion (3:1–13), Paul calls Timothy to remain anchored in the Bible.

*This book will keep you from sin.
 Or sin will keep you from this book.*

Paul's counsel is pointed: *stay rooted in the Scriptures.*

Acts 20:32 – [Paul's last words to the Ephesian elders] - And now I commend you to God and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up and to give you the inheritance among all those who are sanctified.

In 2 Timothy 3:14-17, Paul explains

- a) why Scripture has been central to Timothy's spiritual formation,
- b) why it carries divine authority, and
- c) why it remains essential for faithful ministry.

This passage, then, is not merely about the nature of Scripture in the abstract; it is about how God sustains you and me through His Word.

IMP: Paul does not call Timothy to novelty, technique, or charisma, but to the Bible.

Transition: This passage tells us what Scripture is, what it does, and why the we as individual people and the church as a body cannot grow without it.

First: Remain Grounded in the Scriptures You Have Received (vv. 14–15)

But as for you, continue in what you have learned and have firmly believed, knowing from whom you learned it and how from childhood you have been acquainted with the sacred writings...

- a) Paul contrasts Timothy with those who abandon truth (3:1–13).

Paul’s repeated phrase “*But as for you*” (v. 14) signals that this passage is not merely about *ideas* but about Timothy’s faithfulness under pressure.

APP: In the crisis, what do you trust?

- b) Scripture is not newly discovered; it is
 - 1- received,
 - 2- learned,
 - 3- trusted and
 - 4- applied

Timothy’s formation began early – *childhood* = GR / *brephos* (βρέφος) = infant

APP: Note 1:5 vs v 14. This signals the importance of family and CGs (Think about the Nehemiah passage last week).

- c) Scripture forms our faith over time, not instantly.

Scripture’s power is cumulative, not instantaneous. It forms through repetition and time, not novelty.

- d) Knowing *from whom* you learned matters as much as *what* you learned.

ILL: The elders have recently created a “*Trusted Reading List*” for our leaders.

- e) Scripture is a lifelong formation, not a short-term fix.
- f) Faithful discipleship roots people in God’s Word before crises arrive.

Second: Because Scripture Comes from God and Carries His Authority (v. 16a) - *All Scripture is breathed out by God...*

- a) Scripture’s authority flows from its divine origin, not human usefulness.

- b) “God-breathed” emphasizes source, not process.

“breathed out” = GR / *theopneustos* θεόπνευστος = “God-breathed.”

- c) Scripture carries God’s voice into the present.
- d) Scripture is not merely inspiring; it is authoritative.
- e) The church submits to Scripture because it comes from God.
- f) Scripture shapes belief before behavior.
- g) Formation begins with trust in God’s Word as God’s Word.

Third: And is Profitable for You (v. 16b) – *...and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness,*

- a) Scripture addresses both belief and behavior.
- b) It not only instructs but exposes, restores, and trains.

The Bible tells us:

- a) What is right – *teaching*
 - b) - What is wrong – *reproof*
 - c) How to make wrong, right – *correction*
 - d) How to keep right, right – *training in righteousness...*
- a) Scripture does not merely inform; it forms.
 - b) Correction is restorative, not punitive.
 - c) God’s Word shapes character over time.
 - d) Discipleship without Scripture becomes shallow or distorted.

Fourth: Maturing and Equipped You (v. 17) - *that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work.*

- a) Scripture’s goal is not knowledge alone but readiness for obedience.
- b) “Equipped” implies preparation for real-life faithfulness.
- c) Maturity flows from sustained engagement with Scripture.
- d) Scripture equips God’s people for every good work, not selective obedience.

- e) Formation leads to faithful action.
- f) Scripture is central to lifelong discipleship.
- g) The Word shapes people who serve God faithfully in the world.

Fifth: Seeing Jesus in the Bible. 15b - *...which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus.*

This passage ultimately points beyond Scripture as a tool to Scripture as a witness.

Paul reminds Timothy that the “sacred writings” he has known from childhood are those “*which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus*” (v. 15).

Scripture’s purpose is not merely moral instruction or intellectual formation, but salvation—and that salvation is found *through Christ* and being like Jesus.

The Scriptures Paul refers to are the Old Testament writings, which, read rightly, lead not to self-reliance but to faith in the promised Messiah now revealed in Jesus.

In other words, Scripture is God-breathed because it is Christ-revealing.

It prepares the way for Christ, points to Christ, and finds its fulfillment in Christ. Jesus Himself affirmed this when He said that Moses, the Prophets, and the Psalms speak of Him (Luke 24:27, 44).

27 - And beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, he interpreted to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself.

44 - Then he said to them, “These are my words that I spoke to you while I was still with you, that everything written about me in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms must be fulfilled

The authority, usefulness, and formative power of Scripture flow from the fact that it bears unified witness to God’s redemptive work accomplished in Christ.

Therefore, the aim of Scripture—to equip the servant of God for every good work (v. 17)—is inseparable from our union with Christ.

Scripture forms mature disciples not by replacing Christ, but by continually returning God’s people to Him.

To be shaped by Scripture is to be shaped into Christlikeness; to be equipped by Scripture is to be equipped to live faithfully as Christ.

Scripture does its deepest work when it brings God’s people again and again to Christ, in whom salvation, authority, and obedience find their true center.

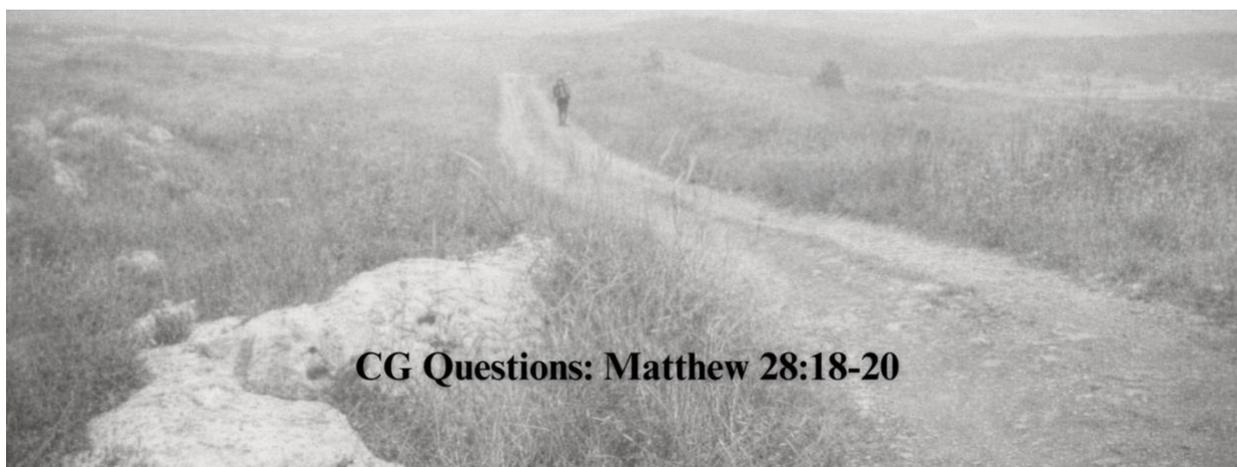
Conclusion:

- Scripture is received, given by God, formative, and aimed at maturity.

Can it be trusted to be God's word? Well, if you start with God, "Yes, *certainly*."

- The church cannot grow beyond its submission to Scripture.

Let us renew our trust in, attentiveness to, and obedience to God's Word.



CG Questions: Matthew 28:18-20

Observe

(What does the text say?)

1. What words or phrases does Paul repeat or emphasize in verses 14–17?
2. What contrasts do you notice between Timothy and others earlier in the chapter (vv. 1–13)? (Let me encourage you to take time to walk through those verses. They describe the Word-centered life vs the self-centered life)
3. What does Paul say Scripture *is* (its source) and what Scripture *does* (its effects)?
4. According to the text, what is the goal or outcome of Scripture's work in a person's life?

Interpret

(What does the text mean?)

5. Why does Paul ground Timothy's faithfulness in what he learned "from childhood"?
6. What does it mean that Scripture is "breathed out by God," and why is that important for authority and trust?
7. How do teaching, reproof, correction, and training function together rather than separately?
8. What does Paul mean by saying Scripture equips the "man of God" for "every good work"?

Correlate
(How does this fit with the rest of Scripture?)

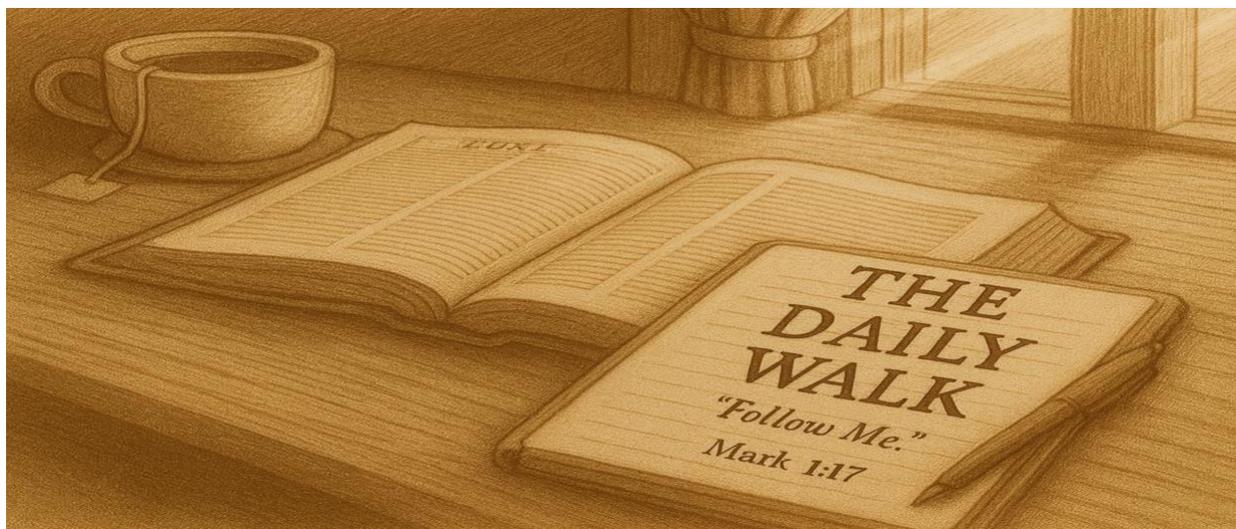
9. How does this passage align with Jesus' teaching that Scripture bears witness to Him (Luke 24:27, 44)?
10. Where else in Scripture do we see God using His Word to form people over time rather than instantly?
11. How does this passage connect with Ephesians 4's vision of maturity, equipping, and growth in the body?
12. How does this text reflect the biblical pattern of indicative before imperative—what God has done before what we are called to do?

Apply
(How should this shape our lives?)

13. How has Scripture shaped you over time rather than in a single moment?
14. Where are you currently tempted to rely on experience, instinct, or culture more than Scripture?
15. What would it look like to place yourself more intentionally under Scripture's forming work?
16. What can you do to get the Bible into you on a regular basis?
17. How can our group encourage one another to remain rooted in God's Word when pressures or confusion arise?

Friends, these particular TRAP devotions are Christ-centered, grace-driven and aligned with the Discipleship Wheel, written in a spiritually forming-focused manner.

They emphasize promise (indicative) before command (imperative), identity before obedience, and Scripture as God's means of shaping His people.



Monday — Continue in What You Have Learned (2 Timothy 3:14)

Think. Paul’s first instruction to Timothy in this passage is strikingly simple: “*continue*.” He does not tell Timothy to innovate, to expand, or to defend himself against critics. Instead, he calls him to remain. Timothy’s faith is rooted in something received, not achieved. Faithfulness, in Paul’s mind, is sustained by remembering trustworthy sources and remaining under their instruction.

Reflect. For many single adults, life feels provisional. You may feel pressure to stay flexible, open-ended, and uncommitted in order to be “ready” for what comes next. Paul’s counsel cuts against that instinct. He reminds Timothy that maturity is not found in perpetual openness, but in rootedness. Remaining in Scripture does not limit your future; it stabilizes it. God forms faithful servants not by constant reinvention, but by long obedience shaped by trusted truth.

Apply. Where are you tempted to treat your faith as temporary or adjustable based on circumstances? What practices or convictions rooted in Scripture have you quietly loosened? Choose one way this week to *continue* rather than drift, a fixed reading time, a memorized passage, or returning to a neglected discipline.

Pray. Lord, I confess my restlessness. Teach me the faithfulness of remaining. Anchor me in what is true and trustworthy. Amen.

Tuesday — Scripture from Infancy (2 Timothy 3:15)

Think. Paul reminds Timothy that he has known the sacred writings “from infancy” (*brephos*). This highlights not Timothy’s intelligence, but the long, formative exposure to God’s Word. Scripture shaped Timothy before he understood its full weight. Paul presents this as a strength, not a weakness. God’s ordinary means of spiritual formation is repetition over time, not sudden insight.

Reflect. Many single people believe they are behind spiritually because they lack certain experiences or milestones. Paul reframes formation as something God does quietly, slowly, and often early. Scripture forms us long before it feels useful. God is not in a hurry to make you impressive; He is committed to making you wise.

Apply. How has Scripture shaped you over time, even when you didn't realize it? Where might God be using repetition rather than novelty to grow you now? Resist the urge to chase constant new input and instead lean into patient attentiveness.

Pray. God, thank You for forming me over time. Help me trust Your slow and steady work in my life. Amen.

Wednesday — God-Breathed Scripture (2 Timothy 3:16a)

Think. "All Scripture is breathed out by God." Paul first grounds Scripture's authority in its origin, not its usefulness. Scripture does not merely contain helpful ideas; it proceeds from God Himself. This means Scripture carries divine authority even when it confronts us, unsettles us, or refuses our preferences. God's breath gives life, and His Word carries that same life-giving power.

Reflect. When Scripture challenges you, do you receive it as God's voice or evaluate it as one voice among many? Single people are often encouraged to "trust themselves" as the final authority. Paul reminds us that life flows not from self-trust, but from listening to God.

Apply. Where are you currently tempted to treat Scripture as optional advice rather than divine speech? Identify one area where you need to submit your thinking or behavior to God's Word rather than your instincts.

Pray. God, remind me that when Scripture speaks, You speak. Give me a listening heart. Amen.

Thursday — Scripture That Trains (2 Timothy 3:16b)

Think. Paul describes Scripture as profitable for teaching, reproof, correction, and training in righteousness. These are not separate functions but a unified process. Scripture teaches what is true, exposes what is wrong, restores what is broken, and trains us toward maturity. God's Word does not merely inform; it reforms.

Reflect. Correction often feels threatening, especially in seasons where identity feels fragile. Paul reframes correction as an act of formation, not rejection. God's Word confronts us precisely because He intends to restore us.

Apply. Where might you be resisting Scripture's corrective work out of fear or defensiveness? Ask God to help you receive correction as care rather than condemnation.

Pray. Father, shape me through Your Word. Correct me where needed and train me toward righteousness. Amen.

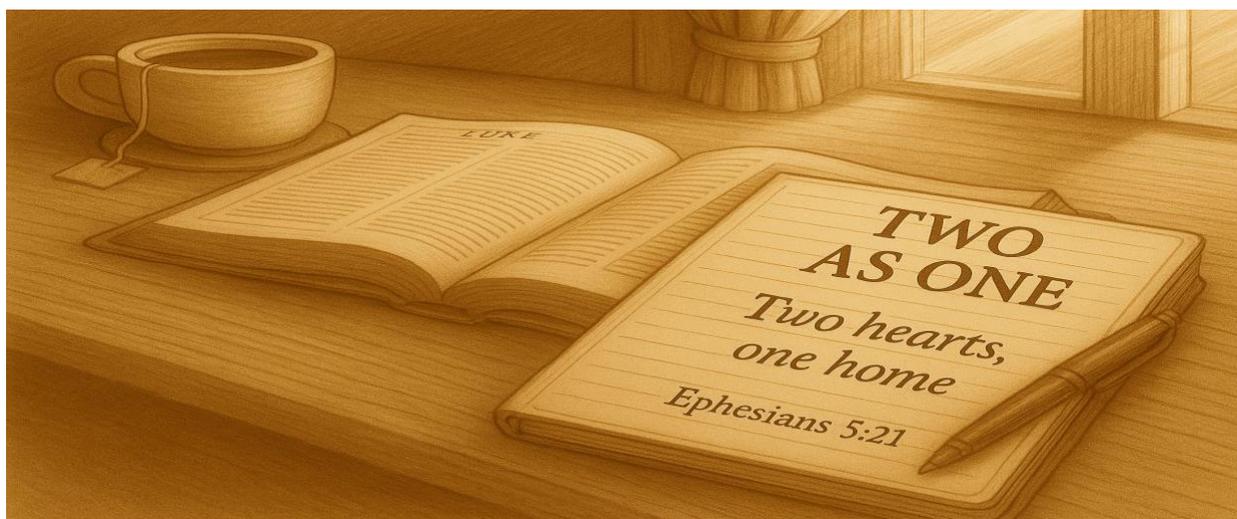
Friday — Equipped for Every Good Work (2 Timothy 3:17)

Think. The goal of Scripture’s work is maturity, a person equipped for every good work. Paul does not say Scripture prepares us for *some* obedience or *future* usefulness only. Scripture equips us now, at whatever stage of life you may find yourself.

Reflect. Single people often feel as though meaningful obedience will begin later; after marriage, career stability, etc. Paul insists that Scripture equips us for faithfulness in the present. God is not waiting to use you; He is forming you now.

Apply. What good work might God be preparing you for through Scripture today? How can you live faithfully this week without waiting for ideal conditions?

Pray. Lord, thank You for equipping me through Your Word. Help me trust You with both today and tomorrow. Amen.



Monday — Continuing Together (2 Timothy 3:14)

Think. Paul urges Timothy to “continue” in what he has learned. The verb implies remaining under an authority already received. For couples, this matters because shared life inevitably raises competing traditions and preferences. Paul reminds Timothy that stability comes from mutual submission to something fixed and trustworthy, the Bible. Scripture becomes the shared ground beneath and directing our differing perspectives.

Reflect. Many tensions in marriage arise not from disagreement itself, but from unexamined authorities. When Scripture quietly slips from the center, couples often default to emotion, habit, or power. Paul’s call to “continue” invites couples to remain together under God’s Word rather than negotiating truth case by case.

Apply. Where do decisions in your relationship tend to drift away from Scripture toward preference or pragmatism? Identify one area where you need to re-center your shared life under God's Word.

Pray. Lord, help us remain together under Your Word. Teach us faithfulness, not control. Amen.

Tuesday — Scripture Received, Not Debated (2 Timothy 3:15)

Think. Timothy learned Scripture from infancy, long before he could defend or explain it. Paul presents this as a gift. Scripture formed Timothy's instincts before it shaped his arguments. For couples, this underscores the formative power of shared habits. Scripture shapes a relationship most deeply when it is received together regularly, not only consulted during conflict.

Reflect. Do you tend to turn to Scripture only when something is wrong? Or is God's Word quietly shaping your shared imagination and expectations? Formation happens before crisis, not during it.

Apply. What regular, ordinary exposure to Scripture could your relationship recover or begin: reading a psalm together, praying Scripture aloud, or listening to the same passage during the week?

Pray. God, shape our hearts through Your Word long before we need it. Amen.

Wednesday — Scripture Above Our Preferences (2 Timothy 3:16a)

Think. "All Scripture is breathed out by God." Paul grounds Scripture's authority in God Himself, not in agreement or usefulness. In marriage, disagreements often reveal whose authority carries weight. Scripture challenges couples not by eliminating disagreement, but by locating your final authority outside both of you.

Reflect. Where does Scripture function as a shared authority in your relationship? Where does it function more like a consultant you invite only when convenient?

Apply. Name one area where Scripture needs to have the final word rather than compromise or avoidance.

Pray. Lord, teach us to listen to You above ourselves. Amen.

Thursday — Scripture That Corrects Without Condemning (2 Timothy 3:16b)

Think. Paul describes Scripture as correcting and training, not shaming. God's Word addresses real failure with restorative intent. Couples often fear correction because it feels like rejection. Paul insists correction is evidence of God's ongoing care.

Reflect. How does your relationship handle correction? Do you weaponize truth or avoid it? Scripture offers a third way: correction that restores rather than wounds.

Apply. Ask how God’s Word might guide one hard conversation with humility and grace this week.

Pray. Father, shape our words so they restore rather than accuse. Amen.

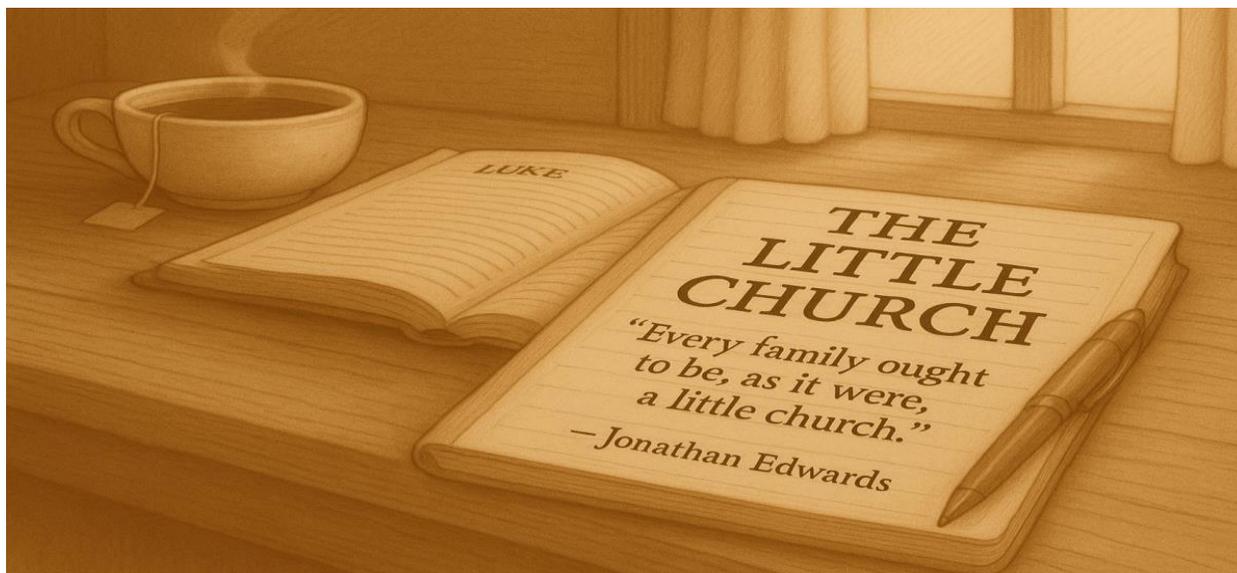
Friday — Equipped Together for Faithfulness (*2 Timothy 3:17*)

Think. Scripture equips the people of God for “every good work.” Paul’s emphasis is readiness, not perfection. For couples, this means God is forming you together for faithfulness you may not yet anticipate.

Reflect. Rather than asking, “Are we ready?” Scripture invites couples to trust that formation precedes maturity now.

Apply. How can you lean into Scripture as readiness now rather than waiting for certainty?

Pray. Lord, prepare us through Your Word for obedience we cannot yet see. Amen.



Monday — Learning God’s Word Early (*2 Timothy 3:14–15*)

Think (Parents explain). Paul reminds Timothy that he learned the Scriptures when he was very young. Before Timothy could fully understand everything he read, God’s Word was already shaping his heart. This teaches us something important: God often works in us long before we realize it. Scripture is not only for adults or experts. It is God’s gift to children, too.

Reflect (Parents explain). As parents, we share the Bible with you because you will understand everything right away. We give it to you because God uses His Word to form us over time. Just like learning to speak or walk, learning Scripture happens slowly and faithfully.

Ask (Parents ask children)

- What are some Bible stories you remember learning when you were younger?
- Why do you think God wants us to hear His Word again and again?

Pray (Together) God, thank You for teaching us through Your Word from the very beginning. Help us love it and remember it. Amen.

Tuesday — God Speaks Through the Bible (2 Timothy 3:16a)

Think (Parents explain). Paul says that Scripture is “breathed out by God.” That means the Bible comes from God Himself. When we read Scripture, God is speaking to us. The Bible is not just an old book or a collection of stories. It is God’s voice, given to help us know Him.

Reflect (Parents explain). Because the Bible comes from God, we listen to it carefully. We don’t decide whether it is true based on how it makes us feel. We trust it because it comes from God, who loves us and always tells the truth.

Ask (Parents ask children)

- What do you think it means that God speaks through the Bible?
- How do we listen differently when we know someone important is speaking?

Pray (Together) God, help us listen when You speak through Your Word. Teach us to trust You. Amen.

Wednesday — God’s Word Corrects Us Because He Loves Us (2 Timothy 3:16b)

Think (Parents explain). Paul explains that Scripture teaches us, corrects us, and trains us. Sometimes God’s Word tells us we are wrong, not to shame us, but to help us grow. Correction is one of the ways God shows His love.

Reflect (Parents explain). Just like we correct you because we care, God corrects us because He wants what is good for us. The Bible helps us see what needs to change so we can grow more like Jesus.

Ask (Parents ask children)

- How does it feel when someone corrects you?
- Why is correction important, even when it’s hard?

Pray (Together). Father, thank You for loving us enough to correct us. Help us learn from Your Word. Amen.

Thursday — God’s Word Prepares Us for Life (*2 Timothy 3:17*)

Think (Parents explain). Paul says Scripture equips God’s people for every good work. That means God’s Word prepares us to live faithfully at home, at school, with friends, and even when things are hard.

Reflect (Parents explain). God doesn’t wait until we are grown up to begin forming us. He uses His Word now to prepare us for the future. Every time we read Scripture, God is shaping our hearts.

Ask (Parents ask children)

- What are some ways God’s Word helps us make good choices?
- How do you think the Bible prepares us for things we haven’t faced yet?

Pray (Together). God, use Your Word to prepare us for everything You call us to do. Amen.

Friday — The Bible Leads Us to Jesus (*2 Timothy 3:15*)

Think (Parents explain). Paul says Scripture makes us wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. This means the Bible’s greatest purpose is to lead us to Jesus. Every story, command, and promise points us to our Savior.

Reflect (Parents explain). We don’t read the Bible just to learn rules or facts. We read it to know Jesus, to trust Him, love Him, and follow Him together as a family.

Ask (Parents ask children)

- What does the Bible teach us about Jesus?
- Why do you think God wants us to know Jesus more than anything else?

Pray (Together). Jesus, thank You for meeting us in God’s Word. Help our family love You more each day. Amen.