

The Word of God

2 Timothy 3.14-17

Series: We Value...

January 30, 2022

The Village Church at Shell Point

I. The God Who Speaks

A. The Silent Treatment

1. We've all experienced it
 - a. Whether in the context of marriage or other human relationships
 - b. When communication is broken, and one or the other partner refuses to communicate, the effect is powerful and devastating
2. In fact, neuro-psychological studies have demonstrated that the silent treatment activates the same part of the brain that feels physical pain
 - a. You can hurt someone, even abuse someone, not only by physically harming them, but by ignoring them
 - b. In human relationships it can be devastating to purposefully cut off communication from someone with whom you've enjoyed a close relationship
 - c. The silent treatment can be just as aversive as an angry outburst or public criticism

B. Maybe that's why God used it as a form of chastisement for the people of Israel

1. 800 years before Christ the northern kingdom of Israel seemed to be functioning perfectly well
 - a. They were prosperous
 - b. Their economy was clicking on all cylinders
 - c. They were checking all the boxes regarding their worship practices
2. And yet, morally the culture was disintegrating
 - a. They were playing fast and loose with the truth
 - b. Lying was commonplace anytime it was expedient
 - c. The poor were abused and oppressed
 - d. The so-called spiritual leaders were padding their pockets even while they enhanced their positions of power
3. And so crashing the party was a man named Amos
4. **Amos 8:11-12** (ESV) —
 - a. 11 "Behold, the days are coming," declares the Lord GOD, "when I will send a famine on the land— not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, but of hearing the words of the LORD.
 - b. 12 They shall wander from sea to sea, and from north to east; they shall run to and fro, to seek the word of the LORD, but they shall not find it.

5. In judgment – God would give Israel the silent treatment

C. Amos had been speaking the word of God to Israel

1. And warning them of God's impending judgment
 - a. That Israel was heading for enslavement and exile

- b. That they would find themselves overwhelmed by the wicked Assyrians
 - 2. But the people of Israel hadn't been listening
 - D. So since they hadn't been interested in listening to the prophets
 - 1. God would stop speaking
 - a. God would send no more prophets
 - b. God would give them the silent treatment
 - E. What's amazing about that is how patient God is with His people
 - 1. In spite of our rebellion
 - 2. In spite of our rejection of His explicit will
 - 3. In spite of our indifference
 - 4. God has continued to speak
 - F. In fact, from the very beginning, it was God who initiated communication with His fallen creatures
 - 1. When Adam and Eve had rejected the explicit will of God in the garden
 - 2. It was God who sought them out
 - 3. It was God who spoke to them
 - 4. It was God who, even in the context of the curse, provided the means by which He could continue to have a relationship with His people
 - G. He is the God who speaks
 - 1. And when He stops speaking
 - a. You know you are in big trouble
 - H. Now the way God has spoken has varied over the course of redemptive history
 - 1. Sometimes God has spoken through dreams and visions
 - 2. Sometimes God has spoken through Theophanies – like His communication with Moses in the burning bush
 - 3. Sometimes He has spoken directly as He did with Abraham
 - 4. Sometimes He has spoken through His prophets as He did with Amos, and with Isaiah, and Jeremiah, and others
 - 5. And then finally, God has spoken to us through His Son Jesus Christ
 - a. **Hebrews 1:1–2** (ESV) — 1 Long ago, at many times and in many ways, God spoke to our fathers by the prophets, 2 but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed the heir of all things, through whom also he created the world.
 - I. And what we have in the Bible is the record of all of these various ways of speaking
 - 1. The scriptures of the OT and the NT
 - 2. The record of the God who speaks
 - 3. The God who cares enough for His people that He would not be silent
 - 4. Who only under rare circumstances
 - a. And only when His people have decided to reject His words
 - b. Has He decided to use the silent treatment
 - J. But God is the God who speaks
 - 1. And His word is central to who we are as believers
 - 2. And central to who we are as The Village Church

- K. Series – **We Value...**
 - 1. Series on the **Core Values** of TVC
 - 2. Mission: We are building a community of forgiveness, purpose and hope in Jesus Christ
 - a. Which we adopted after a thorough study of the nature of our community and of the scriptural imperatives of what it means to the local church in this time and place
 - 3. Then we also determined the Core Values – those fundamental commitments, those non-negotiables
 - a. That comprise the DNA of TVC
 - b. The identity of who we are as the people of God in this place
- L. Seven Core Values
 - 1. **We Value...**
 - a. **The Glory of God**
 - b. **The Word of God**
 - c. **The Sufficiency of Christ**
 - d. **The Ministry of the Holy Spirit**
 - e. **The Great Commission of Christ**
 - f. **The Body of Christ**
 - g. **Prayer**
- M. Last week – examined the first of those values
 - 1. **We value the Glory of God**
 - a. Demonstrated by our passionate devotion to exalting His sovereignty and majesty.
- N. This week – The Word of God
 - 1. **We value the Word of God**
 - a. Demonstrated by our reverential submission to its authority
- O. Text
 - 1. **2 Timothy 3:14–17** (ESV) —
 - a. 14 But as for you, continue in what you have learned and have firmly believed, knowing from whom you learned it 15 and how from childhood you have been acquainted with the sacred writings, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus.
 - b. 16 All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, 17 that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work.
- P. Why is it that the Word of God would rise to the level of a core value of TVC?
 - 1. Well, if you will examine this text with me this morning it will be obvious
 - 2. Because it is clear that Paul, writing to his spiritual offspring Timothy, wanted Timothy to know that the Word of God – the scriptures – were central to him, to his ministry, and to the church

II. **The Sacred Book**

- A. The scriptures are a “sacred” book

1. **2 Timothy 3:14–15** (ESV) —
 - a. 14 But as for you, continue in what you have learned and have firmly believed, knowing from whom you learned it
 - b. 15 and how from childhood you have been acquainted with the sacred writings...
2. The “sacred writings” to which Paul refers comprise the Hebrew Bible – the OT
 - a. Which was the only Bible the early church had at that point
3. Hebrew Bible was divided into three sections by that time in redemptive history
 - a. **TaNakh**
 - b. **Torah** – the Law, first 5 books of the Bible; Pentateuch
 - c. **Neviim** – the Prophets
 - d. **Ketuvim** – Other Writings; wisdom literature – Psalms, Proverbs, Job, Song of Songs
4. Timothy – whose mother was Jewish – had been steeped in learning the essence of the Jewish scriptures
 - a. The Law
 - b. The Prophets
 - c. The Writings
5. Paul wants Timothy to know the value of scriptures that he had been taught from the time he was a young lad
 - a. How many of us went to Sunday School or to Vacation Bible School when we were small?
 - b. Do we value the things we heard from those experiences?
 - c. Paul tells Timothy to continue in faith and obedience to OT scriptures
 - d. Devoted as much to them as an adult as he was a child
- B. But what does it mean that they are “sacred” writings
 1. **Sacred = hieros (Gk) – set apart, consecrated to God**; holy
- C. When we read the Bible, whether the OT or the NT, we read it like any other book
 1. We employ all the grammatical rules we would use when we read any book
 - a. We utilize all the historical contexts to help us understand the text
 - b. We employ all the linguistic characteristics, all the literary genres, to help us in interpretation
 - c. Just like we would any other book
 2. But the Bible is not just any other book
 - a. It is a sacred book
 - b. That’s why most of our Bibles say **“Holy Bible”** on the title page
 - c. We read it like any other book; but it’s not any other book
 - d. It is a sacred book
 3. What then does it mean that it’s a sacred book?
- D. When I read another book – or anything else for that matter – I stand in judgment of that book
 1. In other words, I evaluate the content and argument of the things I read

2. As a Christian I try to evaluate other writings based on the principles and values that I gain through the Word of God
 - a. And some things in other writings I can affirm
 - b. Other things I reject
 3. I don't get everything right
 - a. I am a finite, sinful human being
 - b. And my limits and my sin are a constant hindrance to my intellectual activities just as they are to other human endeavors
 - c. That's why I seek the evaluation of others when I read
 - d. But I still am called to be vigilant about critically examining the literature that I encounter
 - e. I place myself as judge and jury over other books
- E. But not the Bible
1. When I read the Bible, I'm not the judge of the Bible
 - a. The Bible is the judge of me
 2. When I encounter the Word of God I encounter the judgement of God
 - a. I encounter the evaluation of God
 - b. I encounter the gaze of God
 - c. I encounter the surgeon of my soul; the one who has the capacity to excise the cancer of sin in my life
 - d. **Hebrews 4:12** (ESV) — 12 For the word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the division of soul and of spirit, of joints and of marrow, and discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart.
 3. So when I read the Sacred Book, the Holy Book
 - a. I engage, as the core value states, **in reverential submission to its authority**
- F. The scriptures are a Sacred Book

III. **The Saving Book**

- A. **2 Timothy 3:14–15** (ESV) —
1. 14 But as for you, continue in what you have learned and have firmly believed, knowing from whom you learned it
 2. 15 and how from childhood you have been acquainted with the sacred writings, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus.
- B. “Able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus”
1. This is the only book that is able to save you
 - a. The only book that is able to lead you to eternal life
 - b. The only book that is able to take you over the threshold into an eternity of glory in the presence of God
 2. Because this is the only book that leads you to Christ
- C. This is astonishing when you think about it
1. Because Paul is telling Timothy that the sacred writings which he learned as a youth are able to lead him to salvation through faith in Jesus Christ

2. Astonishing because the only writings that Timothy had at that point was the Hebrew Bible – the OT!
3. Even the OT will lead you to Jesus
- D. That's why Bible study is important
 1. Especially for the doubters
 2. And the seekers
 3. And even the unbelievers
- E. Because the Sacred Book is the Saving Book
- F. You could fill a library with the testimonies of people who have been saved by the Sacred Book
 1. At 21 years old, Bonnie was hopeless and homeless. Eventually, she managed to collect a few small jobs and afford an even smaller room for rent. She started drinking heavily and steadily allowed her life to ... decline. However, God had not forgotten Bonnie.
 2. On a cold January night in 1978, a blizzard raged, and she hit rock bottom. Utterly rejected and deserted by everyone she had ever loved, she didn't want to continue living. After all, she tried everything life could offer and was miserably unsatisfied. "That night, I finally cried out to God and begged him for the truth. If Jesus Christ was really the only way to God, He had to show me," said Bonnie.
 3. When Bonnie drove away ... she packed everything she owned—including a small, green Testament. Six years earlier, a faithful Gideon stood on the campus of Binghamton University in New York and handed her older brother that Testament. God used the Gideon to place His Word into her home, then into the trunk of her car, then into her hands on a cold January night.
 4. Alone in that blizzard, Bonnie opened the Testament to the book of Matthew. "For the first time in my life, I understood what I read," Bonnie remembers. After finishing the Gospel of Matthew, she read through the Gospels of Mark, Luke, and John. The winter storm blew outside her window all night long, but her heart was at peace. She read that God loved her even while she was a sinner. She read that Jesus had paid the price for her sins and offered her forgiveness and eternal life in Him. As tears streamed down her face, she fell to her knees and accepted Jesus as her personal Lord and Savior. Her chains fell off, and she was set free from darkness. The burden she had carried for years disappeared. She had a new life—a life of grace that was greater than all her sin.
- G. The Sacred Book is the Saving Book

IV. **The God-Breathed Book**

- A. But why is the Scripture the Saving Book?
- B. **2 Timothy 3:16** (ESV) —
 1. 16 All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness,
 2. The Scripture is "breathed out by God"; literally "God-breathed"

- C. It's the Saving Book because it comes from God
- D. Older translations, perhaps the ones you remember, say "Inspired of God" or "given by inspiration of God"
 - 1. Those are not the best translations
 - 2. The idea of inspired says more about us than about God
 - a. We read the Bible we are inspired by it
 - 3. But that's not what the text says
- E. The word is "theopneustos" – literally "God-breathed"
 - 1. Inspiration is when you inhale – when you take in air
 - 2. This text is not about inhaling
 - 3. This text is about exhaling
 - 4. It's about God breathing out; not we breathing in
- F. All Scripture is breathed out by God
 - 1. All Scripture comes from God
 - 2. God is the source of all Scripture
 - 3. And God is the One who saves
- G. We speak in our statement of faith that the scriptures are without error
 - 1. Not everybody believes that; even many Christians don't believe that
 - 2. But just think about what it means if you don't believe that
 - a. If all scripture comes from God – is God-breathed
 - b. How can there be any error?
 - 3. If there is any error, God is the author of error!
- H. No, we can trust the Scripture because all scripture is God-breathed; all scripture comes from God
 - 1. God who is altogether righteous
 - a. Altogether holy
 - b. Altogether truthful
- I. The Sacred Book is the Saving Book
 - 1. Because it is the God-breathed book

V. **The Profitable Book**

- A. **2 Timothy 3:16** (ESV) —
 - 1. 16 All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness...
 - 2. The Scripture is a profitable book
 - a. Everybody is interested in profit
 - b. Many of you are at Shell Point because you were interested in profitable enterprises
 - c. You wanted to make sure you invested well
 - 3. You need to make sure your are spiritually invested well also
 - a. **Matthew 16:26** (ESV) — 26 For what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world and forfeits his soul? ...
 - 4. An investment in the scriptures is the surest way to be spiritually profitable
- B. **Teaching**
 - 1. **Teaching = didaskalia (Gk) – instruction, doctrine**

2. The Bible is filled with the truth about who God is, who we are
 - a. And what God has done for us in Christ Jesus to redeem us from our sin
 3. Fundamental doctrines of the Christian faith are found in the Bible
 - a. The system of truth on which the Church has relied for two millennia is found only in the scripture
 4. There is the book of Scripture and there is the book of Nature
 - a. I believe in the book of nature
 - b. And God is the author of the book of nature just as He is the author of the book of Scripture
 - c. **Psalm 19:1** (ESV) — 1 The heavens declare the glory of God, and the sky above proclaims his handiwork.
 - d. But the book of Nature, as wonderful as it is, and as much as it tells us about the Creator
 - e. Is not saving
 - f. Nature does not tell us in propositional terms the moral nature of God, the sinful condition of humanity, God's saving purposes, the person and work of Jesus Christ, and the necessity of faith in Jesus
 - g. Only the Sacred Book tells us those things
 5. The Scripture is profitable for teaching, for doctrine
- C. **Reproof**
1. Reproof – to bring to light
 - a. The Scripture is convicting
 - b. It reveals the darkest corners of our hearts
 - c. It shines light on our sin
 2. It does it unlike any other resource
 3. Again – why Bible study is so important
 - a. Especially for believers
 4. Every time I open my Bible – which I do every day, guided to by Scripture Union's Encounter with God (Study with the Pastor)
 - a. I prepare myself to be dissected spiritually
 - b. I prepare to have my darkness exposed
 5. Only the Scripture can do that
 - a. The book of Nature – in spite of how wonderful it is – can never do that
 6. The Scripture is profitable for reproof
- D. **Correction**
1. So what do you do when the Scripture reveals something in you?
 - a. The Scripture doesn't just reveal something to you
 - b. It also provides the correction
 2. **Epanorthosis (Gk)**
 - a. **Root = orthos**
 - b. Orthopedic
 - c. Literally – to straighten
 3. The Scripture reveals that we're crooked

- a. But is also gives us the prosthesis to straighten us out
 - 4. The book of Nature can't do that
 - a. Only the Sacred Book can do that
- E. **Training**
 - 1. **Training = Paideia (Gk)**
 - a. Pediatric
 - b. Education and training of children
 - 2. Instruction involves practice and repetition
 - a. That's the way we grow into adulthood
 - b. By practicing the things we learned as children
 - 3. The Word of God is profitable for training
 - a. That's why we do Study with the Pastor
 - b. It's a discipline – it's training
 - c. If we blow it off, we'll find ourselves floundering when it comes time for the application
 - 4. Training in what?
 - a. Training in righteousness
 - b. Training in right conduct
 - c. Training in right thinking
 - d. Training in right motives
 - 5. The book of Nature can't do that
 - a. Only the Sacred Book is profitable for training in righteousness
 - 6. We can't build a community of forgiveness, purpose and hope in Jesus without being trained in righteousness

VI. **The Equipping Book**

- A. **2 Timothy 3:16–17 (ESV) —**
 - 1. 16 All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness,
 - 2. 17 that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work.
- B. I don't know about you, but when I try to carry out the responsibilities of my job – the primary component of which is preaching and teaching
 - 1. I never want to step into this pulpit unprepared
- C. But it's not just preaching or teaching
 - 1. I don't want to do anything in my life as a Christian unprepared
 - 2. I want to have all the resources I need whatever the occasion might be
- D. Whatever challenges I face, I want to be prepared to handle it
 - 1. Preaching
 - 2. Teaching
 - 3. Counseling
 - 4. Leading a meeting
 - 5. Dealing with a problematic relationship
 - 6. Struggling with loss
 - 7. Handling a crisis
 - 8. Managing a physical illness

9. Whatever it is – I want to be prepared
10. Equipped
- E. Only the Scripture, only the Sacred Book, can equip you
 1. “Equipped for every good work”
 - a. “Every”!
 2. “That the man of God may be complete”
- F. Complete = artios (Gk)
 1. Another orthopedic term
 - a. Refers to joints
 - b. Arthritis is the inflammation of the joints
 2. But this is talking about healthy joints
 3. We all have a little arthritis at this stage
 - a. But we don’t have to have spiritual arthritis
 4. And we won’t – as long as we are in the Word of God
- G. The Scripture, the Sacred Book is profitable
 1. That we may be complete
 - a. Equipped for every good work

VII. Conclusion

- A. Do you see why the Word of God is one of our Core Values?
- B. We value the Word of God
 1. Demonstrated by our reverential submission to its authority