

# WATCH THE WIND

SERMON STUDY - 6.1.2025

## Leader Corner

The Spirit Through the  
Scriptures

2 Timothy 3:16

As Christians, largely because of verses like 2 Timothy 3:16 and 2 Peter 1:21, we affirm that God is the ultimate “author” or “source” of the Bible, and that the person of the Holy Spirit “inspired” the Scriptures. This is what we’re expressing in shorthand when we refer to the Bible as “God’s Word.” Yet, we also know God didn’t sit at a desk with a pen and physically write the Bible himself, nor did the whole book drop from the sky in finished form. Rather, we understand it was men like Moses, David, Paul, and John who *actually wrote* the books found in the Bible. In fact, the combined anthology we call “The Bible” contains 66 individual historical documents, of varying genres, written by roughly 35-40 different men (~25-30 OT, 8-9 NT), with the assistance of various scribes and clerks, over the span of about 1,500 years.

So then...how does this work? What do we imagine *literally happened* before, during, and after the moments when a human put ink to parchment? What does this process *look like*? What do we *really* mean when we say the Bible is “inspired?” This study challenges us to dive into those deep waters.

**Main Idea:** Acknowledging that the Scriptures are divinely inspired by the Holy Spirit, authoritative in origin, and purposefully given to equip God’s people through teaching, correction, and training in righteousness.

**Main Practice:** Learn to approach Scripture as the trustworthy and sufficient Word of God.

**Main Teaching:** 2 Timothy 3:16-17

**As You Begin...:** If you could receive “divinely inspired” instructions for just one area of daily life (cooking, parenting, traffic, assembling IKEA furniture, etc.), what would it be?

## Connect with Prayer & Praise

Have someone in your group read the following Scripture aloud:

*“For as the rain and the snow come down from heaven and do not return there but water the earth, making it bring forth and sprout, giving seed to the sower and bread to the eater, so shall my word be that goes out from my mouth; it shall not return to me empty, but it shall accomplish that which I purpose, and shall succeed in the thing for which I sent it.” - Isaiah 55:10-11, ESV*

## with Principle

1. As a group, read 2 Timothy 3:16-17 together and discuss the key, biblically-based teaching points you recall from the weekend's sermon. What stood out?
2. In 2 Tim. 3:16, the word translated as "God-breathed" (NIV, ESV) or "inspired" (NET, NRSV, KJV) is the Greek word *theopneustos*, and this is the one and only place it appears in the entire Bible, which means scholars for centuries have had to examine the context for clues about what Paul is *really* getting at here. What about you? What do you think Paul means by saying that "All Scripture is God-breathed?" What implications does this have for the authority and origin of Scripture?
3. Why do you think Paul uses the phrase "all Scripture" rather than "some Scripture" or just "the Law" or "the Prophets?" What does this suggest about the unity and scope of the biblical text?
4. Read 2 Peter 1:19-21 and let's dive into the deep end. Discuss how you think this inspiration from the Holy Spirit might "work." For instance, when you think of the Bible being inspired, do you imagine God breathing-out the Scriptures *directly* to the writers, like some sort of audible whispering in the ear, or telepathically implanting each word into their head? Or is this some sort of paranormal, automatic writing experience where David and Paul fall into a trance, have their hand taken over by the Holy Spirit, only to wake up 5 minutes later, look down at a page full of words and they're surprised to discover what the Holy Spirit wrote through them? And if "inspiration" doesn't happen this way, then what do you think this looked like? What does it mean to acknowledge that human authors wrote the Bible using their own styles and personalities, yet were still "inspired" by the Holy Spirit?
5. How do the four stated functions of Scripture (teaching, rebuking, correcting, and training in righteousness) help clarify the practical intent of inspired Scripture? What distinguishes each of these terms, and why might Paul list them separately?
6. What does the phrase "so that the man of God may be complete" imply about the sufficiency of Scripture for spiritual formation and ministry? How does this compare to modern views that might suggest we need additional revelation?
7. How does Paul's understanding of Scripture challenge or affirm the idea of personal or private interpretations of biblical truth?
8. Lastly, how does understanding the divine origin of Scripture influence how we read, interpret, and submit to it? Consider what this means for authority in the life of the church.

## with Practice

In verse 16, the Greek word *ophelimos* is what's translated as "profitable" (NIV) or "useful" (ESV). Encourage your group this week to consider whether their regular interactions with the Bible (devotions, study, etc.) are achieving this purpose.

## for Further Study

The self-claim of divine inspiration is not unique to the Bible. Yes, it's wonderful encouragement to read verses like 2 Tim. 3:16, 2 Pet. 1:21, 1 Cor. 14:36-37, Ps. 12:6, Prov. 30:5-6, and many others, but the responsible Christian should be aware that other religious books like the Quran, the Book of Mormon, and the Hindu Upanishads also claim of themselves that they are divinely inspired. (Qu'ran: Surahs 2:2, 4:105, 10:37, and 12:2; Book of Mormon: Words of Mormon 1:9 and Moroni 10:3-4; Brihadaranyaka Upanishad IV.V.11.) If you're interested in digging deeper, consider ways in which you would uphold and defend the exclusive truth of Jesus and the Bible besides leaning too heavily on passages like 2 Tim. 3:16.