

DON'T WAIT FOR THE MOVIE**2 Timothy 3:10-17**

INTRO: Abby Shifley has a bug. I'm not talking about an ailment, I mean a Volkswagen Beetle. I had bugs too – and so did Emily. So I guess it *is* contagious. Abby's bug is red, Emily's was silver. I'm sure you actually remember it, and even though it, too, was a Beetle, she considered it an all-terrain vehicle. Speaking of ailments, we could have funded a third-world country with the repair bills on that car. Both of my bugs were white, one was a '66 and the other was a '73 and they were the old style that was sold in the USA until 1979. Abby's and Emily's were the new style which was reactivated by VW in the late '90s.

My family and I did all the mechanical work on our bugs. They were simple mechanically but for the harder things we had just the book. It was called *How to Keep Your Volkswagen Alive: A Manual of Step-by-Step Procedures for the Compleat Idiot*. And it explained in very minute detail and simple language anything that you wanted to do on a Bug. We called it simply The Idiot Book. The book was a big help to me in my early forays into VW repair so I guess you know what that makes me.

Someone once said to me, "*I don't need to read the Bible again. I never read a book more than once no matter how good it is*". I'm pretty certain, as is true for many people who make similar statements, this person has never truly read the Bible through one time, let alone more than once. But that's beside the point. The point is the very problematic idea presented in the statement – you see, this isn't just a book, it's life itself. It's an instruction manual for the wisest scholar right down to the complete idiot and everyone in between.

I've also heard, in a joking tone, "*The Bible? No, I haven't read it, I'll wait for the movie to come out.*" I know they're probably being facetious, but let me tell you, don't wait for the movie! I've seen what movies do to good books. They leave important parts out – in fact they leave the best parts out – in fact they often miss the point! It's even true of the Bible? Every year, especially at Easter, they have Bible based movies on TV, and they very often leave the best parts out. Don't wait for the movie. Another problem is there is a growing movement to undermine the Bible. Whether it is people who say the Old Testament is not valid because we have the New Testament now, or those who cast doubt on it because of the how the Biblical Canon was determined, and any number of other "theories", the Bible is under attack. The problem is THIS IS ALL WE HAVE! Without what we have here we have no basis or connection to the One who inspired it. Either we take it as it is, or not.

One of our ABC core values, in fact it's the first of our core values is Believing the Bible:

We value the Bible as God's authoritative Word, and as "people of the Book", we study it together, and build our lives on its truth.

What we are proclaiming in making that a key aspect of who we are, is that as people of the Book we own the fact that the Bible is our rule for faith and practice, and it needs to be applied to every part of life. We need to constantly consult it. Listen to what Paul wrote in his second letter to his young protégé, Timothy:

Read 2 Timothy 3:10-17

If there's nothing else in your tool box for life, the Word of God must be there. Let me give some reasons why. First . . .

Life is difficult and the Christian life is even more so

- Paul says . . . *everyone who wants to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted*, (v. 12). Persecution can range from good natured digs about us being "goodie-goodie two shoes", to not being hired as a university professor, to martyrdom. The truth is, we hardly know what persecution is compared to what our brothers and sisters suffer in Nigeria and Nepal and China and Iran and Vietnam and many other places. The bombings in Sri Lanka last week are the tip of the iceberg when you consider the horror stories coming out of Nigeria. So, truth be told, we have it good in comparison, but without being a Negative Nellie, I'm going to predict that . . .
- It won't get easier. Paul lived in a debauched society and that's why he predicts to Timothy, *while evildoers and impostors will go from bad to worse, deceiving and being deceived*. (v. 13) We live in an increasingly debauched society ourselves. Day in, and day out immorality and even evil are now a proud way of life (examples).
- Some might ask . . .

So what's so good about the Bible that I can't get with an internet search?

- Actually the internet is a great place to research – if you're researching the Bible. Bible Gateway, YouVersion, and any number of Bible sites are an awesome resource. But if you're trying to find life's answers on the 'Net, or anywhere other than the Bible, or a source (such as a biblical person, site, or book), you are barking up the wrong tree. You WILL get the wrong answers. (tell about my Facebook conversation about the atonement)
- Paul tells us in verse 16 that *ALL scripture is God breathed*. Why do a web search when you can go right to the source? A quick aside here, can anyone tell you what Paul's scriptures were? I mean, when he talks about scripture, what is he referring to? (Wait for response) Yes, the Old Testament! The New Testament was just being set down as he wrote to Timothy. So don't let anyone tell you the Old Testament is to be disregarded – it is still God's word.
- So what does *God breathed* mean? It means totally inspired by God. As his servants down through history listened, the Holy Spirit directed what they were to write. And the amazing thing is how perfect it has come down to us.
 - You know the old way to show how rumors start get and get distorted (pass a sentence from one end of a row to another and see how it compares at the other end)
 - Back before you could get every new joke or picture via text, social media or even email, people would copy good stuff and pass it on. It was the same way with forms where the original was lost – you made copies of the copies and then copies of the copies and then copies of the copies. And the result was a distorted and dirty representation of the original. (Look at the screen) This is a crude experiment I did to show that the further a copy gets from the original document the more garbled and distorted it looks. The top is the original sent from my computer to the copier – I then copied each succeeding copy for 16 cycles. Notice the distortion. The further away from an original, whether it's a rumor or a copier copy the less like the original it will be.
 - NOT SO WITH SCRIPTURE! (Explain significance of Dead Sea Scrolls)
 - It comes down to this, God has insured that our scriptures have remained amazingly pure through the centuries despite the fact that finite human beings have been the ones passing it on. This is the protective work of the Holy Spirit.

The answers for life are right here in the Word

- Paul reminds Timothy, . . . *from infancy you have known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus.* (v. 15). Scripture is a lifetime thing.
 - Timothy's mother and grandmother steeped him in the Word early and often. Paul's words, "*from infancy*" show that it's never too early to start. When we have a baby dedication here at ABC we give the child a New Testament with the admonition to the parents to get that little one into the Bible! And while that little Testament is far above the baby's comprehension, there are many other resources.
 - Last month at Fiona's birthday she received many books and many of them were Bible related books that are understandable for her. Online there are great resources. I have a Kids Bible app from YouVersion on my iPad that is great for kids. Early and often Church!
- As we grow to maturity it becomes ingrained. But even if you have not previously made the Bible a habit, there's no time like the present. The more you study it, the more firmly convinced you become. Paul tells Timothy to keep building on what he had been taught. He was to . . . *continue in what you have learned and have become convinced of, because you know those from whom you learned it.* (v. 14) The more you learn, the more you become convinced.
- The example that you provide for your children is priceless, look how it served Timothy. Timothy had a heritage of living by the scripture that we find earlier in this same letter where Paul writes: *I am reminded of your sincere faith, which first lived in your grandmother Lois and in your mother Eunice and, I am persuaded, now lives in you also.* 2 Timothy 1:5. If you consistently live by the Word its likely your kids will too, and as they move through a life that will not be easy, they will have the essential equipment for life they surely will need.

- No matter what the question is, the answer is here in the Word. While the answers for how to deal with a problematic car are not in there, the specifics are so that you can deal with the frustration you experience as you do deal with it. Paul tells us that the Bible is the proper equipment for . . . *the servant of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.* (v. 17). J. B. Phillips paraphrases the same verse like this *The scriptures are the comprehensive equipment of the man of God, and fit him fully for all branches of his work.* 2 Timothy 3:17 (Phillips).

Conclusion: Are you fully fit for life?

Are you prepared for whatever might come along? (Tell about JWs coming to the door)

(Tell about the Associate Pastor who asked his Senior Pastor how he was able to preach with such conviction week after week and always be Great! -- the senior pastor had read the NT every week for 23 years)

(Tell about Rosie who read through the Bible several times a year -- She knew it inside out)

Let's get to know this book! Read it Now, Don't wait for the movie! Amen.