

## THE ILLUMINATION OF GOD'S WORD

2 Timothy 3:16 (Amplified) reads, ***“Every Scripture is God-breathed (given by His inspiration) and profitable for instruction, for reproof and conviction of sin, for correction of error and discipline in obedience, and for training in righteousness (in holy living, in conformity to God’s will in thought, purpose, and action).”*** The English Standard Version says, ***“All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness.”*** Note, the Greek word translated God-breathed or God-inspired is *“theopnevstos”* and it contains *“pnev”* - which is the root of *“pnevma”* (spirit). Primarily, this word denotes “the wind”; and also “breath.” Hence its application when referring to the Holy Spirit (*Agios Pnevmas*). God’s Spirit is like the wind - invisible, immaterial and powerful!

**2 Timothy 3:16** is the only verse in the whole Bible that speaks of the inspiration or illumination of Scripture. Therefore, if we were to misunderstand this verse we could easily misunderstand ‘illumination’ and ‘inspiration’ in the context of God’s infallible word. And consequently misunderstand how we should use it! Therefore, the way this verse is translated and interpreted can have a significant effect of the way we study scripture, hear from God, and apply His word in our lives. With this in mind I would like to examine this verse closely and see if we can discover its true meaning. The original Greek reads, ***“Everything written is breathed out by God and of assistance for ....”*** Notice, the paradox? That which is written is being “breathed out,” and only then can it be of any use or of any assistance!

However, this is not the usual way we view the Scriptures. We assume that God’s Word is the divinely inspired (and complete) record of what God has spoken in the past. Whereas, it is the actual, living, voice of God - breathing **life** (“zoe”) directly into our lives every moment of every day.

And it is so real, and so alive, that we can feel His divine breath on us. Just as He breathed life into Adam, so too is God's Word breathing life into the lives of His children today. Another interesting fact about the word "theopneustos" is that it was originally used when referring to the the ancient Greek poets and philosophers who were so charismatic that their listeners were compelled to listen to and obey what they were saying. Yet, "theopneustos" was only mentioned in reference to what they were speaking out aloud. If what they had said was written down and then passed on, it would never be considered "theopneustos." It was as if those inspiring words, once written down, lost their inspiring power.

This is where the words of poets and philosophers are different to the Word of God. When God speaks through His word (the Scriptures), He is imparting divine life that can never lose its power! What is very clear in the original Greek is that it's the "written Word" which is of assistance and profitable to all. **2 Timothy 3:16** is saying that Scripture is the voice of God, the breath of God, even the whisper of God into our lives! And even though it was written, it did not lose its "inspiring" and "illuminating" power to transform us. This view is fully in line with Hebrews 4:12, ***"For the word of God is alive and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart."***

The words of God (the Holy Scriptures) are alive and active, because they are God-breathed! Hence, they are powerful enough to penetrate deep into our very being, and judge our thoughts and attitudes of the heart. The original Greek says, ***"Living and efficient ('energis') is the word of God."*** I like the word 'efficient' as it implies effectual and powerful. Because the Scriptures are God-breathed, they energise, inspire and illuminate the very soul of man! That is why it is so profitable for teaching and instruction.

If you desire to grow in the things of God, let God's divine breath touch you through His Word. Don't read the Holy Scriptures as if they are a historical record of what God has said! Accept them as being a divine breath, released by God Himself and energised by His Spirit. And the thing to constantly remind yourself of is this... ***All Scripture is "breathed out" by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness.*** There isn't a passage in the Bible that is not effectual, inspirational and powerful! There isn't a passage in the Bible that cannot illuminate your heart and renew your mind! ***"The entrance of Your words gives light; It gives understanding to the simple"*** (Psalm 119:130). ***"Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path"*** (Psalm 119:105). Without God continually breathing out His word, we would be without understanding - and lost!

Back to our opening verse... Notice how there is a definite pairing of words? Profitable for teaching and training (what we should **do**); and useful for reproof and correction (what we should **not do**). What we should be doing is illuminated by God's Word, and is therefore, very profitable once received and obeyed. But unfortunately, many people do not fear God, therefore, they are not open to His word correcting them. So it is void of power! If God was whispering in your ear right now about what you should be doing and also what you shouldn't be doing, what would your reaction be? Well, this is exactly what His Word is intended to do! When we read it we should be very conscious of the fact the God is whispering something into our souls. It is His divine breath that makes it effectual and efficient and powerful! It is God's life; and it embodies the His very character, which is active, piercing, and discerning!

Joshua 1:8 says, ***"Do not let this Book of the Law depart from your mouth; meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do everything written in it. For then you will make your way prosperous,***

***and then you will have good success.***” The Book of the Law refers to the first 5 books of the Bible. Joshua was to be faithful to God’s Word by talking about it, meditating on it, and obeying it fully. This means, reflecting on God’s Word enough for it to illuminate your life. Those who know (have received illumination), and have obeyed God’s Word, will make themselves prosperous and successful in all matters of life. Everyone is looking in the wrong place to find prosperity and success. It is what God has “breathed out,” and what He is whispering into your soul right now, that will cause you to prosper and be successful! We short-change ourselves by not continually reflecting on God’s Word. This message to Joshua provides us with a set of general principles for successful living, so don’t neglect them.

Every time you pick up God’s Word, you should **hear** God whispering something into your soul. And whatever He reveals through the Spirit will illuminate your life and cause you to be victorious. Furthermore, whatever the Holy Spirit illuminates should remain in you. This will ensure a fruitful prayer life! In John 15:7, Jesus makes a covenant with all believers, saying: ***“If you remain in Me and My words remain in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be given you.”*** Therefore, the secret of answered prayer is remaining in Christ. It’s a no-brainer! In conclusion, we should all be more serious about studying Scripture, in order to live triumphant lives based on the truth of God’s Word. We need to realise that God’s eternal breath has being made available, and that it is contained in His infallible Word. So let God whisper something into your soul every day! You won’t regret it! This is my prayer for you... *“May the breath of God illuminate your souls, so that the Word of Christ may dwell in you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom, and as you sing psalms, hymns and spiritual songs with gratitude in your hearts to God. And may the glory of God continue to shine into your lives as you receive and obey the spoken Word in season - in Jesus’ name.”* Amen.