



2 TIMOTHY 3:14-15

Don't Lose Confidence in Scripture

3RD SUNDAY DURING LENT – MARCH 19, 2017 (PM)

1. If we were planning to drill deeper into some single thought from this morning's passage under the title, *Don't Lose Confidence in Scripture*, we'd surely expect to drill into vv.16-17. For truly they uniquely tell us something of profound importance about Scripture: *It communicates God's truth and bears God's authority.*
2. But I want to drill deeper into vv.14-15, because they remind us of three things regarding the nature and accessibility of Scripture.

- *We don't need to look away from Scripture when it comes under fire.*

We just need to press on in our study of and confidence in it, knowing it is the very Word of God. We need to (*abide*) in what (we) have learned and firmly believed (14). *Continue* here is the same verb as in Joh.15:4 *Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit by itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in me*—receive life from me.

- There, to *abide* is expressed as *obedience* (Joh.15:10, *If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love....*). And it's an *obedience* rooted in *love* (Joh.14:15, *If you love me, you will keep my commandments.*).
- Here, then, to *continue*, to (*abide*) in what you have learned and firmly believed, means to *stand firm on what (you) know of the truth, like a rock resisting the increasing fury of the waves* (Guthrie 180). That's a great picture for us to ponder, and keep in mind.
- *Scripture can be learned even by children, so we should teach it to ours.*
Timothy learned it *from childhood* (15).
 - But that has always been our calling. On the heels of the great *shema* (Deu.6:4-5), we read Deu.6:6 *And these words that I command you today shall be on your heart. 7 You shall teach them diligently to your children....* Psa.71:18 *So even to*

old age and gray hairs, O God, do not forsake me, until I proclaim your might to another generation, your power to all those to come.

- I drilled the AWANA kids on the gospel this past Wednesday. They did very well, giving evidence of a knowledge of the deeper things of the Word that are well beyond their full understanding at this point. But the foundation is laid, as with Timothy. And they will grow in their knowledge and understanding over time.
- *Scripture turns our eyes to Jesus like little else can.*
We should meditate on what it means that Scripture is *able to make (us) wise for salvation*. At very least we can say that God's Word, like His Spirit, is always active as He's opening human eyes to the need of *salvation*.
 - But again, keep in mind that Scripture knowledge doesn't save us. *Salvation comes only through faith in Christ Jesus* (15).
 - And that leads to my closing question this evening: *Has Scripture made you wise for salvation?* Even at a Family Dinner the question ought to be raised.
 - Parents, this can and should be a clear and present focus as you're teaching Scripture to your children.
 - But I urge you, seek to teach them to love and enjoy and trust Scripture, not just to know it. Make sense?

3. This past Friday we celebrated St. Patrick's Day. Patrick is one of my heroes in the history of the church. His spiritual legacy as an English missionary to Ireland for thirty years is still felt to this day. And he died in ad 461.

- One reason I appreciate Patrick is because, though he was under-educated even for his day, he was greatly used by God.
 - His schooling was interrupted when he was kidnapped in his mid-teens and sent to Ireland as a slave—he was always embarrassed because of his lack of rhetorical skill.
- But he loved God. He loved people. And he was devoted to the Word of God and the clear gospel, even when he faced life-threatening opposition. May it be so with us.