

A Bible that deserves to be read - 2 Tim 3:10-5

Big Idea: The Bible is God's inspired Word and should have authority over our lives.

Aim: For people to have a renewed joy in the fact that they have God's Words in their hands.

Structure:

- History - What they Did
 - Passage - Why they did it
 - 3:12-14 - Following God and sitting under his Word is hard
 - 3:15-17 - But the Bible is God's inspired Word
 - 4:1-5 - To be a follower of Christ is to submit to his word
 - Today - Why it matters today
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- I wonder what your relationship with your spouse, significant other or close friend would look like if you didn't speak the same language?
 - You could be able to communicate in some form but you wouldn't be able to have a close relationship with them could you?
 - It would be crazy to see a husband and wife on their wedding day saying their vows to each other through a translator wouldn't it!
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- Before the reformation, the people of God were like this.
 - Not because they weren't able to speak the same language as God
 - but because the church was stopping them from being able to hear God's words.
 - So, one of the ruling principles of the reformation became 'Sola Scriptura' which means scripture alone.
 - This means that the people of God, take their authority from only the Bible. And this meant getting God's word out to the people.
 - Today, we will see
 - What they did
 - Why they did it
 - Why it matters today?
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- What did the Reformers do?
 - Long story short, they put the scriptures back into the hands of the people of Christ in a language that they could read or hear.
 - Throughout the ages of 500-1500AD, the church was the self proclaimed guardian of the scriptures.
 - The bible at that time a latin translation called the 'Vulgate' however, the church made it illegal to translate it into different languages
 - So this meant that if you were in Germany and spoke German, you would hear the bible in Latin.
 - If you were in England and you spoke English, you would hear the bible in Latin.
 - So if you didn't speak or read latin, (which not many common-people could do!) you would have never heard the Word of God in your own language.

- You could only hear it interpreted by the church and priests in your language.
 - This meant that the church could preach something that's complete heresy (ie. indulgences or purgatory) and you would have no idea that it was terrible theology!
 - The church had the monopoly on what was taught.
- So some keyed on people saw that this was a major problem!
 - How can a person be a Christian and not be able to hear God's words at all??
 - How is it right that people (the bishops and the church) have authority over the Word of God??
- An English man by the name of John Wycliffe saw this problem about 200 years before the reformation.
 - He wanted people to have a chance to weigh up for themselves whether the teaching of the Church was faithful to the Word of God.
 - So, he and about seven others began the first English translation of the Bible in 1384.
 - However, The Roman church declared this heretical and it was made illegal to have a copy of the Bible in English
- about 170 years later, Because he was influenced by a scholar, William Tyndale embarked again on translating the bible into English in 1523.
- He believed in the power of the Word to convert. So he went over to Germany, influenced by Luther, and smuggled English copies of the bible into England in hay bales!
- But once the bishop had found these copies, he burnt them.
 - He burnt the bible that was translated into English.
 - Not only that but Tyndale was strangled and his body was burnt at the stake for translating the scriptures into the local language.
- Well, after that the English church eventually broke away from the Roman church and King Henry the VIII's eyes were opened. The English translation was made legal.
- Under the next king, King Edward VI, it was made illegal for their not to be an English copy in the church available for every parishioner to read!
- That was until Queen Mary, who sought to bring the Church back to Catholicism and killed many for translating the Bible into English.
- But then in God's providence, Queen Elizabeth made an end to all of these things and restored the teachings of the reformers.
 - That is,
 - that the Bible was the sole authority and
 - that the bible had to be read in English and
 - that the bible be made available to every parishioner
- There is so much more to this history that I would love to get into.
- But now we want to find out, why did the reformers do all these things?
- Why did the reformers endure being burnt to death at the stake for the sake of the scriptures?
- Because they had read the bible for themselves.

- They had read passages like we had read to us from 2 Timothy this morning.
- Let's see why this is so crucial:
- Paul is writing to his protégée Timothy in this letter and he is coming to the conclusion of this second letter that we have.
- Look with me at 3:12
 - “In fact, everyone who wants to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted, 13 while evildoers and impostors will go from bad to worse, deceiving and being deceived.”
 - Isn't this what we have just seen?
 - Godly people being persecuted whilst the church deceived people?
 - What this tells us is that to be a true follower of Christ is really hard. It's going to be uncomfortable.
 - So what's the solution to this persecution?
- Let's read on from V14:
 - “But as for you, continue in what you have learned and have become convinced of, because you know those from whom you learned it, and how from infancy you have known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus.”
- Paul urges Timothy to continue in what he has learnt from the Apostle Paul and to continue in the faith of the scriptures. Don't change the message to avoid persecution but continue in the faith!
- And what is this faith?
 - The Gospel!
 - All scripture testifies to the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ because that is where salvation is found.
 - This is why the reformers went to the stake for these things.
 - To enrich and enliven's peoples faith in the Gospel and in Christ!
 - But it get's even better!!
- Paul writes in V16:
 - “All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness,”
- Brothers and Sisters, what we have in our hands here this morning, is the *very word of God*.
- Every word, every detail was breathed out and inspired by God himself and is useful.
 - Even the books that can be difficult to understand, like Revelation; are the word of God.
 - Even the extremely tedious details of the tabernacle in Exodus to the temple in Ezekiel are breathed out by God.
 - Even the bits that I find difficult, like the biblical teaching about pride and anger are the word of God.

- Even the bits that society rejects, like the biblical teaching about marriage, are, yes, the word of God.
- And since all of these are the Word of God and not of humans, we must sit under the word of God.
 - It alone should have authority over our lives and over our church.
 - The church should never be the sole carrier or interpreter of the bible.
 - The church should never practice things that are against the Word of God.
 - Because when we go against what is taught in the Bible, we go against what is being taught by the sole creator of the universe.
- When we reject ideas that are in the bible that we simply “Don’t like”, we are making ourselves our own god. And we let our foolish pride get in the way of us serving the living God.
- So, we must submit ourselves to God, and to his Word.
 - If you have grown up in Anglican churches you are probably used to the small bit of liturgy after the bible reading. The reader will say, “THIS IS the word of the Lord” and we all say, “.....thanks be to God”
 - Did you know that in a lot of Anglican Churches around Australia, after the readings, the reader will say, “hear the word of the Lord”? Do you notice the difference?
 - One definitively states that what was just read IS the Word of the Lord
 - The other says that whatever you want to hear or make of the reading is the word of the Lord.
 - I know I’m not the Rector here, but we can be **VERY** confident that here at the Anglican Church of Noosa, we will always be committed to
 - The Bible being the sole authority
 - The Bible having the final say, and
 - The Bible being faithfully taught week by week
 - Because the Bible ***IS*** the ***Word of the Lord***.
- So, this is Timothy’s and our charge from Paul in 4:2
 - “Preach the word;”
- The charge to Timothy and to teachers in the church is to faithfully proclaim the word at all times.
 - Notice that here Paul isn’t telling Timothy to deliver happy stories that make us feel nice,
 - or to give self help talks,
 - or to change the message
 - but he is told to proclaim the Gospel.
 - He is to preach regardless of the reception that his message has.
- And this is made even clearer in vv3-4

- “For the time will come when people will not put up with sound doctrine. Instead, to suit their own desires, they will gather around them a great number of teachers to say what their itching ears want to hear.”
- People don't like being told what to do even when it's a good thing to do
 - I wonder if you can finish this line for me... “If it's flooded...forget it”
 - Every year coming up to summer and during summer, we have this drilled into us!
 - But some people just don't like being told what to do?
 - Every summer during heavy rain, we always see on the news someone trying to drive through the flooded waters because they don't like being told what to do
- Everything that is written in scripture is for the good of God's creation.
- But people don't like being told what to do.
- So we are faced with two choices. Do we follow what is written, or do we reject it?
- Paul is telling us here that it is inevitable that some people will turn away from what is written in the Word.
- They will stop hearing what God wants them to hear, and will turn to what makes them feel comfortable, which is a myth!
 - At the very start of this passage, what did we see? That following God's word is really hard! It's uncomfortable!
- But some people don't want to feel uncomfortable.
- And so they turn away from the truth to lies.
- But what is our response? To continue to preach the Word. The truth.
- What was the Reformers response when English copies of the Bible were burnt? They continued their mission.
- What is our response when people reject our message?
 - Keep on preaching the message!
 - We don't change it in the hope that it will 'soften the blow', no!
 - Yes, we proclaim the message in various different, new, creative ways,
 - But we will never change the message, the hope and the truth of the Bible which is the Word of God...//
- Why does this matter today?
 - I'm a big fan of U2.
 - I have two of their albums on CD, maybe even three!
 - I have some of their concerts on DVD
 - I'm even a fan of their page on Facebook!
- But I wouldn't be a big fan of U2 if i never listened to them would I?
- In our comfortable life here in Noosa, It's easy to just be a big fan of God and of the bible.

- We may have three or more at home.
 - Maybe we have one that's just so special, that's not for reading because it's just so nice!
 - We may even be fans of the Bible on Facebook!
 - But if we never get stuck into it and actually read it, what types of followers of God would we be?
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- If we didn't have the Bible in your own language, would our lives look any different?
 - If the only input into your Christian life came from this pulpit, would your relationship with God look any different?
 - For me, all too often, the answer can be No.
 - How easy is it to go through the week without picking up and reading God's Word.
 - How easy it is to take it for granted that we have the Word's of God
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- But We must never take it for granted that we have God's word in our hand
 - We should revel in the Word
 - Be encouraged by it
 - Be rebuked by it
 - It should at times make us uncomfortable
 - And it should at other times make us rejoice!
 - Our daily diet should consist of time in God's Word.
 - Don't have the motivation to do it by yourself? Find a friend and read together over a cup of tea or coffee.
 - Join up a small group and dive into the nitty gritty
 - Have questions or doubts about some things?
 - Tell someone else!
 - Discuss it! You might find that they have trouble with these things as well!
 - Or Ring up Mark! (I haven't checked with him about this)..but I'm sure the best calls that a minister can get is, "Mark I'm really struggling with Ephesians 1 at the moment, can you help me?"
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- Because it's in this Word that the great news of the Gospel is revealed to us.
 - And it's through the Word that the simple Gospel was revealed to Whycliffe, to Tyndale, Luther, to Calvin, to Zwingly, to Cranmer, to all the reformers and the people who came along with them.
 - It's only through the Word that someone can come to a greater knowledge of God and knowledge of the salvation offered through Christ Jesus.
 - Because the bible is the authoritative Word of the Lord.
 - May we never take it for granted that we have the Bible in our hands.
 - We must let it have the final say
 - Because this,{— — —} is, the Word of the Lord
 - Thanks be to God