

I've always loved the third chapter of Second Timothy. When things are spinning wildly out of reasonableness and present a completely detached-from-reality view of God, of Christ and His Church, I find comfort in 2 Tim 3. The chapter's final 2 verses, 16 and 17, are very inspirational:

"All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness; so that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work."

The very unfortunate fact is that people find as many things inspiring them as there are people looking for inspiration. Two questions need answered to satisfy the desire for unity in Christ as there are as many ideas as there are sects, denominations, in Christ.

Question 1: Just exactly HOW are we "Equipped?"

Question 2: Just exactly WHAT constitutes a "Good Work?"

Question 1 has an easy answer. The answer is contained in the verse 16 itself as it states, "All Scripture" is there for everything we need for our "training in righteousness." The Word of God is our equipping. The Word of God in His scripture, the Bible, is how we are equipped. Volumes of books can be written on all the reasons that scripture is the only known, trusted, source of our equipping but I will cut it short by pointing out that the text has, and is, the answer.

BUT! I will just point it out that, that answer IS disputed. Galatians 1:8 says, "But even if we, or an angel from heaven, should preach to you a gospel contrary to what we have preached to you, he is to be accursed!" but that has not stopped many from running to the claim that an angel, Moroni, has brought a different gospel. And Christ Himself in Matthew 24:23 said, "Then if anyone says to you, 'Behold, here is the Christ,' or 'There He is,' do not believe him." yet many are drawn to the preaching that Christ made an appearance and is now reigning in a particular sect. (I guess you will just have to become a Seventh Day Adventist to learn what you missed).

Answer 2 is the calling of Christ and into Christ, that we love one another; Jn15: 12 and 17. Christ jumped right into this theme in His "Sermon on the Mount" recorded in Matt 5: 43, 44, "you have heard that it was said, 'You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.' But I say to you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you." This is the emphasis and the totality of our relation to and with God. The greatest commandments issued by God Himself and relayed to us were spoken by Christ and recorded by Matthew in chapter 22 and verses 37 through 40, "And He said to him, 'You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind. This is the great and foremost commandment. The second is like it, You shall love your neighbor as yourself. On these two commandments depend the whole Law and the Prophets."

So what has Christ done to fulfill God's calling to love? Both equipping us for a good work AND giving us a "Good Work" to fulfill? He has given us a dinner table to gather around! "Who woulda thunk it?" It appears the world would have grand monuments and great soaring temples to "awe" everyone and make the point of being great rather than such a humble exercise. I mean, after all, who wants to go have dinner with a bunch of nobodies or even our enemies!?? Such is the preparation and thoughtfulness of God and our Lord Jesus Christ.

Luke 22: 19 - 20, "And when He had taken some bread and given thanks, He broke it and gave it to them, saying, "This is My body which is given for you; do this in remembrance of Me." And in the same way He took the cup after they had eaten, saying, 'This cup which is poured out for you is the new covenant in My blood.'" Let us take this bread and this cup together in the love of Christ and in the love of His calling us together to do so.

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