

BECOMING MATURE IN CHRIST

The Keys of Spiritual Development

Ready for Anything

2 Timothy 3:17

Introduction: Paul's encouragement to Timothy is to become a man of the Word, to come to know the Word of God in great depth so that he will be wise and ready for anything. As we have already seen, God's desire is for our success in life. He wants to bless us, to protect us from foolish decisions, to guide us through dangerous and thorny paths. In verse seventeen we learn that the key to this successful life is in the knowledge of the Word of God and its application by the Holy Spirit in our lives.

I. That the man (and woman) of God may be adequate.

- A. What does it mean to be adequate? By definition it is to have sufficient supply, to be complete, to lack nothing.
- B. Applied to the Scriptures it means to have within its pages all the knowledge and wisdom necessary to live life well and to make wise decisions while avoiding pitfalls and foolish choices.
- C. Matthew Henry relates 2 Timothy 3:17 to Psalm 19.

II. Equipped for every good work

- A. Equipment: the tools of the mechanic, the computer of the programmer, the formulas of the engineer, the brushes and paints of the artist. In life, the Word of God is the equipment we need to live well.
- B. Academic training, trade schools and skill, business acumen and understanding the workings of Wall Street may enable us to make money—but we have all read or known of people who have had great success in business and were miserable failures in life. The only equipment that guarantees true success as a person is the knowledge and spiritual application of the Word of God.

III. For Every . . . Good . . . Work

- A. Understand the difference between the collective and the qualitative use of "good"
 1. The collective noun "good works" brings to mind such activities as working in a homeless shelter, donating clothing to the Salvation Army, collecting donations for charity. These activities are NOT what Paul is referring to.
 2. The qualitative use describes the quality, nature, and moral value of our activities. Regardless of what we are doing, does the outcome contribute to the betterment of people and society, does it build character, does it point to God, does it strengthen our family and friendships and make our lives an example to follow?
- B. In the study and assimilation of the Word of God, coupled with obedience and spiritual application, we have the opportunity to transform EVERY work into a good work, to see every activity touched by the Presence of God, and to come to the end of our days satisfied and unashamed knowing that God is pleased with our life.

Conclusion: In the Bible God has given us, not only a key to spiritual maturity, but a gift for living a successful life. Combined with prayer and Holy Spirit led application, it will inform us at every juncture the wise path to choose. It will guide us in choosing a partner and living out a marriage, in raising children, in being a good employer or employee, in making wise business decisions and maintaining trust with our clients, in investment and money management, in spiritual and emotional health. It will teach us how to live and how to die and how to enjoy the blessings along the way as well as navigate the crises with grace and dignity, how to handle success and how to live with disappointment. God's Word is sufficient for all of life.

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.
(2 Timothy 3:16-17 NAU)

...seeing that His divine power has granted to us everything pertaining to life and godliness, through the true knowledge of Him who called us by His own glory and excellence.
(2 Peter 1:3 NAU)

"And He, when He comes, will convict the world concerning sin and righteousness and judgment;"
(John 16:8 NAU)

23 For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man who looks at his natural face in a mirror;
24 for once he has looked at himself and gone away, he has immediately forgotten what kind of person he was.
25 But one who looks intently at the perfect law, the law of liberty, and abides by it, not having become a forgetful hearer but an effectual doer, this man will be blessed in what he does.
(James 1:23-25 NAU)

For the word of God is living and active and sharper than any two-edged sword, and piercing as far as the division of soul and spirit, of both joints and marrow, and able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart.

13 And there is no creature hidden from His sight, but all things are open and laid bare to the eyes of Him with whom we have to do.
(Hebrews 4:12-13 NAU)

