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2 Timothy 3:14-4:4

The Cornerstone Core: Community

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2 Timothy 3:14–4:4 (NIV) *14 But as for you, continue in what you have learned and have become convinced of, because you know those from whom you learned it, 15 and how from infancy you have known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. 16 All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, 17 so that the servant of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work. 1 In the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who will judge the living and the dead, and in view of his appearing and his kingdom, I give you this charge: 2 Preach the word; be prepared in season and out of season; correct, rebuke and encourage—with great patience and careful instruction. 3 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. 4 They will turn their ears away from the truth and turn aside to myths.*

Core Value: Bible - We study, preach, apply, and share God's Word.

Introduction:

1. My brother Nathanael joined the Marine Corp after high school (Veterans Day thanks).
2. He is the brother who likes hiking, camping, and going for runs and working out (skinny wired strong).
3. When you go to boot camp, you're cut off from the world (no email, Facebook, Skype).
4. His girlfriend, parents, siblings, church, and extended family members wrote him piles of letters.
5. The number of letters he got was a status measure—the more you got, the more loved you appeared.
6. He ran out of space in his sea bag, so he threw his clothes away instead of his letters.
7. We wrote to him because we knew he was going through something hard, through change.
8. We all go through life change: school, move, new job, marriage, children, aging parents.
9. We all need a message of hope to help us stay grounded and level headed through it all.
10. God has written us a letter of hope for our lives, the Bible.
11. We're so important to him that God has written us 66 letters, 39 OT and 27 NT.

I. The Bible is God's message for us. (read 2 Tim 3:14-15)

A. We study God's message because it's for us. (v. 14-15a)

1. At the end of his life, the Apostle Paul wrote this letter to a young pastor named Timothy.
2. Timothy is in the hostile culture of Ephesus in the Ephesian church full of false teachers.
3. These are Paul's last words, because he shortly be executed, so they're full of importance.
4. Paul says "to continue" in what his mother Eunice, grandmother Lois, and Paul taught him.
5. Since he was 5, they taught him the "Holy Scriptures" which are the OT (law, prophets, writings).
6. These writings are able to make "you" Timothy "wise for salvation"—God's message for you.
7. Like Paul and Timothy, what we need to hear most, no matter our circumstances, is God's words.
8. This is why we study the Bible on our own, as a church, and in our small groups.

(The Bible is God's message for us.)

(But what's the message about?)

- B. I worked for a lady who liked to read the last chapter of a book before reading the rest of the book.
1. If the ending was bad, she wouldn't read the rest of the book.
 2. In v. 15, Paul spoils the ending of the Old Testament for Timothy.
 3. He says, "the holy Scriptures... make you wise for salvation... through faith in Jesus Christ."
 4. Paul is saying that the Bible, in every part, is ultimately all about Jesus Christ.
 5. God's message is not really a "what" but a "who".

C. Jesus is God's message. (v. 15b)

1. The whole Bible, every book, every chapter, every verse, ultimately points to Jesus in some way.
2. After Jesus rose from the grave, he caught up with two of his followers on the road to Emmaus.
3. Before he revealed himself to them, he taught them about himself from the Old Testament.

Luke 24:27 And beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, he explained to them what was said in all the Scriptures concerning himself. (NIV)

4. We are a "gospel-centered church" that believes the Bible itself is "gospel centered."
5. Gospel is the "good news" that anyone who puts their faith in Jesus Christ is saved.

(The Bible is God's message for us—Jesus is God's message.)

(But it's not just the friendly parts of the Bible that are God's, every part is his.)

II. The whole Bible is God's message for us. (read **2 Tim 3:16-17**)

A. The whole Bible is God-breathed. (v. 16)

1. The ESV says, "All Scripture is breathed out by God."
2. In the Greek, "breathed out by God" is a compound of "God" and "breathed."
3. This means that the whole Bible is "inspired by God".
4. God is the ultimate author even though he didn't dictate it (he guided).
5. This means: 1) We can't pick which parts of the Bible are true and which aren't.
6. For example, the Canaanite genocide is as much a part of the Bible as the birth of Jesus.
7. And 2) The God of the Old Testament is the same God as the New Testament.
8. We can't choose the parts we like and throw the rest out—the power is in the whole story.

B. Maybe some of you have seen the new Star Wars trailers, I already got tickets.

1. Of the original trilogy, my least favorite is The Empire Strikes Back b/c Han Solo gets frozen.
2. What if I removed the second movie from the Star Wars Canon because I don't like it?
3. We wouldn't appreciate the story if it jumped from A New Hope to Return of the Jedi.
4. George Lucas and Disney are the ones who decide what's Star Wars Canon, not me.
5. When we take out parts of the Bible, the story doesn't make sense any more (sin, dark parts).
6. When we remove the Canaanite genocide, we cut our understanding of God's holiness and mercy.

(The whole Bible is God's message for us.)

C. The whole Bible teaches us what to believe and how to live. (v. 17)

1. "All Scripture is... useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness."
2. "Teaching and rebuking" are a + and - way of saying "what to believe" and "what not to believe."

3. “Correcting and training” are a + and - way of saying “live this way” and “don’t live that way.”
4. The Bible not only teaches us what's true about God, but what to do about it.
5. V. 17 says that the Bible also helps us, it “equips” or “prepares” us for every “good work.”
6. When we study the Bible, we’re preparing ourselves to do something good.

(What is the good work?)

III. The whole Bible is God's message for us to share. (read 2 Tim 4:1-2)

A. God calls us to share his message with others (v. 1-2a)

1. V. 1 is like Paul is saying, “I charge you, as if you were standing in front of God and Jesus.”
2. Paul is invoking God’s own name and the name of Christ here for what he’s about to say.
3. He commands Timothy to “preach the word... in season and out of season...”
4. The “good work” is sharing the message of the Bible and ultimately Jesus with others.
5. We excuse ourselves from talking about Jesus because we don’t think we know enough.
6. If you ever read some of the NT stories, people met Jesus, and instantly started telling others.
7. God wants us to tell others about him when it’s “convenient” and “inconvenient.”
8. He has already made us ready—we are “thoroughly equipped” to share God’s message.

(The whole Bible is God’s message for us to share.)

B. Some of you may have heard this story before.

1. One summer I traveled to Croatia with my wife Monica and her family.
2. In the Zagreb airport on the way back I was studying this passage for a sermon I was preparing.
3. I was sitting in the terminal thinking how I need to know God’s word and share it.
4. That’s when I heard a man on his phone four seats to my left say something interesting.
5. “It was a real spiritual time... I found many answers, but not all the ones I was looking for.”
6. That’s when I had to decide, was I going to share what I knew or not.
7. Paul's words came back at me, “Preach the word; be prepared in season and out of season!”
8. After giving myself a prep-talk and asking the Holy Spirit to help, I approached this man.
9. I said, “Excuse me sir, I’m a pastor and I overheard you are looking for something spiritual.”
10. The man turned to me, smiled and said, “No. I’m the President of the Mormons for Croatia.”
11. We talked for about thirty minutes and I got to share the gospel message of Jesus with this man.
12. I didn’t convert him, but God wasn’t asking for that, but for me to leave the results to him.

(Whether we realize it or not, we are ready, the Bible helps us prepare.)

(Our passage says to “reprove, rebuke, and exhort, in all patience and teaching.”)

(We’re not supposed to troll people or Facebook rant when others don’t “get it.”)

(We’re supposed to build relationships and love people even if they reject Jesus.)

IV. We share God's message no matter the results. (read 2 Tim 3:3-4)

A. We share God’s message even though many won’t listen (v. 3-4)

1. When our doctor tells us we’re sick, we get a second opinion, because we don’t want to be sick.
2. We do this with the truth too—the Bible tells us we’re sick, so we ignore our Bibles.
3. Paul warns Timothy that people inside the church will “...turn away to myths.”

4. Myths are candy for your soul, like God saves everyone or all religions are true.
5. It's easier to believe no one goes to hell than it is to honestly deal with the truth of the Bible.
6. We believe and do things all the time that are bad for us.
7. This week I used Coke to clean foamy purple battery acid off my car battery.
8. Right before I used that Coke to remove battery acid, I drank some of it (think drano).
9. When we believe put our faith in anyone but Jesus and the Bible, we do the same thing.
10. One of our Core Values is "Bible - We study, preach, apply, and share God's Word."
11. We're making the Bible a part of our DNA so that we never turn away from Jesus.
12. We have a healthy meal to share with others even when they prefer candy or coke.

(The whole Bible is God's message for us to share.)

Conclusion:

1. I put a lot of thought and time into writing my Nathanael when he was in boot camp.
2. I thought boot camp must be a hard place, so I sent him jokes, and I also told him he was my hero.
3. My Marine brother told me that sometimes when he received my letters he would cry.
4. We believe in a God who has put just as much love into the letters he has written to us.
5. Maybe sometimes when you read the Bible, it feels more like an encyclopedia than a love letter.
6. Remember each letter points to Jesus, God's son, who God the Father sacrificed to pay for our sins.
7. Every single part of the Bible points to God's great love for you and for me.
8. Don't you want know and feel this magnificent love?
9. The great thing is we can pass these love letters along to others.
10. The whole Bible is God's message for us to share.

Benediction: Joshua 22:5 (NIV) — *5 But be very careful to keep the commandment and the law that Moses the servant of the Lord gave you: to love the Lord your God, to walk in obedience to him, to keep his commands, to hold fast to him and to serve him with all your heart and with all your soul.*"