

OVERCOMING SPIRITUAL DECEPTION
Part III: Staying With Scripture's Divine Inspiration And Authority
(2 Timothy 3:1, 15-16a)

I. Introduction

- A. In 2 Timothy 3:1, 13, the Apostle Paul predicted that in the latter days, evil people and impostors would go from bad to worse, deceiving and being deceived. Evidence abounds that this prediction is being fulfilled.
- B. We thus do a four-part study on overcoming spiritual deception, and in this third part, 2 Timothy 3:1, 15-16a directs us to stay with Scripture's divine inspiration and authority (as follows):

II. Staying With Scripture's Divine Inspiration And Authority, 2 Timothy 3:1, 15-16a.

- A. Where we learned in our second lesson that we need to overcome deceivers and deception by remaining with what we learned and became convinced was true from reputable teachers, due to the imperfections of even well-meaning, godly teachers (cf. 1 John 1:8-10), we need a perfect, authoritative guide for discernment.
- B. Paul presented that guide as the divinely inspired and authoritative written Scriptures in 2 Timothy 3:15-16a:
 - 1. Paul directed Timothy to the "sacred writings" (*hiera grammata*, U. B. S. Grk. N. T., 1966, p. 736; G. Abbott-Smith, A Manual Grk. Lex. of the N. T., 1968, p. 95, 214) to which Timothy had been exposed from "infancy" (*brephos*, *Ibid.*, p. 85) and that were able to make Timothy wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus, 2 Timothy 3:15.
 - 2. Precisely **WHY** the sacred writings could **achieve** this **insight** is explained in 2 Timothy 3:16a:
 - a. The Greek word rendered "all" (v. 16a KJV) is the feminine singular adjective *pasa*, and it modifies the feminine noun *graphe*, *Ibid.*, U. B. S. Grk. N. T. Since *graphe* is anarthrous, a noun that does not have a definite article (*Ibid.*), the meaning of *pasa* is actually "each, every" instead of "all" (*Ibid.*; *Ibid.*, Arndt & Gingrich, A Grk.-Eng. Lex. of the N. T., 1967, p. 636). This implies that every part of the sacred writings is divinely inspired, and Christ in Matthew 5:18 indicated that this included every letter and every part of a letter that distinguishes that letter from another letter that thereby affects the meaning of every word in Scripture. In other words, Paul in unity with Jesus held to the **verbal** divine inspiration of Scripture.
 - b. The Greek word rendered "Scripture" (v. 16a KJV) is *graphe*, and it is "never used of a single book in the Bible," so in 2 Timothy 3:16a, "it obviously means every passage of Scripture." (T. D. N. T., vol. I, p. 754) Paul thus taught the **plenary** divine inspiration of Scripture – that **all** of Scripture is divinely inspired.
 - c. The phrase "is given by inspiration of God" (2 Timothy 3:16a KJV) translates the Greek adjective *theopneustos*, what is full of important meaning (as follows):
 - i. This adjective is "used attributively to describe *graphe*" (*Ibid.*, Theol. Dict. N. T., vol. VI, p. 454), meaning that the sacred writings are **objectively** divinely inspired in contrast to Neo-orthodoxy that teaches that the Scriptures only subjectively become inspired in one's mind when one reads it.
 - ii. The Greek word *theopneustos* is composed in part by the word *theos*, meaning "God," so the sacred writings bear the inspiration of God Who is omniscient, omnipotent, omnipresent, righteous, loving, good, eternal, etc., all the attributes of the God Who is revealed in Scripture. Thus, the sacred writings of Scripture carry the authority of the Creator God Who in Genesis 1 called the entire universe into existence from nothing (*ex nihilo*, Hebrews 11:3) with the words of His mouth!
 - iii. The adjective *theopneustos* is also composed in part with the **-tos** suffix (ending). Princeton scholar Bruce M. Metzger, Lexical Aids of Students of N. T. Grk., 1970, p. 44 claimed: "A special class of adjectives, called verbal adjectives, is formed by the suffix **-tos**. These either (a) have the meaning of a perfect passive participle or (b) express possibility." Paul was **not** suggesting **mere possibility** in the 2 Timothy 3:16 context where he is so dogmatic, so the **perfect** tense force of the **-tos** suffix here means that the divine inspiration of Scripture is **permanent**, and the **passive** voice force of the **-tos** suffix here means that **Scripture was made permanently divinely inspired by God!**
 - iv. *Theopneustos* is also composed in part by the word *pneo*, meaning "breathe out," and the ESV fittingly translates the word as "breathed out by God" (2 Timothy 3:16a ESV). The sacred writings of Scripture thus bear the **authority** of God just as if God had spoken each word in Scripture.

Lesson: *To overcome deceivers and deception, God directs believers to view Scripture as His permanent, verbal, plenary, objective, divinely inspired Word as our divinely authoritative and thus ultimate guide in discerning truth.*

Application: *May we rely on written Scripture as God's ultimate authoritative guide for us to discern the truth.*