

OVERCOMING SPIRITUAL DECEPTION
Part IV: Staying With Scripture's Divine Ministry Sufficiency
(2 Timothy 3:1, 13, 16b-17)

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 fourth part, 2 Timothy 3:1, 13, 16b-17 directs us to stay with Scripture's divine ministry sufficiency (as follows):

II. Staying With Scripture's Divine Ministry Sufficiency, 2 Timothy 3:1, 13, 16b-17.

- A. Where we learned in our third lesson that we need to overcome deceivers and deception by remaining with belief in Scripture's divine inspiration and authority, we now view the effectiveness of Scripture in ministry, noting its divine sufficiency that overcomes efforts to dilute Scripture's truth with errant, harmful views.
- B. We first illustrate the great need to discern the need to clarify Scripture's sufficiency for ministry:
 - 1. Evangelical psychologist Dr. Lawrence Crabb, Jr., in his book, Effective Biblical Counseling, shows he thinks he takes "only the best and only the biblically sound ideas from psychology . . . (a)nd he criticizes those who would use solely the Scripture" (Martin and Deidre Bobgan, PsychoHeresy, 1987, p. 75).
 - 2. However, "(w)ith Crabb, guilt is . . . related to lack of significance and security" (Ibid., p. 79), but "(i)f the church busies itself with relieving guilt through making people feel significant and secure, what happens to God's . . . remedy of confession, forgiveness, and restoration as the means of relieving guilt?" (Ibid., p. 80)
 - 3. Thus, Dr. Crabb's view of guilt opposes Scripture's teaching on handling it, countering true discipleship!
- C. In contrast, 2 Timothy 3:1, 16b-17 reveals Scripture's sufficiency in ministry as the provision of God Himself:
 - 1. Having stated that, to overcome deception (2 Tim. 3:1, 13), every part of Scripture is divinely inspired and authoritative (2 Tim. 3:15-16a), Paul added that Scripture is useful for four ministries (2 Tim. 3:16b):
 - a. Scripture is useful for **teaching**, "imparting knowledge concerning God's revelation in Christ," (William Hendriksen, Exposition of the Pastoral Epistles (NTC), 1974, p. 303).
 - b. Scripture is useful for **reproof**, "(w)arnings, based on the Word" as "(e)rrors in doctrine and in conduct must be refuted in the spirit of love. Dangers must be pointed out. False teachers must be exposed" (Ibid.)
 - c. Scripture is useful for **correction**, what "emphasizes the positive side" that directs one "to the right or straight path (Dan. 12:3) . . . (This ministry) is restorative in character." (Ibid.)
 - d. Scripture is useful for **training in righteousness** (cf. 2 Timothy 2:22). "Every Christian needs to be disciplined, so that he may prosper in the sphere where God's holy will is considered normative." (Ibid.)
 - 2. The **effectiveness** of Scripture's use in these four ministries is then explained in 2 Timothy 3:17:
 - a. Paul's reference to "the man of God" applies to each believer in Jesus Christ. (Ibid.)
 - b. Each godly believer through use of Scripture in his ministry is then **artios**, "capable, proficient = able to meet all demands" (Arndt & Gingrich, A Grk.-Eng. Lex. of the N. T., 1967, p. 110) in a spiritual ministry.
 - c. The adjective rendered "all" (KJV) is **pan**, the neuter form of **pas** that modifies the anarthrous [no article] noun **ergon** ("work"), making the expression read "every good work" (U. B. S. Grk. N. T., 1966, p. 736).
 - d. The words "thoroughly furnished" (KJV) render the **perfect passive** participle **exertismenos** from **exartizo**, to "equip" (op cit., Arndt & Ging., p. 273), and we explain in view of the context at verse 16a where **theopneustos** ("God breathed") depicts Scripture's divine inspiration with the **same perfect passive force**:
 - i. The **passive voice** means Scripture readily equips the believer by virtue of God's inspiration and authority that is built within Scripture itself. (cf. the **passive force** of **-tos** in **theopneustos**, v. 16a)
 - ii. The **perfect tense** means Scripture permanently equips the believer due to the permanent nature of Scripture's divine inspiration and authority. (cf. the **perfect force** of **-tos** in **theopneustos**, v. 16a)
 - 3. Thus, the divine authorship, inspiration and authority of objective written Scripture equips a believer who fellowships with Christ and uses Scripture to be permanently effective in teaching, reproving, correcting and instructing others in righteousness. This makes him proficient for every good work that needs to be done to disciple. To the contrary, the use of extrabiblical sources of thought is both ineffective and inevitably counters real discipleship due to the error that exists in a world controlled by Satan, 1 John 5:19.

Lesson: *Scripture by its divine inspiration and authority is all that a believer needs and should use in discipling.*

Application: *May we rely on the sufficiency of written Scripture to avoid deception and fulfill God's calling for us.*