

Unique

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The Bible is unique in all the literature of the world. There are several things that set it apart from any human literary production.

It is inspired. 2 Timothy 3:16 says that the Scriptures are “God-breathed.” God breathed them out through His Holy Spirit. He has also breathed Himself into them, so that the Bible is a living thing (Hebrews 4:12) imbued with God’s own thoughts.

In some ways it is like other books. It communicates like other books. It conveys its message in human language through the normal process of reading and understanding. In other ways, it is unique and wonderful, quite unlike any other book.

We ought to approach the Bible in a different way because of its Author. If you read a paper from an inferior student of the fourth grade, you don’t EXPECT to learn much from it. If you read C.S. Lewis or some favorite author, you expect something delightful and profound, and you look a little closer, because you have come to expect great things from the author. So with the Bible.

Truly, it is filled with wise counsel. It is “profitable for doctrine (that is, teaching), for reproof, for correction and instruction in righteousness. **Those who are charged with building spiritual edifices (1 Corinthians 3:10ff), as Timothy was, can find a full range of materials and plans for the job.**

The building of God’s house is done by “teaching.” Every brick has to be laid in place; every part of the building must be built according to the plan. Nor is any page of the plan missing.

Sometimes it is necessary to “reprove” people, that is, to convict or convince them of their wrong. The Bible supplies everything needed for that also.

In the building business, there is a constant need to align things. Everything in a symmetrical and attractive building has to be plumb. Timothy would sometimes need to correct or “straighten up” things in the church at Ephesus. Cf. *Titus on the isle of Crete where a similar Greek word is rendered “set in order” (Titus 1:5)*. The Bible serves as a plumb line for straightening things up.

“Instruction” in this passage (2 Timothy 3:16, 17) is not just another word for teaching. It is a special kind of teaching, namely “training” or discipline. There is a certain kind of instruction that builds stamina. There is no way to develop that stamina except by increased amounts of exertion. Not only is the BODY conditioned but the MIND is

trained to compel the body toward the desired goals. This is the kind of “discipline” intended, and the Bible shows the way to develop it.

But the most remarkable claim of the passage is found in verse 17. “...that the man of God may be COMPLETE, THOROUGHLY EQUIPPED for EVERY good work.”

There are many modern publications that claim to tell you “Everything You Need to Know” about something. But we recognize these titles as exaggerations. Nothing can tell us EVERYTHING we need to know about a subject. There is no human publication that can actually live up to this claim.

But the Bible can. It provides everything a preacher needs, to build a spiritual building. It provides everything any Christian needs, to serve the Lord acceptably. The reason it can do this is that, it has a divine Author. **Only God could anticipate EVERY spiritual need of His people. Only He could write a book that could meet ALL the people's needs.**

This has a very important implication for passages like 2 John 9, Colossians 3:17 and others. Only an all-sufficient book can reasonably restrict by its silence. God has made the SILENCE of the Scriptures binding, because He has given ALL the answers we need within its pages. Through statements, commands, examples and principles, He has addressed EVERYTHING required for acceptable service. At least in principle, every spiritual requirement is met. This is especially true of the structure and function of His church. If He has not provided for it, we need not pursue it. Indeed, we dare not pursue it. His design for His church is complete and sufficient. It cannot be improved by human wisdom or invention.