

2 Timothy 3:16 “When Scripture is appropriate”

2 Timothy 3:10-17 NIV)

“You, however, know all about my teaching, my way of life, my purpose, faith, patience, love, endurance, (11) persecutions, sufferings--what kinds of things happened to me in Antioch, Iconium and Lystra, the persecutions I endured. Yet the Lord rescued me from all of them.

“(12) In fact, everyone who wants to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted, (13) while evil men and impostors will go from bad to worse, deceiving and being deceived.

“(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**

***person*¹ of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.”**

Do you believe that it benefits you to follow God’s word?

Many consider the Bible an old book of myths with dubious sources.

“Smart people look to science, technology, and education for real answers,” they say.

Scientists, technologists, and educators deserve our gratitude.

They enable us to do things deemed impossible not long ago.

Now, high speed travel and virtual reality help us experience everything imaginable.

Two weeks ago, Norma and I flew to Southern California and I went by plane to Oregon.

Folks of all income levels, races, ages, and with various medical challenges travel by air.

All passengers on each aircraft arrive at the same time.

¹ The word in the original is *anthropos*, often translated as *man*, but actually refers to any male or female human being.

Even a few dogs traveled with us.

Suppose you could measure the happiness level of those travelers-excluding the dogs.

Would their joy equal, exceed, or be less than travelers of eras before?

On all four flights I took, passengers and crew acted courteously and amiably.

If you have recently traveled, however, you possibly noticed something I did.

We travel long distances comforted by gadgets that satisfy every wish and whim-instant info at our fingertips.

On one flight, using the restroom required me to walk the four fifths the length of a stretch airliner.

According to the airline site, I passed about 150 passengers sitting in 25 rows.

Most kept eyes fixed on their laptops or iPads, reading, viewing movies, doing business, or studying in “airplane mode.”

Do these devices make us happier?

The following websites give statistics that should give us pause.

1. <https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2018/aug/16/us-drug-overdose-deaths-opioids...>

Aug 16, 2018 · The Center for Disease Control estimates that **72,287 people** died from overdoses in 2017, an increase of about 10% from the year before.

- o **Author:** Erin Durkin

The number dying of drugs in one year nearly equals Iowa City, IA’s population.

<https://www.addictioncenter.com/addiction/addiction-statistics>

About **88,000 people** die as a result of alcohol every year in the United States.

The number 88,000 nearly matches Sioux City’s population dying in one year.

According to the CDC, suicide rates among both men and women keep increasing.

Factors leading to those suicides?

Feeling like a burden

Being isolated

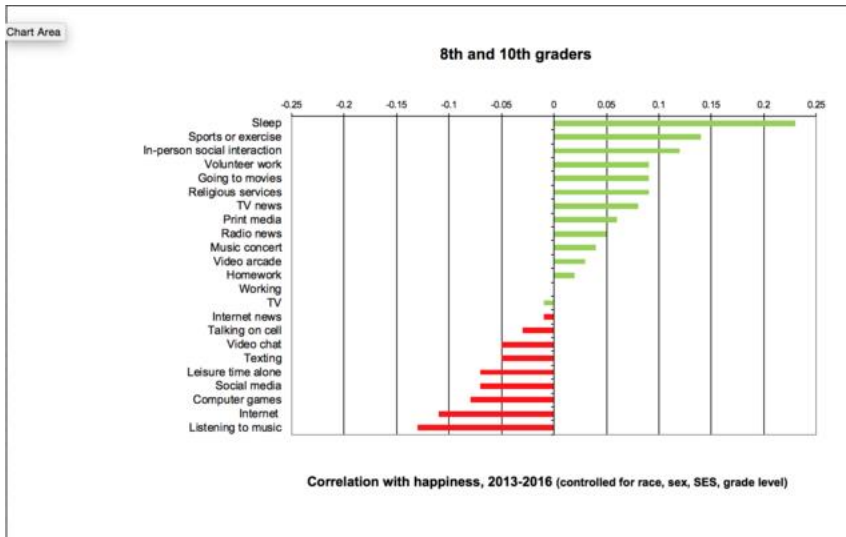
Increased anxiety

Increased substance abuse

“ **anger or rage**

Suicide was a leading cause of death
1999-2016.

The **Psychology Today** website related results of a study by Jean Twenge, Ph.D. on “Correlation between activities and happiness” among 8th through 10th graders.



Study results of Jean Twenge, Ph.D.

On the above chart, listening to music (the bottom factor listed in red) apparently referred to listening on “earbuds,” which shuts off nearly all interaction with others.

To quote Jean Twenge:

“The pattern is again clear: Nearly all phone activities are linked to less happiness, and nearly all non-phone activities are linked to more happiness.”

And,

“Teens who spend hours listening to music (on earbuds) are often shutting out the world, effectively isolating themselves in a cocoon of sound.”²

God’s word helps us resolve loneliness, anxiety, and anger, and avoid deadly errors.

The Bible benefits people of all ages.

In earlier years, I learned certain scriptures that supported my religious position, and I studied hard so I could prove other people wrong.

² To further quote Jean Twenge’s study: “There are two exceptions, both correlations $|\leq 0.01|$ or under: TV (sometimes non-phone, sometimes phone) is linked to slightly less happiness, and working at a paid job (usually non-phone) does not correlate with happiness ($r = .00$). An activity not involving phones but that still involves screens, video arcades, correlates .03 with happiness (though I’m not sure most teens even know what a video arcade is anymore, and going to an arcade is usually a social activity).” The 2nd quote is from *Our Changing Culture*, Jean M. Twenge.

Jesus criticized his contemporaries for doing the same thing:

“You diligently study the Scriptures because you think that by them you possess eternal life. These are the Scriptures that testify about me, yet you refuse to come to me to have life.”³

I didn’t read the Scriptures to find and know Jesus, the Son of God.

I read the Bible looking for the right church.

The one good habit I formed was to begin reading the Bible every day.

In the late 1950s, I began reading through the Bible every year.

The bad thing: I too often brag about it.

Here’s the good news I discovered:

- **God wants us all to succeed. “God is not willing that any should perish.”⁴**

When I was younger, I wasn’t sure that all my family wanted me to succeed.

But when Scripture made it clear that God wants me to win, I gained great reassurance.

- **In Jesus, however, we succeed by serving others.**

“The one who would be great among you must be servant of all.”⁵

“So you also, when you have done everything you were told to do, should say, ‘We are unworthy servants; we have only done our duty.’”⁶

- **At Sunday gatherings of God’s people, we honor God in Christ, but we also assemble to encourage one another.**

“And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds, ²⁵ not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching.”⁷

³ John 5:39 NIV

⁴ 2 Peter 3:9

⁵ Matthew 20:26 NIV

⁶ Luke 17:10 NIV

⁷ Hebrews 10: 24, 25 NIV

Scripture shows how as we follow Jesus in supporting, encouraging, and loving others, the Lord lifts discouragement and depression from us.

- Serving Jesus and others gets our minds off us.
- **The Bible promotes bold faith in Christ.** Paul sent the young preacher Timothy to city Ephesus (on the west coast of modern Turkey). Timothy began wavering in his assignment.

How do I know?

Some of the things Paul earlier wrote to Timothy point us toward that conclusion:

“Train yourself to be godly. 8 For physical training is of some value, but godliness has value for all things, holding promise for both the present life and the life to come. 9 This is a trustworthy saying that deserves full acceptance.”⁸

⁸ I Timothy 4:7-9 NIV

Can you believe that the word translated “train” is the term from which we get our word gymnasium or gym?

I get a mental picture of Timothy at the gym wearing “earbuds.”



Had he begun neglecting the Scriptures his mom and grandma taught him?

Ephesus was a tough place to preach, especially for a younger person.

That city was world headquarters for Diana worship, a fertility goddess also known as Artemis.

Townpeople claimed Diana fell out of the sky near Ephesus and they constructed a huge temple in her honor.

They not only worshiped in that football-field-sized-temple, they did their banking there, and the building served as a museum.

Worshippers didn't necessarily go there to sing to Diana, pray, and hear a sermon.

They routinely performed wild, vile fertility rites at Diana's temple.

The Diana temple attracted lots of tourists.

Craftsmen made and sold replicas of the temple that contained Diana's image.



How the Ephesus-Artemis temple probably looked in the first century AD.

Remains of the temple today.



This created considerable income for the city.

Based on Paul's letter to Ephesus and on Acts 19, we can conclude:

Many folks were on the edge of violence.

- Alcohol took its toll on people.
 - Cursing and filthy talk filled the air.
- Add these to strong sexual temptation, and it makes it tough especially for a young minister.

Timothy tried to toughen his body.

God wanted Timothy to fortify his inner man.

Unless their inner person gets right with God, even tough, physical folks fall apart.

To strengthen our inner person we put Christ in charge and do his will.

“All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, (17) so that the person of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.”

Scripture becomes our ultimate GPS, our Alexa, and Serie.

Note these examples God's powerful word:
"The Bible has spoken to Africans because, as in all languages, it speaks to the heart. One little Chiluba schoolboy in the Congo listened attentively to the reading of the Scriptures and immediately afterward went to the missionary, asking to borrow that Book. He wanted to take it back with him into the jungle to read to his parents in the distant village, 'For those words made holes in my heart.'"⁹
When you read the Bible, does it make holes in your heart?

- "Turrubio Torrejon was rummaging through the dump heaps on the salt flats at the edge of Oruro, Bolivia, when he noticed part of a book. There were only a hundred or so pages, but it was a fascinating book. It contained things about Jesus Christ he had never heard. He had no idea what this book was, but he kept it and read it.

One day he met an old friend on the train, and as they rode along, the friend began to tell Turrubio about what had happened in his life. This friend had found Jesus Christ, and now, instead of being a

drunkard, everything was different. In the Bible which he had been reading he had found the truth for which he had look so long. **"But the Bible is a forbidden book!"** Turrubio Torrejon remonstrated. **"You'll be deceived if you read it."**

Whereupon his friend took a Bible out of his suitcase and began to read it, challenging his friend to find anything false in what this Book had to say.

"Oh, but that is not the Bible!" Torrejon insisted. **"That is the book I have been reading."** Then he pulled out of his traveling basket the carefully preserved leaves of a part of the New Testament. Immediately he began to compare the words, the chapters, and the books. **"Yes, they are the same,"** he finally admitted. **"To think-all this time I have been reading the Bible and did not know it."** His friend then continued to explain more of the message of the forbidden Book. By the time the journey had ended, Turrubio Torrejon had given his heart to the Saviour . . . next day he sought out a missionary from whom he could obtain a complete Bible and learn more of its message of salvation.¹⁰

⁹ *God's Word in Man's Language* Eugene A. Nida p. 173

¹⁰ *God's Word In Man's Language*, Eugene A. Nida p - 177

God designed the Bible to lead us to Jesus Christ, His Son, who changes us into his image so that we love and appreciate God and forgive others.

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Once we give our lives to Christ and are baptized into him, God puts His Spirit in us.

The term “God-breathed” shows the close link between God’s word and His Spirit, whom he gives to those who obey Him.¹¹

God did not intend us to construct holy worship buildings. He wants our bodies to become temples of His Holy Spirit.¹²

God willing, we’ll speak more about that connection in two weeks.

In the meantime, I pray that you will read Scripture on your own. You will hear God speaking to you in amazing ways.

He will likely lift much of your loneliness and discouragement.

¹¹ See Acts 5:32

¹² 1 Corinthians 6:19, 20

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