

# Life for Dummies

2 Timothy 3:14-17

## Preface

*For Dummies* is an extensive series of instructional books which are intended to present non-intimidating guides for readers new to the various topics covered. To date, over 1,700 *For Dummies* titles have been published. There is Sewing for Dummies, Windows 7 for Dummies, Landscaping for Dummies, Stocks for Dummies, Chess for Dummies and one thousand six hundred and ninety five (1,695) more *For Dummies* books.

There is even a “Power Boating for Dummies.” Now that’s scary. I can just imagine being in a boat on Fish River and some guy is coming at me in a big power boat with a bright yellow book in his hand that reads, “Power Boating for Dummies.”

In my earlier years of marriage, Pam and I could have used a “Marriage for Dummies” book. Fortunately, there is a book that is Life for Dummies. The title is the Holy Bible and it is the one authoritative Bible on life and eternity. The Holy Bible is the authoritative Word on the Christian faith. It is the Word of God. It holds the secrets to peace and wisdom in a volatile and roller coaster world.

## Scripture: 2 Timothy 3:14-17

<sup>14</sup> But as for you, continue in what you have learned and have become convinced of, because you know those from whom you learned it, <sup>15</sup> and how from infancy you have known the holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. <sup>16</sup> All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, <sup>17</sup> so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work. 2 Timothy 3:14-17 NIV

## Introduction

The Holy Bible is comprised of 66 different books divided into 2 sections; the Old Testament and the New Testament. It was written by over 40 different authors over a period of 1500 years in 3 different languages, yet it presents one unified message of God’s plan and purpose for humanity.

The original manuscripts of the Old Testament were written primarily in Hebrew with some Aramaic. The original manuscripts of New Testament were written in Greek. Portions of the Bible have been translated into 1946 different languages. Numerous translations exist in English. No doubt there are numerous different translations in your hands here today.

The Holy Bible is the bestselling book of all time. Most Americans have numerous copies of the Bible in their homes. The Holy Bible is the Word of God. Unfortunately, the Bible is different things to different people. The Bible is different things to different hearts. Where is your heart and what is the Bible to you?

## Content

### 1. God’s Word is a joke to the Hard-Hearted

We often refer to non-believers in Jesus Christ as “the lost”. What we mean is that they do not know Jesus Christ as their savior and the Bible describes them as lost in sin.

God desires that all people would come to know Him and experience a personal relationship with Him. God reaches out to the lost through many avenues especially His Holy Spirit and His Word.

However, there are those who are hard-hearted and to them God’s Word is just a joke. They often poke fun at it and consider it an old outdated writing that is no longer applicable to modern society.

God’s Word speaks of this in Isaiah 28:13 where it says...

<sup>13</sup> So then, the word of the LORD to them will become: Do and do, do and do, rule on rule, rule on rule; a little here, a little there— so that they will go and fall backward, be injured and snared and captured. Isaiah 28:13 NIV

To the hard-hearted, God’s Word is just a bunch of do’s and don’t’s, repetitions and meaningless rules that they choose to ignore. They consider themselves too smart and enlightened for such elementary teaching and view the Word as being for the narrow minded.

1 Corinthians 1:18 say, <sup>18</sup> For the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God.

Illus: One of the most challenging moments in my life was when I was in college working on campus security. Mark Bernard was a friend who came in one night drunk. I was wearing a .38 caliber gun. He

kept daring me to arrest him and poking fun at me and my Christian faith. That night he was the drunken fool and had it not been for my Christian faith and compassion he would have ended up in humiliated that night. Mark was super intelligent but he considered himself too smart for the Bible. He made fun of the ministerial students and mocked our faith all the time. That particular night he was completely over the top. Marks enlightened philosophy didn't take him far in life. A few years later he committed suicide by intentionally overdosing on drugs while his wife was at work.

Sadly, the Word of God is without meaning to some people. Not only do they miss the importance, authority and authenticity of God's Word, but they miss the message of God's grace and love.

How sad that some people refuse to open their hearts to the Word of God. They plow forward making mockery of God's Word and they become snared in their own sin.

## **2. God's Word is a life saver to the Open-Hearted**

On the other hand, there are those who are lost but searching for answers and many of those have open hearts. This is where the work of the local church is so important. We can teach and share the Word of God to countless people whose hearts are open.

To the open-hearted, God's Word is literally a life saver.

Illus: Around 25 years ago, I purchased an old beat-up boat for a small amount of money. The boat was 19 feet long and I foolishly felt safe going a few miles out into the gulf. My father-in-law and I spent many Saturdays out on that boat catching king mackerel and other great fish. The boat only had an 18 gallon gas tank so I always took along a portable 6 gallon tank and usually had to switch to it on the way back in. On one occasion, we were on the way back in but were still about 2 miles out when we ran out of gas. As I was switching tanks, we realized that the waves were coming in over the transom and the boat was filling up with water. We later discovered that the plug had come out of the boat. Before I could get the fuel lines switched and the old motor started again the boat was full of water and the motor became swamped. There was another boat anchored within shouting distance from us but they replied they were having motor trouble and could not help us. We put on our life vests and were standing almost knee deep in water as the boat was about to completely submerge. All of a sudden, one of the men from the other boat threw a rope onto our deck and within seconds we were being

towed. Somehow the guys on the other boat got their engine started and rushed over to help us. We were saved and the boat was saved.

For the open-hearted who hears the Word of God, it is a complete life saver. It is a life saving rope to a soul drowning in sin and anguish.

God's message of grace and salvation is truly the "Good News". His Word provides the answer to what the soul has been longing and searching to understand.

There is no discovery like the discovery that the God of the universe loves you.

Proverbs 30:5 says every Word of God is flawless.

Jeremiah 23:29 says God's Word is like a fire that purges us.

To the man or woman who will open their heart to the Word of God, there is power through Jesus Christ; there is salvation.

## **3. God's Word is the Book of Life to the Christ-Hearted**

God's Word doesn't just reveal the message of salvation to the lost. It also provides guidance and crucial answers to the believer who is willing to follow Christ.

Illus: I have a GPS that I use when I am traveling or just trying to find someone's home or a place of business. I can input the address and the GPS will give me step by step instructions telling me what turns to make to arrive at the desired destination.

Psalms 119:105 says, "Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path."

God's Word provides answers and instructions to the believer. God's Word provides wisdom and teaches us how to dispense grace.

God's Word burns in our hearts and challenges us to live and be someone beyond who would be in our natural state.

Hebrews 4:12 reminds us God's Word is alive and it penetrates right to our soul and heart to change us. His Word molds us and transforms us into the person God desires.

God's word provides answers to living life in the fullest and avoiding many of the pitfalls the world offers. When we fully trust God's word and live by it, we discover life the way God intended it to be lived.

Hebrews 4:12 says, <sup>12</sup> *For the word of God is living and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart. Hebrews 4:12 NIV*

**The inner life of a Christian is often a strange mixture of motivations ranging from genuinely spiritual to completely human. God's Word is the supernatural agent that discerns and exposes to us what is spiritual and what is of the flesh.**

Our text reminds us that all scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness so that we are equipped to do the work of our Lord.

God's Word brings us hope and peace in times of trouble. His Word gives us wisdom beyond our natural abilities.

Many preachers today work hard to make the Bible relevant to modern society. We do not need to work at making the Bible relevant. The Word of God is and always has been relevant and will always be relevant. We just need to get out of the way and let it speak to our hearts in a living way.

Jesus said in a prayer before His arrest, *"Sanctify them by the truth; your word is the truth. (John 17)"* The Bible is our standard for what is true. **God's Word is the one authoritative living voice that Christians need in order to experience the fullness of life.**

God's word is Life for Dummies, without it life is a mess.

## Conclusion

Illus: I am a dummy. I have done some really dumb things in my life. I recall how at the age of 15, Walt Sessions and I had been observing those large sucker fish in Warren Creek. One morning we decided to skip school, take our bathing suits and borrow his Dad's spear gun. We went to Warren Creek and shot one of those big sucker fish (carp like fish). As we were standing face to face trying to get the fish off the spear, I was holding the spear and Walt was sliding off the fish. The second the fish came off the spear, he thrust into the air wiggling and thrashing. Walt lost the fish and in the madness of it all I let go of the spear. It fell straight down went completely through Walt's foot. This was a dumb thing to do when you have skipped school.

Illus: We have a new little dog in our house. We have some friends who just built a new home and they did not have a good place to keep the dog. Upon visiting, we showed some interest and the rest is history. In a moment of complete stupidity and insanity, I agreed to take the dog.

The dog is only 6 months old and it is a beautiful Border Collie mix. She walks really light on her feet as she sort of tip-toes around. They were calling her "Bear" but we renamed her "Lady".

This week I took Lady to the local vet where Brittany Commalander works for shots. I had her on a leash attached to a little read collar around her neck.

As I walked up the sidewalk towards the door of the vet's office, Brittany opened the door to greet me. I quickly noticed the look on Brittany's face changed. With a giggly voice she said, "Brother Bob, you don't have your dog."

I looked around and the collar had slipped off Lady's head and I was just dragging a leash with an empty collar on the end of it.

Many people today are going through life empty handed. Their hearts are empty and there is no fulfillment in life. Without God's word, we are walking through life like dummies. We are relying on our own opinions and those of the world rather than the wisdom of God.

What kind of heart do you have? Is it a hard heart or an open heart? Have you reached the point that you have a heart for following Christ? What is God's Word to you? Has it brought real life and meaning?