**All Scripture is *Theopneustos***

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[Bible One - Arlen Chitwood's The Study of Scripture, Ch. 1, Pg 4](http://bibleone.net/SS01.htm)

2 Timothy 3:16 in the KJV reads,

*All Scripture is given by inspiration of God*, *and is profitable for doctrine* [*teaching*], *for reproof*, *for correction*, *for instruction in righteousness*.

The words, “*given by inspiration of God*,” are a translation of the one Greek word, *theopneustos*, meaning “God-breathed.” This is a compound word comprised of *Theos* (“God”) and *pneuma* (“breath” in this particular usage [this is also the word used for “Spirit” in the New Testament — the Holy Spirit, man’s spirit, and the use of spirit in general; also “wind” in John 3:8]).

That which is meant by and the implications of Scripture being God-breathed are given in a somewhat simple manner in Scripture, but one has to look at and compare related parts of both Testaments before he can really begin to see and understand that which is involved. A person has to reference passages in both Testaments, studying passages from one in the light of passages from the other. He has to compare Scripture with Scripture, i.e., he has to compare “*spiritual things with spiritual*.”

Note first of all Hebrews 4:12a:

*For the Word of God is living and powerful*, *and sharper than any two-edged sword*. . . .

Now, the question: Why is the Word of God “*living*,” “*powerful*,” and “*sharper than any two-edged sword*”? The answer: Because of its origin. The Word is “*theopneustos*”; the Word is “God-breathed.”

But, what does that mean? And why is the Word “*living*” because of its origin? This is where one has to go back to beginning points in the Old Testament and find the first mention in Scripture of God bringing a matter to pass through the use of His breath.

This is necessary not only because of the need to compare Scripture with Scripture but also because of a principle of biblical interpretation, called, “the First-Mention Principle.”

This principle has to do with *unchangeableness*, and it centers on an unchangeable structure of the Word given by the unchangeable God. Because of the inherent nature of the Word, *the first time a subject is mentioned in Scripture*, *a pattern*, *a mold is established at that point that remains unchanged throughout the remainder of Scripture*.

Remaining within this principle, the first time one finds *the breath of God* mentioned in Scripture is in Genesis 2:7, in connection with life imparted to man; and, consequently, at this beginning point, this verse connects *life* with *the breath of God* after an unchangeable fashion. God formed and fashioned man from the dust of the ground, but man was not created alive. Life was subsequently imparted through God breathing into man’s “*nostrils the breath of life*,” resulting in man becoming “*a living being* [*soul*, KJV].”

Thus, at this point in Scripture the unchangeable connection between God’s *breath* and *life* is established and set. Only God can produce life, and any time life is produced beyond this point it *must always* be through the one means set forth at the beginning, revealed in Genesis 2:7.

The whole of the matter can be illustrated after a simple fashion from a later Old Testament passage, the vision of the valley of dry bones in Ezekiel, chapter thirty-seven.

The bones are presented as lifeless, and the question is asked in verse three, “*Son of man*, *can these bones live*?” Then note in verse five how life is to be affected: “*Surely I will cause breath to enter into you*, *and you shall live*.”

And verse eight, revealing their condition following “*sinews*,” “*flesh*,” and “*skin*” covering them, but prior to God acting, states, “*there was no breath in them*.” Then there is a cry in verse nine for “*breath*” so that “*these slain . . . may live*.” And the end of the matter is then given in verse ten: “. . . *breath came into them*, *and they lived*, *and stood upon their feet*, *an exceeding great army*.”

(Ezekiel 37, in its entirety, outlines events of a yet future day. It has to do with that time when Messiah returns and *life* is restored to “*the whole house of Israel*, which includes both those alive at that time [those already possessing natural life, but not spiritual life] and resurrected Old Testament saints [those already possessing spiritual life, but not natural life] [Exodus 13:19; cf. Ezekiel 36:24-28].

The remnant in the land today comprises only a small portion of “*the whole house of Israel*”; and this remnant, in relation to God’s breath, can only be described after the same fashion as Jews anywhere else in the world — *spiritually lifeless*. Then, beyond that, the dead from the past dispensation must be included [Scripture presents “*the whole house of Israel*” remaining dead for the *entire* two days — 2,000 years — of the present dispensation (John 11:6, 7, 43, 44)].

“*The whole house of Israel*” is pictured today after one fashion in Scripture — *very dry bones*, *without breath*. But they will one day live. When?

“*After two days* [after 2,000 years] *will He revive us*: *in the third day* [in the third 1,000-year period, the Messianic Era] *He will raise us up*, *and we shall live in His sight*” [Hosea 6:2].)

Thus, there is the information from the Old Testament to show what is meant by the statement in 2 Timothy 3:16 (“*All Scripture is God-breathed* . . . .”), to show the connection between this verse and Hebrews 4:12 (“*For the Word of God is living* . . . .”), and to show the full implications involved by what is further stated about the whole of Scripture in both passages.

(Note also Luke 8:55; James 2:26; Revelation 13:15. The word *pneuma* appears in each verse, referring to “life”; and the word should be understood as “breath” in these passages.)

Then there is the inseparable connection between the Spirit (the *Pneuma*) and the Word:

*For prophecy* [referring to written revelation (v. 20)] *never came by the will of man*, *but holy* [set apart] *men of God spoke as they were moved* [borne along] *by the Holy Spirit*.

(2 Peter 1:21)

The Word is “*God-breathed*,” and thus “*living*,” *because of* the Spirit’s inseparable connection with the Word. He is the One who gave the Word to man *through* man, and He is the One presently in the world to guide man “*into all truth*” through the use of this Word (John 16:13).

The *Pneuma* (Spirit/Breath) is not only the One who gave the Word after this fashion in past time, but He is also the One who effects man’s regeneration after a similar fashion during the present time. It is the present work of the *Pneuma* (Spirit/Breath) in man’s regeneration that produces life (there must be *breathing in* for man to pass “*from death to life*” [cf. Genesis 1:2; 2:7; John 3:6-8; 5:24]). And the *Pneuma* (Spirit/Breath) not only produces this life (based on Christ’s finished work at Calvary), but He presently indwells the one to whom He has imparted life in order to lead and guide that person into an understanding — from immaturity to maturity — of the God-breathed Word that He Himself previously imparted to man *through* man.

Thus, it is *the breath of God* producing life in unregenerate man today, through the instrumentality of the Spirit, based on the Son’s finished work. And *that* *new life* is nurtured and sustained by a continued work of the Spirit, through the use of that which is itself the breath of God, and, accordingly, *living*.

The Holy Spirit uses *only* *that which is living* to nourish and nurture that which *has been made alive*. Spiritual growth from immaturity to maturity requires spiritual nourishment, which is derived from *only one source*. There’s no other way for spiritual growth to occur.

That’s why pastor-teachers have been exhorted to “*Preach the Word*,” and that’s why Christians have been exhorted to “study” this same Word (2 Timothy 2:15; 4:2). *A person*’*s ability to function in the spiritual realm is inseparably connected with that person*’*s knowledge of and ability to use the Word of God*.

*It*’*s the WORD*, *the WORD*, *the WORD*! *Christians have been given nothing else*; *nor do they need anything else*.