Week 2 Handout – The Sufficiency of Scripture

Where will I turn for truth and direction?

Primary texts: 2 Peter 1:3–8; 2 Timothy 3:14–17
Supporting text: Psalm 19:7–11

Big idea: God has given His people what they need for godliness through knowing Christ, and His Word equips them for faithful living.

"When you feel pressure, whose voice becomes most persuasive?"

1. Trust God's _____ 2 Peter 1:3–4

God provides what I need for life and _____.

Practical Example: After a stressful day, someone thinks, "I cannot handle tonight without returning to my old habit." Instead of accepting that thought as truth, they read 2 Peter 1:3–4 and remember that God has provided what they need to pursue godliness through knowing Christ. The temptation may remain strong, but they can trust God and take the next obedient step.

Application Idea: Prepare a promise card to read when temptation comes:
"Because God has supplied what I need for godliness, I can depend on Him and choose obedience in this moment."
Then pray specifically for help and contact a trusted believer.

Ask: "Am I placing my hope in the relief this habit promises or in the God who has promised to help me?"

2. Receive God's _____ 2 Timothy 3:16

- Teaching shows what is _____.
- Reproof exposes what is wrong.
- Correction directs us toward what is right.
- Training develops _____ of righteous living.

Practical Example: Someone has been lying to conceal a sinful habit. Read Ephesians 4:25 and walk through Scripture's four functions:

- **Teaching:** God calls His people to speak truth because we belong to one another.
- **Reproof:** My deception violates God's command and harms others.
- **Correction:** I need to stop concealing the truth and honestly acknowledge what I have done.
- **Training:** I can develop a pattern of honesty through regular accountability and promptly correcting misleading statements.

Application Idea: Divide a sheet of paper into four sections: "What is true?" "What needs to change?" "What should I do instead?" and "How will I practice it?" Answer each question from the passage.

Ask: "Am I allowing Scripture to correct me, or only looking for something that makes me feel better?"

3. Practice God's _____ 2 Timothy 3:17; 2 Peter 1:5–8

God's Word equips me for _____ & good works

Personal Application: Replace "I must escape this feeling" with a biblical response: "I can bring my distress to God and take the next obedient step."

Practical Example: Someone recognizes that loneliness often precedes a return to an enslaving habit. After studying biblical fellowship and love, they make a concrete plan: "On Wednesday evening, I will attend our church gathering, speak honestly with my accountability partner, and encourage someone else." They pray for God's help and follow through even if they still feel lonely.

Application Idea: Finish this sentence after each Bible reading:

"Because this passage teaches _____, today I will _____."

Choose an action specific enough to review later. Where physical dependence or other bodily concerns are involved, faithful action also includes receiving appropriate medical care.

Ask: "What will I do differently today because of the truth I have read?"

Take-home questions

1. Where do you usually turn first when you feel overwhelmed?
2. What belief helps you justify returning to your sinful habit?
3. Which truth from this week challenges that belief?
4. What would obeying that truth look like tomorrow?

Application ideas

- Read 2 Peter 1:3–8 daily.
- Write one recurring lie and one passage that answers it in context.
- Use this response pattern: "Because God says _____, I will _____."

SMALL GROUP 2: ADDICTION'S BIBLICAL NAME (PART 2)

"*For the time already past is sufficient for you to have worked out the desire of the Gentiles, having pursued a course of sensuality, lusts, drunkenness, carousing, drinking parties, and abominable idolatries.*" (1 Peter 4:3, LSB)

A forty-year-old woman, who loved to eat ice cream, complained of feeling sick and physically weak for several months. She visited her doctor for a checkup and was diagnosed with adult-onset diabetes and high blood pressure. After hearing his instructions which included no more ice cream, her response demonstrated her idolatry of the desire for ice cream. She loudly exclaimed, "What?" as she could not fathom living without ice cream "every once in a while," and she believed her life was "not worth living without sweets." She left the doctor's office planning to ignore the doctor's orders. It was not until she had a near-death experience after eating a large bowl of ice cream that she finally valued the doctor's loving advice.

POINT TO PONDER: We all have desires, passions, and lusts of our flesh that we want to "freely" enjoy, but when we end up excessively longing for them it becomes sin. These desires can enslave us, as the woman described above, who worshipped ice cream in her heart because it pleased her flesh. Her sinful desire nearly ended her life.

"Idolatry" is a spiritual problem of our hearts.
Most people do not worship little wooden statues as idols, but they are nonetheless idolaters. Idolatry today takes the form of worshiping oneself. It is a violation of the First Commandment in Exodus 20:3: "You shall have no other gods before me." When you are enslaved to any type of "addiction," you are serving the addiction," which has become your master. That is the definition of idolatry.

In the beginning, idolatry and addiction start out as fun and the pleasure serves you. But then at some point your heart desires that idolatrous pleasure so much that your thoughts are consumed by it. You love to chase it and when you obtain it, you are satisfied temporarily, but the consequences are devastating. You could lose everything you ever had materially, and nearly every relationship that had meaning to you. Most of all, you lose yourself: your self-respect, your dignity, and your identity. A submitted relationship with the Lord Christ Jesus is the only solution as you lose yourself in Him, but that's a good loss! Matthew 11:28-30 encourages you: "Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light"

PRAYER: "Father, forgive me of my idolatry and sin. Empower me by your Spirit to overcome my addiction that I may find your rest for my soul"

Small Group Discussion Questions

1. Read 1 Peter 4:1–3. What contrast does Peter draw between living for human desires and living for God's will? How does that contrast challenge the way we approach our daily choices?

2. Consider the woman's statement that life was "not worth living without sweets." What might statements such as "I must have this" or "I cannot be happy without it" reveal about our hearts? How can we recognize when enjoyment has become a ruling demand?

3. Read Exodus 20:3. How can something we enjoy begin to receive the trust, devotion, or obedience that belongs to God? What questions can help us examine our priorities honestly?

4. The reading describes pleasure becoming a master. What warning signs suggest that a desire is beginning to control someone's thoughts, decisions, or responsibilities? Why is it important to respond before the consequences become severe?

5. The woman resisted counsel that challenged what she wanted. How do we tend to respond when someone lovingly confronts a cherished habit? What would a humble, teachable response look like?

6. Read Matthew 11:28–30. What does Jesus invite burdened people to do, and what does He promise? How do His gentleness and authority encourage us to surrender desires we have been afraid to release?

7. Consider the closing prayer for forgiveness and the Spirit's power. What desire or habit do you need to bring before God this week? Identify one practical step of obedience and one way a trusted believer can help you follow through.