

# 2 Timothy 3:15

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures,  
which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith  
which is in Christ Jesus.

## Analysis

**And that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.**

Paul identifies the foundation of Timothy's faith: Scripture. "From a child" (apo breephous, ἀπὸ βρέφους)—brephos (βρέφος) means infant, baby, very young child. Timothy's mother Eunice and grandmother Lois taught him Scripture from earliest childhood (1:5). This models the crucial importance of early biblical instruction, shaping young minds before competing worldviews take root.

"The holy scriptures" (ta hiera grammata, τὰ ἱερὰ γράμματα). Hieros (ἱερός) means sacred, holy—set apart for God. Grammata (γράμματα) means writings, letters, documents. Paul refers to the Old Testament Scriptures Timothy learned as a Jewish child. These Scriptures are "able to make thee wise unto salvation" (ta dynamenasé sophisai eis sōtērian, τὰ δυνάμενά σε σοφίσαι εἰς σωτηρίαν). The verb sophizō (σοφίζω) means make wise, instruct, give insight. Eis sōtērian (εἰς σωτηρίαν) means unto salvation—not merely intellectual knowledge but saving wisdom.

Critically, salvation comes "through faith which is in Christ Jesus" (dia pisteōs tēs en Christō Iēsou, διὰ πίστεως τῆς ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ). Scripture alone doesn't save—it makes wise unto salvation by pointing to Christ, whom we embrace through faith. The Old Testament testified to Christ (Luke 24:27, 44; John 5:39), and Timothy's childhood Scripture knowledge prepared him to recognize Jesus as

Messiah. This refutes both salvation by Scripture knowledge alone (intellectualism) and salvation apart from Scripture (mysticism). Scripture reveals Christ; faith unites to Christ; union with Christ saves.

## Historical Context

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Devout Jewish families taught Torah to children from earliest age. Mothers bore primary responsibility for young children's religious education. Timothy, having Jewish mother but Greek father, received Torah instruction from his mother and grandmother despite his father's likely disinterest. This early foundation prepared Timothy to recognize Jesus as Torah's fulfillment when Paul preached the gospel. The principle remains valid: early biblical instruction creates framework for later gospel response. Children raised on Scripture have enormous advantage over those encountering it only as adults.

## Related Passages

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**Ephesians 2:8** — Salvation by grace through faith

**John 3:16** — God's love and salvation

**Romans 1:17** — The righteous shall live by faith

**James 2:17** — Faith and works

## Study Questions

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1. If you have children or influence over children, how intentionally are you teaching them Scripture from earliest age?
2. How has Scripture made you wise unto salvation by pointing you to Christ for faith and union with Him?
3. In what ways can you deepen your understanding of how Old Testament Scripture testifies to Christ and prepares hearts for gospel reception?

## Interlinear Text

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|         |          |       |         |       |           |            |                 |
|---------|----------|-------|---------|-------|-----------|------------|-----------------|
| καὶ     | ὅτι      | ἀπὸ   | βρέφους | τῆς   | ἱερὰ      | γράμματα   | οἶδας           |
| And     | that     | from  | a child | which | the holy  | scriptures | thou hast known |
| G2532   | G3754    | G575  | G1025   | G3588 | G2413     | G1121      | G1492           |
| τῆς     | δυνάμενά | σε    | σοφίσαι | εἰς   | σωτηρίαν  | διὰ        |                 |
| which   | are able | thee  | to make | unto  | salvation | through    |                 |
| G3588   | G1410    | G4571 | G4679   | G1519 | G4991     | G1223      |                 |
| πίστεως | τῆς      | ἐν    | Χριστῷ  | Ἰησοῦ |           |            |                 |
| faith   | which    | is in | Christ  | Jesus |           |            |                 |
| G4102   | G3588    | G1722 | G5547   | G2424 |           |            |                 |

## Additional Cross-References

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**Luke 24:45** (Word): Then opened he their understanding, that they might understand the scriptures,

**Proverbs 22:6** (Parallel theme): Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it.

**Matthew 22:29** (Word): Jesus answered and said unto them, Ye do err, not knowing the scriptures, nor the power of God.

**Luke 24:27** (Word): And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself.

**2 Timothy 1:5** (Faith): When I call to remembrance the unfeigned faith that is in thee, which dwelt first in thy grandmother Lois, and thy mother Eunice; and I am persuaded that in thee also.

**Psalms 19:7** (Word): The law of the LORD is perfect, converting the soul: the testimony of the LORD is sure, making wise the simple.

**Luke 2:40** (Parallel theme): And the child grew, and waxed strong in spirit, filled with wisdom: and the grace of God was upon him.

**Acts 10:43** (Faith): To him give all the prophets witness, that through his name whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins.

**Psalms 71:17** (Parallel theme): O God, thou hast taught me from my youth: and hitherto have I declared thy wondrous works.

**Proverbs 8:17** (Parallel theme): I love them that love me; and those that seek me early shall find me.

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