

2 TIMOTHY 3:16

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πᾶσα γραφὴ θεόπνευστος καὶ ὡφέλιμος
pāsa graphē theopneustos kai ophelimos

All	scripture (,)	[is] Godbreathed (,)	[is]	and profitable
Every	writing			also

Variables in the English wording of this verse

1. all vs. every
2. scripture vs. writing
3. commas vs. no commas [restrictive vs. non-restrictive adjective “God-breathed”]
4. placement of is
5. and vs. also

Two wordings seem to fit the context, which shows Paul's evident concern to encourage Timothy in a good thing:

- (1) “All/every scripture [is] God-breathed and profitable . . .”
- (2) “All/every scripture, God-breathed, [is] also profitable . . .”

(being) God-breathed	
(because it is) God-breathed	[NONRESTRICTIVE]

All scripture lacks an article on *scripture*, implying perhaps that Paul is talking about the kind of thing scripture is rather than about scripture as an identity, the implication that would be given by the presence of an article.

As far as words and grammar are concerned, it is possible to translate the verse as a restrictive statement: (3) “All/every scripture [that is] God-breathed (is) also profitable . . .” We have not used that option because it is not likely that Paul would be implying that some scripture might not be God-breathed. In the restrictive format, it would be possible for Paul to say, (4) “Every writing [that is] God-breathed (is) also profitable . . . ,” but in the preceding verses he has already mentioned “*the holy writings/scripts*.” He is talking about what would have been viewed as “holy” by Lois, Eunice, and himself; so he does not have in mind the broad sweep of anything that might be called *writings*.

Observations

1. It is easiest to eliminate *writing* because the context is talking about the holy writings/scripts rather than every writing there is.
2. Omitting the commas would make *God-breathed* a restrictive expression, which would fit with *writing*; but since that is eliminated, we do not take a restrictive meaning for *scripture*.

Though grammatically possible, the idea is foreign to the setting here: Paul is not contrasting within scripture but between scripture and no scripture, so to speak.

3. Placing *is* before *God-breathed* is most natural because it allows *and* to have its most normal value, especially since it stands between grammatically equal and conceptually parallel entries.

4. Taking #2 and #3 in combination, we conclude that *God-breathed* is non-restrictive (hence, commas) with *is* placed afterwards or that it is a predicate adjective parallel to *profitable* with *is* ahead of it.