

# **The Word Of God**

**Volume IV**

**The Way Of Enoch**

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by

Thomas M. Mitchell

*The Word of God - The Way of Enoch Volume IV*  
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*Walk With God Ministries* adopted these Chinese characters that are part of a course created by Pastor Archie Parish as a symbol of the message that is at the heart of our vision. Over the years these characters have been used by many believers to introduce the Gospel.

2500 years before the birth of Christ and 2100 years before the first recorded crucifixion, the Chinese language gave us the secret of how to live forever... *the secret to eternal life.*

**Cross**            The first character depicted is a cross.



**Man**              Next is a man placed on a cross... a great man dying.



**Two Men**        Two men are crucified along side of this great man. The full character depicts Jesus dying on the cross with the two thieves crucified alongside Him. One thief rejected Him (Luke 23:39) and the other one believed Him (Luke 23:40-42). This is the character Lai, which means *Come*.



**Mouth**

言

The second character begins with a man's word coming out of his mouth.

**Standing**

信

This character represents a man standing by his word. Combined this is the character Xin, which means *Believe*.

**Lai Xin**

來信

When these two characters are taken together they represent *Come and Believe*. The circle surrounding them represents eternity.

2500 years before the birth of Jesus the Chinese language clearly stated the Gospel message and depicted the only road to eternal life... Jesus. Come to Jesus and Believe that He died for your sins, that you might have eternal life. Here we are some 4,500 years later and His Word is still true:

*John 3:16 For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him shall not perish but have everlasting life.*

The opportunity is before you and all that you need to do is visit

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# INTRODUCTION

*The empire of Caesar is gone; the legions of Rome are smoldering in the dust; the avalanches that Napoleon hurled upon Europe have melted away; the prince of the Pharaohs is fallen; the pyramids they raised to be their tombs are sinking every day in the desert sands; Tyre is a rock for bleaching fisherman's nets; Sidon has scarcely left a wreck behind; but the Word of God still survives. All things that threatened to extinguish it have only aided it; and it proves every day how transient is the noblest monument that men can build, how enduring is the least word that God has spoken.*

Albert Baird Cummins

There wouldn't be a *WalkWithGod* were it not for His Word—Jesus, the Word of God. The Word was there in the beginning (*John 1:1*) and it's certainly the foundation of anything God is doing today. In this book we are going to briefly examine what God has to say about His Word and how it impacts our daily life. It truly is our owner's manual and there isn't anything in our life that it doesn't cover. But like any manual, it must first be read and understood before it can be of any value to the person holding it. Too often, however, it just sits on a coffee table in plain sight for all to see and to gather dust.

God's Word is all around us, and when we reflect on the detail within it we can't help but be awed at His plan. His Word is everywhere we look and throughout this book the goal is to open

up our thinking, challenge ourselves to go deeper, let it change us, draw us closer and closer to Jesus, and slowly conform us into His image (*Rom 8:29*).

If you aren't a student of the Word, let me urge you to become one. Within the Bible are all the answers that you will ever need in this life to prepare you for heaven. And just like any good manufacturer, God has given you the Holy Spirit to call on to help with the parts you don't understand. Let's start by looking at a concept I drew out of the back of one of my bibles—there really is something else in there besides the maps—*The Seven Editions of God's Word*.



# CHAPTER 1

## SEVEN EDITIONS OF GOD'S WORD

The number 7 in the Bible represents “perfection,” and the Holy Spirit used it in many instances to set forth a number of things that when taken together represent perfection in God’s Word.

1. Written on Nature
2. Written on our Conscience
3. Written on Tablets of Stone
4. The Entire Scriptures
5. Christ the Illustrated Edition
6. Written on the Heart
7. The Living Epistles

### VOLUME 1—WRITTEN ON NATURE

*Ps 19:1 The heavens declare the glory of God; and **the firmament sheweth his handiwork.***

The heavens (*shamayim; the sky containing the clouds*) referred to here is the visible portion of the sky that we see in a beautiful sunset or in the stars at night. As used in *Gen 1:1* it

essentially corresponds to our word “space,” such as when we refer to the universe of time and space, and it’s a constant reminder for us of God’s creative work. The brightness of the heavens displays His Glory and the firmament (*raqiya*) refers to its expanse, or the “arch” of the sky.

*From the brightness of the heavens we may collect that the Creator is light; their vastness of extent bespeaks his immensity, their height his transcendency and sovereignty, their influence upon this earth his dominion, and providence, and universal beneficence: and all declare his almighty power, by which they were at first made, and continue to this day according to the ordinances that were then settled.*

Matthew Henry

I can just see David looking up into the night sky as he wrote this Psalm. Go back again to *Genesis 1* and study the origin of light and you will see that God created light before He created the sun, moon, and stars. That elementary light was His Glory, the same Glory that David referred to in *Ps 19*. He went on to then say that the hands of the one who’s Glory made the very earth that he stood on is there for all to see. God has written His Word on every facet of nature; it’s everywhere man will look without a biased eye. As my good friend Rich Wilkins would say: *That’s Powerful Stuff!*

## VOLUME 2—WRITTEN ON OUR CONSCIENCE

*Rom 2:15 Which shew the work of the law **written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and their thoughts the mean while accusing or else excusing one another;***

This is the knowledge of right and wrong. Paul said that by doing the right thing the Gentiles show that they have God’s law written on their conscience. As a result, man isn’t going to be excused in the end because God has written the law in his heart. Heart (*kardias*), as used here, means the thoughts or feelings of the mind. The manner in which they were conducting themselves in civil matters reflected the inward conscience that God had given them. It doesn’t mean that they necessarily approved of the law, but rather they had knowledge of it; it was engraved on their minds. The conscience (*suneidesis*) refers to their judging right from wrong—their morality—and that is what their actions gave evidence of. The Word of God (the Law) has in its design and purpose to make known to man his duty and his obligation to perform it, with respect to his creator.

### **VOLUME 3—WRITTEN ON TABLETS OF STONE**

*Ex 24:12 And the LORD said unto Moses, Come up to me into the mount, and be there: and I will give thee **tables of stone, and a law, and commandments which I have written; that thou mayest teach them.***

Here is the direct authentication of the Word of God from His hand to man. God called Moses to come up to the mountain and wait for Him; *be there* is translated *remain there*. That’s the way it should be for us. When we hear the Word of the Lord we should be prepared to dwell on it, and actively walk it out in our life. Matthew Henry said *blessed are they that dwell in His house and not merely call there*. It’s a concept that is often repeated in His Word:

*Ezek 11:19-20 Then I will give them one heart, and I will put a new spirit within them, and take the stony heart out of their flesh, and give them a heart of flesh, 20 that they may walk in My statutes and keep My judgments and do them; and they shall be My people, and I will be their Lord.*

## **VOLUME 4—THE ENTIRE SCRIPTURES**

*Rom 15:4 For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope.*

The facts recorded in scripture are designed for our instruction. This refers to the Old Testament and the fact that through learning the Word it produces patience and reassurance in times of trials. As Wycliffe says: *Instruction, endurance, and consolation are all essential elements for the Christian who has hope.*

The last part of verse 4 (*elpida echoomen*) is translated in the active tense and really says, *that we might keep on having hope.* The Word of God is the fundamental ingredient in hope; the entire Word of God is hope itself. And note that the word comfort is *paraklesis*, from which we get the word *parakletos*; the Holy Spirit. It is the Holy Spirit who acts as the exhorter and revealer of God's Word for us.

## **VOLUME 5—CHRIST THE ILLUSTRATED EDITION**

*John 1:14 And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.*

Jesus embodied God's Word (*logos*) in every respect, revealing the character of God in the flesh for all to see. In the New Testament, as opposed to the Old Testament, God revealed Himself in human form; His Word became flesh and the shadow became substance. God has shown Himself to us in answer to Moses' prayer in *Ex 33:18 ...shew me thy glory*. When John said that the Word became flesh he referred to "human nature" as well as flesh and bone. God didn't become a person but rather His personality became human. In other words, when we look at Jesus as He is revealed in the New Testament, we see the nature and character of God (His Word). The Word became body, soul, and spirit for you and me, and God reveals more of Himself to us every time we read His Word. He illustrated Himself and His character in His Son.

## VOLUME 6 — WRITTEN ON THE HEART

*Heb 8:10 For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel **after those days**, saith the Lord; **I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts**: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people: [Jer 31:33].*

God wrote the law in their minds, but He had to send his Son to take away their sins. The reason God had to make a new (second) covenant with us was because we broke the first one with sin.

*Heb 8:13 In that He says, "**A new covenant**," He has made the first obsolete. Now what is becoming obsolete and growing old is ready to vanish away.*

God said, *after those days (meta tas heemeras; when vision and prophecy are sealed up and the Messiah has come in the flesh)* that He would put new laws in their hearts. We are living “after those days” and as the bride of Christ we have received new life through a personal relationship with Him.

These laws now regulate our conscience and not our outward actions, although our actions follow the judgment we exercise. By the Word regulating the inside, we are equipped to control the outside. The laws are not written on tablets of stone but on our heart itself, which is the home of our spirit and the Temple of the Holy Spirit. In so doing, God said that He would be to us what a God should be to His people.

*... lawgiver, counselor, protector, redeemer, guide, provider of their wants, defender, comforter, and faithful friend.*

Albert Barnes

In *Heb 8:10* God said *they shall be to me a people*. This is not a statement of fact; it’s a privilege and a blessing. It implies that we should give Him our whole heart, serve him with all our strength, and have no gods other than Jehovah. Another way to say it is “love, honor, and obey.”

## **VOLUME 7—THE OUTWARD CHRISTIAN LIFE (LIVING EPISTLES)**

*2 Cor 3:2-3 Ye are our epistle written in our hearts, known and read of all men: 3 Forasmuch as ye are manifestly*

*declared to be the epistle of Christ ministered by us, written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God; not in tables of stone, but in **fleshy tables of the heart**.*

Here Paul referred to believers as letters (*epistole; written messages*). He told the Corinthians that they were the walking letter that he wrote; the visible fruit of his ministering the Gospel to them. They represented Christ's letter to the world just as well as Paul's. What kind of epistle are we presenting for those around us to read? Do we represent Jesus' letter or someone else's? It all comes down to the last part of verse 3: *in fleshy tables of the heart*. That's where the Word of God does its best work. In one of my wife Diane's books of quotes for the day I read one that really fits here:

*God is so big He can cover the whole world with His love...  
and so small He can curl up inside your heart.*

June Masters Bacher

I like that. That's where we'll find Him as we open up His Word and allow the Holy Spirit to reveal Him by bringing us into His very presence.

Seven editions of the Word of God and none more important than Volume Seven. That's the one we put on display each and every day. The one by which God desires to draw others into His kingdom. We need to take stock and see how ours is reading these days. Is it getting better every day?

As we read and study the Word and allow the Holy Spirit use it to cleanse us, we are slowly but surely getting all the spots and blemishes washed from our wedding dress. And as the righteousness Jesus put in our heart begins to show on the outside, the world is attracted to the glory of God that is revealed. That's

moving from the milk to the meat, from the Holy Place to the Holiest place, from the Cross to the Throne Room of God, from spiritual infancy to spiritual maturity.

With that goal in mind, let's first explore just what the Word of God is.



## CHAPTER 2

# WHAT IS THE WORD OF GOD?

*Nature in her laws tells of God, but the message is not too clear. It tells us nothing of the love and grace of God. Conscience, in our inmost being, does tell us of God, but the message is fragmentary. The only place we can find a clear, unmistakable message is in the Word of God, which we call the Bible.*

Billy Graham

The Word of God is a powerful sword, but just hanging from our belt in its scabbard it's nothing more than something to look at. Unless we draw it out by faith, unless we open ourselves up to its truth, it will never deliver us, save us, or empower us. God has shown us that His Word is the only offensive weapon we need to endure the trials and challenges of life the enemy throws at us. How sad for so many that when those attacks come their sword is laying on the coffee table. Or tragically, when in the moment of crisis they pull it from its scabbard but they don't know how to use it. I've been there, and it's not a place I want to revisit.

In this chapter we'll look at some foundational principles concerning the Word and how they were designed to impact our life. We need to spend time in the owner's manual so when we find

ourselves in the middle of a mess we won't be scrambling for an answer.

## THE WORD DEFINED

Look at these two definitions from Vine's Expository Dictionary. In the first we have Jesus (the Word) and in the second we have the manner in which God is working in the world today. They are both built upon Jesus and the fact that in Him the Word is revealed and works.

- ***The Word***—This is a theological phrase, which expresses the absolute, eternal, and ultimate being of Jesus Christ (*John 1:1-14; 1 John 1:1; Rev 19:13*). The Old Testament spoke of the Word of God as the divine agent in the creation of the universe: *By the Word of the Lord the heavens were made (Ps 33:6)*. In the New Testament, the Gospel of John declared, *And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us*. Through the incarnation of Christ, God has come to dwell in our midst. Through the life and ministry of Jesus, a unique and final revelation of God has been given—one superior to the revelation given through the law and the prophets. In Christ, the word of God, God's plan, and purpose for mankind are clearly revealed (*2 Cor 4:4; Heb 1:1-3*).
- ***The Word of God***—God's Word is the primary means by which He is present and working in the world. He is not Himself part of this world, but He acts in it by means of His Word. He becomes personally known through His Word (*1 Sam 3:21*), His Word is powerfully creative (*Ezek 37:4*), and its purposes are irresistible (*Isa 55:11; Jer. 23:29*). God's Word is totally dependable; it represents His

permanent commitment (*Isa 40:8*). When heard and responded to, His Word meets deep needs in the human heart and provides joy, satisfaction, and confident direction which can be achieved in no other manner (*Deut 8:3; Ps 119:162; Jer15:16*). God's Word has the power to penetrate all pretense and discern *the thoughts and intents of the heart* (*Heb 4:12*).

## THE WORD NEVER CHANGES

*2 Pet 3:3-7* Knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts, 4 And saying, Where is the promise of his coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation. 5 For this **they willingly are ignorant** of, that **by the word of God** the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of the water and in the water: 6 Whereby the world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished: 7 But the heavens and the earth, which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men.

God's Word created the world and held back the water, and it also released the water and destroyed the world. God's Word (His promises) is sure, and to question it only reveals one's ignorance of the truth. But, in the end as in the beginning, there will be men who won't listen, they will just follow after their own lusts. In verse 5 we see that *they willingly are ignorant*; desiring to be hidden from or unaware of. It wasn't something that caught them unaware, it was intentional on their part and indicated that they

didn't want it to be true. But the fact remains that if God's Word is true in creation then it's just as true in judgment.

Jesus specifically told us that no one would know the time of His Second Coming except for the Father (*Mat 24:36*). But here we have scoffers (mockers) saying, in essence, it hasn't happened yet and it probably never will. They didn't see the slightest evidence that it would be accomplished and felt that those who did were completely misled. In verse 4 they spoke of the fathers (prophets of the Old Testament) being long gone, and that which they predicted had never come to pass—it was just business as usual.

In other words, the laws of creation and nature are settled and will never change. The sun continues to rise and set, the seasons come and go, and one generation succeeds another. Why should we believe it's going to change they said? But as Jesus' bride we walk in His light and have the answer.

It's a certainty that things are changing and will continue to do so until Jesus comes again. Nothing in life remains unchanged in God's economy, except God Himself. Therefore we know with a certainty that His Word is truth and it will never change. God Himself is immutable (unchanging) and therefore so is His Word:

*Isa 55:11 So shall **My word** be that goes forth from My mouth; It shall not return to Me void, But it shall accomplish what I please, And it shall prosper in the thing for which I sent it.*

God's Word was there in the beginning (*John 1:1*) and Adam was the first to transgress it, allowing sin into the world. Subsequently man became so estranged to the Word that God had to intervene to save Israel from herself. His Word had to become

Law in order to provide Israel with conviction for her sins, and that has continued for all mankind right through to today.

## THE GOSPEL

*Isa 2:3 And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for **out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem.***

Isaiah prophesied that God's Word would go forth out of Jerusalem into the entire world. That task now rests with the bride of Christ because she is now God's center of truth (His Word) in the world. The unbelievers in the world are dependent upon the bride for the Word of God, and Jesus has challenged us to minister the Gospel to them. For most of us that means beginning in our own backyard. I know that I've said it many times before but it's true—God expects us to first bring the Gospel to those around us before we start sharing abroad. If you're walking with Him then you can be certain that He is steering you along a path to meet many who need to hear the Word come forth out of Zion. But how often do we pass those that God has placed in our path as we hurry on our way to spread the Gospel far and wide? Maybe we need to spend more time "hearing" and not just "listening."

*Ps 46:10 **Be still, and know that I am God; I will be exalted among the nations, I will be exalted in the earth!***

When we do stop and listen we can be certain of one thing, God will make Himself known through His Word.

*1 Sam 3:20-21 And all Israel from Dan even to Beersheba knew that Samuel was established to be a prophet of the LORD. 21 And the LORD appeared again in Shiloh: **for the LORD revealed himself to Samuel in Shiloh by the word of the LORD.***

God revealed Himself to Samuel by His Spirit and the word of prophecy. For us, He reveals himself through the ministry of His prophets, teachers, pastors, evangelists, and apostles. But most importantly He shows Himself by His Spirit when we study and meditate on His Word. However, He will often communicate to us through His children who are submitted and walking in love. More than once in my life I have had someone bring the Word of the Lord to me without even being aware that they were. For that reason we should heed the words of Paul to young Timothy:

*2 Tim 4:2 Preach the word! **Be ready in season and out of season.***

In the King James Version it is translated *be instant in season (episteethi eukairoos)*, which means to be “conveniently ready;” accessible, reachable, at hand. If we read between the lines, it’s clear that we won’t be conveniently ready unless we spend time in the Word and are listening to His Spirit with a ready heart. And with that brief introduction let’s spend a little time taking a look at just what the Word of God is.

## **THE WORD IS LOGOS**

- The expression of thought—not the mere name of an object

embodying a conception or idea (*Luke 7:7; 1 Cor 14:9,19*).

- A saying or statement by God (*John 15:25; Rom. 9:9; 9:28*) or by Christ (*Matt 24:35; John 2:22; 4:41; 14:23; 15:20*).
- Discourse or speech of instruction (*Acts 2:40; 1 Cor 2:13; 12:8; 2 Cor 1:18; 1 Thess 1:5; 2 Thess 2:15; Heb. 6:1*).

### Vine's Expository Dictionary

**It Can Be An Utterance**—Jesus had to but speak the Word and the action would take place.

*Luke 7:7 Wherefore neither thought I myself worthy to come unto thee: but **say in a word**, and my servant shall be healed.*

The literal translation is: *say with a word, let my servant be healed.*

**It Can Be A Communicated Thought**—What is spoken carries the thought being communicated, but the thought must be understood to be of value. If it's not clearly spoken you might as well be speaking into the wind. Look at the verse and see the comparison with the trumpet.

*1 Cor 14:8-9 For **if the trumpet give an uncertain sound**, who shall prepare himself to the battle? So likewise ye, **except ye utter by the tongue words easy to be understood**, how shall it be known what is spoken? for ye shall speak into the air.*

Without the proper sound the trumpet carried no meaning—attack or retreat?

***It Can Be A Divine Expression***—What a beautiful embodiment of a thought. Jesus was there in the beginning, He was with God, and He was God. The Father gave us His express image in His Son; His complete character. The Logos became the expression of life itself.

*John 1:1 In the beginning was the **Word**, and the **Word** was with God, and the **Word** was God.*

Think of logos as Dr. David Jeremiah puts it: It's the armory of God that contains all of the weapons we will ever need to fight the spiritual battles we encounter. And when we step into the armory we are given a specific weapon for the battle it becomes Rhema.

## **THE WORD IS RHEMA**

The significance of *rhema (the revealed Word)* is exemplified in the command to *take the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God (Eph 6:17)*. Here the reference is not to the whole Bible but to the Word we need it at that moment. But we have to be in the armory in order to receive it.

*Eph 6:17(b)... and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word (rhema) of God:*

It's a lot like the word "healing." You can hear that word spoken, see it written, and use it yourself, yet it may be no more than *logos*. But put that word into action in your life by the teaching of the Holy Spirit, by meditation, and repetition with the addition of faith and it will come alive to you. It will become



*rhema*; the revealed word. That's when the Word comes alive to you and *you know that you know that you know*. It's sealed in your spirit and the enemy can't take it from you. And the exciting part is that revelation in one area brings the strength and trust in His Word to move into the next revelation—*from glory to glory*.

In *Eph 6:17(b)* we are admonished to use the Word as a sword, but only the Word that is *revealed* to you can be used as a sword. In the wilderness Jesus repeatedly told Satan *it is written*. He was able to use the Word of God as a weapon against the enemy because He knew it personally. That's why it's so important for us to study, meditate, and memorize the Word. And while we're here let me get a big pet peeve off my chest. *The Word of God doesn't make us free*.

*John 8:32 And you shall **know** [gnooesthe; fully resolved; understood] the truth, and the truth shall make you free.*

It is the truth—the Word of God—that “we know” that makes us free; the truth that has been revealed, has become *rhema*. We can only truly know the Word by the revelation of the Holy Spirit, and He can only accomplish that if we're reading and studying it. It's when the Word becomes *rhema* that it has power in our life to make us free.

The most profound example in my life came when God led me to the sixth chapter of *Matthew* and had me feast on it for 18 months. And when I got *rhema* on one particular section it forever changed my life.

*Matt 6:31-34 "Therefore **do not worry**, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear?' 32 For after all these things the Gentiles seek. For your heavenly*

*Father knows that you need all these things. 33 But **seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you.** 34 Therefore **do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about its own things. Sufficient for the day is its own trouble.***

Because these verses have been revealed to me—*exploded in my spirit*—I am able to keep them in perspective when the enemy comes knocking at my door with his band of demons; concern, anxiety, worry, and fear. I know that I know that God’s Word is the truth and the enemy can’t steal that from me. But in years past *Matthew 6* was just *logos* to me, and because of that I was open to the enemy’s attacks; once I let concern in the door, all the rest followed.

But let me take this example one step further. God never wastes the lessons that He teaches us. He knew the incredible struggle we would have to endure and the relentless attacks of the enemy concerning bringing our daughter Amanda home from China. I can tell you that without the revelation of *Matthew 6:31-34* in my spirit I wouldn’t have made it through that trial.

Let me encourage you to allow the Holy Spirit to transform *logos* into *rhema* for you. Let Him “explode” God’s Word in your spirit and build up your faith in His Word. I promise you that once you let Him show you what He can do with your submitted heart you will never go back to “just reading” the Word. You will find a direct line to the power of God in your life and the impact it will have on your walk and role in His Kingdom will be powerful.

The Word is there for us to read, study, and mediate upon, and when we do some awesome things happen in our life. When I think of going *from glory to glory* that is what I see. The more “real” God becomes in my life the more “real” my life becomes. So

hearken to the words of David Jeremiah and remember that it is up to each of us not only to be familiar with God's armory, we need to be in His armory so the Holy Spirit can *reveal* to us the Word we need for any moment in time. Only then we will be able to fully utilize the Sword of the Spirit—the Word of God.

## CHAPTER 3

### THE WORD IS FOUNDATIONAL

*The word of God spreads like ripples on a pond where, from a single center, each wave touches the next, spreading wider and farther. The Gospel still spreads this way. You don't have to change the world single-handedly—it is enough just to be part of the wave, touching those around you, who in turn will touch others, until all have felt the movement. Don't ever feel that your part is insignificant or unimportant.*

Tyndale Life Application Devotion

In this chapter let's continue looking at some of the definitions of the Word of God to help us build up our foundation. It's the one thing that we can totally depend upon—take to the bank. It's the first, the last, and everything in between, and as the author of the quote above noted, we just need to be a part of the Gospel Wave. However, if we don't know there is a wave or if we don't know how to get on top it will just slide right under us.

My dear friend Pastor Martin Oliver has ridden many waves in his long and illustrious surfing career, but he will tell you that the one he rides for Jesus is the only one that will never end up dead on the beach. It's a wave that can be ridden forever, and the only caution is that we guard ourselves and don't fall off. God has

provided us with an endless wave—His Word—that is powered and lifted by His Holy Spirit. Martin is a true evangelist at heart and he is always willing to “share a wave” with a total stranger. As he always says... *what a ride!*

## **THE WORD IS INSPIRED—GOD BREATHED**

*2 Tim 3:16 All scripture is **given by inspiration of God**, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness:*

The meaning here is not that God-breathed into the writers or that He somehow breathed into their writings to give them their special character. It means that which was written by man was breathed out by God. He spoke through them (*theopneustos; inspired them*). We might consider that the Word of God is all we need because it has His life breathed into it. Being God-breathed the Word comes with His full divine authority and truthfulness. It is profitable (*useful*) for doctrine (*teaching to make wise*), reproof (*conviction*), correction (*setting right*) and instruction (*chastisement, discipline*).

It comes the same way today. Man is not the sender of prophecy, the Holy Spirit is. Man is just the vessel God uses to communicate His truth. The prophetic word wasn't of the prophets, they spoke as they were led by the influence of the Holy Spirit.

*2 Pet 1:21 For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake **as they were moved by the Holy Ghost**.*

## THE WORD IS FOUNDATIONAL

*1 John 5:13 These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; **that ye may know that ye have eternal life, and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God.***

These words of John testify to the living Word of God. The expression “these things” represents the “entire epistle.” John wanted us to know (*understand*) and not just observe (*recognize*). We need to be settled with absolute knowledge, to absolutely know that our foundation is eternal life in Jesus, the living Word of God.

*Mt 7:24-27 Therefore **whosoever heareth** these sayings of mine, **and doeth them**, I will liken him unto **a wise man**, which built his house upon a rock: 25 And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell not: for it was founded upon a rock. 26 And every one that heareth these sayings of mine, **and doeth them not**, shall be likened unto **a foolish man**, which built his house upon the sand: 27 And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell: and great was the fall of it.*

It’s fairly easy for us to make the decision to become a hearer (*understander*) of the Word and begin to read it, hear it, and speak it with some sacrifice. But the thing that brings on the second part—*being like a wise man*—is founded in action; *doeth* (*abide, continue, execute*). We have to be doers of the Word and not hearers only.

Without putting the Word into action we're like the house on sand (*ammos; sand piled up on a beach*). As soon as the tough times come we realize too late that our foundation is soft, unsure, porous, and without substance. Matthew said of that house: *and great was the fall of it*. The fall (*ptosis; crash*) was so great because it was high and lifted up by pride, there wasn't a solid foundation under it. So often that's just like the lives of many today, they are founded on pride and not on the Word; *pride goeth before the fall (Pro 16:18)*.

Be a doer of the Word and firmly plant your foundation on the "Rock" (Jesus) so your house will stand when the storms come. For all those who build upon the sand (the world), the fall is going to be costly:

*Matt 8:12 But the sons of the kingdom will be cast out into outer darkness. There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth."*

*Luke 13:28 There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth, when you see Abraham and Isaac and Jacob and all the prophets in the kingdom of God, and yourselves thrust out.*

## **THE WORD CAME IN THE FLESH**

*John 1:1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.*

Jesus was there before the foundation of the earth was set, and He was the *logos* of God (*arche; the first estate, power, principality, magistrate*). Not only is He the second person of the trinity, He became flesh to fully reveal the Father to us. Note that

He didn't become the Word of God; He was always and will always be the Word of God.

*John 1:14 And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.*

Before man could have faith for the new spiritual birth he had to have something on which to place that faith. The only way was for Jesus to become flesh; not just putting on a body but assuming the "human nature." He took on a body with a soul and a spirit and *dwelt* (*akwnoo; tabernacled*) among us as a symbol and *we beheld his glory*.

John told us that he "saw" Jesus. In the Greek the word *beheld* (*etheasametha*) means to continually contemplate. In other words, he had a chance to continually study God in human nature and observe how He operated. What he saw was Jesus' glory under human conditions with human limitations. Remember that Jesus didn't do anything that we aren't equally capable of by the power of the Holy Spirit.

*John 14:12 "Most assuredly, I say to you, he who believes in Me, the works that I do he will do also; and greater works than these he will do, because I go to My Father.*

He didn't call upon His divine nature to walk the sinless life He lived. He came to earth without any sin in Him and throughout His life He never let sin enter in. That's the difference. He was able to accomplish what was set before Adam; that which Adam failed to do. It took a perfect lamb without blemish to pay the price for all of us, and the only lamb capable of fulfilling that was the Word of



God that became God's presence with us. The Shekinah Glory of God dwelt among us in the presence of His Son, and man was able to observe and study it. Like the tabernacle contained the Glory so Jesus' body (His earthly tent; tabernacle) held the Glory.

God asked me one time if I understood the true meaning of the Cross. Well, I thought I gave a pretty good answer but what He said really set me back. He said the Cross was only the culmination. If His son hadn't led a "perfect" life, the Cross would have been meaningless. What a thought!

God brought His perfect Lamb into Jerusalem on the day all of Israel brought theirs (Passover), and He was treated the same. The temple priests found fault with every lamb and required the substitution of their "perfect" lamb. And so they rejected the only Lamb that was truly perfect in every way; without spot or blemish. He was turned away with all the others; judged imperfect by man.

Shekinah is not a word used in Scripture but it denotes God's "residence." For Israel it represented God's presence resting between the two cherubim over the mercy seat and the pillar of cloud/fire. And that was the presence that was withdrawn from Israel, which they anticipate will return when the Messiah comes. While they look forward to the first coming, we anticipate His second coming, but in either case what we await is the same; the Word of God. The Word by which God has already spoken:

*Heb 1:1-2 God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, 2 Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds;*

God's prophets spoke His Word in the past in various ways as God imparted the meaning of His Word in different ways. But in

every case, it was always His revealed Word. The prophets brought the Word in the Old Testament, but in *these last days (last age or judgment day/time)* it was brought by—and will be judged by—His Son (*John 12:49*).

## THE WORD IS THE PLAN/PURPOSE

*2 Cor 4:4 In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious Gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them.*

It's important to recognize that Satan (the god of this world) *hath blinded the minds of unbelievers*. We can't do battle with him on that issue by ourselves because it's impossible for us to remove the blindfold that covers their eyes. The only thing that breaks the yoke and removes the blindfold is the anointing (Holy Spirit) and the Word that the anointing brings that delivers and sets free. We do, however, have that anointing within us, and as we are yielded vessels to His power we can impact the lives of others. But one of the mistakes we make in walking out God's plan for our lives is witnessing to others without being a witness; the 7<sup>th</sup> edition of the Word of God. Often it's our actions that the Holy Spirit uses to draw others to us in order to hear the Word.

What we do speaks more about what we are and whose we are than anything we may say. Our submitted life to Jesus will bring the overflow of the anointing to bear in each and every dark corner into which the Spirit leads us in order for the light within us to expose the darkness. Our lifestyle will be that which brings honor to God's Word in our life. Without exception, the testimony of a submitted life will bring credibility to our testimony of what God

has done in our life. Then *the light of the glorious Gospel of Christ... will shine unto them (2 Cor 4:4-5).*

It's that glorious light (*dignity, honor, praise, worship*) that is applied to the Gospel to open their eyes. Satan's main focus is to blind man from seeing the light of the Gospel because it reveals Jesus as the image of God. The main focus of the Word is to remove that blindfold and reveal the light.

## **THE WORD IS A LAMP AND A LIGHT**

*Ps 119:105 Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path.*

The Lamp represents the “commandment” and the light represents the “whole teaching.” The entire word of God lights our path (life) but the lamp lights where we are right now. The lamp represents that specific word God has given us for the present moment. Using the Word to illuminate your way is a sure-fire method of seeing the dangers and pitfalls along the way.

*God's word is a candle, which may be held in the hand to give us light in every dark place and chamber; and it is a general light shining upon all his works, and upon all our ways.*

Adam Clarke

I have spent many hours feasting on this Scripture as it relates to my life and what God has planned for me. Much to my surprise He caught me up short one morning and told me that I really didn't understand it at all. He said that I really had a firm grasp on shining a one million candlepower light down my path to see what

lay ahead but that I was ignoring the other half of the equation—*the lamp*. And, He asked me, where does that lamp shine?

Well, I didn't have to think long and hard for the answer—"my feet?" Yes, and therein was the root of my problem. I was spending so much time looking ahead that I kept stumbling over the roots and rocks in my path every day; the very things He was trying to illuminate for me.

The Word of God is His full counsel, and when we keep it in perspective we'll have a much better balance in our walk through this life. Remember God's armory and how He has the exact weapon we need for every attack of the enemy? Well, I guess we could say that God's "lamp" is the very Word we need for the day, the hour, or the moment. It's the Word that provides that "check" or "peace" you get when asking Him about some part of your day or your life.

As we move along the path of life, God will be faithful to provide us with the rhema needed for our present situation. It's the perfect Word we need at the moment that will define our next step. Using God's lamp is what keeps us from stepping off the path and becoming sidetracked. On the other hand, it's His Word as a shining light that sets the bigger picture in front of us. I like to look at it as the "light" provides us the Word to base our hope on and the "lamp" is the Word that we need to attach to our faith.

God always knows where we are and where we're headed. If we get lost it's because we haven't been using His lamp to find our way over the roots and rocks and to avoid the false trails the enemy puts in our path. Let's keep both our light and our lamp burning brightly, and spend time looking at both where we are at the moment and where we're headed.

# CHAPTER 4

## DISCOVERING THE WORD

*Many times Christians base their moral judgments on opinion, personal dislikes or cultural bias rather than on the Word of God. When they do this, they show that their own faith is weak. They don't think God is powerful enough to guide his children. But when we stand before God's court of justice (judgment seat), we won't be worried about what our Christian neighbor has done.*

Life Application Study Bible

The more time we spend in the Word the more we tuck away in our spirit, not only the Word but the revelation of why God gave it to us. The exciting part is that we, like Indiana Jones, discover the hidden “gems” each time we sit down and let the Word speak to us. And the really great part is that the exploration is totally and completely unique for each one of us. The treasure that is laid up for us to discover is priceless, it will totally change our life. But the best part is that it never runs out. The treasure is never completely discovered, there are always more jewels just waiting to be uncovered.

So, here are a few gems to start your treasure hunt. They may not be new, but they are unique as each of us will find the interpretation provided by the Holy Spirit exactly in keeping with

where we are and exactly what we need. After all, He is the Spirit of truth and understanding.

## HOW DO WE UNDERSTAND THE WORD?

*1 Cor 2:12-14 Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God. 13 Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual. 14 But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.*

Only the Holy Spirit reveals God's Word. Man may be the vehicle He uses but it's the Spirit who illuminates it so that we might "know" it (*be sure of; understand*). He is the one who makes it *rhema*. It's impossible for the un-regenerated to understand spiritual things because they don't have the Spirit of God. However, these spiritual things, which are freely given to every believer, are made known by the Holy Spirit. He wants us to fully know and understand (be able to compare) spiritual things with spiritual.

He also wants us to be able to explain or unfold that which was said by the prophets in the Old Testament with respect to what Jesus said in the New Testament. These are *spiritual things* (doctrines, teachings, and subjects that pertain to the teaching of the Holy Spirit) that are revealed by *spiritual* words or by *spiritual* men.

God wants to use us to be the vehicle whereby He accomplishes His ultimate goal of unbelievers becoming believers

through the revelation of “spiritual things” by His Word. Divine truth doesn’t come from man, it only comes from God by His Word as revealed by His Spirit. Take note in verse 13 that Paul was very clear that *the things that are freely given to us of God* we are to speak (*preach*); we are to share them.

The word for *comparing* (*sugkrino*) carries the meaning of interpreting or revealing. That yields this translation of verse 13: *combining spiritual things with spiritual words*. Another interpretation renders it: *explaining spiritual things to spiritual men*. In either case the action is the same. It’s our responsibility to be the available vessel for the Holy Spirit to use to accomplish the task, to put forth the Word so that He can act upon it. So, if we are to put the Word forth, let’s take a look at a few of the things we know about it.

## THE WORD IS ETERNAL

*Ps 119:89 Forever, O LORD, thy word is settled in heaven.*

*Isa 40:8 The grass withereth, the flower fadeth: but the word of our God shall stand for ever.*

*Mt 24:35 Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away.*

The Word was there in the beginning (*John 1:1*) and will be there for all eternity; it will not pass away. In *Isa 40:8* we get the sense of worldly things eventually ending, but that which God has spoken lasting forever. This can easily be translated to man without God, he is frail, transient, and of himself and is of no real distinction without God. God’s Word (His promises), on the other

hand, stands forever as opposed to all of the temporal things of this world. Empires and kingdoms will come and go as they have throughout time, but God’s Word has remained and will always remain constant.

*Heb 13:8 Jesus Christ, **the same yesterday, and today, and forever.***

Since Jesus is the Word, we can substitute “the Word” in this verse—the Word is the same yesterday, today, and forever.

## **THE WORD IS TRUTH**

*John 17:17 Sanctify them through thy truth: **thy word is truth***

We are sanctified (*set apart and made holy*) for our mission by God’s Word; His truth. It’s the message of God’s love and glory revealed in Jesus that equips us for our mission. God imparts His life into us by grace through faith (*1 Cor 1:30*), which is sanctification. One of the best definitions I have ever heard for sanctification is “Christ In You.” He sets us apart from sin by making us righteous. He gives us His righteousness so that we can live a life of holiness and purification from guilt and sin’s power.

Remember that from God’s perspective we are already sanctified, we are already holy. He only sees us through the lens of His Son, Jesus’ image is all He sees. We, as Paul noted, are on the other side of the mirror and we don’t see through it clearly because we are on a journey of working out our sanctification with the goal of ultimately becoming just like Jesus. And that process is one in which God continually reveals to us those things that are keeping us from making that transition. He does it through His Word and



by the revelation of His Holy Spirit. Simply put, the Word sets us apart for His pleasure (*Rev 4:11*), the pleasure for which He created us.

By hearing, receiving, and acting on His truth we are living out our sanctification, having been set apart from the world for His service. It's a process that continues throughout our entire life (*Heb 10:14*), and only after completing the journey God has laid out for us will we step through that mirror into perfection (*Heb 12:23*). I cover this in great detail in my book *Wake Up and Rest – The Bride Sleeps at Her Own Peril*; it's all about the importance of our journey through this life as Jesus' bride. There are also 4 companion books that review the message in detail through a verse-by-verse study of 4 key Books in the Bible. But for now, let's sum this section up with a comment from Nelsons that defines our responsibility:

*These commands imply effort on our part. We must believe in Jesus, since we are "sanctified by faith in Him" (Acts 26:18). Through the Holy Spirit we must also "put to death the evil deeds of the body" (Rom 8:13). Paul itemized the many "works of the flesh" from which we must separate ourselves (Gal 5:19-21). Finally, we must walk in the Spirit in order to display the fruit of the Spirit (Gal 5:22-24).*

We truly do *work out* (walk out) *our salvation with fear and trembling* (*Phil 2:12*). We walk out the salvation that has already been given us through the process of sanctification that reveals the holiness we have already been given. What an awesome God we serve.

## THE WORD IS SHARP

*Heb 4:12 For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.*

A two-edged sword was designed to cut going in and coming out. It was short and easy to put to quick use, and God's Word is just like that, quick to discern every twist and turn of mans' mind. I once heard Dr. James Dobson describe the Word as a sword that represents both the positive and negative of God's Word. Many times in the Old Testament God told the Israelites that He was going to allow their enemies to carry out their destruction (negative), but He also gave them a way to prevent it by turning back to Him (positive). The Wycliffe Commentary makes five excellent observations about the Sword of the Spirit:

1. It is **living**, alive and not something of past history.
2. It is the word of **power** or creative energy.
3. It **severs** even the closest of relationships.
4. It is the **judge** of the innermost thoughts.
5. It is the **agency** by which God deals with the creature.

In this way God reveals everything about us, particularly the things of the heart and faith, as He examines us and admonishes us to holy living and believing faith. The Word of God has a way of cutting right to the heart of the matter and exposing the very issues that are hindering our holiness and faithfulness; the process of individual sanctification. In that respect the Word "cuts" to the heart of the matter but it "heals" on the way out.

## THE WORD SAVES

*Rom 1:16 For I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ: for it is **the power of God unto salvation** to everyone that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.*

The reason Paul wasn't ashamed of the Gospel was because it brings salvation. Note that he said three very important things about the Gospel: it's powerful, it comes from God, and it's available to everyone.

Not only must we believe in the content of the Gospel, we must also have faith and commit our lives to it. We have to have more than a head knowledge assent to what it says and unconditionally believe in and commit to the truth as it's revealed.

*Such total involvement brings moral earnestness, a dedication and consecration apparent in every aspect of life. Note that although the salvation spoken of here is to the Jew first, the Gentile experiences the same salvation.*

Wycliffe

In 16(b)—*to the Jew first, and also to the Greek*—salvation isn't something that has only been given to the church during this "Age of the Gentiles" or the "Church Age." We must never forget that it was always offered to the Jew first; Jesus is a Jew. By becoming believers we become grafted into the Jewish faith through the blood of Jesus (*Rom 11:17*). He was their Passover Lamb just as He is our Saviour. Sadly, this has been forgotten and the end result has been continued persecution of the Jews. It's important for us to remember that we aren't praying that Jews become Christians, but rather that they accept their Messiah and become complete in Him. We are blessed by the Grace of their God (Jehovah) through the blood of their Messiah (Jesus) to

partake in the eternal blessing of salvation. We may be the bride of Christ but Israel is the wife of God. We are truly blessed to be “grafted in” to the olive tree.

## THE WORD IS A WEAPON

*Eph 6:17(b)... and **the sword of the Spirit**, which is the word of God:*

We touched on this previously but a comment or two here is appropriate. The sword of the Spirit is an offensive weapon, not just defensive like the shield of faith and the other pieces of the armor. The best example of using the Word of God as weapon is seen in Jesus in the wilderness. He both used the Word to answer Satan (*Matt 4:3-4*) and to correct him for misusing the Word (*Matt 4:6-7*).

The Word of God is the sword of judgment and it divides and separates light from dark, good from evil, and just from unjust. It's the one sure weapon against Satan in the spiritual war that rages all around us. Paul reminded us that we wage our battles against *principalities, powers, and rulers of darkness (Eph 6:12)* and not against man. Nothing cuts deeper and inflicts more pain to the enemy than the Word of God, and nothing cuts deeper than the *rhema* word that waits inside you (if you have put it there). Look again at Jesus in the wilderness (*Matt 4*) and note that He used the exact scripture needed for the moment. And remember that He learned it the same way we do:

*2 Tim 2:15 Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, **rightly dividing the word of truth.***

Paul told Timothy that he needed to be able to *rightly divide the word of truth*. Rightly divide (*orthotomounta*) is used only here in the New Testament and it means to make a straight cut or dissect correctly. That is exactly what Jesus did in the wilderness. He had studied the Word of God, locked it in His heart, and when the enemy came in like a flood He was prepared to “make a straight cut” into the lie of the enemy. Note that I said, the lie of the enemy. We are to attack the lie when it presents itself but not the bearer of the lie. The bearer will always deny the truth but the lie itself will be revealed and it will be cut open and exposed by the sword of truth.

This is one of the best cases to be made for studying the Word of God. How do we ever hope to turn the lie away without “the” truth? Can you imagine a legion of Roman Soldiers (3,000 to 6,000 infantry troops plus 100 to 200 cavalymen) moving into battle without a sword! Don’t forget that Satan knows the Word of God and he is no dummy. He will press you with the lie until you present the truth, responding like Jesus in the wilderness.

## **A FINAL THOUGHT**

Jesus is the two-edged sword that cuts right down the middle, dividing us into believers and nonbelievers. That’s why Paul admonished Timothy to be “ever ready” to use the Word of God, and by definition that meant that he had to have the Word in him.

*2 Tim 4:2 Preach the word! Be ready in season and out of season. Convince, rebuke, exhort, with all longsuffering and teaching.*

It was important for Timothy to preach the Gospel so the Christian faith could spread throughout the world. We believe in Christ today because people like Timothy were faithful to their mission, a mission that hasn't changed. It is vitally important that we spread the Gospel because over half of the people who have ever lived are alive today, and most of them don't know Christ. It may be inconvenient to take a stand for Christ or to tell others about His love, but preaching (sharing) the Word of God is the most important responsibility we've been given. Be prepared, courageous, and sensitive to God-given opportunities to share the Good News and to "make disciples." That means following up in ministering the Gospel through teaching the new believer. Jesus is coming soon and He wants to find His bride ready for him, so if we're going to carry out our mission we need know the Word of God... *happy exploring!*

## CHAPTER 5

# BENEFITS OF THE WORD

*Give the Bible to the people, unadulterated, pure, unaltered, unexplained, uncheapened, and then see it work through the whole nature. It is very difficult indeed for a man or for a boy who knows the Scriptures ever to get away from it. It follows him like the memory of his mother. It haunts him like an old song. It reminds him like the word of an old and revered teacher. It forms a part of the woof and warp of his life.*

Woodrow Wilson

The benefits of the Word of God for His bride are innumerable and they are endless. President Wilson was a committed Christian who read the Word daily, and he hit the nail on the head; *unadulterated, pure, unaltered, unexplained, and uncheapened*. It's interesting that he used weaving as an example to make his point. The “woof” is the yarn and the “warp” is what the yarn is drawn through to make the fabric. That is what the Word is to the fabric of our life. We pull it through our spiritual “warp” as we meditate on it, memorize it, and share it. And when we do the treasures are revealed for us to grab hold of and weave into the fabric of our life—deposit into our spiritual bank. Here are just a few pieces of yarn to get us back to some industrious weaving.

## THE WORD BRINGS JOY

*Jer 15:16 Thy words were found, and I did eat them; and **thy word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of mine heart: for I am called by thy name, O LORD God of hosts.***

Remember the Word tells us that *the joy of the Lord is our strength (Neh 8:10)*, and the source of our joy is God's Word. In the Hebrew *words* translates as *dabar*, which means a cause; God's cause was found. Notice that Jeremiah didn't just hear the words or read them, he "ate" them. I like to think that he chewed them like you do a good piece of steak, getting every bit of flavor you can. Note also that he "found" them (*got hold of*), which meant that he had been searching. The meaning in this verse is that he found them with eager delight and interest, like the man who finds a treasure.

Read the story of the merchant who found the pearl in the field (*Matt 13:44-46*). That pearl was of great value to him and he gave up everything he had in order to possess it. Jesus was the man who gave up everything He had to purchase His pearl; His bride. It should be that way with us in our search for the Word of God. The joy it brings to the heart is worth all we have to pay and more.

## THE WORD TESTIFIES

*John 5:39 Search **the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me***

Jesus questioned those who believed they had eternal life in living the Law. The word "search" (*investigate*) carries with it the idea of diligence and anxiety, like a miner who searches for valuable ore. Jesus challenged them with the fact that the Law they



so diligently searched to find eternal life only pointed to Him; the very scriptures that bore witness to His coming as the Messiah (*Isa 53; Dan 9:26-27*); true eternal life.

## THE WORD PROMISES

*It is the very nature and being of God to delight in communicating Himself to His children. He keeps nothing to Himself for His nature is to be always giving.*

Andrew Murray

*2 Pet 1:4 Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.*

God's promises are precious (*valuable, costly, honorable*) for two reasons:

- ***They let us become partakers***—we get the divine nature by the Holy Spirit (*John 16:7*), whose divine nature replaces our old nature. *2 Cor 5:17 Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new.*
- ***They allow us to escape***—when we walk and live in the power of the Holy Spirit we're walking in the opposite direction of the natural life. We are able to leave the corruption of this world behind. *Gal 5:16-18 I say then: Walk in the Spirit, and you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh. 17 For the flesh lusts against the Spirit, and the Spirit*

*against the flesh; and these are contrary to one another, so that you do not do the things that you wish. 18 But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law.*

In considering *2 Pet 1:4* we need to take a long look at the word “whereby.” Whereby refers to verse 3 in which we are told it is *through the knowledge of Him*. Only by gaining that knowledge will we receive these promises. Remember that we ask God for wisdom but we gain knowledge by our effort. We have to put time into studying the Word with the Holy Spirit in order for it to be revealed to us; for the *logos* to become *rhema*. How will we ever know what the promises are if we don’t put forth the Indiana Jones effort to find out?

It’s through the glory and virtue of Jesus that these precious promises become ours. What are these promises in which we partake? They are the richest of all treasures, the very nature and life of God in Jesus. We are removed from sin and death and are given eternal life. Salvation is indeed the great and precious promise of a new life in the Spirit—*Christ in you, the hope of glory (Col 1:27)*.

## **THE WORD BRINGS GROWTH**

*1 Pet 2:2 As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby:*

We start on milk but we can’t stay on it forever. We need to move on to the meat of God’s Word. What did Jesus say to Peter by the campfire? *Feed my lambs (John 21:15)*. The Word will bring spiritual growth but only if we desire it; if we don’t eat we

don't grow. Lambs will never mature unless they are weaned off milk and get on solid food.

As we grow spiritually, our hunger will need to be satisfied with the deeper things of God in order for us to continue to mature. The Lion of the tribe of Judah didn't mature from a cub to the King by constantly drinking milk. Today we have many cubs in the bride of Christ that are still standing at the Cross and drinking milk. As a result their lives are unfulfilled and unsatisfied and they are without the full peace and joy promised by the Lord because they won't move on past the Cross into a lifelong walk with Jesus by investing themselves in the Word. We can, and should always look back to the Cross and remember the price that was paid for our justification, but if we stay there we'll miss out on one of the real blessings of eternal life... Jesus' Rest.

We can't remain just inside the Holy Place. God has removed the veil to the Holiest Place—the Holy of Holies—so that we can enter with boldness and dwell there, and move on from the nominal or carnal Christian Life to the Spirit-filled Life in Christ; from the immaturity of milk to the meat of maturity. This is Jesus' Rest for His bride, this is her Canaan, and she can't afford to stay in the wilderness and miss out on all that He has prepared for her. There is so much beyond salvation for the bride of Christ.

## **THE WORD BRINGS TRUTH**

*Ps 119:142 Thy righteousness is an everlasting righteousness, and thy law is the truth.*

Everything else will fail but God's Word can always be counted on. The Hebrew expression used here means not only is it truth, *it holds us up when we lean on it*. One of the meanings of

righteousness is God's plan for redemption (*Rom 3:25-26*). His plan is an everlasting one, and it will remain so because His Word is truth that is founded on reality (*assured, established, faithful*).

*The Word of God is truth, the Son of God is truth (John 14:6), and the Spirit of God is truth (1 John 5:6). The Spirit of truth wrote the Word of truth and that Word reveals the Son of God. When your feelings deceive you into concluding that it is not worth it to serve the Lord, immediately turn to the Scriptures and delight in your Lord.*

The Bible Exposition Commentary

Man's governments, plans, and promises will always fail but God's will not. When the enemy seems to be prevailing in our life we can know with a certainty that God's righteousness endures forever. The enemy cannot prevail because *no weapon formed against you will prosper (Isa 54:17)*.

## THE WORD PURIFIES

*John 15:1-4 I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman. 2 Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away: and every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit. 3 Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you. 4 Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me. 5 I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing. 6 If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them, and*

*cast them into the fire, and they are burned. 7 If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you. 8 **Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be my disciples.***

Notice how we are kept clean by abiding in Him. As branches that abide in the vine need to be pruned to produce more fruit, so God prunes us with His word. It took me a long time to understand that pruning back fruit trees would actually cause them to produce greater and sweeter fruit. The key for us is to choose to abide in spite of the pruning, understanding that it's ultimately for our good and God's glory. Through Jesus we receive the Holy Spirit and through Him we receive the Word, and it's the Word that continually prunes us.

In *John 15:8* we see the end result, that God is glorified when we bear much fruit. When His Word abides in us we're able to pray like Jesus for His Will to be done in our life, and our prayers are sure to be answered because He has given us the desires of our heart; His desires. It's not about our fleshly desires, He has so taken over our heart that what we desire is His desire. But this can only come about as we abide in the vine and are pruned, fed, and purified by the Word. The orange tree has to produce oranges. It can try all day but it isn't going to produce apples. But that's not the issue, it's not the type of fruit that matters it's the quality of the fruit. Each of us a branch needs to provide the fruit that results from the nourishment we get from the vine, and it's the Word that carries all the nourishment we need... we just need to stay attached and receive it.

## THE WORD SANCTIFIES

*John 17: 14-17 I have given them thy word; and the world hath hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. 15 I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil. 16 They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. 17 **Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth.***

Only Jesus (the Word) can set apart or consecrate the bride for His holy purposes. Sanctification has made us holy and our walking it out makes us more like Jesus and less like the world. I once heard it said that we measure our sanctification by our response to sin. Do we tolerate it in ourselves and in others or do we hate it like Jesus does? When we draw closer to Jesus—resting at His feet in the Holiest Place—we will begin to see sin in light of the truth, and then we can be changed. Once again, however, we must recognize that we aren't going to progress in our sanctification (our holiness) without making a commitment to the truth and to change.

Look back at verse 14 and note that Jesus stated that He has already given us God's Word, and in the next verse He asked the Father not to take us out of this world but keep us from the evil of this world. How does He do that? Verse 17—we are sanctified by His Word.

*Eph 5:25-26 Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; 26 **That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word,***

Simply put, we won't become pure and remain clean of the world's dirt without the constant washing of the Word. We all

know what happens if someone just takes a bath once in awhile; the analogy is the same. It's the Word that the Spirit uses to teach us, to encourage us, to cleanse, and to change and renew us. Verse 25 tells us that Paul was talking about the church and that it was Jesus who gave His life for it. We are the true church—the bride of Christ—and He has set us apart so that His Word can cleanse us (26).

As we become yielded vessels, the Spirit begins to purify us by the Word. At first the cleaning goes somewhat quickly as the major part of the dirt is scrubbed off. But true purity is often seen in the removal of that part of the world that we have allowed to scorch deeply into our vessels. That can only be removed by complete submission and obedience to the Word. Think of it this way, the Word is like cleanser, but repentance is the scrub brush. The bride will never be spotless (pure) unless she submits to the cleansing of the bridegroom (the Word), and without purity she won't be ready for Him when He returns.

Remember it this way. At the end of the day, before the Last Supper, Jesus washed the feet of His Disciples. He was symbolically washing off that part of the world that they had picked up during the day. It's the same thing for us. We need to let Jesus (the Word) wash our feet every night before we go to bed. To get rid of the world and replace it with the Word. That is the secret to sweet sleep.

## **THE WORD TEACHES**

*Dt 11:18-19 Therefore shall ye lay up these my words in your heart and in your soul, and bind them for a sign upon your hand, that they may be as frontlets between your eyes. 19 And ye shall teach them your children, speaking of them when thou*

*sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, when thou liest down, and when thou risest up.*

For us the key verse is 18: *lay up these words in your heart and in your soul.* In the Hebrew it is *lay them upon your hand for a sign and bind them to your soul, and as frontlets between your eyes.* Orthodox Jews actually tie the Word of God to their wrists and their forehead as a constant reminder to “lay up” the Word of God. The idea is to let God’s words invade every area of their lives and home, and by teaching their children Israel will be able to escape the seductive worship of idols. The problem for Israel was that the act became just that; an act of obedience. Today it’s far easier for a Christian to wear a cross or put a sticker on their car than to bear the Cross daily. Here are four places for us to lay up God’s Word so it is instantly available to us as we walk through this life:

1. ***Our heart***—Store the Word in your heart as you would gold in a treasure chest and let it be a guide for your meditation and memorization.
2. ***Our soul***—Lay the Word up in your understanding, the place where the Holy Spirit can use it to convict you when you begin to stray from righteousness.
3. ***Our life***—Bind the Word upon your hand for a sign to the world; realize it in your life and use it as a sword to reveal the truth to others.
4. ***Our head***—Keep the Word before your eyes as a reminder of what you have; profess what you possess. Place it as you



would something of dignity; an ornament of grace in your life and a source of protection.

Look up the following scriptures: *Col 3:16*; *2 Ptr 1:12*; and *2 Ptr 3:1-2*. This is how the Word washes us and makes us pure; by laying it up in our hearts. There is no better way to ensure a good cleaning than to start on the inside, and once that is clean the outside will follow. However, if we approach it from the outside it won't work. That is what Jesus meant when He called the Pharisees "whited sepulchers"—white on the outside but rotten on the inside (*Matt 23:27*). They knew the Word but didn't let it teach them, it was laid up in their heads but not in their hearts. And the Word that never gets past the mind to find its way into the heart has lost its power. Let's make sure that it's laid up in our heart and not in a golden cross, a silver dove, or a fish sticker.

The Word of God truly brings us joy, testimonies of God's faithfulness, and promises of His love, protection, provision, spiritual nourishment, truth, purification, sanctification, and knowledge. When you sit down and think about it, there isn't anything we need to weave a holy life that it doesn't contain. As Woodrow Wilson might say... *knit one purl two*.

## CHAPTER 6

# HOW DOES THE WORD OPERATE?

*God is more real to me than any thought or thing or person. I feel him in the sunshine or rain; and all mingled with a delicious restfulness most nearly describes my feelings. I talk to him as to a companion in prayer and praise, and our communion is delightful. He answers me again and again, often in words so clearly spoken that it seems my outer ear must have carried the tone, but generally in strong mental impressions. Usually a text of Scripture, unfolding some new view of him and his love for me, and care for my safety... That he is mine and I am his never leaves me; it is an abiding joy. Without it life would be a blank, a desert, a shoreless, trackless waste.*

William James

Although William James was a Harvard psychologist and pragmatist, he captured the essence of the message of the Word. The Word works in many different ways for many different reasons because there are many different people. It can be a quiet whisper, the sound of a ringing bell, or as Jeremiah discovered, it can burn like fire.

### LIKE FIRE

*Jer 5:13-14 And the prophets shall become wind, and the word is not in them: thus shall it be done unto them. 14 Wherefore*

*thus saith the LORD God of hosts, Because ye speak this word, behold, I will make my words in thy mouth fire, and this people wood, and it shall devour them.*

Because the people said the prophets were “empty people” and their words were like the wind, God told Jeremiah that He would put His Word in his mouth and it wouldn’t just be “air,” it would be fire. Purity results from refinement, which comes from fire. Today the same thing occurs when the Word is spoken; it purges all lies with the fire of truth. There is nothing that burns to the heart of a matter like the Word of God as it reveals that which is false. We’ve all had those messages from the pulpit or the Word from a friend that “burns down inside” the moment we hear it. I know I have, and many times it’s resulted in burns ranging from first to third degree.

## **LIKE A HAMMER**

*Jer 23:29 Is not my word like as a fire? saith the LORD; and like a hammer that breaketh the rock in pieces?*

God’s Word will crush everything that’s untrue. All self-deception and self-righteousness will be broken under His word, crushing everything in our hearts that’s evil. It’s interesting to note that one of the methods of getting the ore out of rock is to roast it in fire and then crush it with a hammer. This process insures that the rock is fully pulverized, making the ore easier to extract. So it is with the human heart, the sooner it’s pulverized the sooner the sin can be separated from the purity. But oh how we stiffen our necks to avoid the process.

## LIKE BREAD

*Mt 4:4 But he answered and said, It is written, **man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.***

*Deut 8:3 And he humbled thee, and suffered thee to hunger, and fed thee with manna, which thou knewest not, neither did thy fathers know; that he might make thee know that **man doth not live by bread only, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of the LORD doth man live.***

In his commentary on *Deuteronomy*, John Maxwell wrote that *humility is the gift given upon graduation from the school of affliction*. When that lesson is learned the hunger for His daily bread becomes the driving force, rather than our fleshly appetites. In the Old Testament, God gave Israel natural bread and in the New Testament He has given us Spiritual bread. Without that Spiritual bread our spirit will starve and become weak, setting us up for every attack of the enemy. It's been said that an army marches on its stomach, and so the bride of Christ must march on her spirit; a spirit fully fed with the Word.

## LIKE INCORRUPTIBLE SEED

*Ps 126:5-6 They that sow in tears shall reap in joy. He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him.*

The new King James says *continually goes forth*, the thought being that sowing is associated with death (dying daily; sowing in tears). Jesus said the same thing:

*John 12:24-25 Most assuredly, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the ground and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies, it produces much grain. 25 He who loves his life will lose it, and he who hates his life in this world will keep it for eternal life.*

And the lesson is still just as valid for us as it was for Israel. We have to continually die to ourselves, sowing ourselves on the Cross with Jesus was just the beginning. There is, however, a great promise in so doing; joy will come because there is a resurrection after death. And for us to die daily is to keep ourselves in a position to reap His joy daily.

These verses are focused on the farmer who tromps over the plowed field, sowing his seed in tears. Perhaps out of the famine he has kept a small amount of seed to sow for this year's crop. But in the midst of his work he knows he will come to the field again to reap what he now works so hard to sow, and at that time he won't come in tears, he will be full of joy in the harvest. We're like that farmer at times, trudging through our field (the world) sowing the Word of God—often in tears—yet knowing that we will reap the harvest in heaven.

## **LIKE A MIRROR**

*Jas 1:23-25 For if any be a hearer of the word, and not a doer, he is like unto a man beholding his natural face in a glass. 24 For he beholdeth himself, and goeth his way, and straightway*

*forgetteth what manner of man he was. 25 But whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed.*

The Phillips translation puts it a little clearer:

*The hearing-but-not-doing man is like a person who sees the reflection of his own face in a mirror. He sees himself, it's true, but he goes on with whatever he was doing without the slightest recollection of what sort of person he saw in the mirror.*

He takes time to examine himself but then he walks away without noticing anything in his appearance (spirit) that needs his attention.

Here James referred to God's mirror (His Word) and the mistakes we often make: we merely glance at ourselves, we don't look deeply enough into our heart, and like Isaiah proclaim *woe is me, for I am undone*. We fail to obey what the Word tells us to do because we think hearing is the same as doing. We often substitute reading and talking for doing, which is a poor substitute for serving. But, said James, the man who makes a habit of looking into the perfect law of God will become a "doer" of the work and find true happiness.

A doer of the Word is simply one who performs it. The Greek word *poietae* literally means performer or poet. We are to become poets or, if you will, performers of the work. Our work is to share Jesus like a poet for He is the *perfect law of liberty*. If we will just obey the Word our joy in Him can be the only result.

The Word of God operates in various ways but the desired result is the same in all cases. God is most interested in using His Word to remove all the barriers—all the spots and blemishes—that are keeping us from becoming more like His Son every day. He may use it to “fire” us up, to “crush” the sin we want to hang onto, to “feed” our spirit with precious bread from heaven, “bury” the old and “sow” new life, or show us a “reflection” of *who* we are so He can reveal *whose* we are.

These operations of the Word just scratch the surface. If we will spend the time alone with His Word He will show us so many more ways that He wants to encourage us on our journey to holiness. I have experienced and continue to experience each of the ways we just explored, and every time the end result is the revelation of something I never knew or saw before. God has a plan for each of us and the very best way to find out what it involves is to fall on His Word. Remember, Jesus is the Word, He is the fire, He is the hammer, He is the bread, He is the seed, and it's His image (His character) that we need to see in the mirror.

## CHAPTER 7

### WHAT IS OUR RESPONSIBILITY

*Deut 6:6-7 And you must think constantly about these commandments I am giving you today. You must teach them to your children and talk about them when you are at home or out for a walk; at bedtime and the first thing in the morning.*

Consistent living makes the deepest impression on our children. I think this passage gives us the central theme of *Deuteronomy*. It sets a pattern that helps us relate the Word of God to our daily lives. We are to love Him, think constantly about His Word, teach it to our children, and live each day by following it. God emphasized the importance of our teaching the Bible to our children and we can't let the church and Christian schools be used to escape from this responsibility. The Bible provides so many opportunities for object lessons and practical teaching that it would be a shame to study it only one day a week. Eternal truths are most effectively learned in the loving environment of a God-fearing home.

In the last chapter we briefly looked at how the Word operates. This time let's reflect on our responsibility. What is expected of us



if the Word is to operate effectively and powerfully in our life? There are many things to consider and ponder and the following are some thoughts to get us headed in the right direction.

*Col 3:16 Let the word of Christ  **dwell in you richly**  in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.*

Isn't it interesting that the way God suggests we should teach and admonish one another is through various forms of worship? I'll wager that in the beginning, songs have taught new believers more about Jesus than textbooks. The Word of God is full of praise and worship from which we can take many a good lesson. Look at the many ways David and the other psalmists presented their hearts to God in song. The best way I know to overcome depression, fear, and anxiety when they come knocking is to put my nose in the Word and my heart into song. Let's look at some of the things that we are expected to do where the Word of God is concerned.

## **WE NEED TO HEAR THE WORD**

*Rom 10:17 So then  **faith cometh by hearing** , and hearing by the word of God.*

This is a very interesting scripture and, as discussed earlier, hearing the Word of God builds up our faith. But let's look at the translation of "word" as used here. It's our old friend *rhema*, which we remember is the revealed Word. Paul is saying that in hearing the Word of God we have the Word revealed to us by the Holy Spirit. He makes it *rhema* to us and as a result we are able to

increase our faith. Remember that it's not just the Word that makes us free, it's the Word that we "know" that makes us free (*John 8:32*). In that passage Jesus used the word *ginosko* and it means to understand or be sure of. The Jews had a saying that *no man was free but he who exercised himself in the meditation of the law*.

Now to bring this home, look at the word used for God in *Rom 10:17*; *Cristos*. That fairly well sums up what man is to meditate on, the Word of the Messiah. Therefore we need to hear the Word and let the Holy Spirit unwrap (reveal) it for us because nothing has more meaning than when it is personalized. When a truth of God gets into our spirit it's like the seed sown on fallow (fertile) ground. It has meaning and understanding for us and builds up our faith... *Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks (Luke 6:45)*.

## **WE NEED TO READ THE WORD**

*Rev 1:3 Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein: for the time is at hand.*

The word blessed used here is the same one Jesus used in His Sermon on the Mount (*supremely blessed*). The word "readeth" is *anaginooskoon* and it means "to know again," which indicates a repetitive process. This applies to both the one who reads the Word out loud and the one who hears it, who can be the same person. But we shouldn't forget the second part of the promise. It is given to those who *keep* that which is written. In this case, the things prophesied regarding the future as well as the things that are required of us.

## WE NEED TO STUDY THE WORD

*Act 17:11 These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so.*

The first thing these men did was to receive the Word after which they searched it. Searched (*anakrinontes*) conveys a thorough examination from top to bottom like a legal review; ask, question, discern, examine, or judge. Note that they did this daily with *all readiness of mind* (an eager rushing forward). This is a great example for us. As we daily examine the Word with eager interest it will become *rhema* to us; yet another sword in God's armory available for our spiritual battles. Do we eagerly rush forward to our early morning time in the Word?

### Memorize The Word

*Ps 119:9-11 Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way? by taking heed thereto according to thy word. 10 **With my whole heart have I sought thee:** O let me not wander from thy commandments. 11 **Thy word have I hid in mine heart,** that I might not sin against thee.*

How is a young man to conduct himself? With his whole heart he is to seek out the Lord. Look at this key life verse and note the similarity:

*Matt 6:33 **But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness,** and all these things shall be added to you.*

We need to “conceal” the Word in our heart and make it inaccessible to the enemy, whose sole purpose is to steal it. It needs to become a permanent treasure that we can call upon when the temptations come: *that I might not sin against thee.*

The memorized Word of God is always at hand and is our best defense against straying from our Lord. When the enemy comes in like a flood (*Isa 59:19*) we are to lift up God’s Word as a standard against him in the power of the Holy Spirit. Remember Jesus in the wilderness? He used the Word and the Word only, He didn’t argue with Satan because He didn’t need to. Satan’s argument was with the Word, the Word of truth which needs no justification

### **Meditate On The Word**

*Ps 1:2 But his delight is in the law of the LORD; and **in his law doth he meditate day and night.***

*Josh 1:8 This **book of the law** shall not depart out of thy mouth; but thou shalt **meditate therein day and night**, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein: for then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success.*

The Hebrew word for meditate (*hagah*) used in these two verses means to murmur, speak, ponder, imagine, mutter, study, talk, or utter—get the point? We can’t hope to appropriate the Word into our lives unless we put forth the effort. It should be our delight to meditate on the Word instead of the things of this world.

The word meditate has been given a bad name through association with many Eastern religions. It’s not intended to carry that negative connotation here as we are commanded to meditate

by God (*Josh 1:8*). The problem is not meditation itself, rather it's the focus of that meditation. It's very popular for man to meditate on himself today in an effort to determine all that he is capable of.

These two scriptures, among many, clearly set forth our focus and the reward for being obedient. On the other hand, anything man can generate through fleshly meditation will only bring, at best, fleeting happiness that is guaranteed to be temporal and unsatisfying. Meditating on the Word of God, however, brings joy that is eternally satisfying. Man can't fill his spiritual void with the things of this world, no matter how much he mutters and ponders upon them.

I like to think that the expression *meditate therein day and night* represents what our friend Enoch was doing in his Walk With God. An integral part of our relationship with Jesus is an ongoing dialogue with Him throughout the day, thinking and pondering His Word; living in the Holiest Place.

### **We Can't Be Ignorant Of The Word**

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

The Sadducees were "Sad You See" because they didn't believe in the resurrection... I know it's an old joke but it makes the point. Jesus challenged their interpretation of the scriptures, telling them they were not only wrong regarding the resurrection of the body but that their belief denied God's power to accomplish it. Isn't it ironic that they were throwing up their false doctrine to the One who absolutely knew they were wrong and was going to prove it? There is a real message in there for us.

We need to very carefully judge what others say and/or teach regarding the Word of God. It's our responsibility not to be ignorant and make the error of the Sadducees. If we don't study the Word we are easy prey for those who change, alter, or pervert it for their own purposes. Don't lean on your own understanding of the Word, lean on that understanding given by the Holy Spirit.

## **We Can't Despise The Word**

*Isa 5:24 Therefore as the fire devoureth the stubble, and the flame consumeth the chaff, so their root shall be as rottenness, and their blossom shall go up as dust: because they have cast away the law of the LORD of hosts, and **despised the word of the Holy One of Israel.***

As a result of her rejection of God's Word, Israel had developed dry rot. The loss of her roots kept her from receiving nourishment from her source of strength. The result was that all that was beautiful in Israel dried up, turned to dust and was blown away, all because they despised (*blasphemed, scorned or provoked*) the Word. The same thing happens today when man chooses to disregard the Word of God and follow the god of this world.

*Zech 7:11-13 But they refused to hearken, and **pulled away the shoulder**, and stopped their ears, that they should not hear.<sup>12</sup> Yea, they made their hearts as an adamant stone, lest they should hear the law, and the words which the LORD of hosts hath sent in his spirit by the former prophets: <sup>13</sup> therefore came a great wrath from the LORD of hosts. Therefore it happened, that just as He proclaimed and they would not hear,*

*so they called out and I would not listen," says the Lord of hosts.*

Israel pushed God so far that He had no choice in His response.

***2 Chr 36:16: But they mocked the messengers of God, and despised his words, and misused his prophets, until the wrath of the LORD arose against his people, till there was no remedy.***

They *pulled away the shoulder*, they backslid away from God and refused to hear Him. Why? Because they didn't want to hear what the Law had to say. Sound familiar with respect to today's culture?

Here we see an example of resisting the Holy Spirit. An *adamant stone* is one that can't be cut; it cuts others. Like a diamond, so hard that it can cut glass. The idea is that they were afraid to trust God's Word because by it He might convert them. One of the results of this attitude is that God says He won't listen when they cry out (verse 13). Let's look at just one instance of this out of the New Testament.

***Mk 7:9 And he said unto them, Full well ye reject the commandment of God, that ye may keep your own tradition.***

Adam Clarke put it this way: *How noble is your conduct! From conscientious attachment to your own traditions ye have annihilated the commandments of God!*

Man is still doing it today and, unfortunately, we all too often find the same attitude in the bride. The tradition of the Old

Testament too frequently becomes the religion of the New Testament. But God's commandment is still the same. Let's go back to verses 6 and 7 where Jesus quoted *Isa 29:13*.

*Mark 7:6-7 He answered and said unto them, Well hath Esaias prophesied of you hypocrites, as it is written, **This people honoureth me with their lips, but their heart is far from me.** 7 Howbeit in vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men.*

God's commandments have always reflected His desire for man to honor Him, but man has continually substituted his own doctrines. He always seems to take what God designed and remolds it for his own purposes. Think back to Jim Jones and the cult he founded. The People's Temple was formed around the Christian Truth, but somewhere along the line it was lost in favor of man's rituals and man's gain.

Man's law was substituted for God's Law and the result was the same as we see in these verses. They give us the same warning: if we reject the Word of the Lord we are only deceiving ourselves. If we only desire the smooth, quiet, soft, or easy path we stand to be devoured. For those who despise the Word, the purifying fire of the Spirit will consume them as *wood, hay, and stubble (1 Cor 3:12)*. Jesus called them hypocrites or actors who wore masks and appeared to be what they weren't. When they should have impressed the people with the Word of God they were indoctrinating them with the principles of their own religion, despising the Word. Let us ever be on the outlook for those today that do the same, those who preach fables (*2 Tim 4:3-4*).



## SOME CONCLUDING THOUGHTS

In our brief look at the Word of God we started by noting its seven editions, of which the Living Epistles ought to strike home for each of us. As we walk through this life we are, whether we like it or not, living examples of God's Word to all those around us. Our testimony is directly related to our relationship with Him and our understanding of His Word. It has a powerful impact on the unbelievers observing us. How important is that? Sometimes we are the only glimpse of God and His Word that they may ever see. As Jesus' bride we are the sole and final arbiters of whether or not we allow the Word to indwell us and change us.

Thankfully, the Lord has given us His Spirit to lead us into and through His Word. Without Him we have no hope of going beyond the written Word (*logos*) into the revealed Word (*rhema*) that becomes a lamp unto our feet and a light unto our path; showing us where we are and where we're headed; the whole counsel of God; and His counsel for the moment. How important it is then that we embrace it with all that we are, and let it totally engulf us with all that it represents: truth, joy, growth, purification, and strength to name a few.

The Word was given to us as a guide to the plan of God for our own life. It holds all the answers to every hard question we will ever face, and the Holy Spirit stands ready to lead us into the Truth for each one. Our part is to hear it, read it, memorize it, study it, meditate on it, and most importantly be obedient to it.

God desires that we grow more like Him each and every day. For that reason He gave us His Son as a clear image of who He really is. Without His Word our faith would be just like that of those who follow Mohammed or Buddha; empty and useless. But God took that into consideration from the very beginning and made a provision for us to overcome the false teaching that pervades this

world. His Word feeds us the truth as we grow stronger in His Spirit and progress through this life, moving ever closer to Him. It makes it possible for us to overcome all the obstacles that the world sets before us.

In my life I have grown to love the Word in a way that I never thought possible. As I've spent time in studying it the Holy Spirit has been faithful to reveal new and exciting truths to me each and every day. One of the most exciting benefits is the way in which He always seems to point out something that impacts my exact situation. I must admit however, that sometimes He keeps pointing out something in my life that I would just as soon put in the past. He will never let a lie supplant the truth of the Word and if we're obedient to that truth we will see ourselves mature as Christians. Jesus will ensure that we move from faith-to-faith, from glory-to-glory, from *Teknon* (immature adopted child of God) to *Huios* (fully mature child of God).

We need to be ever mindful of the place and the power of the Word in our life. Along with the Holy Spirit it provides the answer for every question and the sword for every attack of the enemy. If we use it wisely and as our first choice, our Walk With God will be a wonderful and exciting adventure. Who knows better what we need than the One who created us, breathed life into us, revealed Himself to us in His Word, and paid the costliest ransom price for us. Surely this is someone we need to spend time with. God gave us His Word—His Son—as the centerpiece of our relationship with Him. To fully enjoy that relationship we need to take time to communicate with Him every day... all day long.

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## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Pastor Tom Mitchell has spent the better part of his ministry years exhorting, challenging, and encouraging the bride of Christ to move ever deeper into her relationship with her bridegroom. Over the past 30 years through Walk With God Ministries he has authored 13 books, written numerous articles, and has taught the Word of God from the pulpit, in the classroom, and through his weekly blog at: <http://WalkWithGod.org>.

His published works include *Wake Up And Rest – The Bride of Christ Sleeps at Her Own Peril*, along with its four companion books, *The Doorway to Rest*; *The Pathway to Rest*; *The Dangers to Rest*; and *The Battle For Rest* that challenge Jesus' bride to wake up and fulfill the role He has given her in preparing the way for His Kingdom. By anyone's clock, the time until His return is growing very short. *Wake Up And Rest* is a timely challenge the bride can ill afford to ignore, for if she does she does so at her own peril. This series reflects the urgency of the message the Lord has impressed upon Tom for His bride, to wake up and remember to whom she has committed herself and make herself ready for His soon return. The hour grows short and there is much at stake, both here and now and for all eternity. The question is... *will she wake up?*

His most recent work is the eight volume series, *The Way of Enoch*, that explores the foundation and sound scriptural doctrine that underlies God's plan for our lives. It is a journey that begins with learning who God really is and culminates in discovering how we are to walk out a loving and obedient relationship with our bridegroom. *The Way of Enoch* is a great resource for both the

bride of Christ and for those who have just begun their walk with Jesus. Each book is solidly based on the Word of God, looking at how it to be applied in the Christian life. The message is presented in a straightforward look at eight key areas of our Walk With God.

*Volume 1—Your Life In Christ*

*Volume 2—The Spirit-Filled Christian*

*Volume 3—Foundations of Faith*

*Volume 4—The Word of God*

*Volume 5—Principles of Prayer*

*Volume 6—Authority of the Bride of Christ*

*Volume 7—Walk The Walk*

*Volume 8—The Obedient Lifestyle*

# OTHER BOOKS BY THOMAS M. MITCHELL

[www.WalkWithGod.org](http://www.WalkWithGod.org)

## Wake Up and Rest Series

*The Bride of Christ Sleeps at Her Own Peril...* This book is a wakeup call to those who have made their personal commitment to their Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. They are the ones who hold the key to survival the world is looking for and they cannot fail to share it. But to do so they have to overcome their human side and allow their spirit to take charge and lead them through this “wilderness” we find ourselves in. And the key to that is to stop and take a long hard look at their relationship with the One to whom they’re engaged to be married. Do we really know Him? What is He expecting of us? How can we find the answers? These questions and many more have to be answered if we’re going to be able to step up and become all that He created us to be. *Wake Up and Rest* is a guidepost to a fruitful walk with our bridegroom as we prepare ourselves for our wedding day.

*The Doorway To Rest—The Brides’ Invitation...* When we consider Solomon’s Song we can easily see the relationship between Christ and His bride portrayed in many ways. Think of the “sun’s” relationship with the moon being like our relationship with the “Son.” This book is a detailed, verse-by-verse study of the *Song of Solomon*, revealing the true view of bride of Christ through

His eyes and a life changing view of the bridegroom through the eyes of the bride as she opens *The Doorway to Rest*.

***The Pathway To Rest—The Brides’ Purpose...*** As we looked at the message of the *Song of Solomon* we were given a clear picture of not only who our bridegroom is, but equally important how He sees us and how we should see Him. His invitation opened the doorway to His Rest and now, as we walk out the days of our *ketubah*—our betrothal—we need to find out what that means and what it entails along *The Pathway To Rest*. For that we turn to the book of *Hebrews*, where we learn through each verse what sewing our wedding dress means and how important it is for us to be ready and watching for His soon return as we move up the path to spiritual maturity.

***The Dangers To Rest—The Brides’ Warning...*** We have been inundated with not the shout of triumph but the incessant worldly scream of pending disaster. The country’s economics have been turned upside down and fear and panic have grabbed the headlines as the Middle East falls into chaos. The news is full of rampant pandemics, meteorological disasters, hopeless individuals committing tragic acts and families destroyed. And sadly, the majority of the bride of Christ is not prepared for His return. We have allowed the world and its supreme ruler to distract us from the path the lies in front of us. Now He has finally released me to write this verse-by-verse study—*The Dangers To Rest*—out of the book of *Revelation* that He put on my heart 18 years ago concerning His letters that not only deal with why He is coming back but also what we, His bride, are supposed to be doing and not doing as we wait and watch.

***The Battle For Rest—The Brides’ Armor...*** Spiritual warfare is a war between the forces of God and the forces of rebellion led by Satan. And the bride is engaged in this spiritual war between light

and darkness, good and evil, heaven and hell and Christ and Satan. But sadly, many aren't even aware of the fact that they are in a spiritual battle every day of their life. As believing Christians we're in a grim conflict and we're not on a worldly cruise ship or a showboat; it's a battleship. It's a fight to the finish with no holds barred and we can't be neutral and we can't call a truce. This war is a personal one; very personal. In *The Battle For Rest* I have taken a detailed verse-by-verse study of the part of the book of *Ephesians* that deals with the enemy, his strategies and his goals and most importantly the battle orders we have been given to ensure victory over those personal strongholds.



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