

The Bible Is God's Word

Hebrews 4:12

12 For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged 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.

We have a new year coming up. They seem to slip away awfully fast now-a- days. And as time passes, we are ever reminded that there is a birth and a death of each individual, and only what we do with the time in between is important. Anytime is a good time to commit ourselves to a time of reading and studying the Bible, but the New Year is especially good for it gives us structure.

With this in mind I have prepared a Read Through The New Testament In 2004 plan, which comprises of reading one chapter each day, and the readings will be completed in September. There is not one person here today that can't do that. This is also in line with our Wednesday Night Bible study. I plan to start a study through the Gospels the first Wednesday in January, and I hope you will join me in this adventure as we look at the life of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

This message today is not designed to convince anyone that the Bible is God's Word. That is a matter of faith, and no manner of proof will convince the unbeliever. Those who think they know more than God will always try to disprove and cast doubt on the Bible. It is not the unbeliever that concerns me, but the believer who does not spend the time they should to fully appreciate the Bible and all it says. What I hope to accomplish today, by pointing out some of the astounding truths of the Word, is to generate a greater interest in the study of the Bible for the believer.

I would venture to say that some of you have never read the Bible through. You have been saved, you support the church, you give regularly to its cause, but somehow the sum total of your Bible experience is limited to hearing the message preached, listening to your Sunday School teacher, and occasionally reading some of your favorite Scriptures.

If you fit in this category, you are biblically illiterate and are subject to be led astray by someone who claims to have all truth. It seems that Baptists are the easy target for the cults such as Mormonism and Jehovah Witnesses. They come on the scene quoting Scriptures that appeal to one's desire to be closer to God, and they promise that closeness. If one doesn't know God's Word well enough, he or she can easily be deceived by the false messages of such people.

To avoid being deceived, you must first be saved, and then you must seek to be close to God and seek the leadership of the Holy Spirit. There are many ways one can approach a closeness with God, through teaching, preaching, good music, other's testimonies and by studying God's Word. While all of these are important, the study of God's Word transcends the rest.

Teaching that does not present the Gospel in its truest form is not teaching, but is instead a distraction. I say this because it distracts from the real truth of God's plan for mankind. Those who teach have a great responsibility to study the Word and be able to answer questions of the students. The Bible says that teaching is a good calling and must be treated as such. You who teach children have a greater responsibility than those who teach adults for you are in the process of helping them form their minds to prepare them for the future.

I can't say enough about the responsibility of the preacher. If a preacher doesn't study God's Word to expound its truths to the people, he is not called of God. The preacher must thirst for the truths of God's Word and present these truths to the citizens of whatever country he finds himself in. He must deliver the salvation message to the lost as well as feed the saints of God. He must deal with all levels of Christian growth so that everyone who hears his messages will be fed.

Music is just as important as any other means of spreading God's Word. Sometimes music reaches a spiritual depth that teaching and preaching can't seem to penetrate. It has been said that music can touch the very soul of man. I think that the music scene today has more effect in leading our young people away from God than any other thing in our society, but on the other hand, music can be structured to such a way to lead them to the Lord if the director is saved and in touch with God. Music must be presented in such a way that it glorifies God and leads to salvation. Any thing else is not of God.

Our personal testimonies are the best witness we have to offer to others. I'm not talking about the verbal talk we sometimes give in the church service, but the life we live that others see. This is our testimony whether we like it or not.

You have often heard it said that we preach our funerals by how we live. This is true for how we relate to God as we go through life speaks loudly as the preacher in presenting your final eulogy. The unsaved are watching you every minute you are among them, and they are just waiting to say, "**If that's Christianity I want nothing to do with it.**" Another one of their favorite quotes is, "**You're not acting like a Christian.**" I say this not to get you to structure your life to accommodate the unsaved, but to live a life befitting to Jesus Christ, and don't worry about the remarks of the unsaved.

I bring out these points to make you more aware of how God's Word fits in all of His plans that He has for His people. If you don't pay much attention to God's Word, you have a poor relationship with Him. Can you imagine living with a man or woman that you ignored all the time? It would be clear to the ignored one that something is wrong with the relationship. I suspect God feels exactly the same way when we treat His Words as if they are unimportant.

God's book, when studied properly, opens up the Kingdom of God in such a way that it makes God feel closer to us and makes us feel closer to one another. It is the

key to pleasing God and doing His will on this earth. It is where we get our instructions for living. It should be our only source of information in dealing with our fellowman and other Christians.

Some say the Bible is just a book of myths and tales, and I'm sure you have heard this said many times. I don't waste my time with those kinds of people. You shouldn't either, for they are out to try to destroy the faith you do have. If they can't do that, they are happy to leave you confused if possible. They'll wake up in hell one of these days and discover that it really does exist. The myth will become real.

Some say the Bible is the Word of God as far as faith and practice is concerned, but there were errors in transcribing and translating it over the years. They will tell you that you can't trust all of it, but only certain parts. These people can usually tell you what parts to trust, for they have them well memorized to support their viewpoint. These people are just as bad as the ones who don't believe it at all, for they have no Bible that they can use for guidance and direction. It's kind of make-up-the-directions for what they want to do as they go along in life, and then find a Scripture to support it.

The Bible Itself Testifies

Then there are those old hardheaded people like me who will argue that the Bible is God's Holy Inspired Word, totally dependable, and is completely without error; it was dictated by God to humans through the Holy Spirit as He moved them to record His Words exactly as He presented them. Here is what God said in Deuteronomy 18:18.

18 I will raise them up a Prophet from among their brethren, like unto thee, and will put my words in his mouth; and he shall speak unto them all that I shall command him.

We find this delineated in the New Testament in 2 Peter 1:21.

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.

Jesus confirmed that the Bible is the Word of God. He said in John 12:49-50.

49 For I have not spoken of myself; but the Father which sent me, he gave me a commandment, what I should say, and what I should speak.

50 And I know that his commandment is life everlasting: whatsoever I speak therefore, even as the Father said unto me, so I speak.

Luke 24:27states:

27 And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself.

And He takes this a step further in Luke 24:44:

44 And he said unto them, These are the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the psalms, concerning me.

And in John 10:35, He states:

35 the scripture cannot be broken;

He was also clear that it would be preserved for all generations. We read in Matthew 5:18:

18 For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled.

There are many more Scriptures that confirm that the Bible is the very Words of God, but these make the point that the Bible itself testifies that it is God breathed. If we accept Jesus at His Word, we then must accept that the Bible is God's Word to mankind, or we are in effect calling Jesus a liar.

Fulfilled Prophecies Testifies

Even If we don't accept the testimony of the Jesus, the fulfilled prophecies of the Bible would be enough to confirm its trustworthiness. I want to list a few prophecies that were fulfilled in the nation of Israel.

In Genesis 15:13 Abraham was told that his descendants would be strangers in a land not theirs for 400 years. This was fulfilled by their sojourn in Egypt. He also told of how they would be delivered out of the land by Moses.

In Deuteronomy 28:64-66 He tells how they will be scattered throughout the whole earth.

Throughout the Old Testament it tells about the destiny of Israel time after time and finally culminates with their return to the Holy Land, which we witness fully today.

On Wednesday night I went over the Old Testament prophecies that predicted a Savior to be born of a virgin in a town called Bethlehem. These were all fulfilled to the letter.

In Isaiah 53 it speaks of a suffering savior and how He is to die, which was fulfilled on the cross. Other prophecies tell of His rejection and His final acceptance as the Messiah of Israel during the tribulation period. This prophecy is yet to come, but it is just as real as if it were occurring now, for what God has written will always come to pass.

These and other fulfilled prophecies firmly declare that the Bible is God ordained and the things written will with certainty come to pass.

Science Testifies

The liberal Theologians tell us that the Bible is not reliable in the things of science. I wonder if they are reading the same book as I am, for the Word of God is not only 100 per cent correct, but even projects interesting scientific facts thousands of years before the scientific world event though about them.

Listen to this; the Bible told about the earth being round and hanging in space several hundred years before man even dreamed of such a thing.

Isaiah 40:22

22 It is he that sitteth upon the circle of the earth, and the inhabitants thereof are as grasshoppers; that stretcheth out the heavens as a curtain, and spreadeth them out as a tent to dwell in:

Job 26:7

7 He stretcheth out the north over the empty place, and hangeth the earth upon nothing.

The Bible even told that the earth rotated on its axis in Genesis where it refers to the morning and night and how the seasons were formed.

It said that air had weight long before Galileo discover it. This is given in Job 28:25. **25 To make the weight for the winds; and he weigheth the waters by measure.**

Man really thought he had discovered something when he found out that the winds had regular circuits. All he would have had to have done is read Ecclesiastes 1:6-7 to find this out.

6 The wind goeth toward the south, and turneth about unto the north; it whirleth about continually, and the wind returneth again according to his circuits.

7 All the rivers run into the sea; yet the sea is not full; unto the place from whence the rivers come, thither they return again.

Just one more in this area and I'll move on, but I'll have to mention that the Bible spoke of automobiles long before the world even knew how to harness the power of a gasoline engine. This is found in Nahum 2:3-4.

3 The shield of his mighty men is made red, the valiant men are in scarlet: the chariots shall be with flaming torches in the day of his preparation, and the fir trees shall be terribly shaken.

4 The chariots shall rage in the streets, they shall justle one against another in the broad ways: they shall seem like torches, they shall run like the lightnings.

If that is not the modern day automobile, I don't know what is. It runs on fire in the combustion chamber, and we do see lots of justling against one another in the streets.

History Testifies

The Bible is not only accurate scientifically, it is just as accurate historically, and archeology is confirming this almost daily. One of the early arguments against the Bible was that it mentioned the Hittites, but there was no secular history of such a nation. The unbelievers always have to have an external source to confirm the history of the Bible. They don't believe it then, but they like to make a lot of noise about its inaccuracies.

In the 1906 an archeologist by the name of Winckler discovered a large number of tablets that talked about the Hittite empire. The skeptics found out what the believer all ready knew, the Bible is correct.

In Second Kings 18:4, we are told that Sennacherib made King Hezekiah pay a tribute of 300 talents of silver and 30 talents of gold. The archeologists discovered a tablet that said the amount was 800 talents of silver and the 300 talents of gold. To the unsaved mind, obviously the Bible is wrong. This was believed until it dawned on somebody that they used two different standards for the silver talent. It has been proven that 300 Hebrew talents of silver equal exactly 800 Assyrian talents. The Bible is right again.

It has been argued in the past the Abraham was a mythical character because people could not write in that time, and no such place as Ur existed. This was totally disputed by F. Petrie in 1887 when he discovered tablets in northern Egypt that contained both personal letters and government documents. Oh yes, they also mentioned the land of Ur.

People's Changed Lives Testifies

The Bible is the only book ever written that will lead people to God, and in doing so become the agent for changed lives. I defy anyone to read the Bible diligently and still live in unbelief. It has been tried over and over again. I'm not talking about those who read it to disprove it; I'm speaking of those who read it with an open mind and let the Holy Spirit deal with them on the pages of God's Word. There have been many skeptics who have been converted because of the living Word of God.

You are all familiar with the Schofield Reference Bible that was written by Dr. C. I. Schofield at the turn of the 20th Century. Schofield was a lawyer, and I might add a drunken lawyer. He was not interested in the things of God and was busy with his career of practicing law and drinking booze. A friend who cared for his soul convinced him that he should at least give the Bible a try, and Schofield agreed to read it through, but he had his doubts. It is said that he was converted while studying the Gospels about Jesus, for it became perfectly clear that He was who he said He was.

Schofield put his legal trained mind to work serving the Lord and gave us a Reference Bible that is still the best one around. When the Holy Spirit guides a person, the result is always phenomenal.

We have seen a more recent story such as this. You all remember Charles Colson of the Nixon era. He was an advisor to the President and got caught up in the Watergate mess. Charles knew he had broken the law and was deeply concerned about it. He was not a Christian, but he had a close friend who was, and he was amazed at how his friend could face the troubles of life with apparent no effect on his character. He called on his friend who told him about Jesus Christ and His saving grace. Charles was skeptical, but was interested. He said that he went to a private place with a Bible and a legal pad. He drew a line down the middle of the page and began to take notes. He placed on one side of the page evidence against Jesus, and on the other side he placed evidence to support Jesus' claims. He said from a legal standpoint, the evidence for Jesus won hands down. Because of this, he gave his heart to the Lord. He spent some time in prison because of his involvement in the Watergate affair, but a miraculous thing happened to him, he became convicted that the Lord wanted him to have a prison ministry, and because he yielded to the Lord's desires. He has had one of the most successful prison ministries in history.

I knew a man back home who was a drunk. In fact he had consumed so much whiskey that he continually had the shakes. He couldn't lose them. He tried many times to quit drinking, but with no success until one day when he could no longer contend with the alcoholic binges and constantly pulling himself out of the gutter, he found the Lord through the efforts of an evangelist in town. I haven't seen that man for at least 30 years, but the last time I saw him he was not shaking and was talking about how the Lord had saved him, and had totally taken the desire for alcohol away from him.

This is what happens when one yields himself to the Word of God. Man can never save himself. Man can never cure himself, but God can, and this book, the Holy Bible tells us all about his successes, but never about failures; for there are no failures with God.

Conclusion

The Bible is the greatest book that has ever been written. From front to back it tells about man's failures and God's successes. It tells about how much God loves His creation and just how much He has taken from him and how much He is willing to take

before He says it is enough. He has demonstrated His love for us by sending Jesus to die in our stead. He has proven His love for us by forgiving us of our sins, and He has left a record of His love for us in his Holy Word. It doesn't make sense to accept His gift of salvation and then ignore His Words of eternal life. I challenge you today to read it regularly, study it reverently, digest its truths religiously, and live a life that is an honor to God and kingdom.

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