

The Word

Revelation 1:1-4

Words are the most powerful forces in the world whether spoken or written. They can be either constructive or destructive, but words are very seldom neutral.

With words one can sooth pain, with words one can calm an angry mind, with words one can start wars, with words one can cause death, with words one can destroy a reputation, with words one can praise God, and with words one can profess Jesus Christ. Words are mightier than the weapons of wars; a modern take off of the saying that the pen is mightier than the sword. It is no wonder that the Bible places so much emphasis on the word. According to the Bible there are actually three types of words we must be concerned about; the spoken word, the written word and the living word, and each of these are intertwined within the human personality. All three of these are important as pointed out in our text.

Revelation 1:1-4

The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto him, to shew unto his servants things which must shortly come to pass; and he sent and signified it by his angel unto his servant John:

Who bare record of the word of God, and of the testimony of Jesus Christ, and of all things that he saw.

Blessed is he that readeth (written word), and they that hear (spoken words) the words of this prophecy, and keep (living word) those things which are written therein: for the time is at hand. In our text we see evidence of communication in three different ways; the spoken words, the written words, and the living words. We learn to give and receive instructions in all three of these forms.

I. The Spoken Word

Let us look first at the spoken Word. Spoken words begin with thoughts. The first verse in the Bible tells us about the thoughts of God.

Genesis 1:1

(1) In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth. He thought about the heavens and the earth, and they became real. Then He began to speak words. He saw the darkness and spoke, "Let there be light, and there was light."

He saw the need to divide the atmosphere from the waters of the earth, and he commanded it and it was so.

He spoke and the waters and the earth separated. He again spoke and the plant life appeared on the earth.

He again spoke and the sun and moon appeared.

Then the animal life was created by His voice. But His next act was not one of speaking but one of getting personally involved in His creation He molded man out of the dust of the ground, but He did more than that for He breathed into him the breath of life and he

became a living soul. With the breath of life man was given the ability to talk. He was a thinking, living creature that could communicate complex ideas with other human beings. He could talk, and write, and form words and ideas as none other of God's creation could do. We begin to understand that this is part of what God meant when He said He was creating man in His own image; a living, thinking, talking creature that could understand the power and responsibility of words. Man was and still is what I would call living words.

This means his words have a life within themselves. He can create or destroy, he can build up or tear down, he can create evil or good, and do it all with words.

The spoken word is usually thought of in basically three patterns; truth, near truth, and the lie. Actually the Bible only has the extreme of the word, it is either a truth or a lie, but man has modified this and we have bought it completely.

We now have truth, half truths, partial truths, implied truths, but we no longer have the lie in our way of thinking. Everything is relative, and we make We invite confidence men into our living rooms every day without even feeling the impact. It is not wise to excuses for lying and blame it on environment or circumstances. But rarely call it what it is, just a plain old lie.

Our entire society is built on the distortion of the truth. Capitalism is the American way. We rarely find a merchant or a person dealing with money who will be totally truthful when trying to make a profit. The motto of capitalism is, "Let the buyer beware," and you'd better heed this saying carefully for all who deal in products and services are out to make as much as they can.

One of my not so famous sayings is, "You must charge exorbitant prices if you're going to get filthy rich."

Today we live in such an environment of distortion that we readily accept the untruths as being normal. When Bill Clinton lied to the grand jury, it was laughed off as if it was not significant. When politicians lie to us we just accept it as being normal, and jokingly say such things as "May the best liar win." believe anything you hear on Television for all advertisement is structured to make you believe something that is not totally true. The advertisers do not have the interest of the consumer at heart; profit is their motive, and it would be well for us to never forget it.

God still uses the spoken word to get His message out. The primary source of the spoken word is preaching, but He also uses words of music, words of testimony, and words of praise. However today even the preachers and singers have to be suspect for the world has crept into the worship of God to such an extend that the average person simply does not know what to believe any more.

II. The Written Word

The second form of expression in our text is the written word.

Written words are no more than thoughts put on paper. They express ideas more concisely than spoken words because they are given more consideration. How many times have you regretted something you have said, but I suspect you have very rarely regretted something you wrote because you took time to think about it.

The written word is so important that God chose this way to preserve His communicate with man. Here we have it, the Written Word, the Bible, which are the very Words of God. Here we have all the truths God wanted to reveal to mankind, His Holy Spirit revealed Himself to certain chosen people, and God inspired them to write down, and preserve what they heard. He confirmed this as being His true Words in the Book itself. In 2 Timothy 3:16 we read, "All scripture is given by inspiration of God."

He promised to preserve it as we read in Jesus own words in Mathew 5:18, "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."

He said that only the Scriptures give us the secret to life everlasting John 5:39, "Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me."

Deny people the Scriptures and you deny them salvation. This was and still is at the heart of communism and humanism. Satan hates the Word for he knows the power of it when the human soul comes into contact with its originator through His Word.

All the great revivals of the past have come to us only one way, through the Word of God. It is when man hears the Word, reads, and studies the word, and then applies the Word to his life then great changes take place.

I often hear the question, "Why don't we have great revivals today like we did in the past?" The answer to this question is quite simple, "We no longer honor the Bible as God's Holy Word." Man has reached the point where he thinks he is smarter than God is. We have unholy hands messing with God's Holy Book. We have so many books today that are called Bibles that we can find one that will present about any belief man is looking for. Just a few brief examples will fully illustrate this point.

Who has with the three men in the fiery furnace? The King James Bible reads in Daniel 3:25, "He answered and said, Lo, I see four men loose, walking in the midst of the fire, and they have no hurt; and the form of the fourth is like the Son of God."

The NIV reads, "A son of the gods." _____

The Living Bible reads, "A god."

The Holman Bible reads, "A son of the gods." Here are a few areas of differences in the many Bible versions that change or degrade the Word of God. While all of these don't apply to every version, they have commonalities that transcend all of them.

Isaiah 7:14

KJB – Virgin

Some others – Young woman

Luke 2:33

KJB – Joseph and his mother

Most others- His father, or the child's father

1 Timothy 3:16

God was manifest in the flesh

Most others — He appeared in a body, or some variation of he was revealed in the flesh. I could go on for hours pointing out the differences, but you get the point, the scholars have been messing with God's Word. Along with all this changing of the Word

comes confusion and doubt about what God has said. All these different readings cause disrespect for the Bible, lead people astray, and makes a mockery of God's promise to give us His correct Word and to preserve it for all generations.

III. The Living Word

The third form of expression in our text is the living Word. This is expressed in its greatness in John 1:1 "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." Jesus Christ is the living Word.

You want to know what to do, look at Jesus.

You want to know what to say, look at Jesus. You want to know how to deal with your fellowman, look at Jesus.

However, we too must be the living Word because we are the emissaries of Christ. He said, "Ye are the light of the world." He clearly meant that the only way the world could truly know Him was by the actions of His followers.

I remember hearing an old saying when I was real young, you've heard it all your life too, "Actions speak louder than words." This is what Jesus meant by the illustration of light. People are in the darkness of evil, we are in the light of Christ, and our actions should show it.

If the world can't see anything different in our lives than they can in the lives of ordinary people, we're sending the wrong message. Our actions are either words of testimony or else they are words of doubt and uncertainty.

We have to really believe that He is with us always, even to the end of the world. We have to accept every challenge the world throws at us with confidence, never wavering, and with a hope that speaks so loudly that the unbelieving world will stand up and listen.

If we send the wrong signals, the world will interpret them wrongly. Even when we send the right signals, they are sometimes misread, but we had to put out the supreme effort to be more like Jesus each day of our lives.

Just keep in mind that we are not out to please the world, but to please Jesus. We are not to structure our lives because the world is critical of us, because it always will be. We are to structure our lives to please Jesus, knowing full well that he was rejected by the world, and we can expect nothing better. Don't be upset when some worldly person tells you your behavior is not Christian. But, do get upset when your heart tells you that Jesus is not pleased with your actions, for if you are truly saved, your heart will tell when it is right or wrong.

Jesus said the time will come when the Laws of God are written in the believer's heart. That was true at Pentecost, that was true in the First Century, it has been true down through history, and to is still true today. If your heart doesn't convict you when you are sinful and wrong, you've got serious spiritual problems. I'd recommend you get earnest about your Christianity, repent, and get on with your life.

IV. Conclusion

Words, Words, Words, the basic elements of communication whether it be spoken, written, or actions. However we choose to get our message across, it speaks of whom we are and what we are. I urge you to get so deep into the Bible that your spoken words, your written words, and all your actions will reflect a firm belief in the risen Saviour. If we get this straight, it will be as close as we can possibly get to perfection in this old human body.

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