

Bibles???

The Word of God is the Absolute Truth and the Final Authority

Turn your bibles with me to the book of Hebrews 4

We are continuing our verse by verse study through this amazing letter that was written to a group of Jewish believers who were seriously contemplating returning back to Judaism.

We are in the portion of the letter where the writer has been admonishing his readers to be diligent to enter into God's rest.

In order to enter into that rest they must claim the promises of God which are found in His Word.

They must hear the word and believe in it.

They must trust in the good news of Jesus Christ and embrace it.

If they do not mix the promises of God with personal faith they cannot enter into His rest.

So in our text this evening – the writer is going to tell his reader why they should trust and believe His word.

Let's pray...

For the past two weeks – in our studies in chapter three and the first half of chapter four.

The writer of the book of Hebrews has been reminding his readers of the consequences of the Children of Israel's disobedience to the Lord that resulted in them wandering the wilderness for 40 years and it also resulted in their failure of entering into the Promised Land – the land flowing with milk and honey

Every individual from that generation (except Caleb and Joshua) – died in the wilderness because of their unbelief – as they failed to trust in the promises that God had made to them and their forefathers.

And so the writer was telling this group of Jewish believers that they were in the process of doing the same thing that their ancestors had done – as they want to go backward – back to religion – back to works – instead of entering into His rest.

So with that being said – the writer is going to provide for them and us one of the most magnificent descriptions of the Word of God in all the bible.

[Heb 4:12-16 NKJV] 12 For the word of God [is] living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

1. The Word of God is **Living** – meaning that it is alive.

- The bible is full of life

- And the reason that the bible is alive and is a living book is because it is the very Word of God.
- Now, some in the world will make the claim that the bible is antiquated or that it is no longer relevant in our generation because we are so progressive now and we have moved on – they will say that the bible really has nothing to say to us.
- But the bible is not an outdated book – it has something to say and will always have something to say to every generation of human beings – and to every individual human being.
- It provides us with instruction
- It asks and answers the great questions of life:

Why are we here?

What is the purpose of life?

Is there a God? And if there is a God, what is He like?

Can I come to know Him? Is He interested in someone like me?

Why do people die?

What happens when people die?

What can we do to prepare for death?

Only God's Word answers these questions.
- Now someone might come and say – “I tried reading the bible and I just couldn't. I never read a more boring incomprehensible book in my entire

life” – the problem is that they are trying to read the bible apart from the Author.

- Here is an illustration that might – like almost every guy out there, when I buy something that requires assembling or instructions – a bike, our sound system for church, the video camera that we use to record the studies – the first thing I do – is throw out the instructions.

- They are difficult to read. Who wrote this?

Now – imagine the value - if the individual at Canon – who wrote those instruction, if they came out here and walked me through (step by step) the instructions of everything that the camera is capable of.

It is the same thing with the Word of God –

As a nonbeliever – we are not going to get it

However, as a believer, we have the Author residing inside us. Not only does He gives us a hunger for the Word, He also opens up the scriptures to us as He teaches us.

- It is living – meaning that we can read it year after year, over and over again and it will reveal something new.

I have said over and over again, that my favorite book in the bible is Joshua – in fact, when I would teach in CCOS – everyone knew I was going to be teaching on Joshua. I thought I knew everything about Joshua – and then I did the study here – the Holy Spirit revealed things that I never saw in

those earlier studies in Joshua. And I am pretty sure – if the Lord tarries and I do another study in Joshua, the Holy Spirit will reveal something new.

- Turn your bibles to Isaiah 55 -

[Isa 55:10-11 NKJV] 10 "For as the rain comes down, and the snow from heaven, And do not return there, But water the earth, And make it bring forth and bud, That it may give seed to the sower And bread to the eater, 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, when He sends it down from heaven, does not return to Him void. Instead, it always fulfills His purpose on earth.

2. The next description that the author has for us is that the Word of God is powerful.

- Everything that God speaks to us in His Word - He stands behind that promise or behind that encouragement with all of His power, all of His strength and wisdom, all of His infinite everything.
- Every promise He has made in His word will be fulfilled
- He keeps His word

[Num 23:19 NKJV] 19 "God [is] not a man, that He should lie, Nor a son of man, that He should repent. Has He said, and will He not do? Or has He spoken, and will He not make it good?

- Solomon – when at the dedication of the temple –

[1Ki 8:56 NKJV] 56 "Blessed [be] the LORD, who has given rest to His people Israel, according to all that He promised. There has not failed one word of all His good promise, which He promised through His servant Moses.

- God's word is powerful because not only does He speak His word – but He gives us the power to obey His word.

I have said this before in other studies – God never gives us a command in His word / He never tells us to do something – unless He has given us the power to obey that command.

Every single time, His power is there behind the Word of God.

Turn to Luke 6 – I am going to show you an example

Now, here in Luke 6 – the religious rulers are trying to find something to accuse Jesus of -

[Luk 6:6-10 NKJV] 6 Now it happened on another Sabbath, also, that He entered the synagogue and taught. And a man was there whose right hand was withered. 7 So the scribes and Pharisees watched Him closely, whether He would heal on the Sabbath, that they might find an accusation against Him. 8 But He knew their thoughts, and said to the man who had the withered hand, "Arise and stand here." And he arose and stood. 9 Then Jesus said to them, "I will ask you one thing:

Is it lawful on the Sabbath to do good or to do evil, to save life or to destroy?" 10 And when He had looked around at them all, He said to the man, "Stretch out your hand." And he did so, and his hand was restored as whole as the other.

The man had a withered hand –

Jesus asked him to do something impossible – humanly impossible – but not impossible to God.

And therefore, God gave the man the power to obey His command – and he stretched out his hand and restored it / He transformed it.

God was not going to give the command to stretch out his hand if He wasn't going to give him the power to do it.

It would have been cruel to do so –

- God's word is powerful

He spoke the heavens and the earth into existence

These are the words that are able to save a sinner with the Gospel – a greater miracle than creation itself

3. The third description of the Word of God is sharper than a two edges sword

- Now, for those of us that don't know what a two edge sword –
- A samurai sword, a machete, a sabre – those are examples of one edge swords – meaning that only one of the edges is sharpened.
- A double edge sword – both sides are sharpened

- And there is only one reason why you would use a two edged sword – that is you want to be able cut into deeply whatever you were thrusting your sword into.
- And so, the writer of Hebrews is saying that the Sword of the Spirit – the Word of God, it can penetrate deeply into a human life in a way that nothing else can. And there is no defense for it
- When David committed adultery with Bathsheba – and then He conspired to have her husband killed.

God sends His prophet, Nathan to confront David

And God spoke through Nathan

Hey David, “There were two men in one city – one rich and one poor, the rich man had a bunch of sheep and the poor man only had one sheep – in fact, that is really all he had and he loved that sheep and treated it like family – the rich man had a bbq – and the guests really wanted lamb chops - but he didn’t want to kill one of his own sheep’s so he killed the poor man’s sheep”

David says that man deserved to die

And then Nathan says “You are the man! Thus says the LORD God of Israel (2 Sam 12:7)

- That word would have been like a two edged sword driven straight into David’s heart and mind

David – the most powerful man in the region, with all of his wealth, his popularity, his position – none of it was able to protect his heart from conviction. The word of God cut through all of it straight to his heart.

And David confessed his sin

In my own life – when my boss at the time, Ed Pena, when he invited me to speak to a pastor at his church – the only reason I went was because I had ran out of excuses to tell him.

Ok – let's get this over with –

Maybe he can leave me alone after this

I am going to go in there and come out the same

Five minutes into the meeting – I was crying like a baby – I was pierced by the Sword of the Spirit

- Everyone of us in this room – owes something of our salvation to the penetrating power of the word of God – where the gospel had to go through layers upon layers to penetrate our hearts.
- There is no human heart or human mind that the word of God cannot penetrate.
- This is why many people choose not to read the bible

Because we can read a novel and never be convicted

We can read a manual on how to fix a car and never be convicted

But I am here to tell you that every time we open up His Word it will pierce us if we allow it.

- Before we move on – I want to make sure that we understand that the piercing or the penetrating of the word of God is not limited to rebuke.
- Imagine we are at home and the phone rings – it is the doctor with a bad report – police are calling

Our world is turned upside down by a tragedy

And we are filled with grief

Our friends and loved ones they try to offer encouraging words – but none of their words are able to penetrate the grief in our hearts.

We just want to be alone

And then God brings a verse to our remembrance

And we know that came from the throne of God

And it brings encouragement and peace into our hearts.

What human words couldn't penetrate – God's Word can.

4. piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

- so the writer is still talking about the penetrating power of the word of God –

- And here he goes into another illustration on how sharp it is
- He uses the illustration of joint and marrow.
- We all know what marrow is – the yummy part inside the bone
- Joints – another part of the bone
- Here is what he is getting at –
- The marrow and joints are integral part of the bone – in fact many times it is hard to distinguish between when is still bone and when it is joint or when it is marrow and when it is bone.
- The same goes for the soul and spirit – sometimes it is hard to tell them apart
- We might say that a “soul” is our invisible human “self” containing emotions and personality, and our “spirit” is that invisible part of us that connects with God ... but it’s really hard at times to tell one from the other.
- Where we think we are having a spiritual experience when all we are really having is an emotional experience (soulful experience).
- The word of God is so sharp that it is able to cut through and be able to see whether or not we are having a spiritual experience.
- The same goes for our thoughts and our intentions
- We may think we are serving unto the Lord

- But if we are in the Word – the word will reveal to us if we are serving to feed our own flesh or if we are doing it unto the Lord

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13 And there is no creature hidden from His sight, but all things [are] naked and open to the eyes of Him to whom we [must give] account.

Here in verse 13, the writer of Hebrews moves from the penetrating Word to God Himself

Our God sees everything – and it is impossible to hide anything from Him

Think back to the Garden of Eden – Adam and Eve

When they failed miserably, and they chose to run away from God and hide from God – one of the first thing that they chose to do was to cover up their nakedness

They were ashamed of their nakedness – so they attempted to cover it up (by the way, that is the first mention of man made religion in the scriptures)

And in the same way – sometimes we try to hide certain things from God or from our loved ones.

And sometimes we think that that we are doing a good job of hiding those things because we haven't got caught -

Yet, the bible says that there is nothing hidden before God – we are naked. He knows all.

Not only are we naked – I had you make a note of the word open

That means that our lives are fully exposed

What he describes here is something intensely personal that every person has known or will know.

It's a confrontation with the Word of God in which a person's very heart is laid bare and they come face to face with God.

They realize they are being challenged with the Truth, and they have a decision to make to either yield to that truth, or resist it.

It's the place we all come to when we experience the work of the Spirit opening us like a fisherman guts a fish. (that is what the word opens means)

Our motives, or desires, our innermost fears, dreams, values and aspirations are all laid out under the light of the Holy Spirit and we come face to face with the choice of hanging on to all of that or agreeing with God's view of it that it's all sin and death.

These Jewish believers find themselves in the same place like their ancestors –

The writer is saying that just as in that day, God's eyes still surveyed those who were called His people and He knew what the posture of each heart was.

No one can fool God with appearances for God looks at the heart.

And in his grace and mercy, He sends His Word to us so that we too can know what's really in our hearts.

This is why there's no substitute for the Word of God in the Life of the Christian.

That is why I am called to teach His Word and only His Word.

Let's pray...

To Receive Christ do the following:

Admit, "I am a sinner."

Confess and be willing to turn from your sin.

Believe, by faith that Jesus Christ died for you on the cross.

Receive, through prayer, Jesus Christ into your heart and receive eternal life.

Dear Lord Jesus,

I know that I am a sinner and need Your forgiveness. I believe that You died on the cross for my sins. Please forgive me for my sins and cleanse me by Your blood. I accept You by faith as my personal Lord and Savior. Give me a thirst for Your Word and Help me to follow You all of my days. In Jesus' name I pray, Amen.

[Num 6:24-26 NLT] 24 '

May the LORD bless you and protect you.

May the LORD smile on you and be gracious to you.

May the LORD show you his favor and give you his peace.'



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