

The Importance of the Word of God

By Bill Scheidler

I. Introduction

- A. We are living in a day when the Scriptures are being challenged everywhere we turn.
- B. We are living in a day when people do not want to acknowledge absolutes.

Now the Spirit expressly says that in latter times some will depart from the faith, giving heed to deceiving spirits and doctrines of demons, speaking lies in hypocrisy, having their own conscience seared with a hot iron... I Timothy 4:1

- C. We are living in a day where the Bible predicts that people will turn away from the truth to believe lies.

For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine, but according to their own desires, because they have itching ears, they will heap up for themselves teachers; and they will turn their ears away from the truth, and be turned aside to fables. II Timothy 4:3-4

- D. We are living in a day where we would like to see the restoration of the church to the purity and power of the New Testament Church.

II. Keys of the Kingdom in the Book of Acts

There were certain keys to the success of the early church. I call these the Keys of the Kingdom that the early apostles used to open the world to the Gospel and change the world in their generation.

- A. There are Four keys of the Kingdom

1. The Holy Spirit

- a. The Church cannot function or even attempt to fulfill the Great Commission without a relationship to and a reliance on the Holy Spirit.
- b. The apostles in the Book of Acts lived in the conscious awareness of being motivated by, empowered by, and under the authority of the Holy Spirit.
- c. All through the Book of Acts we find that the Holy Spirit is the dynamic in the ministry of the apostles, and to be filled with the Spirit is absolutely essential for effective and acceptable service.

2. Prayer

Prayer is the pipeline of the Holy Spirit. Prayer is the link that connects the saints with the Lord of heaven. Prayer is the channel of the supply of the Spirit.

It is the way in which we access our heavenly instructions. The Apostles in the Book of Acts demonstrated an absolute dependence on God which is evidenced by their continual watchfulness in prayer.

3. The Name of the Lord

When Jesus left the earth He extended His authority to His followers (Mt. 28:18-20). He gave them the right to use His name (Mark 16:17-18; John 16:23-24).

And in that day you will ask Me nothing. Most assuredly, I say to you, whatever you ask the Father in My name He will give you. Until now you have asked nothing in My name. Ask, and you will receive, that your joy may be full.

John 16:23-24

The day that Jesus' spoke of had now arrived. The Apostles in the Book of Acts were totally dependent on the name of the Lord to effect results and empower their ministry.

So he gave them his attention, expecting to receive something from them. Then Peter said, "Silver and gold I do not have, but what I do have I give you: In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, rise up and walk." And he took him by the right hand and lifted him up, and immediately his feet and ankle bones received strength. Acts 3:5-7

4. The Word of God

The Word of God is seen as the Sword of the Spirit in the Book of Acts. The Apostles in the Book of Acts looked solely to the Word of God to impart faith and life to their hearers.

B. The Word of God was a major key and major weapon of the Spirit in the Early Church.

1. The Word of God was central to all of their teaching and preaching. Every message is totally saturated with the word of God. All of the sermons are saturated with Old Testament references and allusions.
 - a. Peter quoted Joel and David in his message on the Day of Pentecost (Acts 2:16, 25).
 - b. The apostles went everywhere, preaching the word (Acts 8:4).
 - c. They preached the word to the Jews and quoted the references (Acts 2:16, 25).
 - d. They preached the word to the Gentiles and stated the content (Acts 17:22-34).
2. The Word of God as seen in the Book of Acts was a complete word. It was:

- a. The Word of exhortation (Acts 13:15)
- b. The Word of salvation (Acts 13:26)
- c. The Word of the Lord (Acts 13:48-49; 16:32)
- d. The Word of the gospel (Acts 15:7)
- e. The Word of His grace (Acts 14:3; 20:32)

So now, brethren, I commend you to God and to the word of His grace, which is able to build you up and give you an inheritance among all those who are sanctified. Acts 20:32

3. The Word of God evoked many positive responses from people.

- a. They heard the Word (Acts 4:4).
- b. They received the Word (Acts 2:41; 8:14, 11:1), not just the preacher of the Word.
- c. They believed the Word (Acts 4:29).
- d. They desired to hear the Word (Acts 13:7, 42, 44), not just stories.
- e. They received the Word with readiness of mind (Acts 17:11).
- f. They gave themselves to the Word (Acts 6:4) and continued steadfastly in the Word (Acts 2:42).
- g. They searched the Word (Acts 17:11).

These were more fair-minded than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness, and searched the Scriptures daily to find out whether these things were so. Therefore many of them believed, and also not a few of the Greeks, prominent women as well as men. Acts 17:11-12

- h. They glorified the Word (Acts 13:48).

Now when the Gentiles heard this, they were glad and glorified the word of the Lord. And as many as had been appointed to eternal life believed. And the word of the Lord was being spread throughout all the region. Acts 13:48-49

4. The Word of God was used in many ways by the apostles in the Book of Acts.

- a. They spoke it boldly (Acts 4:29, 37).
You can only speak boldly when it is God's Word. The boldness itself gives testimony to the Word (Acts 14:3).
- b. They preached the Word everywhere (Acts 8:4, 11:19, 13:5, 14:25, 15:35-36).

- c. They taught the Word (Acts 15:35, 18:11).
 - d. They testified the Word (Acts 8:25).
 - e. They spread or published the Word (Acts 13:49).
 - f. They used the Word to determine policy (Acts 15:15).
 - g. They commended people to the Word (Acts 20:32).
5. The Word of God brought forth powerful results.
- a. The Word moved in power (Acts 10:44). This is what happens when the Word and Spirit are working together.

While Peter was still speaking these words, the Holy Spirit fell upon all those who heard the word.

- b. All in the area heard the Word (Acts 19:10).

And this continued for two years, so that all who dwelt in Asia heard the word of the Lord Jesus, both Jews and Greeks.

- c. The Word of God increased (Acts 6:7, KJV).

And the word of God increased; and the number of the disciples multiplied in Jerusalem greatly; and a great company of the priests were obedient to the faith.

- d. The Word of God grew and multiplied (Acts 12:24).

But the word of God grew and multiplied.

- e. The Word of God grew mightily and prevailed (Acts 19:20).

So the word of the Lord grew mightily and prevailed.

The word that is translated “prevailed” in this verse means “to have force.” The Word of God is a force to contend with and ultimately, if it is upheld above the words of man, it will overcome or prevail.

“Let the Gospel do the heavy lifting” Judah Smith

III. Symbols Used in Connection with the Word of God

- A. The Word of God is a **hammer** (Jer. 23:29). It is able to break up and make an impression on hard hearts.

“Is not My word like a fire?” says the LORD, “And like a hammer that breaks the rock in pieces?”

- B. The Word of God is a **mirror** (Jam. 1:22-25). It reveals to man his true spiritual condition.

But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves. For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man observing his natural face in a mirror; for he observes himself, goes away, and immediately forgets what kind of man he was. But he who looks into the perfect law of liberty and continues in it, and is not a forgetful hearer but a doer of the work, this one will be blessed in what he does.

- C. The Word of God is a **two-edged sword** (Eph. 6:17; Heb. 4:12). It works for us to bring victory to our lives. It works on us to convict and divide (II Tim. 3:16; Jam. 1:23-24).

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 [lit. judge or critic] of the thoughts and intents of the heart.
Hebrews 4:12

- D. The Word of God is a **judge** (Heb. 4:12) (In the Greek, the word for “discerner” literally means “critic” or “judge”). The Word of God passes right judgment on the innermost nature of man. It is like an umpire or the one who calls the shots.

- E. The Word of God is **water** (John 15:3; Eph. 5:26). It refreshes, cleanses and purifies the soul from the defilements of sin.

- F. The Word of God is **seed** (Luke 8:11; I Pet. 1:22-23). It is sown in the heart to bring forth a spiritual harvest.

Since you have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit in sincere love of the brethren, love one another fervently with a pure heart, having been born again, not of corruptible seed but incorruptible, through the word of God which lives and abides forever. I Peter 1:22-23

- G. The Word of God is **food** (Jer. 15:16). It is that which imparts strength to the spiritual man (Deut. 8:3; Ps. 119:103; Job 23:12).

Your words were found, and I ate them, and Your word was to me the joy and rejoicing of my heart; for I am called by Your name, O LORD God of hosts.

Jeremiah 15:16

1. It is milk for babes (I Pet. 2:2; Heb. 5:12-13).

Therefore, laying aside all malice, all deceit, hypocrisy, envy, and all evil speaking, as newborn babes, desire the pure milk of the word, that you may grow thereby, if indeed you have tasted that the Lord is gracious. I Peter 2:1-3

2. It is bread for the mature (Is. 55:1-2; Mt. 4:4).

So He humbled you, allowed you to hunger, and fed you with manna which you did not know nor did your fathers know, that He might make you know that man shall not live by bread alone; but man lives by every word that proceeds from the mouth of the LORD. Deuteronomy 8:3

3. It is strong meat or solid food for the adult (I Cor. 3:2; Heb. 5:12-14).
4. It is as sweet and delightful as honey (Ps. 19:10; 119:103).

How sweet are Your words to my taste, sweeter than honey to my mouth.
Psalm 119:103

H. The Word of God is **a lamp** (Ps. 119:105; Pro. 6:23; II Pet. 1:19).

Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path. Psalm 119:105

1. It imparts life to darkened man (John 6:63; II Cor. 3:18).
2. It exposes areas of sin in our lives (Heb. 4:12-13).
3. It gives direction and guidance (Pro. 6:22-23).

I. The Word of God is **true riches** (Ps. 19:10; 119:72). It makes the possessor rich and wise.

The law of Your mouth is better to me than thousands of coins of gold and silver.
Psalm 119:72

J. The Word of God is **a fire** (Jer. 20:9; 23:29).

Then I said, "I will not make mention of Him, nor speak anymore in His name." But His word was in my heart like a burning fire shut up in my bones, I was weary of holding it back, and I could not. Jeremiah 20:9

1. It warms the heart.
2. It gives zeal for service.
3. It exposes the wood, hay and stubble in our lives (I Cor. 3:12-15).

IV. The Psalm of the Word

A. Psalm 19:7-11

The law of the LORD is perfect, converting the soul; the testimony of the LORD is sure, making wise the simple; 8 The statutes of the LORD are right, rejoicing the heart; the commandment of the LORD is pure, enlightening the eyes; 9 The fear of the LORD is clean, enduring forever; the judgments of the LORD are true and righteous altogether. 10 More to be desired are they than gold, yea, than

*much fine gold; sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb. 11 Moreover by them Your servant is warned, **and in keeping them there is great reward.***

Verse 19, NLT

They are a warning to those who hear them; there is great reward for those who obey them.

It is our obedience to the word or putting the words into practice that carry the blessing.

B. Psalm 119

V. How can I grow in the Word?

Constant growth is something we devote our lives to. It involves the following habits (Adapted from *The Word of the King* by Tendai Chitsike):

1. I grow in His Word by hearing it.

And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in prayers. Acts 2:42

These were more fair-minded than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness, and searched the Scriptures daily to find out whether these things were so. Acts 17:11

2. I grow in His Word by reading it.

...as newborn babes, desire the pure milk of the word, that you may grow thereby, if indeed you have tasted that the Lord is gracious. I Peter 2:2-3

3. I grow in His Word by studying it.

Be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth. II Timothy 2:15

4. I grow in His Word by meditating on it.

This Book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate in it day and night, that you may observe to do according to all that is written in it. For then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have good success. Joshua 1:8

5. I grow in His Word by memorizing it.

Your word I have hidden in my heart, that I might not sin against You. Psalm 119:11

6. I grow in His Word by confessing it.

Then Jesus said to him, “Away with you, Satan! For it is written, ‘You shall worship the LORD your God, and Him only you shall serve.’” Then the devil left Him, and behold, angels came and ministered to Him. Matthew 4:10-11

7. I grow in His Word by doing it.

But He said, “More than that, blessed are those who hear the word of God and keep it!” Luke 11:28

But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves James 1:22