

CORINTH CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP

THE WORKS OF THE BIBLE (PART 5)

SCRIPTURE READING:

- “For this cause also thank we God without ceasing, because, when ye received the word of God which ye heard of us, ye received it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which effectually worketh also in you that believe” (1 Thess 2:13).
- “As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby” (1 Pet 2:2).
- “Jesus answered and said unto them, Ye do err, not knowing the scriptures, nor the power of God” (Matt 22:29).

INTRODUCTION:

A. THE BIBLE IS THE MOST IMPORTANT BOOK

When David Livingstone began his trek across Africa in 1852, he carried 73 books which together weighed 180 pounds. After he had gone 300 miles he had to throw away some of the books because it was not feasible to carry so much through the jungle. He continued throwing books away as he went further into the jungle. Eventually his library had shrunk to one book—the Bible—this he did not throw away. The Bible is truly the most important book in the world, yet many read it as if it were the least important (Ministry 127).

B. THE DANGER OF IGNORING THE WORD

According to Dr. Charles Stanley, ignoring the Word of God is dangerous. When we stop reading Scripture and applying its principles, we don't just stand still; we actually start drifting away from God. Peter tells us to long for the Word so we may grow in respect to our salvation (1 Pet 2:2). And don't forget, the indwelling Holy Spirit will bring understanding. If you desire to glorify God and overcome worries, fears, and sin, then Scripture must be your priority. Reading, studying, and applying the Word may require sacrifices, but the reward of knowing your Savior better and living a life pleasing to God is worth it.

For this Bible Study, we will examine three ways in which the Bible works in Believers:

I. The Word of God is to Build us Up

- “And now, brethren, I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified” (Acts 20:32).
- **“Build”** – to edify, encourage, rebuild, strengthen

A. The Word of God Helps Believers to Build on the Foundation of Jesus Christ – The Great Master Builder

- “For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ” (1 Cor 3:11).

1. Jesus Christ is the only foundation for the Christian life – Salvation.
2. Jesus Christ is the only firm, sure and certain foundation for living as God intended. Do not build on other foundations such as wealth, politics, human wisdom, personal power, and influence.
 - My hope is built on nothing less than Jesus blood and righteousness; I dare not trust the sweetest frame, but wholly lean on Jesus' name
On Christ, the Solid Rock, I stand; all other ground is sinking sand,
All other ground is sinking sand.

B. The Word of God Builds Up Character within Believers

Character is who we are because of our relationship with Jesus Christ. Character is built and learned as we follow Jesus Christ.

- “Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling. For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure” (Philippians 2:12-13).
- “But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you” (John 14:26).

C. The Word of God Builds Up the Fruit of the Spirit within Believers

The Fruit of the Spirit works in our lives when we are obedient to the Holy Spirit – those walking according to the Spirit (Gal 5:16).

- “But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law” (Gal 5:22-23).
- “(For the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness and righteousness and truth;)” (Eph 5:9).

D. According to Warren Wiersbe, God's Word is a tool for building. "Is not my word like fire,' declares the Lord, 'and like a hammer that breaks a rock in pieces?'" (Jer_ 23:29). Sometimes God's Word has to break down before it can build up. Sometimes God's Word has to burn before it can warm. But God's Word is like a hammer—it is a tool for breaking down the old life and building up the new life. It enables us to build the church... (Acts 20:32). If you want to build your life, you must use tools, and the greatest tool of all is the Word of God. The better you understand the meaning of key Bible words, the more tools you will have in your "spiritual workshop" for building your own Christian life and helping to build the church. (Key Words of the Christian Life)

II. The Word of God is to Give Us Faith

- “So, then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God” (Rom 10:17).
- “**Faith**” – belief, trust, confidence, fidelity, faithfulness

A. Faith comes to individuals when they hear preaching concerning Jesus Christ based on the written Word of God.

B. Steps Involved in Faith

1. A person must be willing to listen to the message of Jesus Christ. A person must hear with an open mind and heart, willing to be shown the truth of God.
 - “But he that received seed into the good ground is he that heareth the word, and understandeth it; which also beareth fruit, and bringeth forth, some an hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty” (Matt 13:23).
 - “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” (Acts 17:11).
2. A person must agree that the message is true. Mere agreement does not lead to action. Sometimes a person knows the truth, but does not change the behavior to match his/her knowledge – This is a double-minded person – He knows the truth but does nothing about it.
 - “Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you. Cleanse your hands, ye sinners; and purify your hearts, ye double minded” (James 4:8).
 - “Ye cannot drink the cup of the Lord, and the cup of devils: ye cannot be partakers of the Lord's table, and of the table of devils” (1 Cor 10:21).
3. A person must make a personal commitment to the truth, a person hears the truth and agrees with the truth and does something about it. The person commits and yield his life to the truth. The truth becomes a part of the person's life and behavior.

C. Saving Faith is Believing in Jesus Christ and Committing One's Life to Him

It is trusting Jesus Christ, completely putting one's trust in Him, who He is and what He has done. It is placing one's life in His hands, believing He will take care of one's sin – past, present, and future.

- “That whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life (John 3:15).
- “He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him” (John 3:36).
- “Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life” (John 5:24).

- “Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live” (John 11:25).

D. To Believe in Jesus Christ is to Obey Him and to Obey Him is to Believe Him

There is no such thing as: (1) Believing in Jesus Christ and not following Him, (2) Believing Jesus Christ has forgiven one’s sin and living in sin, and (3) Believing the Gospel and living like the world.

- “Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you. And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty” (2 Cor 6:17-18).
- Hearing in Romans 10:17 does not involve the ear exclusively. The Word of God might be read, watched, or listened to via radio, television, internet, or CD. Therefore, “to hear” means to receive the Word of God by whatever means.

E. The Use of Gospel Tracts – Evangelist Josh Williamson

1. “Josh, I am just calling to apologize to you,” the voice on the end of the line said, “when we were at Bible College, I told you that you were wasting your time handing out tracts and witnessing on the street; I need to say sorry for that.” I was perplexed at this out of the blue phone call, but I was also intrigued, “What brought about the change of opinion?” I asked. Answering, my pastor friend said, “Tonight, a man asked to be baptized; when I asked him how he was saved he mentioned receiving a gospel tract from you in the Queen Street Mall.”

Over the years I have heard many testimonies from people whom the Lord saved after reading a gospel tract; yet despite the harvest that is still being brought in, the humble tract has fallen upon hard times. Today, we are told that simply handing out printed gospel messages will not impact the world, but I must disagree.

2. Recently, Josh Williamson met a man (who now attends our chapel) who shared his testimony with him; in the story of how he was converted he mentioned receiving a tract through his letterbox many years ago. That simple printed page was then used by the Lord to bring this man to saving faith.
3. According to Josh, a man told him that one night he saw a piece of paper blowing along the street, since he wasn’t keen on litter, he picked it up. This leaflet was different to all the other bits of paper he had picked up, so he read it while waiting to cross the road at a traffic light. As he stood there reading the leaflet the Father drew him to the Son. The Lord has sovereignly chosen to use His message printed on paper to bring many people to a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ.

F. Gospel Tracts Have Always Been an Effective Tool in the Gospel Workers Arsenal

According to Charles Spurgeon, “When preaching and private talk are not available, you need to have a tract ready...get good striking tracts, or none at all. But a touching gospel tract may be the seed of eternal life. Therefore, do not go out without your tracts.”

III. The Word of God is to Give us Reconciliation

- “And all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation; To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation” (2 Cor 5:18-19).
- **“Reconciliation”** – After a fight or argument between two friends they become enemies. This disagreement is to be reconciled, to be restored to friendship or harmony. To be reconciled means to be made at one with God. It means having peace and fellowship with God where once there was enmity.

A. **Christ Reconciled us to God** (Rom 5:10; 2 Cor 5:18; Col 1:20-21)

We needed reconciliation because our relationship with God was broken. Our sin alienated us from Him. Therefore, we were enemies of God.

- “For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life” (Rom 5:10).
- “But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ” (Eph 2:13).
- “And that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby” (Eph 2:16).

B. **The Blood of Jesus Christ Reconciles us to God**

- “Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus: Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God” (Rom 3:24-25).
- “In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace” (Eph 1:7).

C. One of the greatest and most beautiful things man can do is to reconcile, and make friends, those who are enemies. Both Martin Luther and John Bunyan brought their great lives to a close in an attempt to reconcile men: Luther, two brothers; Bunyan, a father, and a son. Likewise, if we may say it, the greatest and the most beautiful act of God is his working out a plan of reconciliation of man with God by the precious blood of Christ.

POINTS TO PONDER:

1. Use the Word of God to help you build on the sure foundation of Jesus Christ.
2. Use the Word of God to build up character and the Fruit of the Spirit in your life.

3. Always trust the Word of God – listen to it, accept it as the truth and make a personal commitment to obey it.
4. Remember, it is the Blood of Jesus Christ that reconcile us to Christ. “And almost all things are by the law purged with blood; and without shedding of blood is no remission” (Heb 9:22).

MEMORY VERSE:

“Ye are my witnesses, saith the Lord, and my servant whom I have chosen: that ye may know and believe me, and understand that I am he: before me there was no God formed, neither shall there be after me” (Isa 43:10).

CONCLUSION:

- A. The Bible is to Build us Up, Give us Faith, and Give us Reconciliation.
- B. “Visit many good books, but live in the Bible” – Charles H. Spurgeon
- C. I believe the Bible is the Word of God from cover to cover” – Billy Sunday
- D. **Romans Road to Salvation (Rom 3:10, 23; 5:8; 10:9, 13)**

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“... the word of our God shall stand for ever” (Isa 40:8).