

THE WORD OF GOD



1. INTRODUCTION

What do we understand when we hear the phrase ‘The Word’? Most Christians immediately think of the Bible, but does ‘The Word’ mean this? Of course the Bible is the written Word of God – His ‘Logos’. However, is this the complete ‘Word’?

Scripture reveals to us that the ‘Word’ was around before the written Word existed. Moses for example wrote Genesis. The book that is probably the oldest in the Bible is the book of Job. Yet, the Word is far older than these are. Let’s look at the most important scripture concerning today’s message; let’s look at the very first verse of the Gospel of John.

2. THE START

- John 1:1 *In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.*

This can often be the source of great errors, e.g. the JWs who say “and the Word was a God.” This portion of Scripture tells us that Jesus Christ is the ‘Logos’, the Word of God; it also reveals to us that Jesus is God! The phrase, in Greek, that lies un-translated in the JW bible is “*kai QeoV hn o logoV*”, which literally says “*and God was the Word*”.

3. PURPOSE OF THE WORD

- 2 Timothy 3:16 *All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness.*

Note the emphasis that all Scripture comes from God Himself, and it is necessary (lit. ‘effective’/‘empowering’) for changing our characters and relationships.

4. EFFECT OF THE WORD

a. It’s the basis of eternal life

- Romans 10:17 *So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.*
- Ephesians 2:8 *For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith - and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God.*

Indeed, this faith is God’s gift, and is generally imparted when people hear the Word of God spoken, e.g. through a message, prophecy etc.

b. It judges the hidden heart of Man

- Ephesians 6:17 *Take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of*

God.

- Hebrews 4:12 *For the word of God [sword of the Spirit] is living and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart.*

The Word reveals our inner heart, and lays a plumbline against which our lives are constantly measured and tested.

5. OUR RESPONSIBILITY TO THE WORD

a. Action – ‘Do!’ Hearing alone is the Enemy’s trick

- James 1:21-22 *Therefore, get rid of all moral filth and the evil that is so prevalent and humbly accept the word planted in you, which can save you. 22 Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves.*
- Luke 11:28 *He replied, “Blessed rather are those who **hear** the word of God and **obey** it.”*

The Enemy is happy with the Christian who hears the Word of God, who even listens intently ... but then does absolutely nothing that God says. Does this mean me? Well, one test for us is to look at our approach to the Word of God.

Do we listen to the message on Sunday or in the Home Groups, and ask ourselves “*What did the Lord say to **me**?*”; then if He spoke into our lives do we ask “*What, then, must **I** do?*”

Can we even remember what was in the message. Listen folks, if Rom 10:17 (“... *faith comes by hearing ... the word ...*”) is speaking about the eternal Word of God, then I want to get all the faith I can – every time I have the opportunity to receive God’s Word. I take notes of the message, or if I’m hit by the message, I’ll get hold of the tape. We can all do this! You can bring a notebook; you can also ask for a tape – it will be available the following Home Group or Sunday!

b. Action – ‘Become!’ Character-change

- Colossians 3:16 *Let the word of Christ **dwelt in you richly** as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom, and as you sing psalms, hymns and spiritual songs with gratitude in your hearts to God.*
- 2 Timothy 2:15 *Do your best to **present yourself** to God as one approved, a workman who does not need to be ashamed, and who correctly handles the word of truth.*

Note this does not just speak to leaders, but to us all. To do this, we need to study – not just read – study the Bible.

- Philippians 2:16 *as **you hold out** the word of life—in order that I may boast on the day of Christ that I did not run or labour for nothing.*

The Word must be communicated as it brings life to a dying World.

- Rom 1:16 *I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes: first for the Jew, then for the Gentile.*

The Hebrew and Greek words for “salvation” imply the ideas of deliverance, safety, preservation, healing, and soundness:

- “Salvation” is the great inclusive word of the Gospel, gathering into itself all the redemptive acts and processes: as justification, redemption, grace, propitiation, imputation, forgiveness, sanctification, and glorification.
- Salvation is in three tenses:
 1. the Christian **has been** saved from the guilt and penalty of sin (Luke 7:50; 1 Cor 1:18; 2 Cor 2:15; Eph 2:5,8; 2 Tim 1:9) and is safe;
 2. the Christian **is being** saved from the habit and dominion of sin (Rom 6:14; 8:2; 2 Cor 3:18; Gal 2:19-20; Phil 1:19; 2:12-13; 2 Th 2:13), and;
 3. the Christian **will be** saved at the Lord’s return, from all our human failures, which are the result of sin and God’s curse upon this sinful world (Rom 8:18-23; 1 Cor 15:42-44), and brought into complete conformity to Christ (Rom 13:11; Heb 10:36; 1 Pet 1:5; 1 John 3:2).

6. SUMMARY

- The Bible is then, for Christians, their final authority for living.
- It places a requirement on the Christian to act according to the contents of the Bible.
- It judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart of mankind, setting a lifestyle that is beneficial to, not only the Christian, but society at large.
- The effects of the Bible on society, working through the lives of individuals, is seen in most of history’s major social changes, from the abolition of slavery, reform of the prisons, education reforms, creation of building societies, mutual insurances, the establishment of co-operative societies etc.

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