

Faith Cometh by Hearing the Word of God

It is one thing to acknowledge that we need the firm truth of God's Word and even that every word in the whole Bible is inspired of God. But, what good does it do if we are not open to receiving and applying it? There are *very* many people who are open to acknowledging but they steadfastly refuse to give *in* to God. They *would* give in to God as long as God wants what they want. Instead of praying "Thy will be done," they pray, "My will be done." This makes God more of a genie in a bottle who is going to grant us what we wish instead of Him being the Lord of our Life. We just don't seem to like being told what to do. Nevertheless, God's Word has the power to draw us.

Everything we need to know to be saved is in the Bible. If someone makes a claim that is not Scriptural, then we can know he is a false teacher. There are no extra revelations. Once the Bible was completed, we needed nothing else. All the visions, the 90 minutes in heavens, the 23 minutes in hell, the dreams, the special Mormon glasses mean nothing. As interesting and inexplicable as they might be, they are nothing compared to the certainty of God's Word. They don't ever count as anything. Satan mixes truth with error and transforms himself into an angel of light. God's Word trumps experience whether it is a shiver and a shaking or an electric feeling. Experiences and feelings change but God's Word never changes.

We read about the interaction between Jesus and the father of the demonically possessed child:

Mark 9:23-24 Jesus said unto him, If thou canst believe, all things *are* possible to him that believeth.

24 And straightway the father of the child cried out, and said with tears, Lord, I believe; help thou mine unbelief.

Getting faith is a common concern.

How did this man get faith? I marvel at those who armed with sincere repentance need only basic salvation verses before praying and receiving Christ as their Savior. People today get faith the same way that man did. Keep in mind that this *Jewish* man probably had an upbringing in the synagogue with the Bible. If not, he was with Jesus, Who *is* the Word. Anyone sincerely concerned about their sin doesn't need a Doctoral Degree studying the Bible, but they can't get saved without the specific instructions of salvation from the Bible. This is what we are going to examine today. How do you get faith? From hearing the Word of God, the Bible.

Rom 10:13-17 For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.

14 How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher?

15 And how shall they preach, except they be sent? as it is written, How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things!

16 But they have not all obeyed the gospel. For Esaias saith, Lord, who hath believed our report?

17 So then faith *cometh* by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.

What everyone should expect when they hear Bible preaching is how to change. It might be their own attitude toward sin, their attitude toward their neighbor, or their attitude toward God. This is what it means to grow in faith by the Word of God.

1. The Word begets us -

The Word will beget us. You see the word beget in the genealogies, like David begot Solomon. In other words, Solomon

was born to David. The Word is the seed planted in us that is used to make us born again.

- The Bible searches us

First, when we start *sincerely* reading God's Word, we notice that it is not a religious text about how to bow and kneel, or how to properly perform religious ceremonies.

Heb 4:12 For the word of God *is* quick [living], and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and *is* a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

When we search the Bible, there is someone that is searching us. The Bible is alive as God, Himself. It causes us to think, discerning our thoughts and intents. Just reading the Bible doesn't make you a Christian, but you can't get saved without the draw of the Bible.

- God speaks to us personally

As we read the Scripture, you can count on the fact that God is speaking to each individual. You can talk to people *about* the Scriptures, you can even quote the Scriptures, but the transformation of someone's attitude when they actually *read* the Scriptures is phenomenal. I have been told by some that the Scriptures mean nothing to them and that there is nothing that could convince them there is a God, until I took out the Bible and read it with them anyway.

Isa 55:8-11 For my thoughts *are* not your thoughts, neither *are* your ways my ways, saith the LORD.

9 For *as* the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts.

10 For as the rain cometh down, and the snow from heaven, and

returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh 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 goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper *in the thing* whereto I sent it.

Reading the Scripture does not automatically convert people, but it does confront and challenge them personally. A sincere person will be drawn. An insincere person will resist and become hardened.

- God draws us to Himself

John 6:39-45 And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of **all which he hath given me** I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day.

40 And this is the will of him that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life: and I will raise him up at the last day.

...

44 **No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him:** and I will raise him up at the last day.

45 It is written in the prophets, And they shall be all taught of God. **Every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me.**

In the context of John's Gospel, Jesus is identified with the Father. The Father had drawn people by the prophets in the Old Testament. Those who heard the prophets were given to Christ. The key element was how God drew His people through the *writings* of the prophets:

Isa 55:6-7 Seek ye the LORD while he may be found, call ye

upon him while he is near:

7 Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the LORD, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon.

Jer 29:13 And ye shall seek me, and find *me*, when ye shall search for me with all your heart.

Zech 1:3 Therefore say thou unto them, Thus saith the LORD of hosts; Turn ye unto me, saith the LORD of hosts, and I will turn unto you, saith the LORD of hosts.

- God does this by presenting the Gospel to us

In the Old Testament, where God spoke to Israel through the prophets. Now, His message is enhanced as He speaks to men through the crucifixion and resurrection of Christ.

John 12:32 And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all *men* unto me.

1Tim 3:16 And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory.

The way we know about the crucifixion and resurrection is through the Word of God.

Jas 1:18 Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth, that we should be a kind of firstfruits of his creatures.

1Pet 1:23 Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever.

- The Word of God speaks to the depths of our heart

The Word speaks to us. It resonates with our Spirit. It strikes a sympathetic cord (sympathetic resonance). Sometimes you can't find a word, or an expression, for what you are thinking. But then someone gives a speech and it rouses something in you. Or perhaps a counselor brings an explanation for you that you couldn't figure out how to say. The Word of God, though, speaks to the deepest needs of our soul.

Rom 8:16 The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God:

1Cor 2:10-13 But God hath revealed *them* unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God.

11 For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God.

12 Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God.

13 Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual.

Heb 4:2 For unto us was the gospel preached, as well as unto them: but the word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard *it*.

Acts 17:11 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.

John 6:63 It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, *they* are spirit, and *they* are life.

Jas 1:21 Wherefore lay apart all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness, and receive with meekness the engrafted word, which is able to save your souls.

- And last of all, let's not forget that Jesus *is* the Word

John 1:1-5 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

2 The same was in the beginning with God.

3 All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made.

4 In him was life; and the life was the light of men.

5 And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not.

When we receive the message of the Word of God, we are receiving Jesus Christ. It is at that point when you pray, ask eternal forgiveness, and are saved.

2. The Word sanctifies us -

The effect of the Word of God on hearts doesn't end there. We are but babes in Christ, ready to receive a lifetime of support and learning from the Bible.

2Tim 4:1-4 I charge *thee* therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom;

2 Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine.

3 For the time will come when

they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears;
4 And they shall turn away *their* ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables.

John 17:17 Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth.

3. The Word protects us -

The Word of God also protects us from outside influence. There are false prophets who will not leave you alone. As we study the Bible, we will find ways to fend off the false prophets.

Gal 1:6-10 I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel:

7 Which is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ.

8 But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed.

9 As we said before, so say I now again, If any *man* preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed.

10 For do I now persuade men, or God? or do I seek to please men? for if I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ.

Eph 4:11-15 And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers;

12 For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ:

13 Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect

man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ:

14 That we *henceforth* be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, *and* cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive;

15 But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, *even* Christ:

4. We use the Word to bring the world to Christ -

The Word begets us, the Word sanctifies us, the Word protects us, but all of this would not be complete without one last step: we take the Word of God to the world to fulfill Christ's Great Commission.

Matt 28:18-20 And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth.

19 Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost:

20 Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, *even* unto the end of the world. Amen.

Eph 6:17 And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God:

Titus 1:9 Holding fast the faithful word as he hath been taught, that he may be able by sound doctrine both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers.

I would recommend you either believe God up to the hilt, or else not to believe at all. Believe this book of God, every letter of it, or else reject it. There is no logical standing place between the two. Be satisfied

with nothing less than a faith that swims in the deeps of divine revelation; a faith that paddles about the edge of the water is poor faith at best. It is little better than a dry-land faith, and is not good for much.

– C.H. Spurgeon

If you have not been born into the family of God by salvation, then I hope you heard enough of the Word to draw you to receive Him today. If God's Word has spoken to you, let me encourage you to repent and call on Jesus to forgive you for all eternity.

If you are a child of God, let me encourage you to take God's Word into your heart so you can let it draw you to repent of anything that is weighing you down. Take that Word and then share it with others to make not just a world of difference, but an eternity of difference.

Mark 9:23-24, Rom 10:13-17

1. The Word begets us - Heb 4:12, Isa 55:8-11, John 6:39-45, Isa 55:6-7, Jer 29:13, Zech 1:3, John 12:32, 1Tim 3:16, Jas 1:18, 1Pet 1:23, Rom 8:16, 1Cor 2:10-13, Heb 4:2, Acts 17:11, John 6:63, Jas 1:21, John 1:1-5
2. The Word sanctifies us - 2Tim 4:1-4, John 17:17
3. The Word protects us - Gal 1:6-10, Eph 4:11-15
4. We use the Word to bring the world to Christ - Matt 28:18-20, Eph 6:17, Titus 1:9