

The Supreme Importance and Value of God's Word

God's inspired word is fully sufficient to meet all the behavioral needs of a born-again child of God. This is plain from 2 Timothy 3:16-17, "All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works."

We say that we believe this but we often betray by our actions that we do not believe it as fervently as we should. If we really believe this we will spend much more time in the Bible. When we are confronted with a problem we will make a **diligent** and **prayerful** search of the inspired word for the solution.

Let us examine the passage quoted above. First, all scripture is given by the "inspiration" of God. The Greek word translated "inspiration" is *theo,pneusto* (*theopneustos*). It is a compound word which literally means "God-breathed." Even though God used men in the process of inspiration, He did so in such a way that every word was written exactly as He willed. The Bible is verbally inspired.

The word of God is "profitable." This Greek word is *o~~w~~fe,limoj* (*ophelimos*). It means "helpful, serviceable." The word of God really works in our daily lives. It does not merely present theory.

This inspired word is profitable in four distinct but connected ways. First, it is profitable for "doctrine". This word is *didaskali,a* (*didaskalia*), and means "teaching or instruction." The first thing the word of God does in practical daily living is to instruct us as to what the Lord would have us to do. Next is "reproof." This word is *e;legcoj* (*elegchos*) and means "conviction." The word of God instructs us about God's standards and then convicts us when we fail to meet them. It, in effect, knocks us down.

Thankfully, God doesn't leave us down. The next function of His word is "correction." This word is *ep~~a~~no,rqwsij* (*epanorthosis*). It means "to lift up, to straighten up again." This is a beautiful picture of what the word of God does in our lives. It teaches us God's standard. It "knocks us down" as it convicts us of our failures to conform to those standards. Then it picks us up and puts on the right

way. There is one final step in this spiritual process. The word is then used for "instruction in righteousness." The word translated "instruction" is *paideia* (*paideia*). It means "education, training, discipline." It often refers to the training of children and is translated "nurture" in Ephesians 6: 4. God's word trains and disciplines us as we endeavor to habitually obey it.

A word picture may be useful here. The word of God shows us where the train track is. It shows us when we get off the track, puts us back on it, and makes sure that we stay on it.

When all this is done our text tells us that the man of God is "perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works." The word translated "perfect" is *artios* (*artios*) and means "complete." He is complete in the sense that he is equipped to do the good works that God requires of him. The word translated "thoroughly furnished" is *exartizō* (*exartizo*). It means to be "fully fitted or fully equipped; to be completely prepared for a special purpose." In his *Synonyms of the New Testament*, R. C. Trench writes of this expression: "The man of God, St. Paul would say..., should be furnished and accomplished with all which is necessary for the carrying out of the work to which he is appointed." Putting all this together we have an amazing claim and a reason for great encouragement. There is much claimed for the usefulness of the word of God here. This text tells us that all we need to live lives pleasing to God is found in the Bible. The encouragement comes from the fact that we have been given everything we need to overcome life's problems and to habitually live what God would deem to be a spiritually successful life. Paul is really saying the same thing here that David said in Psalm 1.

Knowing all this, what must we do about it? Two things we must pursue are **diligent study** and **fervent, believing prayer**.

Diligent Study

We must use our minds to dig deeply into God's word. This should be our number one priority, not just an afterthought. We must not give God our "leftovers." Paul told Timothy in 2 Timothy 2:15, "Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth." The word

translated "study" is *spoudazw* (*spoudazo*). This is a very strong word. The expanded translation is "to use speed, i. e. to make effort, be prompt or earnest, do diligently, endeavor, labor." Paul is writing to a gospel minister here, but the principle applies in large part to each child of God.

To really live for God we must be **regular, diligent** Bible readers. Not only must we read, we must study. As your pastor, I would be very happy to introduce any of you to some study methods, study helps, etc.

Another wonderful way to benefit by the word of God is to **memorize** it. When you memorize a portion of Scripture you are compelled to think about it in much more detail than you would by just reading it. When you have got a section memorized then you are in a position to **meditate** or think deeply about it. The word translated "meditate" in 1 Tim. 4: 15 is *meletaw* (*meletao*). It means "to revolve in the mind."

In the Old Testament there are a couple of very interesting words that are translated "meditate" and "meditation." We read in Joshua 1:8, "This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth; but thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein: for then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success." The word translated "meditate" here is *hagah*. It comes from a root that means to "murmur or mutter." This meaning was expanded to mean "imagine, ponder, muse, study." The root is very interesting. It conveys the idea of one who is so deep in thought that he is muttering to himself, perhaps under his breath, being so deeply in thought that he is not even aware that he is doing so. He is concentrating deeply on some precious thought from the word of God. A similar word is used in Psalms 119:97, where David exclaims fervently, "O how love I thy law! it is my meditation all the day." This Hebrew word is *siyach*. It means "to ponder, converse with oneself." Here the individual is so deeply concerned with what he is thinking about he is talking to himself!

This kind of meditation is almost a lost practice among God's people today, but a return to it would pay immense dividends in drawing close to God and in receiving strength to live by.

Fervent, Believing Prayer

Have you ever been reading a book and wish that you had access to the author so that you could ask him or her what he really meant in a certain place? Well, we have that opportunity when it comes to the Bible! God wrote the Bible, He is alive, and we have access to Him in prayer. When pondering a passage of Scripture we might learn as much or more on our knees before Him than we would by reading a commentary. We are usually in such a hurry that we do not "wrestle" with Him in prayer over the meaning of a portion of Holy Writ.

David prayed with fervency in Psalms 119:18 "Open thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of thy law."

Paul prayed in Ephesians 1:18-20, "The eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that ye may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints, And what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power, Which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places,"

He also prayed in Ephesians 3:18-19, that the Ephesian saints "May be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; And to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fulness of God."

How precious when the Lord Jesus Christ Himself opens to us the Scriptures as we read in Luke 24:32, "And they said one to another, Did not our heart burn within us, while he talked with us by the way, and while he opened to us the scriptures?" Again, it is written in Luke 24:45, "Then opened he their understanding, that they might understand the scriptures..."

My Design

Dear saints, my design in this little study is to remind you of what a treasure we have in God's inspired word and to motivate you to a revival in your Bible reading, studying, meditation, and praying. Concerning the word of God, may it be said of us the same thing that is recorded in Psalms 19:10, "More to be desired are they than gold, yea, than much fine gold: sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb."

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