

THE GIFT OF GOD'S WORD

jkroberts_us@yahoo.com

December 18, 2016

2 Timothy 3:10-17

1. Two weeks ago my message was titled, "God's Indescribable Gift," and focused on the fact that Jesus Christ has become to us wisdom from God, and righteousness, sanctification and redemption.
2. This morning I want to highlight another gift that God has given to mankind--His spoken word in written form.
3. The Psalmist valued God's Word above physical wealth.
 - a. Psalm 19:7-11
 - b. Psalm 119:72
 - c. Psalm 119:126-131
4. Peter said that we should long for the sincere milk of the word. 1 Peter 2:1-3
"Therefore, putting aside all malice and all deceit and hypocrisy and envy and all slander, 2 like newborn babies, long for the pure milk of the word, so that by it you may grow in respect to salvation, 3 if you have tasted the kindness of the Lord."
5. I think that we all understand that what David referred to as the Word was different in content than what Peter was referring to because of progressive revelation.
6. By the time Paul wrote 2 Timothy many of the books that are now a part of God's completed revelation were in circulation.
7. In fact, by the time 2 Timothy was written all of the New Testament was in written form except 2 Peter, Hebrews, Jude, John, 1,2, and 3 John, and Revelation.
8. The Bible used by the early church was the Old Testament.
9. Timothy's grandmother had come to faith through the Gospel being preached from the Old Testament.
 - a. Paul told Timothy, "From childhood you have known the sacred writings."
 - b. Earlier in this letter Paul wrote, "I am mindful of the sincere faith within you, which first dwelt in your grandmother Lois and your mother Eunice, and I am sure that it is in you as well." 2 Timothy 1:5
 - c. 2 Timothy was written around AD 67 when Timothy was in his early thirties which means that he was born not long after the Crucifixion and long before any New Testament writings were being circulated.
 - d. If you do the math it is obvious that Timothy's grandmother had been one of the early converts to Christianity. (She may have been present at Pentecost since the family was from Lystra, in Asia Minor and Paul's first visit there was around AD 48.)
10. Paul made it clear that the Old Testament record was provided for our benefit.

1 Corinthians 10:6-12

Now these things happened as examples for us, so that we would not crave evil things as they also craved. 7 Do not be idolaters, as some of them were; as it is written, "THE PEOPLE SAT DOWN TO EAT AND DRINK, AND STOOD UP TO PLAY." 8 Nor let us act immorally, as some of them did, and twenty-three thousand fell in one day. 9 Nor let us try the Lord, as some of them did, and were destroyed by the serpents. 10 Nor grumble, as some of them did, and were destroyed by the destroyer.

11 Now these things happened to them as an example, and they were written for our instruction, upon whom the ends of the ages have come. 12 Therefore let him who thinks he stands take heed that he does not fall.

11. Paul wrote that “all Scripture is inspired by God and profitable” and I take him at his word.

12. Those who confuse people by compartmentalizing the Word of God are hindering rather than helping advance God’s kingdom.

13. In the West we like to debate things like Calvinism, Arminianism, Dispensationalism and which translation of the Bible is God ordained.

14. In other parts of the world believers just embrace God’s Word in whatever form they have it and preach it in the power of the Holy Spirit to the advancement of God’s kingdom.

15. Let’s notice three things that Paul highlighted here related to the Scriptures.

I. All Scripture protects us from error.

A. Evil men and imposters will proceed from bad to worse.

B. Being deceived they will also deceive.

C. Knowing God’s Word and being convinced of the veracity of what we know protects us against false teaching and false teachers.

II. The Scriptures are able to give us the wisdom that leads to salvation.

A. The Gospel can be preached from any book in the Bible.

B. Go through the New Testament and notice all of the references to the Old Testament.

C. When Philip joined the Ethiopian eunuch in his chariot the man was reading from Isaiah 53.

D. When questioned, Philip opened his mouth, and beginning from this Scripture he preached Jesus to him. Acts 8:35

E. Jesus made this truth clear after his resurrection from the dead.

1. When He appeared to Cleopas and his friend. Luke 24:25-27

And He said to them, "O foolish men and slow of heart to believe in all that the prophets have spoken! 26 "Was it not necessary for the Christ to suffer these things and to enter into His glory?" 27 Then beginning with Moses and with all the prophets, He explained to them the things concerning Himself in all the Scriptures.

2. When He appeared to the Apostles. Luke 24:44-49

44 Now He said to them, "These are My words which I spoke to you while I was still with you, that all things which are written about Me in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms must be fulfilled." 45 Then He opened their minds to understand the Scriptures, 46 and He said to them, "Thus it is written, that the Christ would suffer and rise again from the dead the third day, 47 and that repentance for forgiveness of sins would be proclaimed in His name to all the nations, beginning from Jerusalem. 48 "You are witnesses of these things. 49 "And behold, I am sending forth the promise of My Father upon you; but you are to stay in the city until you are clothed with power from on high."

III. The Scriptures are profitable in relationship to our spiritual walk and work.

- A. For teaching the historical, instructional and doctrinal content of both the Old and New Testament.
- B. For reproof or rebuke of wrong behavior and wrong belief. 2 Timothy 4:1-4
“I charge [you] in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, Who is to judge the living and the dead, and by (in the light of) His coming and His kingdom: ²Herald and preach the Word! Keep your sense of urgency [stand by, be at hand and ready], whether the opportunity seems to be favorable or unfavorable. [**Whether it is convenient or inconvenient, whether it is welcome or unwelcome, you as preacher of the Word are to show people in what way their lives are wrong.**] And convince them, rebuking and correcting, warning and urging and encouraging them, being unflagging and inexhaustible in patience and teaching. ³For the time is coming when [people] will not tolerate (endure) sound and wholesome instruction, but, having ears itching [for something pleasing and gratifying], they will gather to themselves one teacher after another to a considerable number, chosen to satisfy their own liking and to foster the errors they hold, and will turn aside from hearing the truth and wander off into myths and man-made fictions.” (AMP)
NOTE: The modern church is a doctrinal and moral mess because this passage is ignored by many preachers and teachers today.
- C. For correction or returning someone to his or her proper doctrinal position or behavioral pattern.
- D. For training in righteousness or godly behavior.
- E. All of the above are to be faithfully performed so that the man of God may be complete and proficient, well fitted and thoroughly equipped for every good work.

APPLICATION

1. The church is indebted to godly theologians and commentators who have struggled to properly understand, expound, and explain the Word of God.
2. The problem is that the average believer is not going to spend the time necessary to examine and sort out the various points of view and sometimes contradictory conclusions these expositors have come to.
3. However God has made it possible for you and me to become totally familiar with the Word of God.

“The translated word of God is our sword taken out of its scabbard. How much good would it do a Christian who understood only his mother tongue if this sword were sheathed in Hebrew or Greek? Like John, he might weep at the sight of the sealed book which he could not read. So let us bless God who sent not angels but men, equipped by God’s anointing on their work, with the ability to roll away the stone from the mouth of the fountain... Bless God for the ministry of the Word. Think about the times when persecutors drew bloody swords to keep God’s people from coming close to this tree (the word of God) and you will have a clear channel for thanksgiving to flow. And look back to all the years of spiritual ignorance when this cellar (treasury) of living water was locked up in the original tongues and there was not a key anywhere in the city. Surely we can bless God for bringing His Word all the way to our understanding.”
William Gurnall (1616-1679)

4. From a personal standpoint there is no substitute for reading and rereading the Word of God and pouring over the pages of Scripture until our minds and hearts are saturated with the content of God's Word.
5. The best commentary on the Bible is the Bible and the best teacher is the Holy Spirit.
6. As we become more and more familiar with the content of Scripture we will be able to discern truth from error and properly identify the teachers and resources that can help us grow.
7. We will also be equipped to handle accurately the Word of God and be able to witness to and counsel others.