

## The Word of God And Ministry

**Purpose:** To create in the students a desire to apply the principles of the Word of God in ministry.

**Objectives:** By the end of the lesson the students will:

1. Be able to explain the reason the Word of God is so important in ministry.
2. Be willing to submit to the Word of God in doing ministry.

**Key Verse:** Hebrews 4:12

*(Read the Scriptures listed. Don't interject a lot of your own thoughts or it will go long. The reason for so many verses is to let the Word do It's work in the life of the hearer. These Scriptures are self-explanatory for the most part. Mark the verses in your Bible ahead of time so you can easily open to them.)*

### I. Introduction

The Word of God and the work of the Holy Spirit working through believers is what changes lives in evangelism. But many times we rely too heavily on our own wisdom and our own ability to convince. We think that our ability to explain the Word is what brings people to repentance and growth. Yes, we need to apply ourselves to the Word, we need to handle it accurately, and deliver it well. But it is the Word that changes lives more than our explanation of it. We are simply vehicles through which it works, and we need to be good vehicles.

**Transition:** Why do we need to rely solely on God's Word? There are three critical and vital reasons.

### II. The Word of God Cuts to the Root of Every Issue

The prophet Jeremiah says, "The heart is more deceitful than all else and is desperately sick; Who can understand it?" (Jeremiah 17:9). Our heart is constantly deceiving us into thinking we are better than we are. The Word cuts through that. In verse 10 Jeremiah continues, "I, the Lord, search the heart, I test the mind, even to give to each man according to his ways, according to the results of his deeds." And how does God search the heart? Hebrews tells us, "For the word of God is living and active and sharper than any two-edged sword, and piercing as far as the division of soul and spirit, of both joints and marrow, and able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart." Hebrews 4:12

**Transition:** The Word gets to the heart of the matter. What we cannot perceive, it clearly reveals. God's desire for us, our sanctification, can only be accomplished as the Word shows us where we are not sanctified (John 17:17). Psychology cannot do this for us, sociology cannot do this for us. Only the Word can accurately reveal the true intents of our hearts. But not only does it reveal the true motivations of our heart, it also shows us the way to purify our heart. And unlike man's methods, we can be assured that it will always work. Listen to these words from Isaiah.

### III. The Word of God Always Works

"For as the rain and the snow come down from heaven, and do not return there without watering the earth, and making it bear and sprout, and furnishing seed to the sower and bread to the eater; so shall My word be which goes forth from My mouth; it shall not return to Me empty, without accomplishing what I desire, and without succeeding in the matter for which I sent it." Isaiah 55:10-11

Jeremiah adds, "Is not My word like fire?" declares the Lord, "and like a hammer which shatters a rock?" Jeremiah 23:29. Two word pictures are given here. The first describes the purifying activity of the Word. Fire burns off the dross. It gets rid of impurities. The second picture describes a shaping activity. The stonecutter removes unneeded rock by breaking it off. This brings out what the Craftsman intended for the rock, what the rock could never accomplish on its own. In both cases, the Word accomplishes what God has sent it to do, to purify for Himself a people for his own possession, zealous for good deeds (Titus 2:11-15).

This, however, does not mean that everyone will repent when they hear the Word. On the contrary, the Word of God was sent to the Jews through Isaiah (6:9-10), Jeremiah (1:9-12) and Ezekiel (2:3-8) for condemnation, that they would have no excuse at the judgment. Jesus reiterates this, "If the word had not been preached to them, they would not be guilty" (John 15:22). This, too, is one of the ways in which the Word does not return without accomplishing what God wants it to do.

For some, the Word lived through us is an aroma of life. For others, it is an aroma of death (2 Corinthians 2:14-17). God's word always works. It always accomplishes what it was sent to do. Sometimes, it opens blind eyes, sometimes it keeps them closed. Whatever it was sent to do, it accomplishes it. So, it should always be the primary tool we use.

Transition: For the believer who trusts in the Word and does not reject it, it has one more benefit. It brings life to him.

### IV. The Word of God Gives Life to its Adherents

Deuteronomy 32:45-47 records this about the Word: "When Moses had finished speaking all these words to all Israel, he said to them, 'Take to your heart all the words with which I am warning you today, which you shall command your sons to observe carefully, even all the words of this law. For it is not an idle word for you, indeed it is your life. And by this word you shall prolong your days in the land, which you are about to cross the Jordan to possess.'"

The Word is our life, even as "the Word who became flesh" is the life (John 1:14; 14:6). The Word isn't one of many things that bring us life. It is the only thing that brings us life, when we trust it. Listen to what Peter says about it.

"Grace and peace be multiplied to you in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord; seeing that His divine power has granted to us everything pertaining to life and godliness, through the true knowledge of Him who called us by His own glory and excellence. For by these He has

granted to us His precious and magnificent promises, in order that by them you might become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world by lust.” 2 Peter 1:2-4

Everything we need to know concerning life and godliness is found in the Word. We need go nowhere else. God has provided in the Scriptures all we need to live well with ourselves, others, the world around us and Himself. Listen to some of the things it does for us from Psalm 19:7-11: It restores the soul, makes the simple wise, causes the heart to rejoice, enlightens the eyes, warns us and rewards us. Study Psalm 119:97-105 for a rich description of what the applied Word does for a person.

Transition: The Word, rightly used, is the most powerful weapon that God has given to us for making disciples. Like any good soldier, the better we know how to use it, the greater the impact it will have. Here are some general guidelines on how to use the Word.

## V. How to Use the Word

- 2 Timothy 2:14-17: with diligence, handle the word accurately, avoiding worldly and empty chatter.
- 1 Timothy 4:13, 15-16: publicly, with exhortation and teaching.
- 1 Thessalonians 2:3-6a: not from error, impurity, deceit, flattery, or greed, not to get men's approval, but God's.
- 2 Timothy 2:24-26: with gentleness correcting

To sum it up Paul writes to Timothy . . .

"All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness; that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work" (2 Timothy 3:16-17).

## VI. Conclusion

Listen to these last words from Jesus to the Father as He was handing over the ministry to his disciples.

"I have glorified Thee on the earth, having accomplished the work which Thou hast given me to do . . . for the words which Thou gavest Me I have given to them; . . . I have given them Thy word; . . . Sanctify them in the truth, Thy word is truth. As Thou did send me into the world, so I send them. . . and for those who believe in Me through their word" (John 17:4, 8, 14, 17, 18).

Paul handed over the reigns of ministry to Timothy with these words,

"I solemnly charge you in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who is to judge the living and the dead, and by His appearing and His kingdom: **preach the word**; be ready in season and out of season; **reprove, rebuke, exhort, with great patience and instruction**. For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but wanting to have their

ears tickled, they will accumulate for themselves teachers in accordance to their own desires; and **they will turn away from the truth, and will turn aside to myths.** But you, be sober in all things, endure hardship, do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry.” (2 Timothy 4:1-5)

And I leave you with the same charge. Preach the word, be ready in season and out of season, reprove, rebuke, exhort with all patience and instruction.

If you want to glorify Christ on earth, then you need to entrust the words given to you to others who will be able to entrust them to others also.