

Fil-Am Community Church
Pastor David Bennett
14 Sept 2014

Why We Study the Word of God?

Good Morning Fil-Am church, it is so good to see so many of you here this morning, for time sake let's get into the word of God or more importantly let's get the word of God into us.

There are many different reasons we study the Word of God a few of them are because the Word of God is...

- ✓ The Source of Truth
- ✓ The Source of Happiness
- ✓ The Source of Victory
- ✓ The Source of Growth
- ✓ The Source of Guidance

I. The Source of Truth

Jesus was the only preacher who made his congregations smaller with his sermons. He would have big crowds following him and then he would come up with a line like, "Unless you deny your mother and father yea, your own life, you cannot be my Disciple."

The Bible says those people left. Why?
Because he never let the crowd control the truth.

Psalms 119:89, ⁸⁹"Forever O Lord your word is settled in heaven."

And it should be settled in our hearts as well as our practice.

The Bible should be the sole **standard** for everything this church does.

John 17:17, ¹⁷"Sanctify them in truth, your word is truth."

This world is filled with people who are **searching** for truth.

If a church offers **TRUTH** as the only dish on the menu, then it will **offend** some, but others will come to hear that truth and hopefully will give themselves to it.

II. The Source of Happiness

We should study the Bible not only because it is the source of truth, but also because it is the source of happiness or joy.

Luke 11:28, says, “... *Blessed are they that hear the word of God, and observe it.*”

In John 16 Jesus said to the disciples, “I’m leaving” (v. 16).

Well, they just sat there very downcast because they had invested everything to follow Jesus and now he was leaving.

Everybody had left their trade and had been following Jesus for three years. Then Jesus said, “One day soon I’m going to leave, guys.”

They all thought, “Now wait a minute, we joined this deal thinking the kingdom was going to come.

What’s wrong?” They were very sorrowful, so Jesus says in John 16:20,

“²⁰ Truly, truly, I say to you, that you will weep and lament, but the world will rejoice; you will grieve, but your grief will be turned into joy.

In other words, “You’ve got to realize that sometimes there’s going to be sorrow before there’s ever going to be joy.” In fact, if we didn’t know sorrow, we wouldn’t understand joy when it came. If we didn’t know pain, we wouldn’t know pleasure.

I ran across an interesting article that said the difference between an itch and a tickle cannot be defined medically. Yet, a tickle is something that makes you happy, and an itch is something that irritates.

The difference between pleasure and pain can be a very fine line. For example, sometimes there's nothing more wonderful than a real hot shower, but you have to ease in because of the pain; then all of a sudden, ahhh! The thin line between pain and pleasure.

If we didn't know pain we wouldn't know the joy that pleasure could bring. I think one of the reasons God allows sorrow in our lives is so we will understand joy when it comes.

So, why should we study the Bible, because...

- ✓ It's the source of truth,
- ✓ It's the source of happiness

A third motivating force, and the third reason to study the Bible, is that the Word is:

III. The Source of Victory

If you have to choose between winning and losing, almost everyone would say winning is better.

It is the same for my Christian life, rather than defeat we would rather have Victory.

I remember my many different coaches in High School giving us the typical motivation speech saying, "You **can't** be beat, if you **won't** be beat."

How would it be if we, as Christians, or we as a church, thought like that? We can't be defeated if we **refuse to be defeated!**

There's no reason to give in to the enemy, because as you study the Bible, you'll find out that the Word of God becomes the **source of victory**.

The Word is the source of victory over sin.

As the Word of God is taken in, it becomes the resource which the Holy Spirit uses to direct us.

We have no way of preventing ourselves from being led into sin, unless the Word of God is there, so that it can be brought into our conscious mind.

Let me give you something basic to understand:

- ✓ You'll never function on what you **don't know**.
- ✓ We'll never be able to operate on a principle **we never knew**.
- ✓ We'll never be able to apply a truth we **haven't discovered**.

So as we feed into our minds the Word of God, it becomes the resource by which the Spirit of God directs and guides. Now let's look at some specific examples of the Word's effectiveness.

Victory over Satan (Matt. 4:1-11)

⁴ "Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. ² And after He had fasted forty days and forty nights, He then became hungry. ³ And the tempter came and said to Him, "If You are the Son of God, command that these stones become bread."

What he's really saying to Jesus is this: "Listen, You're the Son of God, You deserve better than this;

- ✓ What are you doing out here in this wretched wilderness?
- ✓ What are you doing out here starving to death?
- ✓ You're the Son of God, grab some satisfaction, make some bread,
- ✓ You deserve it."

Satan was really tempting Him to go against God's plan, to grab His own satisfaction.

He was saying, "Do your own thing, don't depend on God; He hasn't met your need."

Satan was really tempting Jesus to distrust the care of God.

⁴ But He answered and said, "It is written, 'MAN SHALL NOT LIVE ON BREAD ALONE, BUT ON EVERY WORD THAT PROCEEDS OUT OF THE MOUTH OF GOD.'"

*⁵ "Then the devil *took Him into the holy city and had Him stand on the pinnacle of the temple, ⁶ and *said to Him, "If You are the Son of God, throw Yourself down; for it is written HE WILL COMMAND HIS ANGELS CONCERNING YOU'*

and 'ON their HANDS THEY WILL BEAR YOU UP, SO THAT YOU WILL NOT STRIKE YOUR FOOT AGAINST A STONE.'"

He said, "If You want to trust God, if you're going to believe God, well, why don't you really believe God and take a swan dive off here and see if He fulfills His Word?"

However,⁷ *Jesus said to him, "On the other hand, it is written, 'YOU SHALL NOT PUT THE LORD YOUR GOD TO THE TEST.'"*

⁸ *"Again, the devil took Him to a very high mountain and *showed Him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory; ⁹ and he said to Him, "All these things I will give you, if you fall down and worship me."*

¹⁰ *Then Jesus said to him, "Go, Satan! For it is written, 'YOU SHALL WORSHIP THE LORD YOUR GOD, AND SERVE HIM ONLY.'"*¹¹ *Then the devil left Him; and behold, angels came and began to minister to Him."*

God fulfilled all His promises.

The point is this: Jesus answered the temptation of Satan three times, and every time He quoted directly from the Word of God.

Listen, as a Christian, it is the capturing of biblical truth in our conscious mind that gives us the capacity to defeat Satan.

We can't do it on our own.

Jesus literally triumphed over the devil through the Word of God; it is the **source of victory, for him and for us.**

In Ephesians chapter 6, Paul's talks about putting on the Full Armor of God, and we see of all the pieces of armor only one is an offensive weapon, the "Sword of the Spirit" which is the Word of God."

Now when we think of a sword, we usually think of a long sword like one you see on Conan the Barbarian, or Brave heart, or the one that Gandalf carried in the Lord of the Rings, however this is not the type of sword Paul is describing.

The Greek word for that type of sword is *rhomphaia*. But the Greek word used here is *machaira*, which refers to a short, small dagger, like the shorter sword carried by the Roman foot soldiers.

I was thinking about this the other night when Isaac and his friends were in the basement playing a new video game, called Ryse. The main character was called the Son of Rome, as he was a soldier and one of the weapons he carried was his short sword.

In order to win with this weapon he had to get in close and fight hand to hand, face to face, and you had to make very precise moves in order to defeat the enemy.

The sword of the Spirit, therefore, is not a huge sword that you just flail around, hoping that you'll whack off the head of a demon sooner or later.

It is not something you use indiscriminately or wildly. But the sword of the Spirit is a *machaira*; it is more like a dagger, it must hit a precise spot in order to do damage.

The sword of the Spirit is not something general, but very specific.

The only way Christians will know victory in the Christian life is for them to know the principles of the Word of God so that they can apply them to the specific points...

- ✓ Where Satan attacks,
- ✓ Where the Flesh attacks,
- ✓ Where the World attacks.

Studying the Word of God, produces benefits for believers because it is...

- ✓ It's the source of Truth,
- ✓ It's the source of Joy,
- ✓ It's the source of Victory.

The Word of God is also...

IV. The Source of Growth

One of the saddest things to see is Christians who don't grow spiritually. The reason they don't grow is because they really don't study the Word.

You would never think a child would advance from elementary school to middle school, junior High or High school without making the grade and hitting the books, so how do we think we as Christians mature without hitting books.

Many people go to church every Sunday and they take a spiritual thimble, fill it up with all they heard from the sermon or lesson, and spill it on the steps as they're leaving.

That's why so many live such defeated lives, Peter describes it in **1 Peter 2:2**, *"As newborn babes, desire the pure milk of the word, that ye may grow by it."*

In other words, the Word of God is the **Source of Growth**.

When I was a younger Christian, I will be honest with you; I really didn't grow that much.

It wasn't until I faced a crisis and then I would pour through the Word of God, looking for relief. However, as soon as relief was achieved, I would fall back into my same state of mind and not really get into the Word.

That all changed when I went to seminary at Liberty University, because I was forced to get into the Word on a daily basis, with assignments for school, working up **IMPACT** classes, home group lessons, and Boundaries classes, plus an occasional sermon from time to time.

While I was forced to get in the Word Daily, I found that areas in my life, which I had struggled with for years, were easily defeated because I stayed in the Word.

I had this desire to grow, in knowledge and spiritual maturity and was smart enough to know that there was only one way it was going to happen. That is to study the Word of God, not just a casual reader but one that Studies the Word, for meaning, for ways of defeating the enemy.

My growth, then, was directly proportionate to the amount of time and effort I spent in the study of the Word of God, and to be honest so were my blessings.

The Word is a source of life that helps us mature and grow stronger; then we are able to defeat Satan, and we come to know more about God and His character.

In John 6:63 Jesus says, ⁶³ *It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh profits nothing; the words that I have spoken to you are spirit and are life.*”

James 1:18 says, ⁴⁸ *In the exercise of His will He brought us forth by the word of truth, so that we would be a kind of first fruits among His creatures.*

The Word is a...

- ✓ A life-giver,
- ✓ A life-sustainer,
- ✓ A life-builder.

It is tremendous nourishment. That's feeding on the Word of God!

God wants us mature;

- ✓ He wants us built up
- ✓ He wants us strong

Saints, there is nothing wrong with being a Baby Christian, we all started there, but there is something wrong with staying a baby.

You cheat yourself if you stay a baby.

You've got to get to the place where you've begun to walk in the very presence of the God of the universe, where you really begin to touch the Person Himself. That's the ultimate end of growth.

So when you study the Word, it becomes the source of...

- ✓ It's the source of Truth,
- ✓ It's the source of Joy,
- ✓ It's the source of Victory
- ✓ The Source of Growth

It also becomes the source of...

V. The Source of Power

Most people get where they want to by a car. The POWER, the force in the car, takes them where they want to go.

All the person has to do is position themselves correctly. In other words, if the car is in the garage and if the person is in the house, they may have what they need to make the trip, but they will not be located in the right relationship to it.

The problem is not the individual's inability to make the trip, the problem is that they are not in correct relationship to the thing designed to provide the POWER to bring them to the next destination or to a certain location.

Many times we stay stuck in the Christian life because we are not in right relationship to the provisions, to the force, to the POWER, to the engine designed to get us where God wants us to be.

It is not that we don't have the POWER of know the guidelines. The interesting thing about Grace is that God has put the Motor inside you.

It's called the New Nature. If any man is in Christ, he's a NEW Creation.

The motor has already been planted inside of you. So in order to feel the POWER to use the POWER to enjoy the POWER all we have to do is be in proper alignment with God.

It is the Word of God that infuses us with power, however, there's nothing worse than feeling like a powerless Christian.

In Acts 1:8 we read, ⁸ *"But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be my witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and even to the remotest part of the earth."*

The Greek word for "power" is *dunamis*, which means "miraculous power" or "dynamite."

Now someone might say that you ought to be exploding all over the world with this tremendous power.

Sometimes we get hung up with our insecurities because we really don't know the "**power**" available to us. Listen, the Word of God will infuse us with "power."

From my own life I've realized that the more I know about the Word of God, the less I fear any situation, because the Word is **My Resource**.

In fact, let's look at various scriptures to see *how* the Bible is a resource for power:

Hebrews 4:12, "For the word of God is living, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing 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."

Hebrews 4:12 Amplified Bible

¹² For the Word that God speaks is alive and full of power [making it active, operative, energizing, and effective]; it is sharper than any two-edged sword, penetrating to the dividing line of the breath of life (soul) and [the immortal] spirit, and of joints and marrow [of the deepest parts of our nature], exposing and sifting and analyzing and judging the very thoughts and purposes of the heart.

When you pick up the Bible and read it, it will cut to the very depths of your being. The Bible is a powerful book!

Romans 1:16, The apostle Paul said, "For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ; for it is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth."

When you share the gospel with someone, you can see its power as it crumbles every bit of false philosophy built up over the years.

Ephesians 4:23, "And be renewed in the spirit of your mind."

Our thinking will change.

Romans 12:2 (NASB)

² "And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good an acceptable and perfect."

- ✓ As we focus on the Word of God, the power it will have in our lives is incredible.

- ✓ As we meditate on it, it empowers us.
- ✓ As we feed on the Word of God, it's going to come right back out in our lives.
- ✓ It's our source of energy.

When you study the Word, it becomes the source of...

- ✓ It's the source of Truth,
- ✓ It's the source of Joy,
- ✓ It's the source of Victory
- ✓ The Source of Growth
- ✓ The Source of Power

And also the.....

VI. The Source of Guidance

Whenever I want to know what God wants me to do, I go to the Word. You hear people say, "*I'm searching for the will of God.*"

Is God's will lost?

God's will is easy to find; it's within the pages of this Book.

When we study the Bible, we find over and over again the phrase, "This is the will of God."

We can know the will of God by studying the Word of God. What does Psalm 119:105 say? "*Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path.*"

That's pretty simple, the Word is a guide. As I open the Word of God, it guides me.

It's amazing how God speaks to me through His Word. If I have a decision to make, I find the place in the Bible where possibly someone in the Old Testament or New Testament grappled with a similar decision. I try and see how God led them. Or I'll go to a text in the Bible that gives me a direct answer. God guides and directs us out of His Word.

But there's a subjective element here also: as Christians we have the Holy Spirit (cf. Rom. 8:9).

First John 2:27 says, “*But the anointing which ye have received of him abideth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you; but as the same anointing teacheth you of all things.*”

When you study the Bible, the Holy Spirit in you takes the Word of God and makes a personal application that will give you guidance.

That’s an incredible combination, to have the truth and the resident truth teacher. It’s that combination that guides the believer.

What have we learned? There are great benefits to studying the Bible. It is the source of truth, happiness, victory, growth, power, and guidance.

Conclusion

But what should be our response?

If this is really true, if the Bible is going to do all these things, then what shall I do? Let me give you a few things to consider.

1. Believe it

If the Bible says it, believe it. Jesus said to the twelve one time, “*Will ye also go away? Then Simon Peter answered him, Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life*” (John 6:67–68).

2. Honor it

If this is the Word of God, then honor it. In Job 23:12 there is that magnificent statement of Job when he says, “*I have esteemed the words of his mouth more than my necessary food.*”

Listen, if the Bible is the Word of God, and it will do everything we just said it would do, then believe it, and honor it. In fact, in Psalm 138:2, the Psalmist said, “*For thou hast magnified thy word above all thy name.*”

Isn’t that incredible? God honors the Word.

3. Love it

The psalmist cried out, “*Oh, how love I thy law!*” (Ps. 119:97).

4. Obey it

1 John 2:5: *“⁵ But whoever keeps His word, in him the love of God has truly been perfected. By this we know that we are in Him.”*

1 John 2:5 Amplified Bible

⁵ But he who keeps (treasures) His Word [who bears in mind His precepts, who observes His message in its entirety], truly in him has the love of and for God been perfected (completed, reached maturity). By this we may perceive (know, recognize, and be sure) that we are in Him:

If it's really what it claims, we should believe it, honor it, love it, and obey it at any price. In fact, it's interesting to see what Romans 6:16 says: *“Know ye not that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are whom ye obey.” If you yield yourselves as servants to God, you obey Him.”*

5.Fight for it

Jude 3 says, *“Earnestly contend for the faith.”*

6.Preach it

In 2 Timothy 4:2 Paul simply said, *“Preach the word.”*

7.Study it

Paul says to Timothy in 2 Timothy 2:15, *¹⁵ “Be diligent to present yourself approved to God as a workman who does not need to be ashamed, accurately handling the word of truth. “*

Let us Pray...