

Christian Study

Lesson 249

Be Light

Focusing on Church beyond Sunday

A Closer Look at the Word of God

The Testimony of the Apostles Concerning the Word of God

A Moment of Reflection

Before beginning your study, pray and ask God that you will be receptive to the apostles' testimony regarding the Word of God

Key Verse: 2 Peter 1:20-21

"First, you must understand this: No prophecy in Scripture is a matter of one's own interpretation. 21 No prophecy ever originated from humans. Instead, it was given by the Holy Spirit as humans spoke under God's direction." Peter in the above passage is making it very clear that the will and message of God in the Old Testament is an explanation of the meaning of God's creative work. None of it started from man. It was God through the Holy Spirit that they were able to pen what we read today. As a result, we can put our faith in the written Word

Peter

2 Peter 3:1-2 "My dear friends, this is the second letter I have written to encourage you to do some honest thinking. I don't want you to forget 2 what God's prophets said would happen. You must never forget what the holy prophets taught in the past. And you must remember what the apostles told you our Lord and Savior has commanded us to do." Notice here also that, the Words spoken in the Old Testament and the words spoken by Christ and the Apostles, came from the same source, God the Father.

2 Peter 1:19 "All of this makes us even more certain that what the prophets said is true. So you should pay close attention to their message, as you would to a lamp shining in some dark place. You must keep on paying attention until daylight comes and the morning star rises in your hearts." The Word is compared to a lamp that shows light in a dark place, so if you are finding your way through total darkness, the lamp would serve as a guide. We must depend on that light until daylight comes and brightens our hearts. The Word of God

and its purpose in our lives is clearly explained in **Psalms 119:105** "Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path"

In **1 Peter 1:24-25** "for 'All flesh is like grass and all its glory like the flower of grass. The grass withers, and the flower falls, **25** but the word of the Lord remains forever.' And this word is the good news that was preached to you." We see that our knowledge and its glory lasts for a little while, but God's Word is strong enough, and truthful enough to last forever.

The reliability of the Old Testament is shown in **Act 3:12-18** "And when Peter saw it he addressed the people: 'Men of Israel, why do you wonder at this, or why do you stare at us, as though by our own power or piety we have made him walk? **13** The God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, the God of our fathers, glorified his servant Jesus, whom you delivered over and denied in the presence of Pilate, when he had decided to release him. **14** But you denied the Holy and Righteous One, and asked for a murderer to be granted to you, **15** and you killed the Author of life, whom God raised from the dead. To this we are witnesses. **16** And his name--by faith in his name--has made this man strong whom you see and know, and the faith that is through Jesus has given the man this perfect health in the presence of you all. **17** 'And now, brothers, I know that you acted in ignorance, as did also your rulers. **18** But what God foretold by the mouth of all the prophets, that his Christ would suffer, he thus fulfilled.

Since these events happened just as it was foretold by the prophets, our conclusion about prophecies in the Bible and what it tells us about events in our lives should be based on the Word of God, that is both Old and New testaments.

Paul

Here is the Apostle Paul's opinion of the Old Testament writings according to **Acts 24:14** "I admit that their leaders think that the Lord's Way which I follow is based on wrong beliefs. But I still worship the same God that my ancestors worshiped. And I believe everything written in the Law of Moses and in the Prophets."

Also in the book of Romans, Paul is telling his readers the purpose of the Old Testament was our instruction, encouragement, and hope. **Romans 15:4**

"For whatever was written in former days was written for our instruction, that through endurance and through the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope." This reminds us of another time in his second letter to Timothy, where he made what I think is the greatest summary of not only the Old Testament but the whole of the Bible.

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, **17** that the man of

God may be proficient, having been thoroughly equipped for every good work." Verse 17 is also telling us that the Bible is for you and me personally and each of us must spend time reading it personally to understand what God is saying to us.

In Galatians 1:11-12 "But I make known to you, brothers, the gospel preached by me is not according to man. **12** For I neither received it from man, nor was I taught it, but through the revelation of Jesus Christ," he claims to have received the gospel from Jesus Christ who was from the beginning of time and he tried to persuade the multitudes about the things concerning Jesus, the Law of Moses and the prophets.

Acts 28:23 "And having appointed for him a day, many came to him at his house, to whom he was explaining and solemnly testifying to the kingdom of God, and persuading them of the things concerning Jesus from both the Law of Moses and from the Prophets, from morning till evening."

Paul believed that Christ's death burial and resurrection all took place according to the scriptures. 1 Corinthians 15:3-4 "For I delivered to you first of all that which I also received: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, 4 and that He was buried, and that He was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures."

The Writer of Hebrews

The writer of Hebrews describes The Word of God as alive and breathing. It is not a dead word, and it does something to us. **Hebrews 4:12** "For the word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the division of soul and of spirit, of joints and of marrow, and discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart The benefit is to recognize or comprehend mentally our thoughts and intentions.

Jesus not only testified to the truth of the Scriptures, He continually asserted that His own words were the very words of God as well. He said; 'When you have lifted up the Son of Man, you will know who I am. You will also know that I don't do anything on my own. I say only what my Father taught me.' **John 8:28** He also emphasized the importance of the Word of God to His followers: "If you abide in my word, then you are truly disciples of mine, and you shall know the truth, and the truth will set you free." **John 8:31-32**. The secret to experiencing a life and freedom and fulfillment is an attitude of humble dependency upon God through His Word."

As seen in the book of Acts, the apostles depended on the scriptures in their ministry of announcing the gospel: For example; **Acts 17:1-3** "And traveling through Amphipolis and Apollonia, they came to Thessalonica, where there was a synagogue of the Jews. **2** And according to Paul's custom, he went in to them and reasoned with them out of the Scriptures on three sabbaths, **3** opening and setting forth that Christ must have suffered,

and to have risen again from the dead; and that this Jesus whom I preach to you is Christ. What gave weight to the apostles' eyewitness testimony concerning Christ were God's many prophecies made hundreds of years in advance, which came true in the person of Jesus of Nazareth.

God's word was written for our benefit. Fulfilled prophecies found throughout the scripture stand as indicators and proofs to us that we can believe and trust the Word in our lives. Moreover, the Bible tells us the truth about ourselves and God's solution to our need. It is a mirror that shows our sin and our spiritual condition (death). Then, through the Word of God, we learn the good news; "that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, that He was buried, that He was raised on the third day, according to the Scriptures." **1 Corinthians 15:3-4**, and "that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have everlasting life." **John 3:16**

We have no need to fear the One who loves us totally, but we must face the truth about ourselves. Jesus did not die to cover man's excuses; He came to take away sins. **John 1:29**. As a matter of fact, He has done it all. "God did this according to his eternal plan. And he was able to do what he had planned because of all that Christ Jesus our Lord had done. **12** Christ now gives us courage and confidence, so that we can come to God by faith." **Ephesians 3:11-12**. Let us make the decision to adopt God's Word as our standard of truth, and trust His Word as we approach our everyday life. We will discover for ourselves what Jesus meant it when He said; "If you hold to my teaching, you are really my disciples. Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free."

When the Word of God is taught clearly, God is understood clearly

Read 2 Timothy 3:1-17

It is no secret, what God can do. What He's done for others, He'll do for you.

Our mission is to help people find strength and security on the foundation that can never be shaken, cracked or shattered. This foundation is the remarkable truth of God's unconditional love and His indisputable grace experienced in a relationship with Jesus Christ. The critics of Christianity have launched a full attack to discredit the person and works of Jesus Christ and the reliability of His word. We cannot be silent anymore. Let us as children of light, stand firm in the faith, because He who has taken us this far will never forsake us. You are called Christians, be careful of that name. Let not our Lord Jesus Christ be blasphemed on your account

Believe this, "Jesus did not come to make bad people good, He came to make dead people live."

Keep It Simple

Jesus loves me this I know, for the Bible tells me so.

If you have any questions, comments or you know anybody else who will benefit from this study please feel free to give us their email address and they will be added to our mailing list to receive weekly lessons. The email address is santigiemandol@yahoo.com,

Remember: A candle loses nothing by lighting another candle (Ephesians 5:8)

Let's go light another candle!