

The Bulletin

Meeks St. Church of Christ

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January 5, 2024

“Does God’s Word Really Affect Your Life?”

By Dennis Abernathy



A management axiom illustrates a spiritual truth that is important to keep in mind as we read and hear God's Word: "To look and hear is one thing. To see what you look at and hear is another. To understand what you see and hear is a third. To learn from what you hear and see and understand is something else. But to act on what you learn is all that really matters."

A lot of folks read, and hear God's Word preached, but they never act on it. Jesus said: *"Everyone who hears these words of Mine and acts on them may be compared to a wise man"* (Matthew 7: 24). The apostle Paul added: *"It is not the hearers of the Law who are just before God, but the doers of the Law will be justified"* (Romans 2:13).

God's Word has not been properly imbibed until it has become a part of one's behavior! Multitudes hear the Word of God taught and preached and have no particular interest in what the Word calls on them to be and do. They go away without the conviction to bring their spiritual lives into conformity with God's will for them.

Attending a worship service, and listening to a sermon, and giving brief attention to some truth taught therein, is of no value, if a difference is not made in one's actual behavior as a result. If one hears God's Word, and sees what is wrong with his life, and he sees what he must do to put it right, and he is only a hearer, and nothing changes in his life, his hearing has gone for nothing!

Thus, if what we hear from the pulpit is not lived in our life there is no point in hearing at all! No one was ever made better by simply listening to a sermon. One may gain knowledge, but knowledge only becomes relevant when it is translated into action. Action means obedience because hearing and doing are summed up in obedience.

It is not just hearing, but the doing that blesses the individual. James 1:25 says: *"But whoso looks into the perfect law of liberty, and continues therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed."*

Warren Wiersbe said: "Too many Christians mark their Bibles, but their Bibles never mark them." Friends, it is action, based on faith that ultimately counts. It is true that "to act on what you learn is all that really matters."

“We Already Know That”

By Joe R. Price

The Scriptures warn Christians of pride's overconfidence: Let him who thinks he stands take heed lest he fall (1 Corinthians 10:12). Yet, the temptation to either tell or to hear some new thing infects the thinking of some brethren, persuading them to discount the need to hear and preach the old paths (Acts 17:21; Jeremiah 6:16).

Preaching on Bible authority, true worship, the organization and work of the local church, the inspiration of the Scriptures, the plan of salvation (faith, grace, and works), and the dangers of immorality (fornication, dancing, drinking, etc.) are deemed irrelevant by some, and too negative and harsh by others. Instead of these topics, the common urge is for a message more palatable to the tongue and pleasing to the ear (2 Timothy 4:3-4).

A rationalized defense is offered for this shift away from preaching the old paths of God's word: We already know that. Maybe so. Yet, the Scriptures are full of exhortations reminding us of things we know (Luke 17:32; Galatians 1:8-9; Philippians 3:1-2; 2 Peter 1:12-15). We must couple knowledge with love, or our knowledge only puffs up (1 Corinthians 8:1-3). And, knowledge must be coupled with discernment to make wise, righteous choices (Philippians 1:9-11).

Growing to spiritual maturity does not mean we abandon the first principles of the gospel. The problem of immaturity in Hebrews 5:12-6:3 resulted from a failure to use the word of righteousness to discern good and evil. Without properly using the word of God, we will not grow in Christ (2 Peter 3:18; 2 Timothy 2:15).

If we conclude we already know that, we are setting ourselves up to eventually neglect that part of God's word we already know, thereby hastening the erosion of our faith. Leaving does not mean forgetting (Hebrews 6:1). An adult does not live on milk, but he does drink it. Or, again (using the figure of construction), a foundation must be laid before constructing a building.

The elementary principles of Christ must be implanted in our hearts for us to go on to perfection (maturity, Hebrews 6:1-2; James 1:21). Spiritual maturity does not dismissively say, we already know that, and now we want something else. Maturity sees the value of maintaining a solid foundation to build strong faith (Hebrews 11:1).

A balanced diet of gospel teaching is essential. We must preach and consume the whole counsel of God (Acts 20:27). We must always teach holy living that identifies sin and warns of sin and death (Galatians 5:19-21; Romans 6:23). We must always teach and hold fast the pattern of sound words, honoring Christ's authority in everything while rejecting every innovation and error (2 Timothy 1:13; Colossians 3:17; Matthew 15:7-14). We need reproof, rebuke, and exhortation in season and out of season (2 Timothy 4:2).

Preachers and brethren, continue to preach and demand God's word on every subject. Never say, We already know that, lest you develop an evil heart of unbelief in departing from the living God (Hebrews 3:12).

“To the law and to the testimony! If they do not speak according to this word, it is because there is no light in them.” (Isaiah 8:20).

“The Lion's Lunch”

By Jerral Kay

“Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walks about, seeking whom he may devour.” (1 Peter 5:8).

The devil's easiest catch...

- 1. THE SMALL-** Newborn and the young who are not strong enough yet to avoid the lion.
- 2. THE SLOW-** Not alert or attentive to be afraid of the lion.
- 3. THE SICKLY-** Spiritually sick and weak, just not able to resist the clutch schemes of the lion.
- 4. THE STRAGGLERS-** Those who have wandered away from the fellowship and safety of the group are easy prey for the lion.

5. THE SOLITARY- Those who are not with the flock, but want to be independent. These do not last very long where the lion hunts.

You will never see one sheep or even a herd of sheep kill a lion.

Let us not assume we are stronger as our pride might provide the lion's lunch. Your only hope is to be faithful in God's church, for help and protection as a group of believers. Some have become so blind and conceited that they can't realize the danger and perils, and see no need for Christ to have instituted His church (Ephesians 5:23; Philipians 4:5-9).

Those Who Need Our Prayers & Encouragement:

Tim Harris Sr, Tim Harris Jr, Daniel Holloway, Debbie Keplinger, Robbie, Sheila, & Sherry Doles, Sandi Poole, Sandra Oliver, Chad Harris, Eli Johnson, Jamie Jones, Mary Ann Holley, LuAnne Parrish, Billy Grisham, Burt Ward, Wesley Trimble, George Hutto, Nathan Cox, Angela Warren (Lisa Busby's friend who has cancer), B.J. Graves, Chandler McCain (Cancer), Michelle Hopper (Dan Cottrell's sister) has been diagnosed with cancer, Lowell Gann.

Those Who Serve:

Sunday Morning 9:00 A.M. Service:

Opening Prayer:	Russell Briggs
Preaching:	Brian Meade
Sermon #1:	<i>"Finding Joy In Serving Others"</i>

Auditorium Bible Class: 9:35am:

Workbook:	Jerry Kennemur
Author:	The Books Of James
Starting Page & Question:	Rick Billingsley <i>Page 34, Question #10</i>

Sunday Morning 10:30 A.M. Service:

Announcements:	Russell Briggs
Opening Prayer & Scripture Reading:	Danny Sheffield
Scripture Reading:	<i>1 Corinthians 12:20-22</i>
Song Leader:	Lee Busby
Lord's Supper:	Jerry Kennemur
Assisting:	— —
Preaching:	Brian Meade
Sermon #2:	<i>"My Obligations To The Local Church"</i>
Closing Prayer:	Tim Harris Sr.

Wednesday Evening: 7:00 P.M.

January 8, 2025

Auditorium Bible Class:	Russell Briggs
Workbook:	Great Bible Characters: Paul
Author:	By Bobby L. Graham
Starting Page & Question:	<i>Page 11, Question #5</i>
Invitation:	Paul Johnson
Song Leader:	Brian Meade
Closing Prayer:	Doug George

“Finding Joy In Serving Others”

Lesson Text: **Luke 15:22-32.** What Was Missing In The Older Brother? Joy!

I. Why Some Will Never Find Joy In Service.

- The Problem Illustrated:
 - The Scribes & Pharisees. **Matthew 23:1-12.**
 - Binding Heavy Burdens.
 - Working Hard At Being Seen As Righteous.
 - Honor Seeking.
 - Diotrophes. **3 John 9-10.**
 - He Wanted All The Preeminence
 - He Did What He Had To Do To Preserve It.
- What Is Missing Is The True Joy Of Serving Christ—His Way! **John 6:38.**

Notes: _____.

II. Jesus First— John 15:13.

- Before Our Family. **Matthew 19:19; 10:34-35; Deuteronomy 13:6-8.**
- Before Our Friends. **Proverbs 18:24; James 4:4; 1 Corinthians 15:33; Gal. 1:10.**
- Before Our Employer. **Colossians 3:22-24.**
- Before Our Material Wealth. **Luke 16:13-14; 1 Timothy 6:17-19.**
- Before Our Brethren. **1 John 3:14; 2 Timothy 2:17-18; 2 John 9-11.**
- Before Yourself. **Matthew 16:24; Mark 10:35-37; Rom. 16:17-18; James 3:16.**

Notes: _____.

III. Others Second— Philippians 2:3-4.

- Our Husband Or Wife. **Ephesians 5:22-33; 1 Corinthians 7:33-34.**
- Our Children. **Ephesians 6:4; Titus 2:4; 2 Corinthians 12:14.**
- Our Parents. **Ephesians 6:1-3.**
- Our Neighbor. **Galatians 5:14; Romans 15:2.**
- Our Brethren. **1 John 3:16.**

Notes: _____.

IV. Yourself Last— 2 Corinthians 12:15.

- **1 Corinthians 10:33.** Paul Was Imitating Christ (**1 Corinthians 11:1**).
- **Mark 10:42-45. Philippians 4:1; Romans 12:10.**
- We Can Only Do This When We First Give Ourselves To The Lord- **2 Cor. 8:1-5.**

Notes: _____.

“My Obligations To The Local Church”

Lesson Text: **1 Corinthians 12:20-22**. All Of Us Are Necessary & Needed.

I. To Put The Church First.

- **Matthew 6:33**. Seek God’s Kingdom Before All Things— Seeking Christ First.
- **1 Peter 1:22; 2 Thessalonians 1:3**. Love The Church Where You Belong.
- Putting The Church First Means Making Right Decisions:
 - Giving Our Time To The Lord. **Ephesians 5:15-16**. (Bible Study, Prayer, Devotion...).
 - Sacrificing For Christ’s Kingdom. **Acts 4:34-37 (Matthew 13:44-46)**.
 - Don’t Let Anything Or Anyone Interfere Or Hinder Your Work In The Kingdom!

Notes: _____.

II. Be A Faithful Member.

- **1 Corinthians 4:17**. Why Did Paul Call Timothy Faithful? What Did He Mean About Him?
- **Faithful:** Pertaining to being trusted— ‘faithful, trustworthy, dependable (Louw, J. P., & Nida, E. A. (1996) Vol. 1, p. 376).
- Could We Be Trusted By Paul To Do What Timothy Did? Can We Be Depended On?
- Faithful In Trials & Temptations. **1 Corinthians 10:13; James 1:12**.
- Faithful In The Work of God. **Acts 16:15; Colossians 1:7**.
- Faithful In Attendance (Bible Studies, Worship, Gospel Meetings...). **Hebrews 10:23-25**.
- It Just Takes A Willing Heart And Work To Be Found Faithful. **Luke 12:42**.
- The Rewards Of Faithfulness Are Great! **Matthew 25:21; vs. 23**.

Notes: _____.

III. Live A Spiritual Life.

- This Is The Way Of God’s People. **1 Peter 2:4-5**.
- To Be Spiritual, We Must Put Off Carnality. **Romans 8:1; 1 Peter 2:11**.
 - No More Carnal Thinking, Talking, Dressing, & Behaving....
- Have The Fruit of the Spirit In Your Life. **Galatians 5:22-25**.
- We Must Think In Spiritual Ways. **Romans 8:5-6**.
- Seeking The Things Above. **Colossians 3:1-3**.

Notes: _____.

IV. Do Your Part In The Work.

- **1 Corinthians 12:20-22— Ephesians 4:16**. Parallel In Thought And Action!
- Don’t Shift It Off To Someone Else!
- You Be Zealous For God, Good Works, & Kingdom. **Titus 2:14; 1 Peter 2:12**.
- Zeal Is Contagious. **2 Corinthians 9:2; Hebrews 10:24**.

Notes: _____.