

CHAPTER TWO

GOD'S WORD IN YOUR LIFE

A sword is to be used skillfully in battle as both an offensive and a defensive weapon. God has equipped you with such a weapon for your spiritual battle: “the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God” (Ephesians 6:17). The Holy Spirit uses the Word of God to accomplish the work of God.

“The great need of the hour among persons spiritually hungry is twofold: first, to know the Scriptures, apart from which no saving truth will be vouchsafed by our Lord; the second, to be enlightened by the Spirit, apart from whom the Scriptures will not be understood.”

A. W. TOZER²

GOD'S WORD— HIS COMMUNICATION TO YOU

The Bible is the most remarkable book ever written. The writing was done by about forty men of many occupations. They wrote over a period of approximately 1,500 years, and in three languages—Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek. Yet the Bible has one great theme and central figure—Jesus Christ. All of this would be impossible unless the Bible had one supreme Author—and it did: the Holy Spirit of God.

1. What does 2 Timothy 3:16 say about the Scriptures? (Circle the letter of the correct answer.)

² From *The Root of the Righteous* (Harrisburg, PA: Christian Publications, 1955), 37.

- Some of the Bible is inspired by God.
- All of it is inspired by God.
- Only the parts that speak to you in a personal way are inspired by God.

(*Inspired* comes from a Greek word meaning “God-breathed.”)

“The meaning, then, is not that God breathed into the writers, nor that he somehow breathed into the writings to give them their special character, but that what was written by men was breathed out by God. He spoke through them. They were his spokesmen.”

JOHN R. W. STOTT³

2. How was Scripture given? *2 Peter 1:20-21*

Who, then, helps you understand the Bible?
1 Corinthians 2:12-13

THE BIBLE AT A GLANCE (66 BOOKS)

| OLD TESTAMENT (39 books) | | “The New is in the Old concealed. The Old is in the New revealed.” | | NEW TESTAMENT (27 books) | | |
|---|--|---|--|--------------------------|--|---|
| HISTORY 17 books | POETRY 5 books | PROPHETCY 17 books | | | TEACHING 21 books | PROPHECY 1 book |
| Law Genesis Exodus Leviticus Numbers Deuteronomy History and government Joshua Judges Ruth 1 Samuel 2 Samuel 1 Kings 2 Kings 1 Chronicles 2 Chronicles Ezra Nehemiah Esther | Job Psalms Proverbs Ecclesiastes Song of Solomon | Major prophets Isaiah Jeremiah Lamentations Ezekiel Daniel Minor prophets Hosea Joel Amos Obadiah Jonah Micah Nahum Habakkuk Zephaniah Haggai Zechariah Malachi | | | HISTORY 5 books Gospels Matthew Mark Luke John The early church Acts | Paul's letters Romans 1 Corinthians 2 Corinthians Galatians Ephesians Philippians Colossians 1 Thessalonians 2 Thessalonians 1 Timothy 2 Timothy Titus Philemon General letters Hebrews James 1 Peter 2 Peter 1 John 2 John 3 John Jude |
| God used forty different men over a period of 1,500 years (about 1400 BC to AD 90) to write the Bible. | | | | | | |

³ From *Understanding the Bible* (London: Scripture Union, 1972), 183.

3. How do the following verses describe God's Word?

- Matthew 24:35* _____
- John 17:17* _____
- Hebrews 4:12* _____

4. Examine Psalm 19:7-11 carefully. Use the following chart to aid you in your investigation.

| VERSE | WHAT THE BIBLE IS CALLED | ITS CHARACTERISTICS | WHAT IT WILL DO FOR ME |
|-------|--------------------------|---------------------|------------------------|
| 7 | Law | perfect | refreshes spiritually |
| 8 | Statutes | trustworthy | gives wisdom |
| 9 | | | |
| 10 | | | |
| 11 | | | |

In the chart above, place a check by the two or three thoughts that impressed you most about the Bible.

"It is the very nature and being of God to delight in communicating himself. God has no selfishness. God keeps nothing to himself. God's nature is to be always giving."

ANDREW MURRAY⁴

HOW THE BIBLE HELPS YOU

5. Look up the following verses and summarize some of the ways the Bible is important to you as a Christian.

⁴ From *Absolute Surrender* (Chicago: Moody, 1962), 21.

- Jeremiah 15:16* _____
- John 5:39* _____
- 2 Peter 1:4* _____
- 1 John 2:1* _____

6. Analogy is a form which explains something by comparing it point by point with something similar. In the following verses, what is God's Word compared with? What is the function of these objects?

| | OBJECT | FUNCTION |
|-----------------------|--------|----------|
| <i>Jeremiah 23:29</i> | _____ | _____ |
| <i>Matthew 4:4</i> | _____ | _____ |
| <i>James 1:23-25</i> | _____ | _____ |

YOUR RESPONSIBILITY

7. "The Glories of God's Word" is a title given to Psalm 119. Nearly every verse of the psalm speaks of his Word, and about applying it in daily living. Notice the psalmist's attitudes and actions concerning God's Word. Beginning with verse 9, fill in the diagram below.

| VERSE | ATTITUDE | ACTION |
|-------|---------------------------|------------------------------|
| 9 | _____ | Keeping God's Word pure life |
| 10 | Wholeheartedly sought God | Prayed—"Don't let me wander" |
| 11 | _____ | Hid Word in his heart |
| 12 | _____ | Asked God to teach him |
| 13 | _____ | _____ |
| 14 | _____ | _____ |
| 15 | _____ | _____ |
| 16 | _____ | _____ |

8. According to John 8:31, what qualifies a man to be Christ's disciple?

How would you explain these words to another person?

| | ACTION TO TAKE | WHY |
|--|----------------|-----|
| 9. From the following verses fill in the remaining blanks. | | |

Psalm 78:5-7 _____

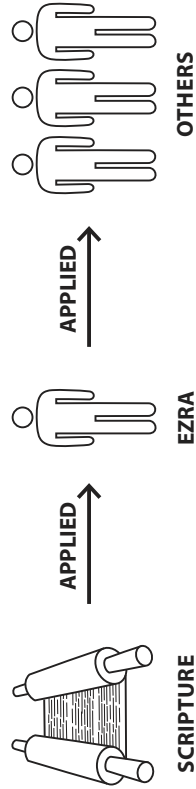
Acts 17:11 _____

James 1:22 _____

Revelation 1:3 _____

10. Ezra is a good example of a man who felt a responsibility toward God's Word. What was his approach to Scripture?
Ezra 7:10

Note the order of Ezra's actions. He applied the Scriptures to his own life before he taught them to others.

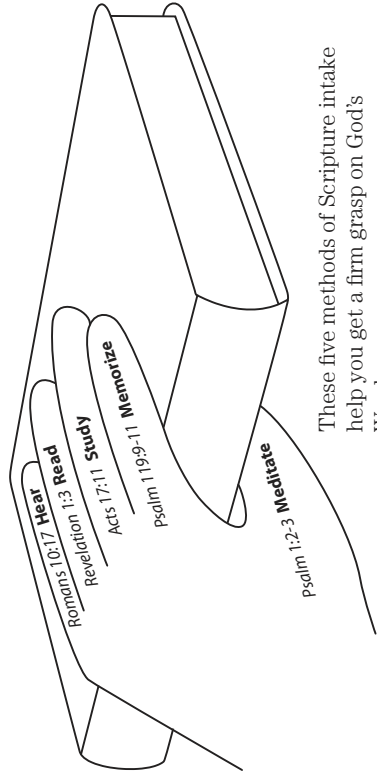


11. Reflect carefully on Colossians 3:16.

a. What practical steps can you take to allow Christ's Word to dwell in you richly? (Examples: take notes during sermons; write out memory verses.)

b. Number them in the order of effectiveness for yourself.

c. During the next week, how can you put into practice the first two methods you numbered?



These five methods of Scripture intake help you get a firm grasp on God's Word.

THE IMPORTANCE OF MEDITATION

Meditation on the Scriptures is prayerful reflection with a view to understanding and application. The goal is to conform your life to God's will by prayerfully thinking how to relate God's Word to yourself.

