

Theme: God has given us His Word, the Bible, to feed us, guide us, point us to Christ, and show us how to live in a manner that is pleasing to Him and for our good.

I. Intro - A Few Weeks on the Basics

- A. John Wooden - began with tying shoes; focus on basics
- B. His teams won 10 out of 12 championships; 7 in a row!
- C. We need to go back to the basics regularly!
- D. This is the point of the Catechism (website)
- E. Today Catechism Question 45

II. The Gift of God's Word To His People

A. The Bible is the Word of God

God has given us His Word, the Bible....

1. The Bible is the Word of God - not just a book!

Jesus answered, "It is written: 'Man does not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.'" Matthew 4:4 (quoting Deut. 8:3)

All Scripture is God-breathed ... 2 Timothy 3:16

- a. Jesus quoted Scripture as authoritative!
- b. The Bible is God-breathed - God spoke through humans to give us His Word!
For prophecy never had its origin in the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit. 2 Peter 1:21

2. The Bible is not man's thoughts about God and the world, but rather it is God's Word written to teach us about God, ourselves, and the world.

B. The Bible is food for my soul

Jesus answered, "It is written: 'Man does not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.'" Matthew 4:4 (quoting Deut. 8:3)

1. The Bible is food for our soul, sustaining our spiritual life and health.
2. This was originally spoken to the wilderness generation to explain why God gave them manna!
3. The only way for Israelites to survive was for manna to come and for them to gather and eat it daily.
4. To survive and thrive spiritually I must feed upon God's Word every day as the Israelites fed upon manna in the wilderness.

C. The Bible is guidance for my life showing me truth and error, right and wrong

All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness... 2 Timothy 3:16

Sanctify them by the truth; your word is truth. Jn 17:17

1. The Bible is God's revelation of truth.
2. The Bible shows us truth and error, right and wrong, so that we might think and act properly.
3. We are surrounded by a seemingly infinite number of voices and "truths" but God's Word cuts through this cacophony to reveal the actual truth - intellectually and morally.
4. This is why we need to read and digest God's Word daily, and why our worship must be centered upon the clear proclamation of the Word.

Preach the Word; be prepared in season and out of season; correct, rebuke and encourage — with great patience and careful instruction. ³ For the time will come when men will not put up with sound doctrine. Instead, to suit their own desires, they will gather around them a great number of teachers to say what their itching ears want to hear. ⁴ They will turn their ears away from the truth and turn aside to myths. 2 Timothy 4:2-4

- a. People are drawn to things that will scratch their itching ears, speculative conspiracy theories, and words that justify our sin.
- b. The antidote to this is the powerful, Spirit-anointed, public proclamation of the Word of God!
- c. This requires careful, consistent, patient instruction in all of the Word of God.
- d. NEVER accept anything less in a congregation than the clear, powerful proclamation of the Word of God!

D. The Bible is guidance for my life, showing me God's will
The secret things belong to the Lord our God, but the things revealed belong to us and to our children forever, that we may follow all the words of this law.
Deuteronomy 29:29

1. The Bible is God's revelation of His will for us.
2. Discerning and following God's will is not a matter of seeking guidance into secret things but rather understanding and applying God's revealed will as given in the Scripture.
3. Any subjective guidance beyond the Scripture must always be built upon, tested by, and submitted to God's revealed will in the Bible.

4. Reading, studying, and meditating upon God's Word are the building blocks for the Spirit to speak in any other way into my life.
5. If you want to know God's will for your life, dig into the Scripture and begin to apply what it says!

E. The Bible points me to Jesus - my greatest need!

But as for you, continue in what you have learned and have become convinced of, because you know those from whom you learned it, ¹⁵ and how from infancy you have known the holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. 2 Timothy 3:14-15

1. The central subject of the Bible is Jesus Christ and how we find full salvation in Him!
2. This is the central need of all humans and the greatest wisdom one can possess - to know Jesus Christ and find life and salvation in Him!
3. The more we feed upon God's Word the more we come to know Jesus - not just knowing about Him, but knowing and experiencing Him in the deepest way a human can.

F. The Bible helps me grow in holiness, becoming like Jesus

All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, ¹⁷ so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work. 2 Timothy 3:16-17

1. The Bible teaches me holiness, rebukes me when I sin, corrects me so that I might return to God's way, and trains me in God's righteous ways.
2. The Scripture not only shows me all of this intellectually - it actually feeds, strengthens, and equips me so I can be like Jesus!

3. To walk in righteousness, becoming more like Jesus, is both pleasing to God and for my good!

4. Since I was created in God's image, I only flourish when I have my thoughts, desires, actions, and character line up with God.

G. God has given us His Word, the Bible, to feed us, guide us, point us to Christ, and show us how to live in a manner that is pleasing to Him and for our good.

III. Applying the Word

A. Do I see the great gift I have been given in the Bible?

1. What a gift God has given to us in His Word!

2. As Peter says, God has given us all we need for life and godliness through His glory and goodness - and this is centrally the gift of His Word to us!

3. We should never take God's Word for granted!

4. We should take advantage of this great gift, both in personal time in the Word and also in our corporate worship.

B. How can I grow in my intake of God's Word?

1. The Bible is an amazing gift - but only if we actually spend time in it!

2. Which area do I need to grow in the most right now?

a. Receiving the Word as food for my soul

b. Receiving the Word as guidance into truth and error

c. Receiving the Word as guidance for God's Will

d. Receiving the Word to point me to Jesus each day

e. Receiving the Word to grow in holiness

3. In different seasons of life we need to focus on different aspects of the Word.

4. Which method of receiving the Word will be most helpful for this area of growth?

a. Reading or hearing large sections of Scripture?

b. Meditating on particular verses or small passages?

c. Studying a particular text or topic in depth?

5. Let's ask the Spirit to renew our hunger for the Word and to empower us to grow in this area He is showing us today!

C. Our Sacramental Table

1. God meets His people in His Word and the sacraments of water baptism and the Lord's Table

2. The Lord has spoken to us in His Word - we now come to receive power from His Spirit to obey.

3. Come and be strengthened!

The Gift of God's Word

Matthew 4:4; 2 Timothy 3:14-17

November 12, 2023

Communion

Acts 20:32

Teaching keywords: Word of God; sanctification; God's Will and guidance; means of grace; discipleship

Now I commit you to God and to the word of his grace, which can build you up and give you an inheritance among all those who are sanctified. Acts 20:32

Jesus answered, “It is written: ‘Man does not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.’” Matthew 4:4

But as for you, continue in what you have learned and have become convinced of, because you know those from whom you learned it, ¹⁵ and how from infancy you have known the holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. ¹⁶ All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, ¹⁷ so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work. 2 Timothy 3:14-17