

Messages From the Gates of Jerusalem  
#23 - Water Gate - Part III - The POWER of God's Word

The Living & Active Word of God is Sufficient  
Provides EVERYTHING Necessary for Life & Godliness

My prayer for each of you is that you might "*grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To Him be the glory, both now and to the day of eternity. Amen.*"  
(2 Peter 3:18)

II Tim. 3:16-17 All Scripture *is* given by inspiration of God, and *is* profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness,<sup>17</sup> that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.

Heb. 4:12-13 For the word of God *is* living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.<sup>13</sup> And there is no creature hidden from His sight, but all things *are* naked and open to the eyes of Him to whom we *must give* account.

II Pet. 1:3 seeing that His divine power has granted to us everything pertaining to life and godliness, through the true knowledge of Him who called us by His own glory and excellence.

The ultimate goal: Comprehend the power and sufficiency of God's Word  
Be like newborn babes > Passion and desire for the pure life giving milk of God's Word.

Stay very close "to the pure milk of God's Word". Bible studies that drift away from "thus saith the LORD" may "feel good" but only God's Word discerns the thoughts and intentions of our heart. Only God's Word provides everything the believer needs for true, fulfilling and abundant life.

Ps. 19:7-11 The law of the LORD *is* perfect, converting the soul;  
The testimony of the LORD *is* sure, making wise the simple;  
<sup>8</sup> The statutes of the LORD *are* right, rejoicing the heart;  
The commandment of the LORD *is* pure, enlightening the eyes;  
<sup>9</sup> The fear of the LORD *is* clean, enduring forever;  
The judgments of the LORD *are* true *and* righteous altogether.  
<sup>10</sup> More to be desired *are they* than gold,  
Yea, than much fine gold;  
Sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb.  
<sup>11</sup> Moreover by them Your servant is warned,  
*And* in keeping them *there is* great reward.

Illustration of the Power of the Word of God - The following beautifully illustrates the supernatural power of God's Word... The renowned preacher C H Spurgeon once tested an auditorium in which he was to speak that evening. Stepping into the pulpit, he loudly proclaimed, "Behold the lamb of God Who takes away the sin of the world." (John 1:29) Satisfied with the acoustics, he left and went his way. Unknown to him, there were two men working in the rafters of that large auditorium, neither one a Christian. One of the men was pricked in his conscience by the verse Spurgeon quoted and became a believer later that day! Such is the penetrating power of God's eternal word! Little wonder that Paul is so insistent on the persistent "preaching of the Word"

II Tim. 4:2- Preach the word! Be ready in season *and* out of season. Convince, rebuke, exhort, with all longsuffering and teaching.

SCRIPTURE	OUR RESPONSIBILITY	GOD'S PROMISE or BENEFIT
<p>II Tim. 3:16-17 (see p. 1)</p> <p>Context: Paul's last words charging Timothy to Guard the Treasure of God's Word &amp; entrust it to faithful men who can teach others.</p> <p><b>ADEQUACY</b></p>	<p>Believe it!</p> <p>Do you believe <u>ALL</u> Scripture is inspired by God?</p> <p>Do you truly believe ALL Scripture is profitable in your life?</p> <p>Even the Old Testament?</p>	<p><u>All Scripture is profitable for:</u></p> <p><u>Doctrine</u> - Show us what's right</p> <p><sup>1</sup><u>Reproof</u> - Show what's wrong</p> <p><u>Correction</u> - Show us how to get right</p> <p><u>Instruction</u> - How to stay right = according to God's standard; not men's</p> <p>Result - <sup>2</sup>Adequate &amp; Equipped for every Good Work</p>

<sup>1</sup>Reproof - "Men do not reject the Bible because it contradicts itself, but because it contradicts them."

<sup>2</sup>Adequate describes the man or woman of God who is able to meet all the demands of the work God has prepared for them beforehand in Christ Jesus that they should walk in them (Ephesians 2:10). They are fully ready, qualified, perfectly fit.

SCRIPTURE	OUR RESPONSIBILITY	GOD'S PROMISE or BENEFIT
<p>I Peter 2:1-2 (see below chart)</p> <p>Context = I Pet. 1:23-25 Peter's readers have been born again by the Living &amp; Abiding Word</p> <p><b>Spiritual Growth</b></p>	<p>Putting Aside All: Malice, Guile, Hypocrisy, Envy, Slander</p> <p>Approach the Word like a newborn baby</p> <p>Long for; Desire; <sup>3</sup>CRAVE</p> <p>Delight the pure milk of God's Word - <b>COMMAND</b></p>	<p><u>GROWTH</u> in Salvation</p> <p>Not a smarter sinner, but grow to be more like Christ</p>

I Pet. 1:23-25 having been born again, not of corruptible seed but incorruptible, through the word of God which lives and abides forever, because "All flesh *is* as grass, And all the glory of man as the flower of the grass. The grass withers, And its flower falls away,  
<sup>25</sup> But the word of the LORD endures forever."

Now this is the word which by the gospel was preached to you.

I Pet. 2:1-2 *Therefore*, laying aside all malice, all deceit, hypocrisy, envy, and all evil speaking,  
<sup>2</sup> as newborn babes, desire the pure milk of the word, that you may grow thereby,  
<sup>3</sup> if indeed you have tasted that the Lord *is* gracious.

"Long for the pure milk of the Word." Pure means undiluted. Many want the Word but we mix it up with other information. Apples lose much of their healthy benefit when they are dipped in sugar. A candied apple is sweet but its nutritional value is diluted because something with no value has been added to it. Many of us will read the Word, hear the Word, and then talk to people about the Word but then dip it in human viewpoint.

### Howard Hendricks in Living by the Book

The Bible was not written to satisfy your curiosity, but to make you conform to Christ's image. Not to make you a smarter sinner, but to make you like the Savior. Not to fill your head with a collection of Biblical facts, but to transform your life."

Moody: God did not give us the Scriptures to increase our knowledge but to change our lives

<sup>3</sup>Question: How can I develop a CRAVING for God's Word?

1. Remember your life source> Living abiding Word of God by which you have been born again. The transformation of your life and your eternal destiny was a miracle worked through the Word of God which is living and abiding.

Why crave it? As the source of your continued transformation, your continued power

Truth: If it transformed you in the beginning, it will keep on transforming you.

Phil. 2:16 holding fast the Word of life, so that I may rejoice in the day of Christ that I have not run in vain or labored in vain.

Isa. 55:10-11"For as the rain comes down, and the snow from heaven, and do not return there, but water the earth, and make it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower and bread to the eater,

<sup>11</sup> So shall My word be that goes forth from My mouth; It shall not return to Me void,  
But it shall accomplish what I please, And it shall prosper *in the thing* for which I sent it.

Consider: The Word is a spiritual inexhaustible, inextinguishable life source. It gave you new life. It gave you new love. It gave you a thrilling glorious marvelous fulfilling joyous life full of hope and peace and grace and forgiveness and power. You mean to tell me you're going to set it aside? Will you turn your back on that the greatest power which you possess?

You should crave that Word and the inherent power in it to continue to transform your life.

## 2. Eliminate Your Sin

I Pet.2:1 "Putting aside (reject) all malice and all guile (originally meant fishhook, deceit) and hypocrisies (spiritual phoniness...originally the word meant an actor who wore a mask, not real, not genuine) and envies (wanting what others have, resenting their prosperity and their blessing leads to grudges, bitterness, hatred, conflict) and all slander." (backbiting, talk, gossip, defamation, disparagement, malicious talk behind someone's back)

Truth: Sin will keep you from this book until you eliminate the hindrances.

## 3. Admit Your Need

You should characterize your desire for the Word of God. You cry if you can't get it. You long for it. A baby has one God-given instinct, one great craving, milk. If it doesn't get it, it gets as violent as a little life can possibly get. As a newborn baby craves the milk he needs, so a believer must crave the Word he needs. It should be read like a hungry baby sucking with all its strength to draw out the nourishment of its mother's breast.

## 4. Pursue Your Growth

"Crave the pure spiritual milk of the Word that IT may grow you. - Passive Action

If you're content with where you are spiritually, you'll never pursue your further growth. Spiritual growth rises out of discontent.

## 5. Survey Your Blessings

Verse 3:Long for the pure spiritual milk of the Word if you've tasted the kindness of the Lord."

Anorexia-nervosa is a disease of people who starve themselves, sometimes to death.

Symptom #1 > long periods without eating, punctuated by binges, followed by vomiting and enemas. It's sort of an occasional overdose that is rejected.

Spiritual Parallel> Christians who go through long periods of the starvation of the Word of God, punctuated by occasional binges which they reject.

Symptom #2 Excessive exercise usually in an effort to prove oneself competent

Spiritual Parallel > No desire for the Word of God but an effort to make up for what is lacking spiritually by church activity.

Symptom #3 Depression, an inability to deal with problems.

Spiritual parallel > A malnourished Christian will be unable to deal with sin, hence spiritual depression, inability to deal with it.

Symptom #4 Social isolation, a fear of being with people, of being discovered, of being questioned.

Spiritual Parallel > Where spiritual malnourishment leads

Starve yourself to death and you're going to not want to answer questions about what's wrong in your life so you leave the fellowship.

What do you have to do is...eat. Starts with the desire. Cultivate a craving for God's Word.

SCRIPTURE

OUR RESPONSIBILITY

GOD'S PROMISE or BENEFIT

<p><sup>4</sup>Psalm 1:1-3</p> <p><i>Real Happiness</i> <i>Prosperity</i></p>	<p><b>DO NOT</b></p> <p>Walk in counsel of wicked Stand in path of sinners Sit in the seat of scorners</p> <p><b>DO</b></p> <p>Delight in the Word Meditate in the Word day and night</p>	<p>Blessed&gt;Makairos =fully satisfied independent of circumstances)&gt; Supernatural work of Holy Spirit</p> <p>Is like a <sup>5</sup>tree planted by water Yields fruit in season Its leaf does not wither</p> <p>All he does prospers (Prosper = expresses idea of a successful venture, as contrasted with failure and the source of such success is God)</p>
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<sup>4</sup>God blesses us to make us a blessing to others, but He has given us *certain conditions for receiving blessings*.

1. We must be separated from the world.

Ps 1:1 Blessed *is* the man Who walks not in the counsel of the ungodly,

Nor stands in the path of sinners, Nor sits in the seat of the scornful;

"Blessed are you" does not mean "untroubled are you" or "healthy are you" or "admired are you" or "prosperous are you." It means "between you and God all is well."

You are deeply secure, profoundly content, happy in God - even if you are weeping over the pain of a struck body, a perplexed mind, or a heartbreaking relationship.

Truth: Strengthened by His Spirit you can still in all things give thanks and rejoice always.

The world is anything that separates us from God or causes us to disobey Him. Separation is not isolation but contact without contamination. Sin is usually a gradual process.

Notice the gradual decline of the sinner in Ps 1:1.

He is walking: Mark 14:54 Peter had followed Him at a distance, right into the courtyard of the high priest;

He is standing: John 18:18 Now the slaves and the officers were standing *there*, having made a charcoal fire, for it was cold and they were warming themselves; and Peter was also with them, standing and warming himself.

He is sitting: Luke 22:55 After they had kindled a fire in the middle of the courtyard and had sat down together, Peter was sitting among them.

Becoming worldly is progressive; it happens by degrees. We make friends with the world; we become spotted by the world; we love the world, become confirmed to it and end up condemned with it. Lot is an example of someone who became worldly. He looked toward Sodom, pitched his tent toward Sodom, lived there, lost everything and ended in sin.

2. We must be saturated with the Word

Ps 1:2 But his delight *is* in the law of the LORD, And in His law he meditates day and night. We saturate ourselves with the Word by meditating on it. When we meditate on the Word, we allow the Spirit of God within us to "digest" the Word of God for us.

Delight > the object of one's delight solicits favor by its own intrinsic qualities.

Ps. 1:3 He shall be like a tree Planted by the rivers of water, That brings forth its fruit in its season, Whose leaf also shall not wither; And whatever he does shall prosper.

<sup>5</sup> Matt. 15:13 But He answered and said, "Every plant which My heavenly Father did not plant shall be uprooted.

Acts 20:32 So now, brethren, I commend (deposit for safe keeping) you to God and to the Word of His grace, which is able to build you up and give you an inheritance among all those who are sanctified.

SCRIPTURE

OUR RESPONSIBILITY

GOD'S PROMISE or BENEFIT

<p>Psalm 119: 9-11 (see below)</p> <p><i>Dealing With Sin</i></p>	<p>Treasure the Word = Memorize</p> <p>Keep the Word = Heed; Obey</p> <p>Pray the Word = Do not let me wander</p>	<p>Keep our ways Pure</p> <p>Equips us so we are less likely to sin against God</p>
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Ps. 119:9-11 How can a young man cleanse his way? By taking heed according to Your word.

<sup>10</sup> With my whole heart I have sought You; Oh, let me not wander from Your commandments!

<sup>11</sup> Your word I have hidden in my heart, that I might not sin against You.

Get into the Word so that it can get into you and become effective in your life, as the Spirit uses IT to renew our minds and transform our thinking.

Warren Wiersbe: You must also rejoice in God's Word, delight in it and meditate on it.

Meditation is to your inner person what digestion is to your body. When you truly delight in the Word, you will have a desire to meditate on it and make it a part of your life.

SCRIPTURE

OUR RESPONSIBILITY

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<p>Joshua 1:8 Moses has died God instructs Joshua</p> <p><i>Leadership</i> <i>Spiritual Warfare</i></p>	<p>Meditate on the Word &gt; Day &amp; Night Do not let it depart from your mouth = Constant component of your conversation Be careful to obey it.</p>	<p>Way Prosperous</p> <p>Success</p>
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Joshua is to lead Israel into the "promised land" filled with adversaries and pagan idolatry. Temptation and Warfare will occur. Does God tell him to make sure the soldiers have their weapons and are in good shape? No. God tells Joshua to make sure that the "Sword of the Word of God" is to be his focus and will provide all that he needs in order to assure success.

In regard to this "book of the law" A W Tozer said..."Read it much, read it often, brood over it, think over it, meditate over it—meditate on the Word of God day and night. When you are awake at night, think of a helpful verse. When you get up in the morning, no matter how you feel, think of a verse and make the Word of God the important element in your day. The Holy Ghost wrote the Word, and if you make much of the Word, He will make much of you. It is through the Word that He reveals Himself. Between those covers is a living Book. God wrote it and it is still vital and effective and alive. God is in this Book, the Holy Ghost is in this Book, and if you want to find Him, go into this Book."

SCRIPTURE

OUR RESPONSIBILITY

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<p>Ezra 7:9-10</p> <p><i>Leadership</i></p>	<p><sup>6</sup>Set Your Heart to Study the Word Practice the Word Teach the Word</p>	<p>Good hand of God upon him</p>
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<sup>6</sup>His mind "was zeroed in on the primary intention of studying God's Word."

John Bunyan, 17<sup>th</sup> century English preacher and author, was also consumed with the study of God's Word. Charles Haddon Spurgeon, who read Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress every year, once remarked, "He had studied our Authorized Version ... till his whole being was saturated with Scripture; and through his writings ... he ... [makes] us feel and say 'Why, this man is living Bible! Prick him anywhere; and you will find that his blood is Bibline, the very essence of the Bible flows from him. He cannot speak without quoting a text, for his soul is full of the Word of God.' "

<p>Jeremiah 15:16</p> <p><i>Feeling Downcast</i></p>	<p>Find the Word - Do you seek it? Eat the Word - Do you just "nibble" at it? Digest, Assimilate - Make the Word part of your very being</p>	<p>Joy</p> <p>Delight in one's Heart</p>
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Symptoms of starvation> At the outset, victims have an insatiable craving for nourishment. As time passes, the body weakens, the mind is dulled, and the desire for something to eat wanes. Starving people actually reach a point when they don't even want food.

Spiritual starvation: If we have been feeding daily on God's Word, it's natural to feel "hungry" when we skip our quiet time. If we continue to neglect it, we may lose all desire to study the Scriptures. How much time do you spend reading the Bible and meditating on its truths? Do you miss the Word when you neglect it?

Thomas Guthrie "If you find yourself loving any pleasure better than your prayers, any book better than the Bible, any persons better than Christ, or any indulgence better than the hope of heaven--take alarm." If you've lost your taste for the "bread of life," confess your negligence and ask God to revive your appetite for His Word. Avoid spiritual starvation!