

Sunday January 20th 2019
The Word of God
A Survey of the Bible – Lesson 14F
‘The End of Your Faith’

1). *2 Tim 3: 14 But you must continue in the things which you have learned and been assured of, knowing from whom you have learned them, 15 and that from childhood you have known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. 16 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 complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.*

As Paul wrote to Timothy, ‘a true son in the faith’, we see that he exhorted him to continue in the things which he had learned and been assured of, as he knew who it was, he had learned these things from. And from the verses themselves we can conclude that Timothy was taught by the Holy Spirit through the Scriptures, as that which he was taught was brought forth from above.

a). And through the Scriptures, brought forth from above, came wisdom for salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus – the salvation in view here being the salvation of the soul, not the salvation Timothy already possessed.

b). So, Timothy was exhorted to continue in that which the Scriptures had taught him and assured him of, so that he would be wise with respect to the salvation of his soul. And to bring this thought to completion Paul then reminded him that all Scripture is ‘God breathed’.

c). Paul reminded him that it is only through the Scripture that profit is to be made – and only through the Scripture could there be an increase on that originally given to him. And profit is seen in connection with doctrine, reproof, correction, instruction in righteousness. All of which we could sum up as the child training of the Lord – a theme Paul had previously visited in –
1 Tim 4:16 Take heed to yourself and to the doctrine. Continue in them, for in doing this you will save both yourself and those who hear you.

d). And the purpose for this was to bring Timothy, and those who heard him, to completion and in order to be brought to completion, he, and they, would be 'thoroughly equipped for every good work'.

e). Then, as we had seen from our study last week, God's breath, the 'Neshamah', the living Word is the only means by which the spiritual life we received at our eternal salvation, in the antitype of Adam – Gen 2:7 *And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living being.*

Is the only means by which this life can be sustained, that we may grow with respect to salvation – 1 Pet 2:1 *Therefore, laying aside all malice, all deceit, hypocrisy, envy, and all evil speaking, 2 as newborn babes, desire the pure milk of the word, that you may grow thereby,*

Eph 4:11 *And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, 12 for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ, 13 till we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ; 14 that we should no longer be children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, in the cunning craftiness of deceitful plotting, 15 but, speaking the truth in love, may grow up in all things into Him who is the head—Christ—*

So, If, we can review for a moment – the salvation of the soul is a continuing process, seen through the type of days 2-6 in the Genesis account, and this salvation is inseparably connected to growing to spiritual maturity. All of which can only be accomplished by continuing to receive the spiritual life which comes through the breath of God, which is the Scriptures.

f). And the growth to spiritual maturity is also seen in terms of the progression from the milk of the word to the meat, to the strong meat of the word – Heb 6:1 *Therefore, leaving the discussion of the elementary principles of Christ, let us go on to perfection, not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works and of faith toward God, 2 of the doctrine of baptisms, of laying on of hands, of resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgment. 3 And this we will do if God permits.*

Without growth in this way there can be no salvation of the soul. This really is a matter of life and death.

g). Perhaps this whole thought will give even greater emphasis to the familiar verses we know from – Eph 5:18 *And do not be drunk with wine, in which is dissipation; but be [continually] filled with the Spirit, 19 speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord, 20 giving thanks always for all things to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, 21 submitting to one another in the fear of God.*

And we know, from the companion Book of Colossians, that to be continually filled with the Spirit is to continually let the word of Christ dwell in us richly in all wisdom – Col 3:16 *Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord. 17 And whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him.*

To be continually filled with the Spirit then is to continually allow the word of Christ, the word concerning the One anointed Prophet, Priest and King, to dwell in us richly, to fill our spirit man, with all wisdom for salvation. And the word of Christ is the Scripture, the living Word, the breath of God.

h). And being continually filled with the Spirit is essential if the following are to be possible – Eph 5:21 *submitting to one another in the fear of God. 22 Wives, submit to your own husbands, as to the Lord. 23 For the husband is head of the wife, as also Christ is head of the church; and He is the Savior of the body. 24 Therefore, just as the church is subject to Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in everything. 25 Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her.....6:1 Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. 2 “Honor your father and mother,” which is the first commandment with promise: 3 “that it may be well with you and you may live long on the earth.” 4 And you, fathers, do not provoke your children to wrath, but bring them up in the training and admonition of the Lord.5 Bondservants, be obedient to those who are your masters according to the flesh, with fear and trembling, in sincerity of heart, as to Christ; 6 not with eyeservice, as men-pleasers, but as bondservants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart, 7 with goodwill doing service, as to the Lord, and not to men, 8 knowing that whatever good anyone does, he will receive the same from the Lord,*

whether he is a slave or free.9 And you, masters, do the same things to them, giving up threatening, knowing that your own Master also is in heaven, and there is no partiality with Him.

2). In the Book of Hebrews though, we find reference to a group of Christians who had seemingly turned away from being continually filled with the Spirit – Heb 5:9 *And having been perfected, He became the author of eternal [age lasting] salvation to all who obey Him, 10 called by God as High Priest “according to the order of Melchizedek,” 11 of whom we have much to say, and hard to explain, since you have become dull of hearing.12 For though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you again the first principles of the oracles of God; and you have come to need milk and not solid food [strong meat]. 13 For everyone who partakes only of milk is unskilled in the word of righteousness, for he is a babe. 14 But solid food belongs to those who are of full age, that is, those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil.*

And the reason this group of Christians were no longer being continually filled with the Spirit is because they had become ‘dull of hearing’; they had become lazy and careless. They were not always that way, but they had become that way.

a). Now, let’s be careful to note that this does not mean they were no longer reading the Scripture or hearing the word preached, but rather, they had gotten to a place where they no longer heard it properly. Like deafness in the natural they were no longer hearing clearly. And the writer of Hebrews referred to this same thing later in – Heb 6: 11 *And we desire that each one of you show the same diligence to the full assurance of hope until the end, 12 that you do not become sluggish [same word translated ‘dull’], but imitate those who through faith and patience inherit the promises.*

b). And the key to understanding why they were not hearing clearly, we have already glimpsed in – 1 Pet 2:1 *Therefore, laying aside all malice, all deceit, hypocrisy, envy, and all evil speaking, 2 as newborn babes, desire the pure milk of the word, that you may grow thereby,*

As we saw last time, before the pure milk of the word can be received and spiritual growth brought about, there must be a laying aside.

c). And this concept of laying aside we had also seen in –

Jas 1:21 Therefore lay aside all filthiness and overflow of wickedness, and receive with meekness the implanted word, which is able to save your souls.

Here in James then there is also a laying aside that must take place if we are to be able to receive with meekness the implanted word. The word 'implanted' itself simply has to do with that which is on the inside. Again, the idea of the Word filling our 'inner man' – being continually filled with the Spirit.

d). The word translated 'filthiness' we might remember is a word that has its origins in ear wax. And so, this provides a metaphor for anything that would get in the way of correctly hearing the word that is to fill us and bring about our spiritual growth to maturity, so as to receive the salvation of our soul.

e). The words 'overflow of wickedness' have to do with anything that is against purity – *Jas 3:17 But the wisdom that is from above is first pure,*

The idea then is that the living Word, the breath of God, is to be allowed to flow unobstructed into our saved human spirit, where the indwelling Holy Spirit will then take that word and work in us to produce spiritual growth. Let's remember – *Rom 8:17 So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.*

This is faith to the saving of the soul and this faith only comes by 'hearing' and hearing only comes through the word. And so, nothing must be allowed to get in the way of the proper reception, the proper hearing, of the word. If it does, then faith to the saving of the soul cannot come, growth to spiritual maturity will be blighted and instead of being wise for salvation we will become foolish.

f). So, what can get into the auditory canal of our spiritual ear to cause us to become dull of hearing? What forms the ear wax?

g). Simply, we can say that anything that has its origin in our unredeemed soul, under bondage to sin, that is allowed to continue unabated will do just that. Peter had described the following characteristics of the unredeemed soul - *all malice, all deceit, hypocrisy, envy, and all evil speaking*

Then from the parable of the sower in Matthew 13 and the companion parable in Luke we can add, 'the cares of this world, the deceitfulness of riches and the pleasures of life'. And we can reference the 3 great enemies, the world, the flesh and the devil, and the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes and the pride of life. All are sin and all will cause substantial hearing loss. And James gives

us further insight into this in – Jas 3:14 *But if you have bitter envy and self-seeking in your hearts, do not boast and lie against the truth. 15 This wisdom does not descend from above, but is earthly, sensual, demonic. 16 For where envy and self-seeking exist, confusion and every evil thing are there.*

There is then a wisdom which comes from above, to make us wise for salvation, and there is an earthly wisdom which will do the exact opposite. And what we see here is the connection between ‘self-seeking’, seeking after the self-life and the demonic, that associated with earthly wisdom and therefore the god of this age – Eph 6:12 *For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against **the rulers of the darkness of this age**.....*

And this is exactly what the Spirit through John tells us in – 1 Joh 5:19 *We know that we are of God, and the whole world lies under the sway of [Lit. ‘in the wicked one] **the wicked one**.*

Those who are of God find their positional standing ‘in Christ’, but everything that finds its connection with this world, our unredeemed soul, is ‘in Satan’. And these 2 positions are diametrically opposed to one another.

h). This is why the Holy Spirit through John speaks so passionately concerning our attitude to the world and the things in it – 1 John 2:15 *Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. 16 For all that is in the world—the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life—is not of the Father but is of the world. 17 And the world is passing away, and the lust of it; but he who does the will of God abides forever.*

And in the same way through James – Jas 4:4 *Adulterers and adulteresses! Do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with God? Whoever therefore wants to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God. 5 Or do you think that the Scripture says in vain, “The Spirit who dwells in us yearns jealously”?*

There is no middle ground in this. There is no place for compromise – Col 1:13 *He has delivered us from the power of darkness and conveyed us into the kingdom of the Son of His love,*

We have been delivered from the power of darkness and it is not rocket science to realize that we should not walk in the bondage of our unredeemed soul when we can walk in the liberty of the Spirit – Rom 6:16 *Do you not know that to whom you present yourselves slaves to obey, you are that one's slaves whom you obey, whether of sin leading to death, or of obedience leading to righteousness?*

3). That which we have just seen through James and John is found again through Paul a few chapters on in the Book of Romans – Rom 12:1 *I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service. 2 And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.*

To begin, we can turn again to the living sacrifice – the one-time action of placing our self on the altar of sacrifice, the same as taking up our cross, and remaining there in a continual state of dying. Which we are told is our ‘reasonable service’. This is what we need to do based on what we know from the Word.

a). V1 tells us what ought to be and v2 begins with a command that can be literally translated, ‘Stop conforming yourselves to this world’. The command here then is not about ‘don’t do this’, it directly says, ‘stop doing this’ – you are doing it, stop it.

b). And the word translated ‘conformed’ has to do with following a pattern. The pattern of this world system that is ‘in Satan’ – in our thoughts, our focus, our actions, our choices, our priorities.

c). And the antidote for this is found in the command that follows, ‘be transformed’. And the word translated ‘transformed’ is the word that gives us the English word ‘metamorphosis’. That which denotes a complete inward change totally apart from any effort on our part, such as is seen in the life cycle of a butterfly.

d). And this spiritual metamorphosis is to be accomplished through ‘the renewing of our mind’ – Eph 4:22 *that you put off, concerning your former conduct, the old man which grows corrupt according to the deceitful lusts, 23 and be renewed in the spirit of your mind, 24 and that you put on the new man which was created according to God, in true righteousness and holiness.*

Here in Ephesians Chapter 4 we again see, what should now be the familiar concept of 'laying aside', 'denying our self', 'stop conforming'. Seen here as 'putting off your former conduct, the old man'. And this is to make possible being 'renewed in the spirit of your mind', putting on 'the new man which was created according to God, in true righteousness and holiness'.

e). And to return to what we have seen through this now familiar concept, unless we stop conforming ourselves to this world there can be no metamorphosis; if we don't put off the old man our mind cannot be renewed, we cannot put on the new man.

f). And if we now turn to the companion Book to Ephesians, Colossians, we will see exactly how our mind is to be renewed – Col 3:8 *But now you yourselves are to put off all these: anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy language out of your mouth. 9 Do not lie to one another, since you have put off the old man with his deeds, 10 and have put on the new man who is [continually] renewed in knowledge according to the image of Him who created him, 11 where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcised nor uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave nor free, but Christ is all and in all.*

The new man is continually renewed 'in knowledge', 'epignosis' – mature knowledge – the meat and strong meat of the word.

g). The mind can only be renewed through the word, the implanted word, the word that produces growth from immaturity to spiritual maturity, the Scriptures which are the breath of God.

h). And from what we see in Romans Chapter 12, patterning ourselves after, and in accordance with the world will provide the ear wax to prevent us properly receiving the word, which would mean no renewing of the mind and therefore no metamorphosis, no inward change.

i). And without the inward change there will be no salvation of the soul. And without the saving of the soul, the complete metamorphosis, inward and outward cannot be brought to completion – Rom 8:15 *For you did not receive the spirit of bondage again to fear, but you received the Spirit of adoption by whom we cry out, "Abba, Father." 16 The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, 17 and if children, then heirs—heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with Him, that we may also be glorified together. 18 For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.23 Not only that, but we also who have the firstfruits of the Spirit,*

even we ourselves groan within ourselves, eagerly waiting for the adoption, the redemption of our body.

You see, without the inward change, without being *renewed in knowledge according to the image of Him who created him*, we cannot be adopted as a firstborn son and if we are not adopted as a firstborn son there can be no redemption of the body as these are synonymous terms – there can be no covering of glory, no being in the image and likeness of God and therefore no place of rulership.

j). And the one finding himself in this situation will have rejected the purpose for his eternal salvation and the reason for Man's creation.

k). But, if we do that which is required, that which the scripture has revealed to us, then the metamorphosis will be brought to completion. We will have a redeemed soul, a body enswathed in glory, and as an adopted firstborn son we will rule as a joint heir with the Christ from the heavens over the Gentile nations of the earth for the 1000 years of His Kingdom.

l). So, as we close out for this week, perhaps we can ask again the question that the Lord put to His disciples – 'What would it profit us if we gained the whole world and lost our soul? Or what would we give in exchange for our soul?

m). The Master is about to return and reckon accounts with His servants. And until He does return there is still the opportunity for the metamorphosis to be brought to completion. Let's not be found wanting in that Day.

We will continue next time – if the Lord is willing.