

“Benefits from the Word!”

Psalm 119:97-104

Intro. – Some top executives were in a heated discussion about the Bible. Each one claimed they were more knowledgeable than the other. Finally, one executive challenged the other, “I’ll bet you don’t even know the Lord’s Prayer.” “That’s easy,” responded the other executive, “It’s ‘Now I lay me down to sleep...’” “Wow,” the first executive said, “You’re a lot more knowledgeable than I thought!”

Sadly, this helps illustrate where most today are at when it comes to Biblical knowledge. Many today don’t even recognize the bible having two parts – and “no” I’m not referring to the OT and the NT. What I am referring to is 1) Believing it; 2) Behaving it!

THE WORD OF GOD

For feelings come and feelings go,
And feelings are deceiving;
My warrant is the Word of God
Nought else is worth believing.
I’ll trust in God’s unchanging Word
Till soul and body sever:
For, though all things shall pass away,
His Word shall stand forever.

I declare this morning it is a great responsibility to own a Bible. Why focus on such a thought? You may ask. Because the Bible remains as God’s complete and final revelation (sole source of authority in matters of faith and practice... sole source for faith itself!”

This is where believing and behaving come into play. I’m persuaded the more we get into the Word and the Word gets into us, the more we will believe it and behave it!

Purpose: to learn what benefits we can count on from the Word of God

What can we expect when we rely on the Bible as the Word of God? The following three points will give a solid summary to this question and will accomplish the very purpose behind this message:

I STABILITY IN ROUGH TIMES (v 98)

A. No One is Immune to Life

1. What I mean = no one avoids *unfairness* or *harshness* life often gives...
2. You and I bear the marks/scars, the hurts and pain that comes as a result of *the storms of life*
3. Illus. – 2 college students talking “What’s the matter? You look all broke up.” “I wrote home for money for a study lamp.” So?” “They sent the lamp!”
4. We can relate all too well, can’t we? – disappointments, hurts, pain real part of life.

B. All Must Deal with Life

1. Not to minimize joys of our lives, we’ve been assured there will also be sorrows.
2. How are we going to deal with them? How are we going to make sense out of the injustices, pain and sorrows of life?

C. The World’s Alternatives

1. Escapism = emotionally and literally (chemical dependence, illicit sex etc.) = idea is to avoid pain at all costs even avoiding reality...
2. Cynicism = bitter revengeful life which is preoccupied with troubles...
3. Humanism = counsel of *man* – logic and reason wrapped up in man (psychologist and psychiatrist become “gods”....
4. Supernaturalism (occult) = turn to mediums and “wisdom” from “the other world”...

All the above, as popular as they are, do nothing to give relief &/or satisfaction. Needless to say these are unacceptable “final authorities.”

D. God's Alternative – His Word

1. Defined as : *Truth* (John 8:31-32; 17:17); *Unbreakable* (John 10:35); *final & complete* (2 Timothy 3:16,17; *perfect* (1 Corinthians 13:9-10); *source salvation* (2 Timothy 3:15); *the Word of God* (1 Thessalonians 2:13).
2. Promised by God, we can rely on His Word to give sense and meaning, especially during tragedies, hurts and disappointments of life.
3. No other “counsel” will get us through the “long haul” like the stability available in God’s Word!

II INSIGHT INSTEAD OF INTIMIDATION (v 99)

A. The “Scholarly World’s” M.O. (Modus Operandi)

1. Few scenes today more intimidating than “scholarly arguments” of “learned” people.
2. Our universities are filled with men/women who think it’s their mission in life to discredit anything that has God and His Word attached to it... (Mary’s and my experience...)
3. This *intimidation* spills over into the corporate world etc. – e.g. titles, clothes, cars even the way hands are shook etc. – “it’s a game of I’m up on you and don’t you forget it!”... glasses on beagle..
 - Illus. – a Jim Waltz tells of the time he was taking notes when his anatomy instructor labored through a lecture on the way nerve cells transmit impulses. “Who can tell me how these cells communicate with one another?” the instructor asked the class expecting someone to explain the phenomenon of neurotransmission. After a few muffled whispers, one student finally spoke up and said, “With cellular phones?”

B. God’s M.O. (Modus Operandi)

1. To communicate His final and complete will through His Word.
2. People who know His Word and growing in it aren’t intimidated:
 - a. *scholarly* attempts to discredit Scripture are recognized for what they really are – attempts to discredit TRUTH!
 - b. cult groups coming to our doors...
 - c. discussions with family/friends/neighbors concerning spiritual matters not just worldly matters...
3. World may have “the attractions” but it doesn’t have TRUTH!
4. God’s Word is TRUTH and because we are enabled to look beyond the temporary into the eternal...
5. Do note: the Bible will always be under attack in secular schools and schools of “higher learning”:
 - Illus. – Roy Aldrich writes: “Satan does not waste his ammunition. Professors, who are being paid to teach philosophy, English, biology, mathematics... often take time from their class periods to undermine the Bible and... Christianity. Why are they not doing the same with the sacred books of other religions? The answer is that Satan, the original Liar, is sympathetic with books that lie. His real enmity is directed against the Book of Truth because it contains the dynamite for his defeat.”

III MATURITY BEYOND ONE’S YEARS (vv 100-104)

A. Immaturity Reigns in the World

1. Examples of this come a dime a dozen...Alex Balwin episode this past week...
2. Honestly, don’t meet very many people who are honestly *satisfied* with their level of maturity...
3. Most people (even worldly people) long to grow up!...

B. God Desires Maturity

1. Loving Father desires His “children” (you and me) to grow up.
 - a. 2 Peter 2:2 “*And many will follow their sensuality, and because of them the way of the truth will be maligned.*”
 - b. 2 Peter 3:18 “*But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ...*”

- c. Hebrews 5:12 *“For though by this time you ought to be teachers, you have need again for someone to teach you the elementary principles of the oracles of God, and you have come to need milk and not solid food.”*
2. Make no mistake – our Father’s desire is maturity on our part...!

C. God Gives the Source

1. He’s equipped us with all that’s necessary to be mature servants of His. Do you believe that?!
2. His Word is our source for FAITH – this is why the Psalmist makes clear that we can have understanding more than the aged.
3. Years will never be the ultimate badge for maturity – experience is limited... even then most of us have a hard time “getting it”!
4. But, relying on God and His Word... -- promised faith and maturity beyond years.

Conclusion: Let me summarize by asking three questions and then I want to conclude with a challenge:

- 1) Do you desire stability? (we’re facing some really challenge days ahead...)
- 2) How would you like some insight instead of being intimidated? (remember it’s the world’s MO vs. God’s MO... which one do you choose?)
- 3) Is it your desire to grow up, mature even beyond your years? (let the Lord use His Spirit and Word to mature your faith, worship and service)

Challenge: to urge you (my church family) to utilize every opportunity to grow in the Word of God. Why? So that you will realize the benefits that come from God’s Word alone!