



The Last Resolution Ever Needed

“He humbled you and let you be hungry, and fed you with manna which you did not know, nor did your fathers know, that He might make you understand that man does not live by bread alone, but man lives by everything that proceeds out of the mouth of the LORD. (Dt 8:3)

But He answered and said, “It is written, ‘MAN SHALL NOT LIVE ON BREAD ALONE, BUT ON EVERY WORD THAT PROCEEDS OUT OF THE MOUTH OF GOD.’” (Mt 4:4)

At the root of every false teaching, every false or extreme movement, and even every personal shortcoming when it comes to our life in Christ is a failure to live by **every** Word of God. The sad reality is that so many struggling, backslidden and outright deceived Christians have not even read all of God’s Word, so living according to all that has been documented by God is not surprising. But another reality is that there are so few outstanding issues for Christians of every category when found to be living “*on every word*” which came from the mouth of God, all of which has found permanent residence in His written Word. And the subsequent result is that for those whose Christian life is not sustained by His Word, whatever corresponding issues and shortcomings which ensue are a direct result of their chosen substitute.

It is understandable when non-believers ignore God’s Word, which is to be expected. But within the walls of the Church where the believing regularly gather there is no shortage of unhealthy substitutes. It is bad enough when only part of God’s Word is read and so much just never studied or outright ignored, but then there are the enabling behaviors of adding to or subtracting from the text, pulling bits and pieces out of context like a marionette to make it say something it actually does not, and all manner of similar antics to detract from the whole. It was bad enough dealing with hyper-Dispensationalists who claim that only certain books of the Bible apply to Gentile believers while others are restricted to Jewish believers, but then came along “red letter” people. They say only the words of Christ printed in red are the absolute truth while the “black” ones are negotiable, the product of **man’s** word rather than **God’s**. There are a lot of tricks employed for

making it appear they are working within the boundaries of God's Word while falling well outside of abiding by any or all of it.

But then we have those who have engaged in rewriting it, whether it be outright misrepresentations calling themselves "The Holy Bible" such as *The Message* or *The Voice*, or inclusivist translations to alter the passages which don't suit whatever agenda or behavior against which the unadulterated Word of God prohibits or mitigates. One popular church figure who has repeatedly graced the covers and headlines of Christian magazines and websites has gone on record that since the Church wrote the Scriptures in the first place, the Church can simply agree to change them to resolve contemporary issues. The previous approach employed creative editing to rewrite the existing, but it has since escalated to achieve a total replacement.

And then we have a whole spectrum of options when we use books in place of God's Word, or even worse, buy into the notion that someone calling themselves a "prophet" or "apostle" insists they have a "new" or "fresher" word from God which is to override anything which came prior. I understand this the least. If it is true that God waited these past two thousand years to only **now** reveal something so critical and landscape altering, I wonder why God hated those previous generations so much that He allowed them to live and die in ignorance of the "new and improved" truth? If I believed such a thing, wouldn't I be worried that God is still holding something back? Such do not merely override His Word, but attempt to speak for Him in His place.

Again, every shortfall where Christianity is concerned, whether it be on the most personal, individual level or operating in a congregation, denomination or movement at large, can be traced to subsisting on something other than every Word of God. While few of us possess the ability, much less the opportunity, to fix the really big things so far afield in this arena, we are more than capable of personally assessing ourselves. It's much easier to point out these general trends of falling short where the Word of God is concerned than to turn that critical eye on myself. And in that regard, it's not simply taking some kind of inventory of my beliefs, but ascertaining the truth of something far more basic: Am I actually living on God's Word? Is that really my primary nourishment? What substitutes am I allowing, even in the smallest of portions?

Recently, Walk with the Word published an in-depth, verse-by-verse study of what is [the largest chapter in the whole Bible](#). And as it turns out, Psalm 119 in its 156 verse splendor

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is all about one thing: putting God's Word into practice. Each of its 22 sections is devoted to a different topic explaining yet another facet of our life in relationship to both God and man by which we are to be guided by God's already given Word. In fact, it is most interesting to discover that although prayer receives an occasional mention, it turns out that rushing into prayer is secondary to making a mad dash to His Word. God has **already** spoken so much and **already** answered so many of our questions and **already** explained what to do, it's not the best use of our time to keep asking again—or His, as it turns out. So much of what we are saying to Him, He has already responded to in advance and, as it turns out, for good measure He put it in writing. Believe it or not, we actually **do** come with an owner's manual.

Psalm 119 has sections devoted to abstaining from sin, dealing with emotional anguish, our actual approach to God, the foundation of our personal ministry to the Body of Christ, not to mention dealing with persecutors, the unsaved and trials, among other things. And it manages to show how prayer itself is accommodated hand-in-hand with His Word. Psalm 119 is but a launching pad of 22 such lessons which are subsequently expanded upon in the whole of God's Word, all combining to provide a written record of what God has already spoken. Is it possible that we don't experience God speaking today because He's waiting for us to give at least a cursory once-over to what He's already covered?

But for those who live by **every** Word of God, there is a progression of growth which reduces by an order of magnitude even the most difficult issues which we are prone to believe can only be answered supernaturally for what we assume is our unique situation alone.

“Therefore, behold, I am sending you prophets and wise men and scribes... (Mt 23:34a)

Jesus provides three categories describing the handling of God's Word, all of which are not only critical for us individually, but the whole of the Church.

A scribe is someone who thoroughly studies the whole of God's Word. They provide the foundation of “what it means”. If we don't begin with a bottom line of what the whole Word of God plainly, literally, and primarily means, the rest of the metaphorical building will go horribly wrong. And if we establish ourselves with anything less than “**every** Word of God”, collapse at some point it inevitable. Or at the least, further construction is impossible.

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Having established such a firm foundation, the wise man is able to apply the principles and teachings of God's Word to any and every situation in life, even those not word-for-word specified. If we first know the primary meaning of the whole of God's Word, then we can advance to the level of knowing how to apply it in every instance; the number of things which God's Word clearly illuminates for your life here and now narrows down to the once-in-a-lifetime category.

But the prophet understands not only the meaning of God's Word as events unfold in his current lifetime, but even more importantly, God's direction for what to do about it. Having first been established in the meaning and application of the whole of God's Word, he or she is empowered to not simply see its relevance to all which is taking place in the world at large, but the appropriate action or response which in kind conform to the whole of God's Word. Biblical prophets spend very little of their time predicting future events compared to preaching about the times they live in and God's desired response.

A serious error we can see in so many areas of the Church proper is when only one of these attributes is pursued and elevated to the exclusion of the others. There are those who pursue knowledge and study for the goal of even more knowledge and study; they never attain to actually putting God's Word into practice much less provide an acceptable biblical remedy for the issues of the day. Like so many Christian academics, they never really enter into true ministry, instead becoming the equivalent of a secular academic, someone who must publish or perish. They are always the first to dismiss what the wise man and prophet have to say because the academician falls short where application of God's Word is concerned, whether it be in the course of life in general, or the specific times in which they live.

But it is just as dangerous when all the eggs are placed in the basket of a perceived wise man, where it often leads to depending on the one personality for all the answers. In such cases, which often become cultic, it leads to believing that only the one figure is the sole source in exclusive possession of the answers. Such a strong dependence ensues that a follower no longer reads Scripture for themselves, quotes their leader/author/pastor in place of God's Word, and in all cases defer to their authority when it comes to the meaning or application of any passage, situation or interpretation of the times in which they live. Such teachers place themselves above both scribes and prophets, invoking that neither actually know the "true" meaning or message which only they can give, and which their willfully ignorant followers are ill-equipped to refute.

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And last but not least, we have those publicly professing themselves to be holders of the office of prophet who easily dismiss the scribes as clinging to “the old” Word and the wise men as not taking into account “the new” Word, which the false prophet asserts is his or her domain alone. They are most readily identified by often not even employing **any** part of God’s written Word in favor of their own, or if they do, reshaping it according to the so-called revisions they attribute to being new revelations provided by God personally to them alone. This why it will be often seen within the crowds such figures draw that there are no Bibles to be found. (Something we noticed when Todd Bentley and company came to town one time. There were approximately 6,000 standing in line to get into the “service”, none of which saw the need to bring a Bible.) They actually abandon God’s Word completely because of their embrace of such a replacement.

But the truth is that just as the Church needs all three—the prophet, the wise man and the scribe, so we likewise individually need to grow into **each** of these respective aspects of handling the whole Word of God. We need to establish the firm foundation in the character a proper scribe can provide, with the ability to put it into practice in any and all cases as the biblically wise man, and thus ultimately attain the reaches of understanding the times we live in and what to do about it as provided by the skillset of the prophet. Just as it is unhealthy to become yoked to a figure who over-realizes just one of these offices or approaches, it presents an equally parallel danger to us personally in our own approach to God’s Word. We need to strive for all three, but there is no scenario by which achieving even one, much less all of them, comes without the pursuit of **every** Word of God.

One of the most popular series of books from the past 30 or so years is probably a good barometer of what actually ails both passing trends, whole organizations at large, and so many individuals all self-identifying as “Christian”. It is difficult to find a church or individual library, much less a local bookstore, which does not have at least one, if not all, of the titles containing “Purpose Driven”. Without satiating the temptation to engage in an extended diatribe on these works specifically, it is sufficient to say that it is only those who have ceased pursuing God’s purposes for their life already prolifically stated **in** His Word who engage in this surrogate for all which God has already documented. It is a classic example of something which takes the place of God’s Word, in the course of using selected portions of His Word, to superimpose an alternate purpose from that already divinely established. It is beyond sadness that this is but one of many examples. But

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because of such a wide embrace of this alternate source of nutrition, in the ensuing decades the way was paved for a steady diet of even worse surrogates for His written Word.

The true scribe knows that which fails the test of the plain meaning of God's Word, the true wise man knows when it violates even the most basic principles of God's Word, the prophet recognizes it is a deception of the times in which we live, but such is only possible when a Christian believes they can live on something **other** than the whole Word of God alone.

Our daily assessment in this regard is to regularly self-assess: What did I "eat" today? And to recognize that for most the act of rescue must in some way be accompanied by a return to the Word, and nothing but the Word.

In Him,

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