

Message 2

The Rich Functions of the Word

Scripture Reading: John 5:39-40; Luke 24:27, 44; 2 Tim. 3:15-17; 1 Pet. 1:23; 2:2; Matt. 4:4; Jer. 15:16; Psa. 119:25, 50, 107, 154, 105, 130, 41, 170, 28, 76, 103; 116-117, 49, 57-58, 135, 114, 175, 65, 98-99, 66, 11, 165, 133; 1 John 2:14; Heb. 4:12; Eph. 5:26; John 15:3; Acts 20:32

- I. **The first function of the Bible is to testify concerning the Lord Jesus—John 5:39; Luke 24:27, 44:**
 - A. The Lord Jesus is the subject and contents of the Bible; the Bible is the explanation and expression of the Lord Jesus; the Lord Jesus is God's living Word; the Bible is God's written Word—*Hymns*, #801.
 - B. The Lord Jesus, the living Word, must have the Bible, the written Word, as His expression; if we want to know the Lord Jesus, we must read and understand the Bible.
 - C. Because the Scriptures testify concerning the Lord, they should not be separated from the Lord; we may contact the Scriptures, yet not contact the Lord; only the Lord can give life—John 5:39-40 and note 39¹; *Hymns*, #812.
 - D. All the various functions of the Word are the actions of a living Person; for example, the Word comforts us, strengthens us, and upholds us; but if we fail to contact the Lord as we read the Word, the Word will not function this way in our experience.
- II. **The Bible functions to make us wise unto salvation (2 Tim. 3:15); it reveals to us how God saves men in Christ, and how men may be saved by faith, so that we may know the way of salvation.**
- III. **The Word causes us to be regenerated and is a seed causing us to become the reproduction of Christ—1 Pet. 1:23; Luke 8:11; Matt. 13:38.**
- IV. **The Word is the believers' spiritual milk; hence a newly regenerated believer must long for the word of the Bible, like newborn babes longing for the guileless milk of the word; otherwise his spiritual life cannot grow—1 Pet. 2:2; 1 Cor. 3:1-2.**
- V. **The Word is also the believers bread of life; the nourishment of our spiritual life can only be supplied by the word of the Bible; we must take the word of God as food and eat it—Matt. 4:4; Jer. 15:16; *Hymns*, #814.**
- VI. **The Word makes the believers complete; after our regeneration, the Bible is profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that we, the men of God, may be complete—2 Tim. 3:16-17.**
- VII. **The Word of God gives us light and life—Psa. 119: 105, 130, 25, 50, 107, 154.**
- VIII. **The Word of God functions to restore our soul and rejoice our heart (Psa. 19:7-8); if we take time to read, pray, and sing the Word, we will find that the Word will restore our soul and cause our heart to rejoice.**
- VIII. **The Word of God can make our body healthy—Prov. 4:20-23:**
 - A. Because the word of the Bible can restore our soul and make our heart joyous, it can heal our body; there is a saying, "When the heart is happy, the body grows fat."
 - B. Since the word of the Bible makes our heart happy, it can also make our bodies healthy.
- IX. **The Word of God also brings us salvation (Psa. 119:41, 170); we need salvation every day, even every moment; the living Word of God brings us God's instant and constant salvation.**

- X. The Word of God strengthens us (v. 28), comforts us (v. 76), and nourishes us (v. 103); the psalmist said that God's word was sweet to his taste, sweeter than honey to his mouth.
- XI. As the Word of God nourishes us, it upholds us; the Word holds us up; it also keeps us safe and causes us to hope (Psa. 119:116-117, 49); when we experience the function of the living Word, we shall not be without hope.
- XII. The Word of God causes us to enjoy God as our portion (Psa. 119:57); if we would enjoy Christ as our portion in the Word, we should not only study the Word, but receive the Word in a living way by praying, singing, psalming, and thanking (Eph. 6:17-18; 5:19-20; Col. 3:16).
- XIII. Through the Word we enjoy God's countenance (Psa. 119:58) and the shining of His face (v. 135); our situation should be that of Moses on the mountaintop, enjoying the shining of the Lord's countenance—cf. 2 Cor. 3:15-18.
- XIV. Through the Word we may enjoy God as our hiding place and shield (Psa. 119:114) and also enjoy God's help and well-dealing (vv. 175, 65).
- XV. The Word of God makes us wise and gives us understanding; the more we get into the Word, the wiser we become—vv. 98-99.
- XVI. The Word of God also gives us good discernment and knowledge—v. 66.
- XVII. The Word of God keeps us from sinning (v. 11); the Word also keeps our feet from every evil way (v. 101).
- XVIII. The Word of God also keeps us from stumbling (v. 165), establishes our footsteps, and causes us to overcome iniquity (v. 133); we shall conquer all evil things, for the Word of God will make us conquerors, overcomers (1 John 2:14).
- XIX. The Word sanctifies the believers; to be sanctified (Eph. 5:26; 1 Thes. 5:23) is to be separated from the world and its usurpation unto God and His purpose, not only positionally (Matt. 23:17, 19) but also dispositionally (Rom. 6:19, 22).
- XX. "The word of God is living and operative and sharper than any two-edged sword, and piercing even to the dividing of soul and spirit and of joints and marrow, and able to discern the thoughts and intentions of the heart"—Heb. 4:12.
- XXI. The word of the Bible washes our outward actions and removes our outward defilement; it also washes us inwardly and frees us from the weaknesses of the old creation—Eph. 5:26; John 15:3; cf. Psa. 119:9.
- XXII. The word of God's grace is able to build the believers up and give them the inheritance among all those who have been sanctified—Acts 20:32:
- XXIII. In Acts 20:32 we see the function of the word of God's grace is first to build up the saints; to build up the saints requires the growth in the divine life, and the growth in the divine life needs the nourishment of the divine element and the edification and equipment with the divine knowledge.
- XXIV. All these can be afforded only by the word of God's abundant grace, which is the Triune God Himself who went through all the processes of incarnation, human living, crucifixion, resurrection, and ascension and who has been given to the saints for their enjoyment.

References and Further Reading:

1. *Truth Lessons, Level One*, vol. 1, ln.1.
2. *Life-study of Exodus*, msg. 58.
3. *The Collected Works of Witness Lee, 1932-1949*, vol. 3, “Crucial Truths in the Holy Scriptures, Volume 3,” ch. 31.
4. *Life-study of Acts*, msg. 55.