



CHURCH ALIVE - HOME BIBLE STUDY

Lesson I- Prepared by Bev Kendrick

The Importance of the Word of God

Let's begin with prayer: "Father, we thank you for Your Word and the opportunity to study Your Word. We thank You for every promise that You have provided for us through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. We thank You for sending Your Holy Spirit to teach us and guide us in our daily lives. We ask that the Holy Spirit would open the Word to us as we study. In Jesus Name!

Life is precious! Each person has been created with value, purpose and promise. Life is what God is all about! Life has been God's plan for you from the beginning. God set out on a course to restore life through Jesus Christ, who paid the ultimate price so that we might have life— both here and now! (John 3:16) Life is what we are all about! And so, each week we are studying God's Word, seeking the reality of *His Resurrection Life!* Jesus came that we might have life and life more abundantly! (John 10:10)

The foundation for our Christian beliefs is the Word of God! So, in this first lesson we will first look at **the IMPORTANCE of the WORD OF GOD.**

Jesus said in Matthew 4:4, *"Man does not live by bread alone but by every Word that proceeds out of the mouth of God."* **THERE IS LIFE IN THE WORD!** I have found the words of Jesus in John 8:32 to be true in my own life: *"You will know the truth, and the truth will make you free."*

There can be no health or growth in the Christian life apart from the Word of God. The word of God is the standard for our faith, morals and practical living.

2 Timothy 3:16,17 – *"All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for ¹instruction in righteousness, ¹⁷ that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work."* The NIV version says that all scripture is *"God breathed."* The first mention we have of God speaking is found in Genesis 1:3, *"Let there be Light"* and there was light!

V.14 says that God's Word is "able to make you wise for salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus."

We are not to just casually read the scriptures. We are to study like a worker – meditate on it, memorize it, so it is readily available to be used as a sword against the enemy, as a deterrent against sin, for witnessing and in prayer, *(as you will learn at Wednesday night prayer)*. **It is important to ask the Holy Spirit to open the Word to you as you read and study.**

2 Timothy 2:15 – *"Be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth."*

"Rightly dividing" means **cutting straight**. This means rightly discerning its truth by capturing the Spirit of the Word – how to rightly APPLY the Word to our lives. **THE APPLIED WORD OF GOD** is the only way to live a healthy balanced life. We are to be **DOERS** of the **WORD** – **APPLYING IT TO OUR LIVES!** (James 1:22) We are to put the Word into practice.

Hebrews 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 discernor of the thoughts and intents of the heart.”*

Nothing is hidden from God’s sight, but exposed and laid bare before Him to whom we must give an account. It’s a reminder of the transforming power of God’s Word in our lives, guiding us to a deeper understanding of ourselves and aligning our hearts with His. God knows all about us!

I would suggest you take time out here and read and meditate on Psalm 139.

WE MUST ALLOW THE WORD OF GOD TO JUDGE THE INTENTS AND THOUGHTS OF OUR HEARTS

He is speaking here of the “RHEMA” WORD of GOD – a Word spoken of given directly to us from God by the Holy Spirit – a single promise the Spirit may bring to our mind from the Word of God. That RHEMA WORD goes right into our soul.

I have found that one RHEMA WORD from God has transforming power in any situation. I have gone to bed with a “bad attitude” and woke up with the complete change of heart because these words from the Holy Spirit, “What difference does it make!”

The written Word of GOD is called the “LOGOS.” The Bible is the WRITTEN LOGOS; Jesus is the LIVING LOGOS; and the Holy Spirit UTTERS the written LOGOS. (*Word Wealth Spirit-filled Life Bible Acts 19:20*)

When God speaks a RHEMA WORD into your heart by the Holy Spirit, He is **CALLING FORTH FAITH**. Hebrews 4:11 encourages us to MIX the WORD with FAITH! (We will look at this in another lesson.)

We also have to aggressively pursue God, study His word – giving it our full attention to guard against false doctrine. In 2 Timothy 1:13 the Apostle Paul instructs Timothy, *“Hold fast the pattern of sound words which you have heard from me in faith and love which are in Christ Jesus.”*

We must **know** what we believe and hold fast to that! Many have been deceived because they do not have a LOVE of the TRUTH!

**Our goal as Christians is to BE all that Jesus wants us to BE
and to DO all that He wants us to DO!**

We are to be imitators of Christ. Jesus said that all who follow Him will be like Him. (Matt. 10:25) His standards are high and can only be achieved by the indwelling Christ and the enabling power of the Holy Spirit. This requires a review of our values and a change in our behavior.

The Scripture tells us that the Word of God is veiled to us until we are ready to receive it (2 Corinthians 4:3). So that is why we must press in and receive all that there is from God – the Holy Spirit being our teacher.

As you study the Word it is important to ask the Holy Spirit to “open the Word” to you.

THE OLD AND NEW TESTAMENTS (COVENANTS)

The Bible, the Word of God, is made up of the Old Testament and New Testament: Old Covenant and the New Covenant. They two Covenants are ONE REVELATION.

The Word of God is a PROGRESSIVE REVELATION of JESUS CHRIST from the Book of Genesis to the Book of Revelation, REVEALING GOD'S PLAN OF REDEMPTION. I learned this important truth in Bible school: **NEVER SEPARATE THE WORD FROM THE PERSON OF JESUS CHRIST!**

The Old Testament are the Scriptures Jesus read, the Scriptures He quoted, the Scriptures He fulfilled.

Jesus upheld the validity of the Old Testament in His teaching.

Matthew 4:17, 18 NKJV– *“Do not think that I came to destroy the Law and the prophets. I did not come to destroy but to fulfill.”*

The Old Testament reveals Jesus. Jesus is seen in every Book. (Ie. In Genesis3:15 He is seen as the “Seed;” in Exodus as “the Lamb” etc.)

In John 3:39 Jesus said, *“You search the scriptures for in them you think you have eternal life; and these are they that testify of Me.”*

Jesus put new content into old words! *“You have heard that it was said, but I say...”* (You will learn more about this in Pastor John's course, *“The Life and Ministry of Jesus.”*

The Message never changes, but the application will. Jesus is concerned with men's hearts, not outward observance of the Law.

Today some say that we do not need the Old Testament. We cannot fully understand the New Testament without the Old Testament. It is the foundation for the New Testament.

COMPARISON OF THE OLD AND NEW TESTAMENTS (COVENANTS):

OLD COVENANT	NEW COVENANT
Begins with God	Begins with Jesus Christ
The foundation for the New Testament	The Superstructure
Associated with Moses	Associated with Christ
Gathers around Sinai (Covenant of Law – made by God with man before Christ came.	Gathers around Calvary (Covenant of grace, which came through Jesus Christ.) (John 1:17)
Begins what New Testament completes.	Completes what Old Testament begins.
Old Testament predicts the coming of Christ and events in His life. It sets the stage for His coming.	The New Testament reveals how Jesus Christ fulfills Old Testament scriptures.
Written in Hebrew	Written in Greek

Our beliefs are based on one sure thing: GOD'S WORD CANNOT BE BROKEN!

Throughout the Old Testament God made covenants with His people... with Adam, Noah, Abraham, David, etc. God relates to us on the basis of the Covenant. HE IS BOUND TO HIS COVENANT. That is why Abraham became such a man of faith. When God “cut” the Blood Covenant with Abraham in Genesis 15

Abraham then understood that the promises made to him by God would come to pass. He would be the father of many nations. Why? Abraham knew that A COVENANT CANNOT BE BROKEN. (Taken from *"The Miracle of the Scarlet Thread"* by Richard Booker)

A covenant means exchange! Abraham knew that everything God had belonged to him and that everything he had belonged to God. This covenant concerns us. God's purposes have not changed.

Hebrews 6:17,18 NIV – *"Because God wanted to make the unchanging nature of His purpose very clear to the heirs of what was promised, he confirmed it with an oath. ¹⁸ God did this so that, by two unchangeable things in which it is impossible for God to lie, we who have fled to take hold of the hope set before us may be greatly encouraged."* **GOD MADE A BLOOD SWORN OATH!**

The covenant God made with Abraham, the father of faith, concerns us. It was an eternal covenant. He had us on His mind when He made it. It's all now for you and me.

"If you are in Christ, you are Abraham's seed and heirs according to the promise." (Galatians 3:29)

Jesus Christ is the New Testament fulfillment of the Abrahamic Covenant. These are great promises—*"a great nation. I will bless you, etc."* (Read Genesis 12.)

God relates to us on the basis of His covenant. Our relationship to God has to be based on His Covenant. We can plead the promises, but if we violate the principles, we cannot expect to receive the blessings. HE GIVES THE PRINCIPLES TO BRING FORTH THE BLESSINGS. The Word is our Covenant.

When God says, *"I will do something"* we need to consider it part of the covenant. Throughout His Word God reminds us of His loyalty to His covenant promises. He is bound by His Word. Not one of His promises has ever failed (1 Kings 8:56). Over and over in scripture He uses Creation to bring home the point.

Isaiah 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,"¹¹ 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."*

God's Word is the most powerful force in the universe. Faith is simply trusting that what God says He will do. His Word is as sure as the fact that it rains and snows **Again...God is saying, MY COVENANT WITH YOU CANNOT BE BROKEN!** His Word is as sure as the sun will rise tomorrow.

God is bound by His Word. God set His spiritual laws in motion. WE MUST PUT FAITH IN GOD BY OBEYING HIM - guided by God's precepts and principles. That's what brings forth the promises. We are talking about HEART FAITH here based on INTIMATE RELATIONSHIP WITH JESUS CHRIST!

The purpose and focus of this course and the vision of Hope Centre Family church is to KNOW JESUS and TO MAKE HIM KNOWN! As we study the Word, we are proclaiming that JESUS is LORD! Jesus is the Word of God manifest in the flesh. *"The Word became flesh and dwelt among us"* (John 1:14). JESUS IS THE LIVING WORD! JESUS LIVED OUT THE WORD!

Closing Prayer: Heavenly Father, I thank You for the covenant promises You have made with Your people—sealed by Your faithfulness and love. You never break Your word! Lord, help me to walk in the fullness of Your covenant blessings. Teach me to trust in Your promises – guided by your Spirit. Strengthen my heart to obey Your Word, so that my life reflects the beauty of Your truth. In Jesus Name!