

The Qualities of the Word

Heb 4:12

I. INTRODUCTION.

- A. Illustration about prisoner's reading the Bible by the light in the dungeon, *Encyclopedia of 15,000 Illustrations*, #779.
- B. Why would this prisoner go to such great lengths to read the Bible?
 - 1. What is there about the Bible to value?
 - 2. Why should we, like this prisoner, value the Word of God?

II. THE WORD OF GOD IS DIVINE.

- A. The author of Hebrews here refers to the Word as the “Word of God.”
- B. There has been some discussion as to what this “Word” is
 - 1. Some see this word as the Word Incarnate, Jesus Christ. However, that view doesn't seem to fit the context.
 - 2. It is far better to see this Word as the will of God.
 - a. Heb. 4:2 speaks of the “word which they heard.”
 - b. The description of the word as being sharper than any two-edged sword and piercing into the recesses of man seems to fit God's will better than God's Son.
- C. This is a divine Word, it came from God.
 - 1. 2 Pt 1:21.
 - 2. 2 Tm 3:16.

III. THE WORD OF GOD IS LIVING.

- A. “The word of God is living.”
- B. This contrasts to our Words which pass away.
 - 1. Our words do not endure through the ages.
 - a. What we say shall not be remembered long after we leave this world.
 - b. The words of great men that are remembered after they die shall not live beyond this world.
 - 2. Mt 24:35.
 - a. The word of God shall never be destroyed.
 - b. Illustration about the Bible's being printed in Voltaire's home, *Illustrations for Biblical Preaching*, p 27, #51.
- C. The word of God is living in that it produces life — only living things can produce life.
 - 1. 1 Pt 1:23.
 - 2. It is through this living word of God that we are able to be born into the family of God.
- D. The Bible is living in that it does things — the author tells us what the word of God does: it pierces man's innermost being and discerns his thoughts.

IV. THE WORD OF GOD IS EFFECTUAL.

- A. “The word of God is living and powerful.”
- B. The word of God has the power to comfort us.
 - 1. Jn 16:33.
 - 2. Who has not been comforted when faced with the unknown by reading the words of the Creator, reading how he loved us and sent his Son to die for us?
- C. The word of God is powerful for salvation.
 - 1. The word of God has the power to convert those who hear it.
 - a. Jer 5:14.

- b. Rm 1:16.
- 2. Illustration about the community in Germany being converted by the Word, *Stories for Preachers and Teachers*, “The Power of the Word,” sv “Bible,” sv “History.”
- 3. Have you been converted by the Word?

V. THE WORD OF GOD IS CUTTING.

- A. “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.”
- B. A double-edged sword is a far more formidable weapon than a single-edged sword.
 - 1. The double-edged sword offers less resistance: therefore, it cuts deeper than the single-edged.
 - 2. But, the double-edged sword was also a common simile for sharpness. The author is saying there is nothing quite as sharp as the Word of God.
- C. The word is so sharp that it cuts to the distinction of soul and spirit and of joints and marrow.
 - 1. There is a great deal of overlap between the terms “spirit” and “soul.”
 - a. The “soul” refers to that which is eternal in man — Mt 16:26.
 - b. The “spirit” refers to that part of man which thinks and reasons — Mk 2:8. Yet, the “spirit” also refers to the eternal part of man — Mt 27:50.
 - 2. It is quite difficult to separate bone and marrow — Although they are clearly separate, one must use an extremely sharp instrument to separate them
 - 3. The point here is that the Word of God is so sharp it can penetrate into man's innermost being. It can divide things that are very difficult to separate.
- D. The word of God is unique in that it will penetrate us like nothing * can.
 - 1. The word of God will not leave us alone Once the word of God has penetrate our hearts, we will not rest until we have obeyed.
 - 2. When those at Pentecost heard the word of God through Peter's mouth, they were “cut to the heart” (Acts 2:38). They wanted to know what they should do.

VI. THE WORD OF GOD IS REVEALING.

- A. “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 discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.”
- B. “Discerner” is actually an adjective in the Greek; the term means “able to judge.” The word of God is able to judge the thoughts and intents of the heart.
 - 1. Because the word of God can go into the heart like nothing else can, it is able to judge the heart.
 - a. I do not know your heart; I do not know your motives; I do not know your thoughts. Therefore, I cannot speak directly to what you're thinking, to the state of your heart.
 - b. But, God, the Creator of Man knows man better than man knows himself. He inspired Scripture so that the word would convict our hearts.
 - c. How many times have you read Scripture, heard Scripture preached or taught and thought, I need to stop thinking/feeling that way?”
 - d. Jesus said the Spirit would “convict the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment” (Jn. 16:8). He continues to do that work through the Word of God.
 - e. Illustration about the African woman's saying that the Bible was reading her. *Encyclopedia of 15, 000 Illustrations*, #716.
 - 2. The Word of God also discerns the thoughts and intents of the heart in that it will judge us at the last day.
 - a. Jn 12:48.
 - b. On the last day, we shall stand before God and be judged according to the Word of God.
 - c. Are you ready to be judged by that Word?