

# READING THE BIBLE

## ORIGIN AND CONTENT

**All Scripture is God-breathed** - 2 Tim. 3:16.

**But men spoke from God, being borne by the Holy Spirit** - 2 Pet. 1:21

The origin of the Bible is God; it was God who breathed His words of revelation through His Spirit into and out of the writers of the Scriptures. What was breathed out was not only words but also spirit. All the words of the Bible are spoken by men being borne by the Holy Spirit, just as a sailboat is propelled forward by the wind.

**Your word is truth** - John 17:17

**Speak to the people all the words of this life** - Acts 5:20

The content of the Bible has two main aspects - truth and life. God's word in the Bible is truth; it reveals the reality of God Himself. The words of life are the words of the Bible which the apostles preached. Since the words contain life, they are able to supply life, and this life is God Himself.

## FUNCTIONS OF THE WORD

**It is these that testify concerning Me.** - John 5:39

The first function of the Bible is to testify concerning Christ. Christ is the living Word of God, and the Bible is His written word. Without the written word, the living Word would be abstract and intangible. We must read the Bible if we desire to know Christ.

**The sacred writings, which are able to make you wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus** - 2 Tim. 3:15

The Bible reveals to us the way of salvation through faith that we may know how to be saved.

**Having been regenerated, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, through the living and abiding word of God** - 1 Pet. 1:23

The living word of God in the Bible enables us to have God's life and to be regenerated.

**As newborn babes, long for the guileless milk of the word, that by it you may grow unto salvation** - 1 Pet. 2:2

**Man shall not live on bread alone, but on every word that proceeds out through the mouth of God** - Matt. 4:4

The words of God in the Bible are our spiritual milk and our spiritual food which nourish us that we may grow and become mature.

**The entrance of thy words giveth light. Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path** - Psa. 119:130, 105

The word shines inwardly over our hearts and spirits to give us wisdom and revelation. It also gives light outwardly to our steps and pathways so that we would not be lost.

Because God's word is full of light and it enlightens us, it can make us very clear about many different things. God's word nourishes us while it enlightens us. The word of God also quenches our thirst. Another aspect of the function of the word of God within us is that of strengthening. The word of God strengthens us. No one who is hungry and thirsty can be strong.

**All Scripture is...profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, fully equipped for every good work** - 2 Tim. 3:16-17

**For the word of God is living and operative and sharper than any two-edged sword,** - Heb 4:12

**And receive the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which Spirit is the word of God.** - Eph 6:17

**That He might sanctify her, cleansing her by the washing of the water in the word,** - Eph 5:26

**Sanctify them in the truth; Your word is truth.** - John 17:17

**And now I commit you to God and to the word of His grace, which is able to build you up...** Acts 20:32

The words of the Bible have the diverse functions of teaching, reproof, correcting, and instructing people in righteousness. The word is living and operative, it is a sword slaying the enemy. The word washes the believers metabolically,

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sanctifies the believers and is grace building the believers up.

## HOW TO READ THE BIBLE

Because the Word of God is the breath of God, it is one with God. Just as it is not possible to separate the breath of a living person from the person himself, so we should not separate the Word of God from God Himself. If we read the Bible without contacting Him, we shall not receive life. Then in our experience the Bible will be a book of dead letters.

Since the Bible is the word of God, its nature is divine and spiritual. We must read it with every part of our being.

***Then He opened their mind to understand the Scriptures*** - Luke 24:45

In reading the Bible, we must first use the understanding of our mind to comprehend its text, which was written in human language, and to know its meaning.

***Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, in all wisdom...*** - Col. 3:16

***God...the Father of glory, may give to you a spirit of wisdom and revelation in the full knowledge of Him*** - Eph. 1:17

Ephesians 1:17 also shows us that wisdom is joined to our spirit. We understand the letter of the Bible with the understanding in our mind, and we apprehend the truth in the Bible by the wisdom in our spirit.

***The words which I have spoken unto you are spirit and are life.*** - John 6:63b

***And receive...the word of God, by means of all prayer and petition, praying at every time in spirit*** - Eph. 6:17-18

God is Spirit, and whatever is breathed out by Him must also be spirit. Therefore, the very element and substance of the Bible is Spirit, just as phosphorous is the basic substance of matches. We must use our spirit to strike the Spirit of the Bible to catch the divine fire. We are told to receive the word of God by praying in the spirit. This reveals to us that we also need to exercise

our spirit when we read and receive the word of God.

If we contact the Lord by praying with the Word, we shall receive life from the Word. Then the Word will not be dead letters, for through the exercise of our spirit we shall touch the living One in the Word.

***You search the Scriptures...and you are not willing to come to Me that you may have life.*** - John 5:39-40

***Thy words were found, and I did eat them; and thy word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of mine heart.*** - Jeremiah 15:16

***The entrance of thy words giveth light; it giveth understanding unto the simple.*** - Psalm 119:130

We read the Bible to contact God Himself, to receive the supply of life and to receive enlightenment.

***They received the word with all eagerness, examining the Scriptures daily, to see whether these things were so.*** - Acts 17:11

***But his delight is in the law of the Lord; and in his law doth he meditate [muse] day and night.*** - Psalm 1:2

Read daily. Memorize and muse on the precious verses.

***The law of thy mouth is better unto me than thousands of gold and silver*** Psa. 119:72. ***More to be desired are they than gold, yea, than much fine gold.*** Psa. 19:10 ***How sweet are thy words unto my taste! Yea, sweeter than honey to my mouth*** Psa. 119:103.

These verses reveal the preciousness of God's word in the Bible for which our desire is continually stirred up. Again and again we need to come to the Word for the purpose of receiving nourishment and refreshment. This approach to the Bible is well expressed in Hymn #811

**References:** Life Study of Exodus Chapter 58, Life Study of Colossians Chapter 64, Life Lessons Volume 1, New Life Lessons Volume 1, BFA Bible Study Guide

**Hymns:** 811, 1218, 812, 815