



# TRANSFORMED BY WORSHIP

## **What is the Word of God?**

*The word of God came to John the son of Zechariah in the wilderness. -Luke 3:2*

The word of God is communication from the Lord that was originally given to Old Testament prophets. In the New Testament, we see that the Gospel accounts open up by saying that the “word of God came to John.” Here, the Scriptures are declaring that God is communicating a message through the Prophet John the Baptist. John the Baptist would prepare the way for Jesus who God the Father would also speak through. The writer of Hebrews says: “Long ago, at many times and in many ways, God spoke to our fathers by the prophets, but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed the heir of all things, through whom also he created the world” (Hebrews 1:1-2).

Prior to Jesus’ death, Jesus also promised the Apostles that they would be given the Spirit to guide them into all truth (John 16:13). They continued the ministry of proclaiming the Word of God.

*They were all filled with the Holy Spirit and continued to speak the word of God with boldness. -Acts 4:31*

As people heard the Word of God they turned from sin and trusted in Jesus as their Lord and Savior. As they heard the Word of God, they also possessed truth for their lives. The wisdom of God guided them with decisions, relationships, priorities, and their perspective. Today, there are many voices seeking to shape our worldview, outlook on life, and lifestyle. God desires that we are equipped with His truth to lead us in every aspect of our lives.

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

*For the word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the division of soul and of spirit, of joints and of marrow, and discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart. -Hebrews 4:12*

## **What is a Sermon?**

*And he said to them [The Apostles], "Go into all the world and proclaim the gospel to the whole creation." -Mark 16:15*

*It is not right that we [The Apostles] should give up preaching the word of God to serve tables.... But we will devote ourselves to prayer and to the ministry of the word. -Acts 6:2, 4*

*Let the elders [Scripture calls the pastor an elder] who rule well be considered worthy of double honor, especially those who labor in preaching and teaching. -1 Timothy 5:17*

*...preach the word; be ready in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, and exhort, with complete patience and teaching. -2 Timothy 4:2*

*Therefore, an overseer [overseer is used interchangeably with elder] must be above reproach, the husband of one wife, sober-minded, self-controlled, respectable, hospitable, able to teach....-1 Timothy 3:2*

The sermon is the proclamation of the Word of God from the Scriptures.

The Apostles preached the Word of God. After preaching it, they also wrote down the Word of God in the New Testament. The sermon is normed and guided by a biblical text and is the "ministry of the Word" and the "labor of preaching and teaching." Therefore, it is authoritative public discourse in the Name of Jesus Christ where a preacher preaches repentance for the forgiveness of sins. It is ordained by God to be a Spirit-filled event that is prophetic, as a preacher teaches forth the Word of God that He

has studied and meditated upon. The sermon is a prophetic message meant to edify the church.

## **What is the Office of the Pastor?**

*Obey your leaders and submit to them, for they are keeping watch over your souls, as those who will have to give an account. -Hebrews 13:17*

*We ask you, brothers, to respect those who labor among you and are over you in the Lord and admonish you. -1 Thessalonians 5:12*

*So I exhort the elders among you...shepherd the flock of God that is among you, exercising oversight, not under compulsion, but willingly, as God would have you not for shameful gain, but eagerly; not domineering over those in your charge, but being examples to the flock. And when the chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the unfading crown of glory. -1 Peter 5:1-4*

When you are connected to the church and worship weekly, you are also connected to your pastor whom God has ordained to be in your life. While some people today desire to be free from spiritual authority and guidance in their lives, followers of Jesus know that a pastor “keeps watch over their souls,” is “over you in the Lord,” and is their “shepherd.” There is spiritual protection when we value the cover of authority God has placed in our lives.

## **What is the Lord’s Supper?**

*Now as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and after blessing it broke it and gave it to the disciples, and said, “Take, eat; this is my body.” And he took a cup, and when he had given thanks he gave it to them, saying, “Drink of it, all of you, for this is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins. - Matthew 26:26-28*

*The cup of blessing that we bless, is it not a participation in the blood of Christ? The bread that we break, is it not a participation in the body of Christ? Because there is one bread, we who are many are one body, for we all partake of the one bread. -1 Corinthians 10:16-17*

*Whoever feeds on my flesh and drinks my blood abides in me, and I in him. -John 6:56*

Communion is the body and blood of Jesus which was poured out for the forgiveness of sins. When we partake of communion with faith in Jesus as our Lord, we experience and are assured of the forgiveness of our sins. We often go through life not feeling good enough. We also get confused regarding how God feels about us. Communion is a gift from Jesus where He wants us to be assured of His love.

When we commune, we share in the body and blood of Christ as a community in Christ. Therefore, we are expressing our unity with Christ and one another as the people of God. The church is called a family, and communion is our family meal where we get to have fellowship with Jesus and one another regardless of age, race, gender, citizenship, or socioeconomic status. We get to come together and walk in Jesus' light without fear, shame, or guilt. John says: "But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus his Son cleanses us from all sin." -1 John 1:7

In communion, we are also experiencing a foretaste of the heavenly feast to come. Heaven is described this way: "Blessed are those who are invited to the marriage supper of the Lamb" (Revelation 19:9). Communion is our earthly meal that gives a foretaste of our heavenly meal where we will see Jesus face to face!

*Ekklesia* is the Greek word for church and is defined as an "assembly or congregation called by God." Therefore, when we gather as the church on the Lord's Day (Sunday is day of the Resurrection), we are assembled primarily to hear the proclamation of the Word of God and to partake of communion. These are gifts from Jesus to cherish. Our singing, prayers, offerings, and confession of sin is all in response to the kindness that He has showed to us through His Son Jesus Christ!

## **Why Do We Sing?**

*You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. -Matthew 22:37*

*Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom, singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, with thankfulness in your hearts to God. -Colossians 3:16*

*About midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God, and the prisoners were listening to them. -Acts 16:25*

Worshipping the Lord with song is our expression of adoration with all our heart, soul, and mind. It is a response to what God has already given to us through Jesus. It is from our hearts. Psalm 96 gives one of the greatest expressions of what singing to God is all about:

Oh sing to the LORD a new song;  
sing to the LORD, all the earth!  
Sing to the LORD, bless his name;  
tell of his salvation from day to day.  
Declare his glory among the nations,  
his marvelous works among all the peoples!  
For great is the LORD, and greatly to be praised;

he is to be feared above all gods.  
For all the gods of the peoples are worthless idols,  
but the LORD made the heavens.  
Splendor and majesty are before him;  
strength and beauty are in his sanctuary. -Psalm 96:1-6

**Head: These questions help us understand Scripture**

1. What does the Bible say that the worship service is for?
2. What is the significance of a biblical sermon?
3. What is the reason for cherishing communion?

**Heart: These questions help us wrestle with our beliefs for our lives**

4. What priority do you place on attending worship currently?
5. What do you believe you receive when you attend worship?
6. How is it an encouragement to other believers when you attend?

**Hands: These questions help us do something after hearing the Word**

7. Will you commit to making worship a priority?
8. Who is someone you can invite to worship?