

Summary

This sermon explores how to become more aware of the Holy Spirit's presence through "sail-raising practices," continuing from previous teachings on stillness and obedience. The pastor focuses on transforming our approach to Scripture, emphasizing that all Scripture is "God-breathed" (theopneustos) - meaning God literally put His words in the mouths of biblical writers. Using the powerful analogy of encountering a living bear versus a dead one, the message illustrates that God's Word is "living and active" like a sword wielded by the Holy Spirit. Rather than approaching Scripture as something to master, dissect, or control, believers should come to be examined, read, and mastered by it. The sermon advocates for approaching Scripture slowly, expectantly, and with listening ears, arguing that learning to hear the Spirit's voice in His written Word trains us to recognize His voice in daily promptings and guidance.

Discussion Questions

1. **The Living Word Analogy:** How does the comparison between a dead bear and a living bear change your perspective on approaching Scripture? What does it mean practically to "come not to read but to be read" by God's Word?
2. **Sail-Raising Practices:** The sermon mentions stillness, obedience, and engaging with Scripture as practices that help us become more aware of the Holy Spirit. Which of these practices do you find most challenging, and why? What other "sail-raising" practices might help us become more spiritually attuned?
3. **Speed vs. Depth:** How do you balance the value of reading broadly through Scripture with the need to "marinate" in passages? What does "savoring" God's Word look like in your personal study?
4. **Training Our Ears:** The sermon suggests that learning to hear the Spirit's voice in Scripture trains us to hear His voice in daily life. Can you share an experience where you sensed God's leading or prompting? How did your familiarity with Scripture help you discern whether it was truly from God?
5. **Expectant Approach:** What does it mean to approach Scripture "expectantly" rather than doubtfully? How might your Bible reading change if you consistently came believing that God has something specific to say to you through His Word?
6. **The Spirit's Language:** The pastor argues that "the Word of God is the language of the Spirit" and that we need a "shared vocabulary" to build our relationship with Him. How does this concept challenge or encourage your current approach to Bible study and prayer?