

Passage: 1 Peter 1:20-25

Title: The Enduring Word

Summary: Today we study the great statement in verse 25, “the word of the Lord endures forever”. We will see the power of the Word of God that not only saves us, but changes us, and imparts His love in us. This “enduring and outlasting word”, also will outlast all things.....it will outlast our fears, our failures, our faults, and our flesh! Join us as we study the “word that endures and outlasts forever”.

1 Peter 1:18–25 (NKJV) ¹⁸ knowing that you were not redeemed with corruptible things, like silver or gold, from your aimless conduct received by tradition from your fathers, ¹⁹ but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot. ²⁰ He indeed was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you ²¹ who through Him believe in God, who raised Him from the dead and gave Him glory, so that your faith and hope are in God. ²² Since you have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit in sincere love of the brethren, love one another fervently with a pure heart, ²³ having been born again, not of corruptible seed but incorruptible, through the word of God which lives and abides forever, ²⁴ because “All flesh is as grass, And all the glory of man as the flower of the grass. The grass withers, And its flower falls away, ²⁵ But the word of the LORD endures forever.” Now this is the word which by the gospel was preached to you.

Peter’s Credentials / Still Feeding

Written by the Apostle Peter, whose credentials have been challenged because of his lack of education and training; but Peter walked with the Lord, the second Apostle called, and all could see that his power and boldness came because he had been with the Lord. For 3 years he walked with Jesus step-by-step, and now it is 30 years since the resurrection and Peter is still faithfully doing what the Lord commissioned him to do, “feeding His sheep”.

The Dispersed

He is writing to the Believers that have been spread out, dispersed from their homeland, thrown into foreign countries. Many of them are struggling and suffering; but their greatest struggle is yet to come, for in just several months Roman Empire Nero is going to launch an all-out attack and persecution against Christians, and over the next 2 centuries over 6 million Christians will die for their faith.

Why Peter Writes / Remember

Peter tells us in the Second Epistle why he writes to them (and us), to stir us up, to remind us, that we hang on to the things we have been taught in the Old Testament, the Epistles of the Apostles, and the teachings in the Gospels. He says remember these things, hold on to them, no matter how hard life may get.

(2 Peter 3:1 NKJV) Beloved, I now write to you this second epistle (in both of which I stir up your pure minds by way of reminder), *(2 Peter 3:2 NKJV)* that you may be mindful of the words which were spoken before by the holy prophets, and of the commandment of us, the apostles of the Lord and Savior,

Doctrine – Duty – Declaration

Peter pretty much breaks this letter into 3 areas. Doctrine, Duty, and Declaration; this book takes on the frame work of Ephesians, except Peter adds on the Declaration – The Lord is Returning – Remember that! Doctrine, what we believe and why. Duty, doctrine in action, living it out. Declaration, soon and very soon we are going to see the King, Hold-fast until then.

Doctrine: Remember Our Great Salvation (1:2 - 2:10)

The Certainty of Our Salvation (1:1 - 1:12)

The Calling with Our Salvation (1:13 - 2:3)

The Chosen of Salvation (2:4 - 10)

Duty: Remember Our Example Before Men (2:11 - 4:6)

Honorable Living Before Unbelievers (2:11 - 3:7)

Submission to the Government (2:11-17)

Submission to Masters (2:18 - 25)

Submission in the Family (3:1- 7)

Honorable Living Before Believers (3:8 - 12)

Submission to One Another (3:8 - 12)

Honorable Living in the Midst of Suffering (3:13 - 4:6)

The Principle of Suffering for Righteousness (3:13 - 17)
The Perfection of Suffering for Righteousness (3:18- 22)
The Purpose of Suffering for Righteousness (4:1 - 6)

Declaration: Remember Our Lord Will Return (4:7 - 5:14)

The Responsibility of Christian Living (4:7 - 11)
The Rewards of Christian Suffering (4:12 - 19)
The Requirements for Christian Leadership (5:1 - 4)
The Realization of Christian Victory (5:5 - 14)

Theme

He tells us to remember because of the theme of this book. The theme of this book is given to us in chapter 5:

(1 Peter 5:10 NKJV) But may the God of all **grace**, who called us to His eternal **glory** by Christ Jesus, after you have **suffered** a while, perfect, establish, strengthen, and settle you.

The word suffering is used 16 times, glory 12, and grace 8. Peter unites these 3 words to write a letter of encouragement to those who are struggling and suffering, that their suffering will one day be transformed into glory.

Perfect / Establish / Strengthen / Settled

He writes to us so that we may be:

- Perfect - (mature) which means to mend (what has been broken or rent), to repair, to complete, to fit out, equip, put in order, arrange, adjust, to fit or frame for one's self, prepare;
- Established – to set fast, confirm one's mind;
- Strengthen – to make one strong;
- Settle – to lay a foundation.

Prayer

The Word of God is Living and Powerful, and is ready, and will do a mighty work in our lives.

Hebrews 4:12 (NKJV) ¹² 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 discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

In Every Study

- Who Is God? (How Great is He?)
- What Does He Think of Me? (How Wonderful Are His Thoughts Towards Me?)
- What Does He Want Me to Do?
- What Can I Boldly Request of Him?
- What Do I Need to Be on Guard of When I Leave Here Today?

Boldly come to the throne of grace, ask God to reveal Himself in a mighty way to you, and to do I might work in you, and through you.

Hebrews 4:16 (NKJV) ¹⁶ Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need

(1 Peter 1:20 NKJV) He indeed was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you

Not Plan B

v.20 – foreordained before the foundation of the world - Peter argues with the Lord saying far be it from you Lord like this is a big mistake don't do it. The cross was never an afterthought it was never a recovery plan from a bad plan that didn't work. The temple sacrifices and all those things in the Law were part of the plan to prove that man could not keep the whole Law and therefore animal sacrifice would never be enough and could not be the final plan for redemption. The Old Testament sacrifices showed the holiness of God and the need for man to be made perfect to come before the holy God. But before the foundation of the world, the Cross was always the plan, because man could not save himself, and needed a Savior.

Matthew 16:21–23 (NKJV) ²¹ From that time Jesus began to show to His disciples that He must go to Jerusalem, and suffer many things from the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised the third day. ²² Then Peter took Him aside and began to rebuke Him, saying, "Far be it from You, Lord; this shall not happen to You!" ²³ But He turned and said to Peter, "Get behind Me, Satan! You are an offense to Me, for you are not mindful of the things of God, but the things of men."

The Gospel was determined before the foundation of the world, and then was "manifested" (made known – come to revelation) in the time period of Jesus on earth, as Peter was witness to.

Significance of this verse is in this one verse wipes out Mormonism. Mormonism is what I call a time response thing, in that according to Mormonism God creates man, they sin, and God has to come and make a recovery plan (which they say was Jesus plan picked over his brother Satan.

Christian, God is never in "recovery mode", or a "Plan B" action, because "Plan A" did not work as He had hoped for you. I take great comfort, when I am in a trial, a suffering, a difficulty, that God not only has a plan, but a sure plan, a perfect plan, a plan that has been determined as best for me and best for the situation I am in, and I can rest in His plan, as sure as I am resting in His Plan, His perfect plan for my redemption.

Locked Out of Heaven

I met two missionaries on my recent mission trip. Both were Americans, and both were in the process the of adopting children who were nationals to the land they were born. I asked them when they would be coming to the States for a furlough and they said no time soon, because as they said "they are locked out of the Country"; and what all that means was that although they have custody of these children, they do not have full adoption, and thus they cannot leave the Country with them until the adoption is finalized. Thus they say, we are locked out of our Country until all this is finalized. I thought of what that must be like for them, and came to the realization how great a sacrifice they are making for these children. I thought of what it would be like for me and my family if something happened when I was in the mission field (say another Covid, or a disaster, or a war), and the US government said no you cant come home right now, you will have to wait until all this is over. I thought what it would be like if it was 3 months, and then what it would be like of it was 5 years, and my heart pained just the thought of not being able to come to the Land I love, and people I love, and my family. Then I saw the picture of Christ; He could have walked right into heaven from the Mount of Transfiguration, He could have walked right back into the arms of His Father, and into His Homeland (if you will), yet He chose to stay, to be locked out of heaven, for He could not leave this earth until..... the adoption was finalized, and the final paperwork was done at the cross (It is Done!). But if He left beforehand, then we would be the ones who would be locked out of heaven, forever. He could not, He would not, leave without us, even at the great pain it cost Him to be locked out for those 33 years, apart from His Father.

Matthew 17:1–2 (NKJV) ¹ Now after six days Jesus took Peter, James, and John his brother, led them up on a high mountain by themselves; ² and He was transfigured before them. His face shone like the sun, and His clothes became as white as the light.

You Are not an Accident – Precious in His Sight

All this, the cross, was foreordained from the foundation of the world. And listen, you are no accident, you are no mistake, you are not "wish never born", you are fearfully and wonderfully made, and you are being held in His hand, and you are precious in His eyes.

For You (Love Must Have a Choice)

V.20, says "for you" – God has done this, the suffering of the cross, for you! God says "I love you", not just by words, but by action too. God was willing to die "for you"! But for it to be love, there has to be a choice. Although elected (verse 2), for it to be love, there must be a choice, for love has to have a choice, love has to have a say in the matter for it to be love. God says "I love you", here is how much, as He shows us the cross; and my say is "I Do", I do love You Lord, and I want this love relationship with You, I choose You, I say "I Do", to your offer to be married to You!

Ephesians 5:25 (NKJV) ²⁵ Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her,

Revelation 19:9 (NKJV) ⁹ Then he said to me, "Write: 'Blessed are those who are called to the marriage supper of the Lamb!' " And he said to me, "These are the true sayings of God."

Bethlehem & Jerusalem Destroyed – But Prophecy not Stopped

Foretold, and thus must be fulfilled. Micah 5:2, the Christmas Card, written in approximately 710 BC, yes over 700 years before the fulfillment of Jesus' birth in Bethlehem. Satan would know this prophecy as he knows the scriptures (Words of God).

Micah 5:2 (NKJV) ² "But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, *Though* you are little among the thousands of Judah, *Yet* out of you shall come forth to Me The One to be Ruler in Israel, Whose goings forth *are* from of old, From everlasting."

As we have looked at in past study, greater is He who is in you than he who is in the world. Do you believe that? We should, and here is a passage that screams that out to us in that Satan had 710 years to destroy Bethlehem, and he didn't because he couldn't. Bethlehem is only about 5 miles away from Jerusalem, and so it would be in the trampling pathway when the enemies of Israel came against Jerusalem. I am thinking about the Babylonians, under Nebuchadnezzar, rolling in to destroy Jerusalem around 600BC, and Bethlehem would have went down as well as it would have been its end from an economic standpoint as Bethlehem income was raising Passover Lambs for sacrifice at the Temple. I can imagine how gleeful the devil must have been thinking he had stopped the prophecy of the place of the birth of Christ, and the place of the crucifixion, when Nebuchadnezzar destroyed Jerusalem. But, after 70 years in accordance with perfect prophecy, but the decree will go forth to allow the Children of Israel to go back, and not only go back, but to rebuild the Temple and begin the sacrifices again, and that Temple will be standing when Jesus comes and fulfills the final Passover Sacrifice, Himself, for our sin. He can't destroy you Ray, all you precious saints, we can't be defeated. All the power of Satan, and yes he has power, but could not destroy Bethlehem and Jerusalem.

Jeremiah 25:9-13 (NKJV) ⁹ behold, I will send and take all the families of the north,' says the LORD, 'and Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon, My servant, and will bring them against this land, against its inhabitants, and against these nations all around, and will utterly destroy them, and make them an astonishment, a hissing, and perpetual desolations. ¹⁰ Moreover I will take from them the voice of mirth and the voice of gladness, the voice of the bridegroom and the voice of the bride, the sound of the millstones and the light of the lamp. ¹¹ And this whole land shall be a desolation and an astonishment, and these nations shall serve the king of Babylon seventy years. ¹² 'Then it will come to pass, when seventy years are completed, that I will punish the king of Babylon and that nation, the land of the Chaldeans, for their iniquity,' says the LORD; 'and I will make it a perpetual desolation. ¹³ So I will bring on that land all My words which I have pronounced against it, all that is written in this book, which Jeremiah has prophesied concerning all the nations.

1 John 4:4 (NKJV) ⁴ You are of God, little children, and have overcome them, because He who is in you is greater than he who is in the world.

(1 Peter 1:21 NKJV) who through Him believe in God, who raised Him from the dead and gave Him glory, so that your faith and hope are in God.

Out from the Dead

v.21 - who raised Him from the dead – The wording literally reads, "raised Him out from among the dead". So Jesus is the first born from among the dead, and then many would follow who believed in the Promise. **Ephesians 4:7-10 (NKJV)** ⁷ But to each one of us grace was given according to the measure of Christ's gift. ⁸ Therefore He says: "When He ascended on high, He led captivity captive, And gave gifts to men."⁹ (Now this, "He ascended"—what does it mean but that He also first descended into the lower parts of the earth? ¹⁰ He who descended is also the One who ascended far above all the heavens, that He might fill all things.)

No Other Religion Can Make this Claim

No other religion can make this claim, the claim of the resurrection, as all others (Buddha, Krishna, Mohammed), they all died, and stayed dead, they did not have resurrection power, only Jesus has resurrection power.

Gave Him Glory

v.21 – gave Him glory – His glory was His perfect sacrifice, and His glory was overcoming and conquering sin, death, and the grave.

Back in verse 13, we were told to rest ourselves in His grace. It is always and only His Grace. And I/we can rest in His glory, His grace, and not look to ourselves for any glory in us. Just read chapter 1 over and over again, and we see all the way through, it is all Him, not us. And we see our faith is a gift, and rest in Him, and not us.

1 Peter 1:13 (NKJV) ¹³ Therefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and rest your hope fully upon the grace that is to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ;

God is Working – Even When Things are Hard / Perfect Love

v.21 - so that your faith and hope are in God. “Faith & Hope”, and so I must say something that is very hard for you to hear, as it is for me to hear, as it was for them to hear (remember the people who received this letter were suffering greatly), and that is..... God is doing something in your life, even when it is hard and difficult,

(1 Peter 5:10 NKJV) But may the God of all **grace**, who called us to His eternal **glory** by Christ Jesus, after you have **suffered** a while, perfect, establish, strengthen, and settle you.

I am conforming you into My image Ray..... and My image is love, perfect love.

Am I, are you, willing to believe and allow, that all these things in my life, God is (will use if I allow), to make me, into “perfect love”.

(1 Peter 1:22 NKJV) Since you have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit in sincere love of the brethren, love one another fervently with a pure heart,

(1 Peter 1:23 NKJV) having been born again, not of corruptible seed but incorruptible, through the word of God which lives and abides forever,

Born Again / Stirred & Penetrated

Verse 23 - born again: All who have repented and asked Jesus for forgiveness of their sin have been born again. Not by human conception, but being conceived by the word of God. Every believer is born again by the same way, the word of God was spoken to them, and it stirred our hearts, penetrated our hearts, and we were conceived and born again.

John 3:3 (NKJV) ³ Jesus answered and said to him, “Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.”

John 3:16 (NKJV) ¹⁶ For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.

The Truth is the Word

Verse 22 – obeying the truth through the Spirit - The truth we obey is the Word of God, and it is the Word of God that purifies our souls.

How can a man cleanse his ways, through the washing of the Word. Mediate on the Word, and let it wash over you. How do we purify ourselves, by obeying the truth

Psalms 119:9 (NKJV) ⁹ How can a young man cleanse his way? By taking heed according to Your word.

Love Fervently (Phileo & Agape)

And then Peter does this amazing connecting of the word through the spirit and says if you've been truly born again you will love your brethren fervently. if you've been born into the family of God and you have therefore been adopted by God and so to everyone else who is in the family is family and we're given the call to fervently love one another. Verse 22 starts with the word since and it is a clause, that simply ties all this together saying since you were born again the proof will be that you love your brother.

V.22 – love (phileo) - In verse 22 the first word for love is the love that means brotherly love it means family love and rightly so because he is speaking that we are family because we are all born into the family.

v.22 love (agape) - The second word for love is the word for unconditional love. this unconditional love is not an emotion but a decision and then decision is that I'm going to love that person unconditionally because they're my brethren in the family of God.

He Who Hates His Brother – No Interpretation Needed

The word of God gives some very direct words on the matter if someone does not love his brother/sister in Christ. God said it..... we should all do some self-examination on the condition of our heart. If we say we love God yet hate our brother the truth is not in us. That is what it says, no interpretation needed.

1 John 2:9 (NKJV) ⁹ He who says he is in the light, and hates his brother, is in darkness until now.

1 John 3:14 (NKJV) ¹⁴ We know that we have passed from death to life, because we love the brethren. He who does not love his brother abides in death.

Agape is a Decision

Jesus told Peter to forgive 70 times 7, yeah that means until you lose count. But I believe it also means 490 years, as in accordance to Daniel prophecy in Daniel 9, regarding His 1st Coming, and His 2nd Coming, and that is referring that we are to forgive our brethren until Jesus returns.

Matthew 18:22 (NKJV) ²² Jesus said to him, "I do not say to you, up to seven times, but up to seventy times seven.

Corrie TenBoom, who was held in the brutal Ravensbruck concentration camp in WW2, tells the story of her teaching on love and that the end of the message a man walks up who she immediately recognizes from her time in the concentration camp and he tells her did he received Christ after the war was over and heard she was speaking and came to ask her for forgiveness of what he did in the concentration camp. she says she literally froze for a moment and all the feelings from the concentration camp welled up inside of her and she was not sure if she could give him forgiveness but then she knew that forgiveness was not an emotion but that decision not a feeling but a decision and she says when she extended her arm to take his hand that was extended to her she said love for this man began to flow through her.

Unconditional love, especially to those who have harmed and hurt you, is not an emotion, for that emotion will never come, it is a decision, and when you make that decision by faith, love will then begin to flow.

You Can't – It is Impossible

If you say I can't love that person because of what they have done to you and understand that you were nowhere near the Kingdom of God and the heart of God. you must say it is impossible for me to love them because agape love love is not human only possible. agape love must come from above. if you say you can't love them unconditionally you were right about that but you were wrong for saying that because you have to say it is impossible to love them and when you come to that place then you can take that to the Lord let's see Lord I'm making a decision to love them unconditionally based on your word and your heart and now because it's impossible I know I can ask the God who does the impossible.

Luke 1:37 (NKJV) ³⁷ For with God nothing will be impossible."

When you come to it is impossible, because what they did to me, and then say Lord I am making a decision, not a feeling, to love my spouse, my parent, that brother, that sister, whoever that may be that has hurt you or failed you, then you will be fulfilling the "SINCE" calling, of being born into the family.

Rin in Cambodia

When I was in Cambodia one of the native pastors went into the middle of the poorest of the poorest areas in all of Cambodia and start ministering to the people there and built a church and also started to help people build homes and also helped people with food and clothing. The work is amazing and it is supernatural. And while he was giving me a tour of the village we came upon this elder lady and he said the most amazing thing to me and that is he said she hated me for four years she hated me without cause and she went from house to house slandering and gossiping about me and my intentions, and even cursing him. And..... He said nothing changed for years, it just went on and on, and he said when I finally started to love her like Jesus in my heart, regardless of what she said and did, but when he loved her like Jesus regardless (in his heart), that is when it finally ended, and her whole heart changed. Now she is like a grandmother to him, and he like a son, and they are sweet family, and she loves him and he loves her.

And what is so powerful with this man's ministry is that he doesn't do an orphanage, or abandoned mother ministry, which all are needful ministry where needed, but his ministry saves and disciplines men, husbands and fathers, and those men end up staying with the family and become husbands that lead their homes. Wow, might ministry, and it all came down to him having a moment with the Lord, that he "decided" I am going to "agape – unconditionally love" this woman, regardless how she loves me. So too will you see great power released in your heart, when you simply "decide by choice" to love that person, and extend your hand to them.

God Calling us to Pre-Fall State

Beloved, God is calling us back to the pre-fall state - perfect love because we are created/redeemed in perfect love - a love that is unconditional, and with compassion, empathy, unrestrained love, unfiltered love, unlimited love. Just like love was intended to be before the fall. That is how we are to love today.

(1 Peter 1:23 NKJV) having been born again, not of corruptible seed but incorruptible, through the word of God which lives and abides forever,

Word Lives Forever

Before moving on, notice a thread that gets woven here, and that is that the word of God lives and endures forever!

(1 Peter 1:24 NKJV) because "All flesh is as grass, And all the glory of man as the flower of the grass. The grass withers, And its flower falls away,

(1 Peter 1:25 NKJV) But the word of the LORD endures forever." Now this is the word which by the gospel was preached to you.

Living Word – 66 Books / Man’s Word / Bargain Table

This living word, 1 Bible, 66 Books, 1118 chapters, and 31102 verses, and 783,137 words, and 3,116,480 characters, are living and powerful, are inspired. Man will write many books, man’s ideas and philosophies spring up and fade away, but verse 25 the Word of God endures forever. Books that are on today’s best seller list for 39.99 will next year be on the bargain closeout table for 1.99. But the word of God endures forever. So mighty is the Word that God says He puts it above His Name, and we know at the Name of Jesus every knee will bow and tongue confess that Jesus is Lord!

(Hebrews 4:12 NKJV) 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 discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

(Psalms 138:2 NKJV) I will worship toward Your holy temple, And praise Your name For Your lovingkindness and Your truth; For You have magnified Your word above all Your name.

Philippians 2:10–11 (NKJV) ¹⁰ that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those in heaven, and of those on earth, and of those under the earth, ¹¹ and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

By the way, on the average of 15-20 minutes a day, you can read (or listen) to the whole Bible in 1 year!

Living Word Must be Embraced / Inspired; Poetically – Theologically - Physically

v.23 – the incorruptible seed of the Word - “Man shall not live by bread alone,” Jesus declared,” but by every word which proceeds out of the mouth of God” (see Matthew 4:4). Every part of the Word is living. None can be ignored. All must be embraced. Every word is inspired—not just poetically or theologically—but physically. How do I know? Look at our text:

(1 Peter 1:23 NKJV) having been born again, not of corruptible seed but incorruptible, through the word of God which lives and abides forever,

Seed – Sperm / Anything Living can Reproduce

The phrase “incorruptible seed” is a Greek term that speaks of sperm. This should not be surprising, for by definition, any living thing has the capability to reproduce itself. The Word of God is no exception, for by it we are born again:

(John 6:63 NKJV) "It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh profits nothing. The words that I speak to you are spirit, and they are life.

Scratching Head / How? / Born of Flesh is Flesh / Born of Spirit is Spirit

v.23 – born again by the Word - Perhaps scratching his head, Nicodemus said, “How can this be? How can a man enter into his mother’s womb a second time? What do You mean?” “That which is born of flesh is flesh,” Jesus said, “but that which is born of spirit is spirit. Marvel not that I say you must be born again. The wind bloweth where it wants, and you hear the sound, but no man knows from whence it comes and no man knows where it goes” (see John 3:1–10):

John 3:1–10 (NKJV) ¹ There was a man of the Pharisees named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews. ² This man came to Jesus by night and said to Him, “Rabbi, we know that You are a teacher come from God; for no one can do these signs that You do unless God is with him.” ³ Jesus answered and said to him, “Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.” ⁴ Nicodemus said to Him, “How can a man be born when he is old? Can he enter a second time into his mother’s womb and be born?” ⁵ Jesus answered, “Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God. ⁶ That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. ⁷ Do not marvel that I said to you, ‘You must be born again.’ ⁸ The wind blows where it wishes, and you hear the sound of it, but cannot tell where it comes from and where it goes. So is everyone who is born of the Spirit.” ⁹ Nicodemus answered and said to Him, “How can these things be?” ¹⁰ Jesus answered and said to him, “Are you the teacher of Israel, and do not know these things?”

Back to Ezk 37

A teacher of Israel, Nicodemus should have understood the reference. Born again, wind blowing? His mind should have raced immediately to Ezekiel 37, a passage familiar to every rabbi and teacher in Israel. Yes it speaks of the nation Israel, but is a picture of being born again also.

Dead Bones / Preach to Them / Zombies / Prophecy to the Wind - Ruwach

One day, the spirit of the Lord took Ezekiel to a valley full of dry, dead bones and told him to preach to the bones. As Ezekiel began to preach the Word, something amazing began to happen. The bones started to move. Before long, they had joined together like a great army, yet zombielike because they were without life. “Prophecy to the wind,” the Lord said to Ezekiel. So Ezekiel prophesied unto the wind even as he had done to the bones, and the wind—the ruwach—the spirit moved into them and the bones came to life.:

Ezekiel 37:1–10 (NKJV) ¹ The hand of the LORD came upon me and brought me out in the Spirit of the LORD, and set me down in the midst of the valley; and it was full of bones. ² Then He caused me to pass by them all around, and behold, *there were* very many in the open valley; and indeed *they were* very dry. ³ And He said to me, “Son of man, can these bones live?” So I answered, “O LORD GOD, You know.” ⁴ Again He said to me, “Prophecy to these bones, and say to them, ‘O dry bones, hear the word of the LORD!’ ⁵ Thus says the Lord GOD to these bones: ‘Surely I will cause breath to enter into you, and you shall live. ⁶ I will put sinews on you and bring flesh upon you, cover you with skin and put breath in you; and you shall live. Then you shall know that I *am* the LORD.’” ⁷ So I prophesied as I was commanded; and as I prophesied, there was a noise, and suddenly a rattling; and the bones came together, bone to bone. ⁸ Indeed, as I looked, the sinews and the flesh came upon them, and the skin covered them over; but *there was no breath in them.* ⁹ Also He said to me, “Prophecy to the breath, prophecy, son of man, and say to the breath, ‘Thus says the Lord GOD: “Come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe on these slain, that they may live.”’” ¹⁰ So I prophesied as He commanded me, and breath came into them, and they lived, and stood upon their feet, an exceedingly great army.

Born Again – Made Alive by the Spirit – AND THE WORD

If Nicodemus had made the connection between this story and what Jesus was telling him that night, he would have understood that to be born again means to be made alive by the Spirit and the Word, just as the bones became alive when Ezekiel preached the Spirit and the Word.

Same Dynamic Available Today

Perhaps, like me, you have known for years that when the seed of the Word and the Spirit of God penetrate our being, we “dry bones” come to life. I want you to see that the same dynamic that caused us to be born again can continually impact us in any arena where there are dry bones in our lives. I know there is a danger of being saved for awhile and thinking that the word doesn’t impact like it did when we first got saved. But Christian, you must hear this today, you must know this today. That same impacting moment in your life, when the dry bones of your life were given new life through the Spirit (rauch) of God,

as the word of God was preached to you, is available for you today. It isn't just the initial experience, that same dynamic can penetrate and impact you over and over again.

Marriage / Parents / Kids / The WORD can Penetrate / Ish 55

“Our marriage is as dry as a bone,” you might be saying. Or, “I respect him immensely, but my dad is spiritually as dry as a bone.” Or, “My six-grade son is not walking with the Lord as closely as he could be.” I have great news for you. The Word of God has the unique ability to impact and change your teenage son or daughter, your grandchildren, your mother, your co-worker, your friend, your husband, your neighbor. How?

(Isaiah 55:10 NKJV) "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,

(Isaiah 55:11 NKJV) 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.

It Will Outlast Everything and All Things

v.24-25 – grass and flower fades – The grass withers, and its flower falls away, but the word of the LORD endures forever: Peter here quoted from Isaiah 40:6–8. The word of the LORD certainly has endured. It has survived centuries of manual transcription, of persecution, of ever changing philosophies, of all kinds of critics, of neglect both in the pulpit and in the pew, of doubt and disbelief—and still, the word of the LORD endures forever!

i. In AD 303 the Roman Emperor Diocletian demanded that every copy of the Scriptures in the Roman Empire be burned. He failed, and 25 years later the Roman Emperor Constantine commissioned a scholar named Eusebius to prepare 50 copies of the Bible at government expense.

ii. “A thousand times over, the death knell of the Bible has been sounded, the funeral procession formed, the inscription cut on the tombstone, and committal read. But somehow the corpse never stays put.”

(Bernard Ramm, Protestant Christian Evidences)

Guzik, D. (2013). 1 Peter (1 Pe 1:22–25). David Guzik.

Personally – 32 Years – It has Outlasted All Things

For myself I have been reading and studying and being led by this Word for 32 years now, and it has outlasted all things in my life, and it will do the same for you.

- This Word will outlast – all your failures (just ask Peter).
- This Word will outlast – all your doubts.
- This Word will outlast – all your fears.
- This Word will outlast – all your anger, lust, bitterness and the likes.
- This Word will outlast – all the lies of the devil that you are not worth it, a mistake, broke vessel that cannot and will not ever change.
- This Word will outlast – your current relationship issues, your hopeless situations, your never-ending pain in this fallen world.
- This Word will outlast – all the corruptness of corrupt men, governments, of this world.
- This Word will outlast – all the lies of the enemy!

This Word, will outlast all things, because it “endures forever”.

Conclusion

The Word is Power, Remember it, let it impact your life, let it penetrate you again and again, day after day, like it did the day you first received it.

Prayer

The Word of God is Living and Powerful, and is ready, and will do a mighty work in our lives.

Hebrews 4:12 (NKJV) ¹² 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 discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

In Every Study

- Who Is God? (How Great is He?)

- What Does He Think of Me? (How Wonderful Are His Thoughts Towards Me?)
- What Does He Want Me to Do?
- What Can I Boldly Request of Him?
- What Do I Need to Be on Guard of When I Leave Here Today?

Boldly come to the throne of grace, ask God to reveal Himself in a mighty way to you, and to do I might work in you, and through you.

Hebrews 4:16 (NKJV) ¹⁶ Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need