



SUNDAY EVENING

AT BETHANY BAPTIST CHURCH

Title: God's Word in the Firelight

Passage: Jeremiah 36:1-26

Speaker: Pastor Dan Preston

Introduction:

"We may know the Scripture to be the Word of God by its miraculous preservation in all ages. The holy Scriptures are the richest jewel that Christ has left us;... The Word of God has never wanted enemies to oppose, and, if possible, to annihilate it...but God has preserved this blessed Book unbreakable to this day. The devil and his agents have been blowing at Scripture light, but could never blow it out; a clear sign that it was lighted from heaven." - Thomas Watson

Once, God's enemies tried to burn the Bible. During the days when Jehoiakim reigned in Judah, all of Jeremiah's prophecies were written on a scroll and taken to the king in his winter apartment. As he sat warming himself by the fire, Jehoiakim used the Word of God for fuel. Jehoiakim's wanton act of destruction placed Jeremiah's writings in jeopardy. If the king had succeeded, there would be no book of Jeremiah today. Everything Jeremiah ever prophesied would have gone up in smoke. Yet, to this day, the church holds the prophecies of Jeremiah as a sacred treasure—all of them. One reason the Scripture is known to be the Word of God is because of its miraculous preservation throughout all ages. Jeremiah 36 is about writing, receiving, rejecting, and preserving the Bible.

I. Writing the Word



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The Word of God passed from the mind of the Holy Spirit onto the pages of the Bible.

God told Jeremiah to write down all the prophecies he'd received in his first twenty years of ministry.

"Whereof the Holy Ghost also is a witness to us..." (Hebrews 10:15)

"Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation. For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost." (2 Peter 1:20-21)

The reason God wanted His words written down was to save His people from their sins.

II. Receiving the Word

It wasn't enough for the words of God to be recorded; they also need to be read and heard.

Micaiah demonstrates the proper receiving of the Word of God.

A. First comes the hearing of God's Word.

Micaiah listened to God's Word in its entirety. He listened to Jeremiah's prophecies from beginning to end.

Expository preaching is a necessary part in receiving the Word. It take God's Word as He gives it—verse by verse, chapter by chapter and book by book.

Every Christian needs to make a regular practice of reading the Word of God.

B. Next comes the fearing of God's Word.

When Micaiah heard that God was angry against Judah's sin, he feared the Lord greatly.



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It is one thing to hear God's Word. It is another to fear it—
heeding all God's warnings, trusting all God's promises, and
obeying all God's commands.

C. Then comes sharing God's Word.

When Micaiah heard words of divine judgment, he could not
keep them to himself.

Many Christians testify to the grace and goodness of God. Yet
how often do they explain how much God hates sin and how
severely He intends to deal with it?

Receiving God's Word means hearing it fully, fearing it greatly,
and sharing it.

III. Rejecting the Word

King Jehoiakim rejected the Word of God. He would not hear it,
feared it not, and tried to make sure that no one would ever share it
again.

Perhaps Jehoiakim doubted the reality of divine judgment. Or
perhaps Jehoiakim thought burning God's Word would prevent his
doom from coming to pass. If so, he failed to recognize that the
power of the Word flows from the power of God Himself.

*"Jehoiakim burns God's Word, ignoring its warnings. That's like getting out
of a car to destroy a 'Bridge Out' sign: done at one's own peril." - J.I. Packer*

It had been a very different scene when the Book of the Law was
rediscovered in the days of King Josiah. When that good king heard
God's words, he did not tear the words, but tore his clothes as a
sign of repentance.

Conclusion: Let us not be found with scissors in hand, trimming
God's Word to fit our preferences. Let us not warm the pews
without letting the Word warm our hearts. Jehoiakim heard the
scroll and cut it to pieces—Micaiah heard the Word and carried it



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with trembling. The difference is not in exposure to Scripture, but in the response to it. So let us ask ourselves honestly: When the Word of God confronts us, do we receive it with repentance or resist it with pride? May we be people who tremble at God's Word, not tear it.

Questions to Consider:

1. What is your personal response to the Word of God—do you receive it like Micaiah or reject it like Jehoiakim?
2. When was the last time you truly trembled at the Word of God?
3. Have you ever tried—subtly or openly—to “cut out” the parts of the Bible that made you uncomfortable?



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