

How to Apply God's Word

THE WORD OF GOD SERIES – PART 3

Pastor Brian Flewelling

This is the last of three messages we're teaching on the Word of God. Today we want to talk about how we use God's Word.

Our goal is really to revisit this foundational truth in our community. We want our church to be built on the Word of God. We hope your families, and parenting, and relationships are built on the Word. We want your small groups to practice reading and discussing His Word. We don't want our sermons to be built on charismatic personalities. We want to be built on God's incredible and powerful and truthful Word.

We hope you fall in love with God's Word. We hope it intrigues you and delights you more than movies. We hope you spend time in it. We hope that it redefines you. If you're trying to be more like Jesus, Jesus loved God's Word.

Story: About a naval ship captain who spotted a light in the evening fog. He got on the radio and radioed to the light coordinate:

Ship captain: "Please divert your course 15 degrees to the North to avoid a collision."

Response: "Recommend you divert YOUR course 15 degrees to the South to avoid a collision."

Ship captain: "This is the captain of a US Navy ship. I say again, divert YOUR course."

Response: "We say again, we recommend you divert YOUR course."

Ship Captain: "THIS IS THE AIRCRAFT CARRIER USS ABRAHAM LINCOLN, THE SECOND LARGEST SHIP IN THE UNITED STATES' ATLANTIC FLEET. WE ARE ACCOMPANIED BY THREE DESTROYERS, THREE CRUISERS AND NUMEROUS SUPPORT VESSELS. I DEMAND THAT YOU CHANGE YOUR COURSE 15 DEGREES NORTH. THAT'S ONE-FIVE DEGREES NORTH, OR COUNTER MEASURES WILL BE UNDERTAKEN TO ENSURE THE SAFETY OF THIS SHIP."

Response: "This is a lighthouse. It's your call."

It's fun story. The point is well taken. Ps 119 says God's Word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path. His Word is a lighthouse in the fog of human confusion. It illuminates the dangers of sin on hand, and the Rock of our Salvation on the other.

The Ship captain still had to take action. The Word can reveal truth. But we still have to take action. Jesus told a very similar story.

Matthew 7:24-27

Slide:

Puts them into practice	Does not practice
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Wise man• Built the house (on rock)• Rains came down• Did not fall	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Foolish man• Built the house (on sand)• Rains came down• Did not stand

It's not enough just to come to church. A conference. Listen to podcasts. Own nice Bible. It's wonderful that you're hanging around...but it's that's only first base. You have to put them into practice.

How do we use the Word?

1. **We practice God's truths** (we're not perfect)

- The more we practice His truths, the more those truths start working on us the more I conform to His image.
- [Ephesians 5:1](#)
[Be imitators of God, therefore, as dearly loved children.](#)
- By practicing God's Truths I'm learning to imitate my Father.
- While I'm reading this, I'm asking the question: "How can I be more like God through this truth? Commands, character, stories.

Illustration: Biblical Theme: God is generous.

- Generous with his resources, hospitality, wealthy in love, generous in patience, He's generous to His enemies, generous to the foreigner (the people that are so different from me...)
- [Leviticus 19](#) [The foreigner residing among you must be treated as your native-born. Love them as yourself, for you were foreigners in Egypt.](#)
- Who are the people that feel foreign to me? Many of them are immigrants. Muslims. Rich people – privileged people, liberals, conservatives, addicts, girl with neon hair. The people that you don't understand...those are the ones...
- What is one thing I can do this week, right now, to start practicing this?
- How can our church continue to be a community that empathizes? That listens. That truly and deeply loves the people we don't understand.
- If I don't practice God's generosity. I'll never understand His generosity. That's a part of God I will never have fellowship with.

John 14:21

Whoever has my commands and obeys them, he is the one who loves me. He who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I too will love him and show myself to him.

- It's in practicing His ways, I start valuing the things He values, Loving the things He loves, treasuring the things He treasures. He's singing melody, and my life is singing harmony.
- It's the monotonous, tedious, difficult work of practicing God's truths that distinguishes His true followers from the crowd.
- The byproduct of practice is the fruit we produce.

Matthew 7:15-23

John 15:5

I am the vine; you are the branches. If a man remains in me and I in him, he will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing.

Fruit comes from knowing God. Coming into harmony with him. And His Word leads us into personal encounter with God.

How Do We use God's Word?

2. We Encounter the Word

His written Word, the scripture, leads us into encounters with the Living Word, Jesus.

Yes, at salvation.

Story: Jew who read Matthew 1:1 – He's a Jew!

But more than salvation. In my daily conversations with God. I grow to understand and encounter His character through His presence breathing across His word.

God Breathed: One of the themes we've been reiterating. The Word of God is God breathed. The scriptures should be leading people to Jesus.

Luke 24:44-45

(Jesus) said to them, "This is what I told you while I was still with you: Everything must be fulfilled that is written about me in the Law of Moses, the Prophets and the Psalms." Then (Jesus) opened their minds so they could understand the Scriptures.

The Living Word acted upon their minds to bring the scriptures to life.

When we're reading the scriptures together, we're not just going through the motions. This isn't just a historical text. We're expecting that Jesus is going to show up.

The New Testament Church – What is the Holy Spirit saying to me right now through His Word?

- Application Question: What am I learning about God through this text? About His character? About what's important to him?

As we encounter the Living Word

3. God's Word is a sword that cuts off lies and deception. – Lighthouse analogy.

Ephesians 6:17b

(Take up) the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.

Hebrews 4:12

For the Word of God is living and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword...

Revelation 1:16

Out of (the Son of Man's) mouth came a sharp double-edged sword...

When Jesus was tempted by the Devil in the desert he responded with Truth from God's Word.

Story: Abused. Numbers 23:21 No misfortune is seen in Jacob, no misery observed in Israel. The Lord their God is with them; the shout of the King is among them."

This is the first time I've understood that God was angry at the things being done to me. He's not passive. He's passionate. The written Word, filled with the Living Word, breaks off lies in our lives.

The Word cuts off Lies of our Identity. Lies our culture tells us. Lies of temptation. Lies of discouragement. Lies of fear. Sets us free to live in freedom.

4. Pray through and meditate on His Word!

Meditate means to moan, mutter, to yourself. Over and over again.

Joshua 1:8

Keep this Book of the Law always on your lips; meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do everything written in it.

Pastor Curt: How do we get the truths from the text into my heart and mind?

Meditation drills it down deep into our Spirit.

Closing: