

THE MARKS OF THE

TRUE CHURCH



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Your Word is Enough

Sunday 18th September 2022

Foundation Scriptures:

Hebrews 6:1 (NKJV): “Therefore, leaving the discussion of the elementary principles of Christ, let us go on to perfection, not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works and of faith toward God,”

2 Peter 3:18 (NKJV): “but grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To Him be the glory both now and forever. Amen.”

Matthew 16:18 (NKJV): “And I also say to you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build My church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it.”

Psalms 19:7-12 (NKJV): “The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul; the testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple; the statutes of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart; the commandment

of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes; the fear of the Lord is clean, enduring forever; the judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether. More to be desired are they than gold, yea, than much fine gold; sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb. Moreover by them Your servant is warned, and in keeping them there is great reward.”
Who can understand his errors?
Cleanse me from secret faults. ***(Also read in The Amplified Classic Edition, New Living Translation, and The Message translation.)***

A quick reminder of the three marks of the true church:

1. **Preaching of the Word** – this will be expanded today
2. **Administration of Sacraments** - (ordinances – the things that Jesus has ordained for us to do)
3. **Exercising of Church Discipline** – discipline has the same root word as the word ‘disciple’; it is about being a disciple of Christ, living their lives in consistency with Christ.

In this text, we will delve deeper into ‘The Preaching of the Word’; the first mark of the ‘True Church’, by expanding on the sufficiency of scripture.

Below is **Psalm 19:7-12** in four translations of the Bible from which you may wish to pick out key words and phrases:

New King James Version

“The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul; the testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple; the statutes of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart; the commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes; the fear of the Lord is clean, enduring forever; the judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether. More to be desired are they than gold, yea, than much fine gold; sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb. Moreover by them Your servant is warned, and in keeping them there is great reward. Who can understand his errors? Cleanse me from secret faults.”

Amplified Bible, Classic Edition

“The law of the Lord is perfect, restoring the [whole] person; the testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple. The precepts of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart; the commandment of the Lord is pure and bright, enlightening the eyes. The [reverent] fear of the Lord is clean, enduring forever; the ordinances of the Lord are true and righteous altogether. More to be desired are they than gold, even than much fine gold; they are sweeter also than honey and drippings from the honeycomb. Moreover, by them is Your servant warned (reminded, illuminated, and instructed); and in keeping them there is great reward. Who can discern his lapses and errors? Clear me from hidden [and unconscious] faults.”

New Living Translation

The instructions of the Lord are perfect, reviving the soul. The decrees of the Lord are trustworthy, making wise the simple. The commandments of the Lord are right, bringing joy to the heart. The commands of the Lord are clear, giving insight for living. Reverence for the Lord is pure, lasting forever. The laws of the Lord are true; each one is fair. They are more desirable than gold, even the finest gold. They are sweeter than honey, even honey dripping from the comb. They are a warning to your servant, a great reward for those who obey them. How can I know all the sins lurking in my heart? Cleanse me from these hidden faults.”

The Message Bible

“The revelation of God is whole and pulls our lives together. The signposts of God are clear and point out the right road. The life-maps of God are right, showing the way to joy. The directions of God are plain and easy on the eyes. God’s reputation is twenty-four-carat gold, with a lifetime guarantee. The decisions of God are accurate down to the nth degree. God’s Word is better than a diamond, better than a diamond set between emeralds. You’ll like it better than strawberries in spring, better than red, ripe strawberries. There’s more: God’s Word warns us of danger and directs us to hidden treasure. Otherwise how will we find our way? Or know when we play the fool? Clean the slate, God, so we can start the day fresh! Keep me from stupid sins, from thinking I can take over your work; then I can start this day sun-washed, scrubbed clean of the grime of sin. These are the words in my mouth; these are what I chew on and pray. Accept them when I place them on the morning altar, O God, my Altar-Rock, God, Priest-of-My-Altar.”

The word of God is life, it gives insight and cannot die. The guiding light we have as a church is the word of God, and God has encoded His word in His scripture.

“Whatever you are looking for in life, your first point of call should be the word of God.” – *Pastor David Adabale, New Wine Church Woolwich.*

Hebrews 4:12 (NKJV) says: “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.” ***(Also read in The Message translation, New Living Translation and Amplified Classic Edition.)***

The Bible is the only book that talks about the origin, life, and destination of man.

2 Timothy 3:16-17 (NKJV) says: “All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the servant of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.”

A famous UK evangelist, Canon J. John was on a plane and sitting next to a lady, who asked him what he does for a living. He tried to look for a creative way to say what he did without deterring or dissuading her from continuing the conversation.

Thus, in answer to her question, he said:

“I work for a global organisation and we have branches in almost every country in the world. It’s a global enterprise and we have hospitals, hospices, homeless shelters; we do marriage work, orphanages, feeding programmes, educational programmes; we do all sorts of justice and reconciliation initiatives. Basically, we look after people from birth to death and we deal in the area of behavioural alteration.”

The lady was amazed and asked for the name of the organisation. It was then that he told her that he worked for the church (of God)!!

The church is the only institution ordained by God to cater to the needs of mankind (spirit, soul, and body) from birth to death, cradle to grave, and from the womb to the tomb! The guiding light that God has given the church to operate with is the word.

Facts About The Bible:

It took **1500 years** to write the Bible, with approximately **3500 years** of testing, has been translated into **531 languages** in full, half translated into **2,883 languages**, contains **66 books**, comprised of approximately **40 writers** from different backgrounds and generations, is the bestselling book of all times and has **one Author**, which is the **Holy Spirit (See 2 Timothy 3:16-17 NKJV)**.

This is despite the numerous attempts to subject and restrict the spread of the Bible.

The scripture is sufficient for everything you and I need in our journey through life.

“The Bible is the only book that talks about the origin, life, and destination of man.” – *Pastor David Adabale, New Wine Church Woolwich.*

The relevance of the Bible is demonstrated in the following acronym:

Blessed

Information

Giving

Life

Eternal

The Strength of God's Word

Matthew 7:24-29 (The Message)

“These words I speak to you are not incidental additions to your life, homeowner improvements to your standard of living. They are foundational words, words to build a life on. If you work these words into your life, you are like a smart carpenter who built his house on solid rock. Rain poured down, the river flooded, a tornado hit—but nothing moved that house. It was fixed to the rock. “But if you just use my words in Bible studies and don’t work them into your life, you

are like a stupid carpenter who built his house on the sandy beach. When a storm rolled in and the waves came up, it collapsed like a house of cards.” When Jesus concluded his address, the crowd burst into applause. They had never heard teaching like this. It was apparent that he was living everything he was saying—quite a contrast to their religion teachers! This was the best teaching they had ever heard.”

The word of God is sufficient to withstand the storms of life.

Jesus lived based on the word. When He was tempted in the wilderness in Matthew 4:1-4, He responded each time with ‘It is written...’ ***(Also read in NKJV, Amplified Classic Edition, New Living Translation and The Message translation.)***

God’s Word Is Enough

We are tripartite beings with a:

- Spirit
- Soul
- Body

We feed:

- Our spirit with the 'word of God'
- Our soul with words
- Our body with food

We are what we eat.

“We are not physical beings trying to have a spiritual experience, we are spirit beings called to master our physical experience.” – *Pastor David Adabale, New Wine Church Woolwich.*

The only way to 'master our physical experience' is by the word of God. **(See Matthew 4:1-4 NKJV, MSG, NLT, AMPC).**

The church is a spiritual entity, therefore one of the marks of the true church is to feed the spirit of the people with the word of God and encourage you to feed your own spirit with the word of God.

Our Enjoyment:

The scripture is sufficient for:

- Feeding our spirit with the word of God – **Luke 4:4**
- Receiving clarity through God's word – **Psalm 119:105**
- Fighting our battles through the word of God – **Hebrews 4:12**

Our Response:

1. *Devotion to God's Word* – **Psalm 119:11**
 - 7 days without the word makes 'one weak'

2. *Meditation on God's Word* – **Joshua 1:8**

- Memorialisation and contemplation

3. *Decision based on God's Word* – **Colossians 3:15 (NKJV)**

- Something that our body will act on through the process of decision

4. *Action based on God's Word* – **James 2:14-26 (NKJV)**

- *The world will see the manifestation of a process that started with God*

The pressures of life want to limit the strength of our spirit. Nonetheless, we can strengthen our spirits with the word of God.

“Spiritual battles are not battles of guns and bullets, they are battles of words, and the person who keeps speaking the word of God who will win that battle.” – *Pastor David Adabale, New Wine Church Woolwich.*

With every spiritual battle, you must respond with ‘it is written.’

Lastly...

Commit yourself to:

1. Devoting yourself to the word of God
2. Meditating on the word of God
3. Making decisions based on the word of God
4. Acting on the word of God

Remember, the scripture is sufficient for everything that we need.