

**I PETER 1:22-25**  
**POWER OF GOD'S WORD!**

Please turn in your Bibles this morning to I Peter chapter 1 as we continue our in-depth study of Peter's letter to the persecuted church.

Keep in mind that from I Peter 1:1 to 1:12 the focus was on our ***SALVATION!***

This is a work of God in our lives. As the Holy Spirit draws us to Christ, our responsibility is to act on what the Holy Spirit is showing us.

What do I mean by that?

I mean that we must see ourselves as sinners.

We must ask Jesus to forgive us of our sins or we must repent of our sins.

And we must ask Him to be Lord and Savior of our lives.

Peter put it like this in I Peter 1:3-5, **"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His abundant mercy has begotten us again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled and that does not fade away, reserved in heaven for you, who are kept by the power of God through faith for salvation ready to be revealed in the last time."**

We are kept by the power of God and thus, once we come to Christ our salvation is secure, He loses no one!

It is from that point – ***JUSTIFICATION*** - that we move to what God is doing in our lives the moment we get saved.

We find this in I Peter 1:13 to 2:12 and here the focus is on our – ***SANCTIFICATION!***

And Peter starts out this section by calling us to be – ***HOLY!***

In other words, we are to be set apart for God, to live a life that would honor Him in all that we do and all that we say.

Yes, we are not going to be perfect, we still deal with sin in our lives, but don't use that as an excuse, as the Lord reminds us, "... 'Be holy, for I am holy.'" I Peter 1:16.

Don't go back to your former conduct but focus on the things of God because, again, Peter reminds us of how we are to live. He wrote, "but as He who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct." I Peter 1:15. Not just on Sunday mornings when we come to church but all the time!

This morning in our study the focus is going to be the – ***THE POWER OF GOD'S WORD!***

Remember that the Devil knows that if he can control the way a person thinks, what they lust after, then he can control the way they will live!

That is where the Word of God, opened up to us by the Spirit of God, can help us to live a life that will honor God – ***THE SANCTIFICATION PROCESS!***

We need to remember that the Bible, the Word of God, is living and it is powerful, and it will transform our lives if we allow it to.

That means all 66 books, all 1,118 chapters, all 774,746 verses, all 3,500,034 words are inspired by God or breathed from the mouth of God!

Now, in saying that, I am also fully aware that across America today we are seeing church leaders' water down God's Word, disregard God's Word, make God's Word fit their theology, replace the teaching of God's Word with other things.

To kind of shed some light on this travesty, let me share with you this true story regarding the ***Book from Heaven – THE BIBLE!***

And as I share this with you, keep in mind we are no different today. We may think we are, but when we take away the teaching of God's Word, when we negate the Word of God, we are no different.

Listen to what we are told,

In the Autumn of 1832, four Indian chiefs representing the Flathead and Nez Perce tribes arrived in St. Louis, Missouri. They had traveled more than 3,000 miles from their home in the Oregon country because a white man had witnessed to them about a ***“Book from Heaven”*** that told of the one true God.

Their tribes had held a council fire and chose these men to go east to find the Book.

The Indians had come to see the Superintendent of Indian affairs, the famous explorer William Clark of the Lewis and Clark Expedition. He told them what he knew about the Bible and then took them on a tour of St. Louis, thinking this would impress them.

But the Indians only wanted the book and a preacher to explain it.

Before long, two of the Indians died of an illness to which they had no natural immunity.

When the time came for the two remaining Indians to return home, General Clark honored them with an elaborate banquet.

At that time, one of the Indians stood and said,

***“My people sent me to get the white man's ‘Book from Heaven.’***

***You took me where you allow your women to dance, as we do not ours, but the Book was not there.***

***You took me where you worship the Great Spirit with candles, but the Book was not there.***

*You showed me images of good spirits and pictures of the good land beyond, but the Book was not among them.*

*I am going back the long sad trail to my people of the dark land. You make my feet heavy with burdens of gifts, and my moccasins will grow old in carrying them, but the Book is not among them.*

*When I tell my poor blind people, after one more snow, in the big council, that I do not bring the Book, no words will be spoken by our old men or our young braves. One by one, they will rise up and go out in silence.*

*My people will die in darkness, and they will go on the long path to the other hunting grounds.*

*No white man will go with them, and no white man's Book to make the way plain. I have no more words."*

- Wes Bently, Far Reaching Ministries, April 2006

What a tragic story and yet, we, the people who have the ***Book from Heaven***, the Word of God are doing the same thing, giving people everything but the Word of God.

We would rather entertain people, go back to the icons, speak of all the blessings that God has given to us in this great country and yet we negate what people need, the Word of God spoken from the mouth of God, the Bible!

My prayer as you leave this morning is that you would have a renewed passion for God's Word.

You would have a desire to not only read the Bible but apply the Word of God to your life and then share it with others, those that don't know the God of the Book!

David, in Psalm 42:1-2 gives us a picture of a man who is deeply in love with God and during a time of spiritual dryness he cries out, **“As the deer pants for the water brooks, So pants my soul for You, O God. My soul thirsts for God, for the living God. When shall I come and appear before God?”**

Do you see the passion that David had to know God and the way we can know God is through His Word!

When I was dating Julie, I wanted to know everything about her, what she liked and didn't like, what made her laugh and so on, and I am still learning.

And when we were apart, I longed to be with her, and I still do. I miss her so much when she is at a retreat or away from home.

God wants us to have that deep, intimate relationship with Him and that is developed as we read and apply His Word to our lives!

Why am I making such a big deal about this?

Because Christians are not trusting the Bible to be God's Word to us.

Let me show you what I mean from a study that took place in 2022. We are told,

A record-low 20% of Americans now say the Bible is the literal word of God, down from 24% the last time the question was asked in 2017, and half of what it was at its high points in 1980 and 1984.

Meanwhile, a new high of 29% say the Bible is a collection of ***“fables, legends, history and moral precepts recorded by man.”***

This marks the first time significantly more Americans have viewed the Bible as not divinely inspired than as the literal word of God.

Not only that, but *“according to a 2022 survey by Arizona Christian University’s Cultural Research Center, 37% of Christian pastors in the United States have a biblical worldview. The survey, called the American Worldview Inventory (AWVI), found that 62% of pastors have a hybrid worldview called syncretism, which is a combination of different worldview elements. The percentage of pastors with a biblical worldview varies by denomination, with 57% of nondenominational and independent pastors having one, compared to 48% of Baptist pastors and 37% of Charismatic or Pentecostal pastors. Senior pastors have the highest percentage of biblical worldviews at 41%.”*

That is why I have been teaching you the Word of God, so that you know it, so that you trust what God has said in it and that you live it!

I have broken down the verses we will be looking at this morning into four main points. They are,

***OUR SALVATION THROUGH THE WORD – I PETER 1:23***

***OUR SANCTIFICATION BY THE SPIRIT THROUGH THE WORD – I PETER 1:22***

***GOSPEL IS SPREAD THROUGH THE TEACHING OF GOD’S WORD – I PETER 1:25b***

***THE WORD OF GOD WILL ENDURE FOREVER – I PETER 1:24-25a***

And what I would like to do is read through these verses and then I will expound on them. The reason for that is because, as you have seen, we are going to look at them according to the point they are making instead of in order, and you will see the reason for that if you have not already.

So let’s begin reading in I Peter chapter 1, beginning in verse 22 and let’s see what the Lord has for us as we study His Word and look at this topic – ***THE POWER OF GOD’S WORD!***

**“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, having been born again, not of corruptible seed but incorruptible, through the word of God which lives and abides forever, 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, But the word of the Lord endures forever.’ Now this is the word which by the gospel was preached to you.” I Peter 1:22-25.**

## **I PETER 1**

### **VERSE 23**

Why do you think there is such a push against the Scriptures?

Because the Word of God opened up to a person by the Spirit of God will bring them to saving faith.

I realize that there are many who don't think the Word of God is important for salvation. But let me say this. It is not only important, but it is how a person gets saved!

Remember what Paul wrote in Romans 1:16 wrote, **“For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek.”**

Now you may be thinking, *“Pastor Joe, it is the Gospel that brings us to saving faith, so how can you say it is the Bible, the Word of God!”*

Let me ask you this. Where is the Gospel spoken of?

It is spoken in the Word of God, the Bible.

Again, Paul wrote this in Romans 10:17, **“So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.”**

I think that is very clear and thus, Satan wants to keep us from the truth because the truth will set you free and Satan doesn't want you to be free!

And Paul drives home this point as he tells us in II Timothy 3:16-17, **“All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.”**

That means all 66 books, all 1,118 chapters, all 774,746 verses, all 3,500,034 words are inspired by God or breathed from the lips of God!

In fact, the rabbi's felt that even the spaces between the words were inspired!

One of the things that really upsets me today is the disregard for God's Word by pastors and people.

Do you realize the number of godly men and women who were put to death by the Roman Catholic Church because they tried to get God's Word into the hands of the common people and the Roman Catholic Church didn't want that to happen.

And yet, today we see leaders' saying things like, ***“We study God's Word too much!”*** or ***“We need to be open to new things outside of God's Word!”*** or ***“God's Word contains the Word of God, but we have to find out which ones He spoke and which ones He didn't!”***

How tragic – just believe what Paul said that God's Word is inspired, all of it and then walk accordingly!



And here's the thing. Satan wants to get us away from God's Word, to twist God's Word because it not only brings forth life, it not only brings salvation to people, but it helps us to walk accordingly! And we will see that in our next point.

But think about what the Bible has for us!

God's Word tells us what is right.

God's Word tells us what is wrong.

God's Word tells us how to get right when we have gone astray.

And God's Word tells us how to stay right so that we might be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work!

But there is that nagging question today that many don't know the answer to, but I do.

The question is "*What is the truth?*"

That is a great question and Jesus gives to us the answer in John 17:17 as He tells us,

**"Sanctify them by Your truth. Your word is truth."**

God's Word is truth and thus, the message is to receive Christ as your Lord and Savior and you shall be free from the bondage of sin, you will enter into that eternal life with Him!

Now what happens when a seed is bad?

It won't germinate, it won't grow and that is the point that Peter is making here regarding "**corruptible seed**" or the philosophies of men, the traditions of men. They can't save you and they keep changing because there is no weight to them, they can't transform a person, they can't set you free from sin.

But God's Word is "**incorruptible**." It is truth and God does not have to change what He has said to fit in with the days we are living in, to fit in with the taste of men, with the ideas of men.

God doesn't change to appeal to men's corrupt appetites, but we must come to Him on His terms!

Now, let me ask you this.

Why do we need a Savior?

Because sin has separated us from God.

We are told in Isaiah 59:1-2, "**Behold, the LORD's hand is not shortened, That it cannot save; Nor His ear heavy, That it cannot hear. But your iniquities have separated you from your God; And your sins have hidden His face from you, So that He will not hear.**"

Now that is not hard to understand, it is straightforward.

The problem with teaching that we are sinners separated from God is that many don't like to hear it, the message is too negative, it doesn't make them feel good and so on.

What has happened is that the church has watered down sin, now it is an addiction, a moral failure, an indiscretion and thus, you don't need a Savior you need a therapist!

God did not become flesh and blood, endure all that pain, was crucified for our indiscretions, or addictions, or moral failures but for our sins!

And if we truly believe that, then we need a Savior to save us from our sins and Peter tells us in I Peter 3:18, "**For Christ also suffered once for sins, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh but made alive by the Spirit.**"

Thus, we are born again, our spirit that was dead to the things of God is now alive and we are led by the spirit and not the flesh for the flesh has been crucified.

You see, here is the starting point for every one of us – dead in sin but now alive in Christ – ***OUR SALVATION THROUGH THE WORD!***

It begins there but does not end there. And Peter is going to make that point – ***OUR SANCTIFICATION BY THE SPIRIT THROUGH THE WORD!***

VERSE 22

Peter’s point is simple. He is saying, “*Since you are saved, since you have come to saving faith in Jesus, then you need to live accordingly!*”

That should just make sense. But when you look at the behavior of the saved and unsaved, how they talk, what they watch, the things they listen to, there is not much difference.

Several years ago there was a television show called ***Desperate Housewives!***

What is interesting is that one writer couldn’t understand how those states that voted for President Bush and for family values could have the highest percentage of people watching this immoral television show!

That is a good question, why is that?

No desire to be holy as God is holy!

David Brainerd was a missionary to Native American Indians, and this is what he had to deal with. We are told,

David was able to set out for Pennsylvania from Kaunaumeeek in early May 1744.

Traveling through southeastern New York, he came to the ancient Indian town of Minisink.

There he sought to befriend the local chief, telling him of his desire to instruct his people in the teachings of Christianity.

The chief just laughed, turned his back, and walked away.

The matter was left to one of the chief's subordinates, who asked the missionary, *"Why do you desire the Indians to become Christians since it's plain to see the Christians are much worse than the Indians? The Christian's lie, steal, and drink worse than the Indians? It was the Christians who first taught the Indians to be drunk. And the Christians steal from each other so much that their rulers have to hang them for it. None of the Indians have ever been hanged for stealing, yet they do not steal half so much. I suppose that if the Indians should become Christians, then they would be as bad as the Christians. No, we will live as our fathers lived, and go where our fathers are when we die."*

David had to admit in his journal that, unfortunately, many of the Indian's observations were all too true of numerous settlers who were mere professing Christians.

As he prepared to leave the native, he queried, *"Would you be my friend?"*

*"Yes,"* the man responded but then stipulated, *"if you don't desire 'em to become Christians."*

- Into All the World, pp. 33-34

What are people seeing in our lives as we live out our faith? People are watching and are we making them hunger for Jesus or repulsed by our faith because of our actions?

As I have said, Peter's point here is that since you're now a new creation in Christ, the greatest evidence of the new birth is love.

First and foremost, we must demonstrate that love to other members of the Body of Christ

What Peter is saying here is that holy living, that life that has been separated from the world is incomplete if you don't have love!

In I Corinthians chapters 12-14 dealing with Spiritual gifts, everyone focuses on the gifts, the power but Paul tells us in I Corinthians chapter 13 that if you don't have love, then all those gifts are empty, they are worthless.

In fact, Jesus said in John 13:34-35, **“A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another. By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another.”**

And Paul in Galatians chapter 5 tells us that the fruit of the Spirit working in our lives and through us is *LOVE* and then he goes on to show us how love manifests itself with joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control!

It's interesting that Peter uses two different Greek words in his admonition for us to love one another as Christians.

When Peter wrote, **“In sincere love of the brethren”** Peter uses the Greek word *PHILEO*.

Phileo, is a word that denotes *“friendship”* love, it is a reciprocal love that involves mutual caring, kindness and overall speaks of the love that enjoys being with a person.

Think of it as *“mutual affection”* or *“brotherly love.”*

The second kind of love that Peter speaks of when he says, **“love one another fervently with a pure heart”** is *“agape”* love.

This is a love that is typically associated with God as in 1John 4:8 where it says that *“God is love (agape)”*; and in John 3:16 which says, *“for God so loved (agapao) the world that He gave His only Begotten Son . . .”*

Agape is the love that God poured into our hearts when the Holy Spirit came to live within us at the moment of our salvation.

That is what Paul wrote in Romans 5:5, **“Now hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out in our hearts by the Holy Spirit who was given to us.”**

This is a supernatural love that can show kindness to an enemy because it’s not rooted in feelings but in the will as we *will* to obey God’s command to love others, even our enemies regardless of whether we feel like it or not.

So what is Peter’s point?

What is he showing us using those two different Greek words for *“love”*?

First of all, we are to love (phileo) each other like family (affection, kindness). In other words, we genuinely like each other and enjoy being around each other.

For this to become a reality, we need to stop the gossip, the backbiting and thinking the worst of each other.

There is nothing worse than when I come to church and see Christians avoiding each other because they’ve had a falling out and they’re too proud to humble themselves and work it out.

And secondly, we are to love (agape) each other unconditionally and sacrificially as God loves us.

That means we look out for each other and help those brothers and sisters in Christ whenever they have a need, and even our enemies. It is a love that comes from God and is not dependent upon what the other person does or says!

Warren Wiersbe sums this up nicely as he tells us,

It is tragic when people try to *“manufacture”* love, because the product is obviously cheap and artificial, *“The words of his mouth were smoother than butter, but war was in his heart: his words were softer than oil, yet were they drawn swords”* (Ps 55:21).

The love that we share with each other, and with a lost world, must be generated by the Spirit of God. It is a constant power in our lives, and not something that we turn on and off like a radio.

Not only is this love a spiritual love, but it is a sincere love (“unfeigned”). We love **“with a pure heart.”**

Our motive is not to get but to give.

There is a kind of **“success psychology”** popular today that enables a person to subtly manipulate others in order to get what he wants. If our love is sincere and from a pure heart, we could never **“use people”** for our own advantage.

This love is also a fervent love, and this is an athletic term that means **“striving with all of one’s energy.”** Love is something we have to work at, just as an Olympic contestant has to work at his particular skills.

Christian love is not a feeling, it is a matter of the will. We show love to others when we treat them the same way God treats us.

God forgives us, so we forgive others. God is kind to us, so we are kind to others. It is not a matter of feeling but of willing, and this is something we must constantly work at if we are to succeed.

We have two wonderful **“assistants”** to help us: the Word of God and the Spirit of God.

The same truth that we trusted and obeyed to become God’s children also nurtures and empowers us.

It is impossible to love the truth and hate the brethren. The Spirit of God produces the **“fruit of the Spirit”** in our lives, and the first of these is love (Gal 5:22-23).

If we are filled with the Word of God (Col 3:16 ff) and the Spirit of God (Eph 5:18 ff), we will manifest the love of God in our daily experiences.

- Warren Wiersbe, The Wiersbe Bible Commentary – NT, p. 901

You see, as we obey the truths of God found in the Word of God we will, by the power of God's Spirit working in us, live a holy life, a purified life.

Our life will be sincere or without hypocrisy and folks, that kind of love, that kind of living is only possible for those who are born again by the eternal Word of God.

David, in Psalm 119:9-11 gives us an interesting perspective or what we are to do as he says, **“How can a young man cleanse his way? By taking heed according to Your word. With my whole heart I have sought You; Oh, let me not wander from Your commandments! Your word I have hidden in my heart, That I might not sin against You.”**

We don't read the Scriptures just to read them but to transform our lives and that will happen as we allow the Spirit of God to speak to us, to guide us.

Read the Word, treasure the Word in your heart so that if you start going astray, God's Word will convict you and put you back on track.

Paul, in Ephesians 5:15-18 warns us, **“See then that you walk circumspectly, not as fools but as wise, redeeming the time, because the days are evil. Therefore do not be unwise, but understand what the will of the Lord is. And do not be drunk with wine, in which is dissipation; but be filled with the Spirit.”**

What does that bring into our lives as we are continually being filled, being led by the Spirit of God?



Paul goes on to say in Ephesians 5:19-21, **“speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord, giving thanks always for all things to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, submitting to one another in the fear of God.”**

You see, submitting your life to the control of God will cause joy to overflow in you and you will submit to others, looking out for them and their souls!

In fact, Peter goes on to say in I Peter 2:1-3, **“Therefore, laying aside all malice, all deceit, hypocrisy, envy, and all evil speaking, as newborn babes, desire the pure milk of the word, that you may grow thereby, if indeed you have tasted that the Lord is gracious.”**

You see, God is working in us and our sanctification is by the Spirit of God through the Word of God, as Paul encourages us in I Thessalonians 5:23-24, **“Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you completely; and may your whole spirit, soul, and body be preserved blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. He who calls you is faithful, who also will do it.”**

So we have seen – ***OUR SALVATION THROUGH THE WORD!***

Then we looked at – ***OUR SANCTIFICATION BY THE SPIRIT THROUGH THE WORD!***

And Peter is going to speak of how – ***THE GOSPEL IS SPREAD THROUGH THE TEACHINGS OF GOD’S WORD!***

VERSE 25b

This is so obvious, isn't it?

I mean, what are you going to give people that will truly help them except the Good News of Jesus Christ.

When Peter speaks of "**the word**" he uses the Greek word *RHEMA* which speaks of specific statements.

He did not use the Greek word *LOGOS* which is more of a broad reference to the Scripture.

And the specific statement that Peter is speaking about is "**the gospel**" or the Greek word *EUAGGELIZO!*

Peter is speaking of the scriptural truth of the gospel that is imperishable and this seed of God's Word will produce new life in the person that receives!

And yet today, we tell people how to live, to do this and not do that, follow the Beatitudes and folks, without a transformed life that will never happen!

We want to clean people up when our mission is to bring the Good News to them and teaching them the things of God and let God, by His Spirit do the work of cleaning! He does a much better job, and it will last!

Remember what Jesus said in Matthew 28:18-20, "**And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, 'All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.' Amen.**"

This is the Great Commission that Jesus gave His men and us, to bring the Gospel message, the good news to a world in darkness!

And did you see that Jesus has the authority and He sends us out to make disciples, followers of Jesus, not just people who know about Jesus.

And not only that, but we are to teach them the things of God!

But again, that is not what we see happening. People don't see this as an important issue – the Gospel – eternal life with Jesus.

They no longer see people with the backdrop of eternity in mind but what is in it for them.

We have lost the reality of seeing people saved because we don't believe the truths of God's Word, we don't teach God's Word.

Let me show you what I mean. We are told,

The Wall Street Journal, 3/9/06: On Ebay, *AN ATHEIST PUTS HIS OWN SOUL ON THE AUCTION BLOCK* [Excerpts]: A few weeks ago, Hemant Mehta posted an unusual item for sale on Ebay: a chance to save his soul.

The DePaul University graduate student promised the winner that for each \$10 of the final bid, he would attend an hour of church services.

The 23-year-old Mr. Mehta is an atheist, but he says he suspected he had been missing out on something.

Evangelists bid, eager to save a sinner.

Atheists bid, hoping to keep Mr. Mehta in their fold.

When the auction stopped on Feb. 3 after 41 bids, the buyer was Jim Henderson, a former [Vineyard pastor] from Seattle, whose \$504 bid prevailed.

Mr. Henderson is part of a small but growing branch of the evangelical world that disagrees with the majority's conservative political agenda.

[He] asked that Mr. Mehta attend 10 to 15 services of Mr. Henderson's choosing and then write about it.

*"I'm not trying to convert you,"* Mr. Henderson said [as they met].

*"You're going there almost like a critic . . . If you happen to get converted, that's off the clock."*

For Mr. Mehta's first service, the two attended noon Mass at Old St. Patrick's, a Catholic church.

Mr. Mehta was born in Chicago and raised in Jainism, an ancient Indian faith whose followers vow to harm no living thing, not even microbes in the air.

He praises famous atheists, but has also read parts of the Bible, loves watching televangelists like Benny Hinn and Joel Osteen, and admires their appeal . . . Mr. Mehta says he's no closer to believing in God, although he does admire churches for the communities they create.

- The Berean Call, April 2006, p. 6

How do you feel about that?

For me, all I can say is – ***HOW TRAGIC!***

Here was an opportunity to share the Good News, the Gospel message with someone who was searching and Mr. Henderson felt that he was not interested in seeing him converted!

What can we do to get back on track?

It is very simple. We need to not only believe the Word of God but to understand that outside of Christ people will be cast into the Lake of Fire!

We need to be able to apply God's Word to our lives and my prayer is that more pastors would take their people through the Word of God, give them the sense of the story and then help them to apply it to their lives.

And folks, we can all do that with the Gospel message as we speak forth God's Word!

So we have seen – ***OUR SALVATION THROUGH THE WORD!***

Then we looked at – ***OUR SANCTIFICATION BY THE SPIRIT THROUGH THE WORD!***

And we have seen how – ***THE GOSPEL IS SPREAD THROUGH THE TEACHINGS OF GOD'S WORD!***

And the last point we will be looking at this morning is – ***THE WORD OF GOD WILL ENDURE FOREVER!***

#### VERSES 24-25a

God's Word is not only truth, but it will not fade away.

We have seen men like Freud, the father of Psychology, once looked upon with great respect for his work, now fall from grace you might say. His ideas are not looked at like they once were.

You see, man's ways, man's philosophies are in a constant state of flux while God's Word is enduring, it will never fade away.

Maybe you remember the story of the anvil. This is what we are told,

***Last eve I paused before a blacksmith's door  
And heard the anvil ring the vesper chime.  
And looking in, I saw old hammers on the floor,  
Worn by the beating of years of time.***

*“How many anvils have you had,” said I,  
 “To wear and batter all these hammers so?”  
 “Just one,” said he, then with a twinkle in his eyes,  
 “The anvil wears the hammers out you know.”  
 And so I thought, the anvil of God’s word,  
 For ages skeptic blows have beat upon.  
 Yet through the noise of falling blows was heard  
 The Anvil is unharmed – the hammers gone!*

- Source Unknown

Look at how God’s Word has been attacked over the years and how hard it is being hammered today, and yet it still stands strong.

The hammers that have tried to destroy God’s Word have all been battered and beaten and fallen out of use, but God’s Word still stands!

And folks, you can take this to the bank, God’s Word will stand the test of time, there is no question about it!

But those that come against it will come and go, their ideas will fade away.

Let me give you an example of what I mean. We are told,

Voltaire, the noted 18<sup>th</sup> century French Philosopher, said that it took centuries to build up Christianity, but *“I’ll show how just one Frenchman can destroy it within 50 years.”*

Taking his pen, he dipped it into the ink of unbelief and wrote against God.

Twenty years after his death, the Geneva Bible Society purchased his house for printing the Bible.

And it later became the Paris headquarters for the British and Foreign Bible Society.

The Bible is still a best-seller; an entire 6-volume set of Voltaire's works was once sold for 90 cents.

Just before his death, the noted atheist swore: ***"I wish I had never been BORN!"***

- Paul Lee Tan, Encyclopedia of 7700 Illustrations, 338

God has a good sense of humor, and He will not be mocked!

And the point that Peter is making is that God's Word will endure forever and the philosophies, the principles of man will come and go, they will not last forever!

We see that once again in Isaiah 40:8, which tells us, **"The grass withers, the flower fades, But the word of our God stands forever."**

And yet, people have tried from early on to discredit the Word of God or to eliminate it from getting into the hands of the common people.

***"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."***

***"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

And why is that? Because **"... the word of the LORD endures forever."**

H. L. Hastings wrote,

Infidels for eighteen hundred years have been refuting and overthrowing this Book and yet it stands today as solid as a rock. Its circulation increases and it is more loved and cherished and read today than ever before.

Infidels with all their assaults make about as much impression on this book as a man with a tack hammer would on the Pyramids of Egypt.

When the French monarch proposed the persecution of the Christians in his domain, an old statesman and warrior said to him, "***Sire, the Church of God is an anvil that has worn out many hammers.***"

So the hammers of infidels have been pecking away at this Book for ages, but the hammers are worn out and the anvil still endures.

If this Book had not been the Book of God, men would have destroyed it long ago. Emperors and popes, kings and priests, princes and rulers have all tried their hand at it; they die and the Book still lives.

- H. L. Hastings

This is so important for us to understand. If this was just an ordinary book, it would fade away, it would not last. But it is not.

Let me just share with you a few points to help you to understand that this book is from God, and it will endure forever!



We are told,

First, compared to other *“holy books,”* the Bible is unique in many respects. Not only was it composed by at least 40 writers, on multiple continents, over a span of 1,500 years, but it is not what we would expect to find were it *“made up.”*

The Bible also includes major moral failings of its heroes, yet most writings of other religions tend to whitewash the flaws of their heroes.

Moreover, the Bible’s theme is quite unlike those found in other religions. Manmade religions teach that a man can earn salvation through various practices and good works.

The Bible explains that man is sinful, deserving of God’s judgment, and that no amount of good works could ever remove our guilt.

God Himself solves our problem by becoming a man and taking our punishment upon Himself.

Manmade religions are about what man can do for his god, but the Bible is about what God has already done for man.

. . . the Bible accurately reveals historical people, events, and places. . .

- Discovered in Israel, the Tel Dan Stele has been dated to the ninth century BC and mentions the “House of David,” shattering the long-held view of many skeptics that David was a mythical person.
- The Mesha Stele describes Moab’s subjection under Omri, the king of Israel. It also references the personal name of the God of the Bible (Yahweh), and very likely contains a reference to the “House of David” (this is debated due to an unreadable letter).
- The Pilate stone provides archaeological evidence for the existence of the man who sentenced Jesus to death on the Cross. Skeptics frequently denied his existence until the discovery of this stone, which identifies Pontius Pilate as the Prefect of Judea.

Dr. Nelson Glueck was the president of Hebrew Union College and a highly respected archaeologist . . . stated the following:

*It may be stated categorically that no archaeological discovery has ever controverted a Biblical reference. Scores of archaeological findings have been made which confirm in clear outline or exact detail historical statements in the Bible. And, by the same token, proper evaluation of biblical description has often led to amazing discoveries.*

. . . Compare the Bible's accuracy with the miserable archaeological record of the Mormon religion. The Mormon "holy books" teach that Native Americans are really Jews who fled Jerusalem, but DNA studies have falsified this claim.

Furthermore, despite millions of dollars spent on excavations in the Americas, archaeologists have not uncovered a shred of evidence to support Mormon claims, and the early Americans did not wield scimitars or ride horses and elephants. . .

So here is the test for the other religions of the world. Can they accurately foretell future events? After all, only the all-knowing, all-powerful Creator knows everything that will happen and has the ability to bring it to pass.

And God has established His righteous character through this unique ability. In Isaiah 41:26, the Lord asks, "*Who has declared from the beginning, that we may know? And former times, that we may say, 'He is righteous'?*"

Most of the founders of the world's religions never attempted to tell the future. Outside of the Bible, the other "*holy books*" of the world do not really include prophecies. The vague predictions of Nostradamus and demonstrably false prognostications of Edgar Cayce do not meet the biblical standard of 100 percent accuracy for a prophet (Deuteronomy 18:22).

Now take a look at what God says about His own ability in this area: ***I am the Lord, that is My name; and My glory I will not give to another, nor My praise to carved images. Behold, the former things have come to pass, and new things I declare; before they spring forth I tell you of them.*** (Isaiah 42:8-9)

What does prophecy have to do with whether the Bible was “*made up*”?

Mere men cannot accurately tell the future, and yet more than one-fourth of the Bible was prophetic at the time of its writing, indicating that these men were not simply making up what they wrote - their writing was inspired by God. The biblical prophecies contain specific people, times, places, and events, and they are generally straightforward. Most of them were written centuries before the events described, and those that have already been fulfilled came to pass exactly as foretold (some prophecies await future fulfillment).

Consider just a handful of the hundreds of accurate prophecies recorded in Scripture:

<b>The Messiah Would Be . . .</b>	<b>Prophesied</b>	<b>Fulfilled</b>
Born of a virgin	<a href="#"><u>Isaiah 7:14</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>Matthew 1:25</u></a>
Born in Bethlehem	<a href="#"><u>Micah 5:2</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>Matthew 2:1, 6</u></a>
Betrayed for 30 pieces of silver	<a href="#"><u>Zechariah 11:12</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>Matthew 26:15, 49</u></a>
Have clothing divided at the Cross	<a href="#"><u>Psalms 22:18</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>John 19:24</u></a>
Wounded for our sins	<a href="#"><u>Isaiah 53:5</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>1 Peter 2:24</u></a>
Killed for others	<a href="#"><u>Daniel 9:26</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>2 Corinthians 5:21</u></a>
Raised from the dead	<a href="#"><u>Psalms 16:10</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>Luke 24:6</u></a>

. . . The truth is that God has inspired the writing of His Word in the collection of 66 books we call the Bible (2 Timothy 3:16). The notion that men just made it up is quite reasonably dispensed by Scripture's uniqueness, its historical and archaeological accuracy, and its inclusion of fulfilled detailed prophecy.

- <https://bit.ly/3X0dnTm>

I pray that you have clearly seen this morning,

***OUR SALVATION THROUGH THE WORD***

***OUR SANCTIFICATION BY THE SPIRIT THROUGH THE WORD***

***THE GOSPEL IS SPREAD THROUGH THE TEACHING OF GOD'S WORD***

***THE WORD OF GOD WILL ENDURE FOREVER!***

As I close this morning let me leave you with this to think about and may you have a hunger to know God, that you love His Word, for we are told regarding the Bible:

***This book is the mind of God, the state of man, the way of salvation, the doom of sinners, and the happiness of believers.***

***Its doctrines are holy, its precepts are binding; its histories are true, and its decisions are immutable.***

***Read it to be wise, believe it to be safe, practice it to be holy.***

***It contains light to direct you, food to support you, and comfort to cheer you.***

***It is the traveler's map, the pilgrim's staff, the pilot's compass, the soldier's sword, and the Christian's character.***

***Here paradise is restored, heaven opened, and the gates of hell disclosed.***

***Christ is its grand subject, our good its design, and the glory of God its end.***

*It should fill the memory, rule the heart, and guide the feet.*

*Read it slowly, frequently, prayerfully.*

*It is a mine of wealth, a paradise of glory, and a river of pleasure.*

*Follow its precepts and it will lead you to Calvary, to the empty tomb, to a resurrect life in Christ; yes, to glory itself, for eternity.*

- Source Unknown

**THE POWER OF GOD'S WORD** enables us to live holy lives as the Holy Spirit opens the Word of God to our hearts and empowers us to live accordingly!

Remember, we have the **Book from Heaven**. May we not only read it and apply it to our own lives but share this **Book from Heaven** with others so they too can find the way to eternal life through Jesus as this **Book from Heaven** is written of Him!!