

The Word of Life Messenger

“Holding forth the word of life” Phil. 2:16

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REDEEMED BY BLOOD: REWARDED FOR SERVICE

Jesus shed His precious blood to redeem the believing sinner from the penalty of sin. “Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus: whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God” (Romans 3:24, 25). Salvation from the penalty of sin is not a reward, but a gift. A reward is earned because of our service to the Lord after we are saved. A gift is not given because of good works. If so it would become a reward. “Now to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt. But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness” (Romans 4:4, 5).

Since redemption is by blood, Jesus had to die on the cross and shed His precious blood to buy or redeem us. The gospel is “how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures” (1 Cor. 15:3, 4). Since salvation is by grace through faith, it cannot be by works or even partly by works. Notice what the scriptures declare in Romans 11:6 -

“And if by grace, then is it no more of works: otherwise grace is no more grace. But if it be of works, then is it no more grace: otherwise work is no more work.”

Thus the scriptures establish that salvation is by grace without works. Since this is true, what place does works have in our lives? The Bible makes this clear. “For my grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them” (Eph. 2:8-10).

From these scriptures, we can see that good works is produced because we are saved and not in order to be saved. Good works are proof we are saved; they do not make us saved. Salvation will produce good works in our lives but good works will not produce salvation.

Since rewards are only for God’s children who have been saved by grace, His faithful children will be rewarded at His second coming at the judgment seat of Christ. “For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath

done, whether it be good or bad” (2 Cor. 5:10). The “all” in this verse refers only to saved people. “And behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me. to give every man according as his work shall be” (Rev. 22:12). The works of God’s children determine the degree of reward in Heaven. Speaking to believers, the Bible teaches us this truth: “Every man’s work shall be manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man’s work of what sort it is. If any man’s work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward. If any man’s work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire” (1 Cor. 3:13-15). So we see a person is saved without any works, but if he does not work for the Lord after he is saved, he will receive no rewards.

Dear friend, are you saved through the redemptive work of Jesus on the cross? Do you believe He died for you, was buried and raised again? When you believe in Him you are saved. Then would you serve Him faithfully? One day His children will cast their crowns of rewards before His throne (See Rev. 4:10).

~ Gladwin Carpenter

THE BOOK

There is a reason that most confessions of faith start with the inspiration of the Scriptures. The Scriptures are the foundation upon which all of our beliefs rest. Edward J. Young once wrote, "If we do not build upon the impregnable rock of infallible Scripture we shall ever be at the mercy of the latest whims and fancies." Today, there is much false teaching in our society because many people do not understand the significance and value of the Scriptures. These people have not built their beliefs upon Scripture, but upon the ideas and philosophies of men. Several words can be used to describe the uniqueness of Scripture: inspired, inerrant, infallible, indestructible, inexhaustible, incorruptible and indispensable.

The Bible is Inspired

2 Timothy 3:16 says, "All Scripture is give by inspiration of God." The word "inspired literally means "God breathed." 2 Peter 1:21 says, "Holy men of God spake as they moved by the Holy Spirit." Vine in his Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words says the word "moved" means they were born along or impelled by the Holy Spirit's power. This means that Scrip-

ture was given to special men who were so controlled and directed by the Holy Spirit that what we possess is exactly what God would want us to have. The Scriptures can also be described as being plenary inspired. "Plenary inspired" means that the Scripture is fully or entirely inspired of God. It is complete and nothing should be taken from it or added to it (Rev. 22:18-19). Psalms 12:6 says, "The words of the Lord are pure words, like silver tested in a furnace of earth, purified seven times.

The Bible is Inerrant and Infallible

There are no errors or mistakes in the Bible, 2 Peter 1:20 says, "knowing that no Scripture is of any private interpretation." This means that no Scripture is to be interpreted apart from the rest of Scripture, and when properly understood, no Scripture will contradict any other Scripture. Even though the Bible was written by approximately forty men over a period of 1600 years, all Scripture is in agreement and is perfectly accurate upon whatever subject it speaks. 2 Samuel 22:31 says, "As for God, His way is perfect; the word of the Lord is tried."

The Bible is Indestructible

Down through the centuries some have tried to destroy the Scripture but they have not succeeded. "The grass withereth, the flower fadeth, but the Word of the Lord endures forever" (1 Peter 2:25). "Until heaven and earth pass away, not one jot or title shall in any way pass from the law until all be fulfilled (Matt. 5:18).

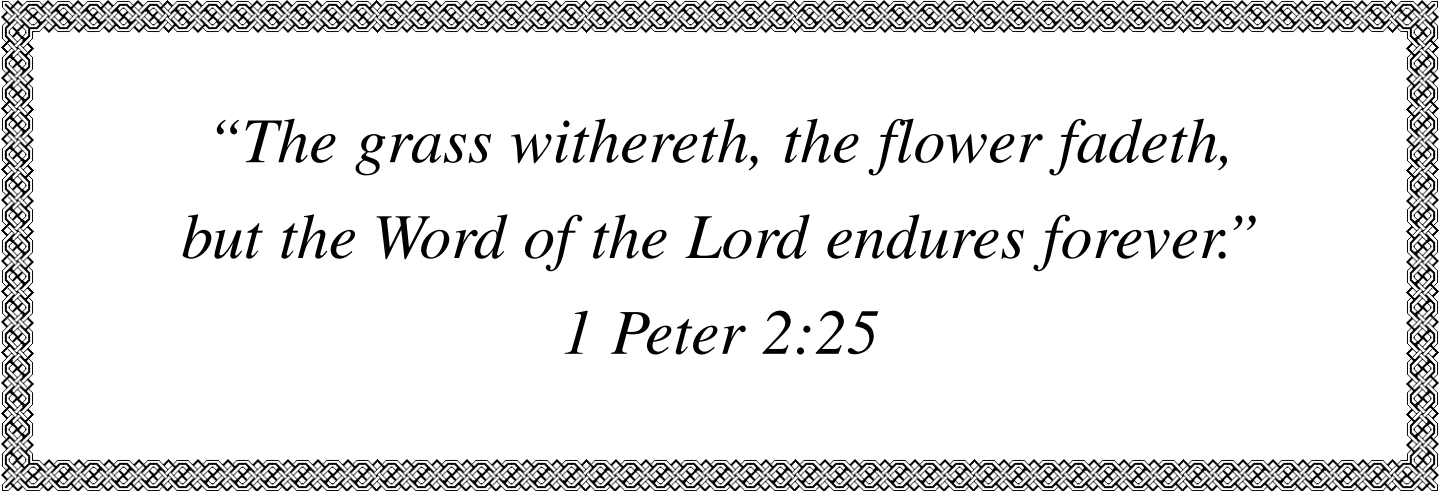
The Bible is Inexhaustible

One may study the Bible all his life and still find new truths and new understanding the next time he or she studies the Scripture. Paul writes in Romans 11:33, "Oh, the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments and His ways past finding out!"

The Bible is Incorruptible

The Bible never loses its relevance and never goes out of date. It is the "Living Word" (Heb. 4:12). The Psalmist writes, "Forever is Thy Word settled in heaven." Customs, fads, mores and morals may change, but God's Word does not. It still brings blessings to those who heed and obey it and judgment to those who ignore or disobey it.

~ Larry Windham



*"The grass withereth, the flower fadeth,
but the Word of the Lord endures forever."*

1 Peter 2:25

PREACH THE WORD

2 Timothy 4:1, 2 - "I charge thee therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his Kingdom; preach the word; be instant in season, out of season, reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine."

How important for us to preach the word?

(1) First, we have been commanded to preach the word, not our opinion about the word, not what we have experienced, not story tales, but the Word of God. We have been called and sent to preach "thus saith the Lord."

(2) We must preach the word because that is God's way of saving lost sinners. "For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe" (1 Cor. 1:21). "So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God" (Rom. 10:17). Faith never comes separate and apart from the

gospel. One never learns of the gospel but from the word. "For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ; for it is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth; to the Jew first and also to the Greek" (Rom. 1:16). The gospel is the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. We are begotten by the gospel. "For though ye have ten thousand instructors in Christ, yet have ye not many fathers: for in Christ Jesus I have begotten you through the gospel" (1 Cor. 4:15). There is woe upon us if we do not preach the gospel. "For though I preach the gospel, I have nothing to glory of: for necessity is laid upon me, yea, woe is unto me, if I preach not the gospel!" (1 Cor. 9:16).

(3) We must preach the word because it is God's way for the saved to grow. "As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby" (1 Peter 2:2). The saved need the word of God like newborn babies need milk so that they may grow. "But grow in

grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ" (2 Peter 3:18). "Grace and peace be multiplied unto you through the knowledge of God, and of Jesus our Lord" (2 Peter 1:2).

(4) We must preach the word because it will cleanse the saints. "now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you" (John 15:3).

(5) We are sanctified by the word. "Sanctify them through thy truth, thy word is truth" (John 17:17). "Thy word have I hid in my heart, that I might not sin against thee" (Psalm 119:11).

(6) I must preach the word of God because it is sweet to the taste. "How sweet are thy words unto my taste! Yea sweeter than honey to my mouth" (Psalm 119:103). The word of God will do the work of God. It is a light, it is sure, it is very pure, it is infallible. It is indeed the word of God.

~ Charles Ellis

HE CANNOT FAIL; HE WILL NOT FORSAKE

"I will be with thee; I will not fail thee, nor forsake thee" (Joshua 1:5)

How great would our troubles be if the Lord were to leave us, fail us, or forsake us. However, our hearts and minds can rest in assurance that God is always faithful to His people and to His Word. Clouds may gather, but the Lord can blow them away. Since God will not leave me or forsake me, neither will I forsake Him.

Since God will not fail me, my faith will also not fail. The God

who spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us will complete the work that He has begun in us (Rom. 8:32; Phil. 1:6). The Son who died for us, has risen from the grave triumphant over death and the grave, and is now seated at the right hand of God where he ever liveth to make intercession for us (Rom. 8:34; Heb. 7:25). Nothing can ever separate the believer from the love of Christ (Rom. 8:35-39). More-

over, the Holy Spirit who sealed us and now indwells us (Eph. 1:14-15) will guide us, help us, and abide with us forever (John 14:16-18). Yes, in the world we will have tribulation and trouble, but remember our God is bigger than our trials (John 16:33). He will not leave us; He will not fail us; He will not forsake us. That's a truth in which we can take great comfort.

~ Larry Windham

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Notice

The Northeast MS Baptist Bible Conference and the North Central MS Baptist Bible Conference do not have a meeting place for June 2011.

“Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to His abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. To an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you. Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.” (1 Peter 1:3-5).

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