

Lesson # 4 – The Priorities Regarding the Bible.

Introduction

- A. Due to our sinful nature we have a tendency to live according to wrong priorities.
- B. It is in this hidden area of the heart - that the practice of the truth is so very important.
- C. What we choose and practice in this area of priorities determines many, if not all, of the other areas of our life.
- D. The priorities before us in this lesson are high-on the list of values. There are few things more important than giving the Holy Word of God its rightful place in our lives.
- E. It is obvious why we need a revelation from God and why we must put this revelation high on the list of our priorities.

All the ways of a man are clean in his own eyes, but the Lord weigheth the spirits. Proverbs 16:2

This I say therefore, and testify in the Lord, that ye henceforth walk not as other Gentiles walk, in the vanity of their mind, having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart. Ephesians 4:17,18

I. Orientation: The Meaning of this Priority.

A. This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth, but thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein, for then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success. Joshua 1:8

Observation: Joshua had a great task before him. He was chosen by God to lead the Israelites into Canaan and to conquer the land. This was not going to be easy. He was given the key in the passage before us. The Word of God was to be his blueprint. If he would live according to the Scripture and lead the Israelites into obeying God, then God could give them victory over their enemies. These words come to every believer with fresh emphasis: ". . . meditate therein day and night . . . observe to do . . . then thou shalt make thy way prosperous and then thou shalt have good success."

B. Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises, that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust. II Peter 1:4

Observation: When we consider the great truth that God has gone on record of what He will do for the believer who will trust Him and implement His Word, then we can understand why God's own promises are important to Him. We also recognize that they are "precious" because of what happens when the promises are claimed and obeyed.

C. 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 Spirit. II Peter 1:20,21

Observation: Here the Apostle Peter simply states that the Bible must be recognized as number one. By use of the word "first" he shows the Word of God to have come to us from God Himself and not from human searching. God has given us His inspired and inerrant Word. We must treat this truth as "first" in our daily life.

Exposition: The Basis of this Priority.

A. The testimony of Jesus Christ to the Word of God.

1. The Lord Jesus made no distinction between Himself and the Written Word
He that rejecteth Me and receiveth not My Words, hath one that judgeth him, the Word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day. John 12:48 (John 5:39; 15:7)

2. He held up Himself and His Word as the object of faith.

Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth My Word, and believeth on Him that sent Me, hath everlasting life and shall not come into condemnation, but is passed from death unto life. John 4:24
(Matthew 24:35; John 6:68; 8:51)

3. He held people responsible for the Written Word of God.

But He said unto them, Have ye not read what David did, when he was an hungred and they that were with him Matthew 12:3 (Matthew 19:4; Luke 24:25)

4. He taught that the key to grace was the relationship of the person to Him through the Word of God.

Then said Jesus to those Jews which believed on Him. If ye continue in My Word, then are ye My disciples indeed, and ye shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free. John 8:31,32 (John 5:24; 7:37-39)

5. He pointed out that the reason for error is a neglect of the Word of God.

And Jesus answering said unto them. Do ye not therefore err, because ye know not the Scriptures, neither the power of God? Mark 12:24
(John 5:38-40)

6. The way the Lord Jesus lived is equally as important as His Words. He trusted the Word of God explicitly.

And when the Tempter came to Him, he said, If Thou be the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread. But He answered and said, It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every Word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God. Matthew 4:3,4 (Mark 7:6-13)

B. God's Description of His Word.

1. The Word of God is inspired. II Timothy 3:16

All Scripture is given by inspiration of God and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness.

Observation: Inspiration means that the Bible has been supernaturally produced and is therefore inerrant. God has revealed Himself to us. We have a written record.

2. The Word of God is our final authority. I Thess. 2:13

For this cause also thank we God without ceasing, because, when ye received the Word of God which ye heard of us, ye received it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the Word of God, which effectually worketh also in you that believe.

Observation: This verse explains how we must respond to God through His Word. The Bible is more than good religious advice. When we accept the Scripture as authoritative said practice it as such - then God can work in our life.

3. The Word of God is truth. John 17:17

Sanctify them through Thy Truth, Thy Word is truth.

Observations What could ever be more important than truth? One of life's most important tasks is to discern between truth and error. To know and practice the truth is of paramount importance.

4. The Word of God is trustworthy. Romans 4:21

And being fully persuaded that, what He (God) had promised, He (God) was able to perform.

Observation: God stands behind His Word. His promises are not given to us to mock us. The strength of the promises is the power and faithfulness of God Himself.

5. The Word of God is a great power and a critic. Hebrews 4:12
For the Word of God is quick (living) and powerful and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner (critic) of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

Observation: God uses His Word as a mirror in our lives. We often see ourselves as guilty or pardoned, free or enslaved, progressing or stagnant as the case may be. Note how the verse indicates that the motive of the heart - is the important facet with God.

III. Application: Warning and Exhortation.

A. The warnings regarding the Holy Scripture.

1. The warning regarding being offended. Matthew 13:20,21

But he that received the seed (the Bible) into stony places, the same is he that heareth the Word and anon with joy receiveth it, yet hath he no root in himself, but dureth for a while, for when tribulation or persecution ariseth because of the Word, by and by he is Offended.

Observation: This is a sad commentary on human nature. When we are persecuted or when things go poorly with us because we have obeyed the Bible - we have a tendency to reject the message of the Bible and change our way of living. This approach to life we must avoid. No matter the cost - we must obey God.

2. The warning regarding wrong priorities. Matthew 13:22

He also that received seed among the thorns is he that heareth the Word and the care of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, choke the Word and he becometh unfruitful.

Observation: This is a serious warning for the day in which we live. The cares of the world and its money are far too important to us. When we place these too high in our priorities it leads us into a life of disobedience to God and we become unfruitful.

3. The warning- regarding merely hearing the Word. James 1:22-24

But be ye doers of the Word and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves. For if any be a hearer of the Word and not a doer, he is like unto a man beholding his natural face in a glass, for he beholdeth himself and goeth his way and straightway forgetteth what manner of man he was.

Observation: No one would choose to be deceived. This, however, is what happens when we hear but do not obey the Bible. There is no substitute for simple obedience to God through His Word.

B. The exhortations regarding the Holy Scripture.

1. The Word of God must be read. I Peter 2:2

As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the Word, that ye may grow thereby.

Observation: This exhortation should be carried out daily. We must read the Word of God reverently and in an attitude of submission to God. Choose a time to read the Bible and maintain that choice each day.

2. The Word of God must be mixed with faith. Hebrews 4:1,2

Let us therefore fear, lest, a promise being left us of entering into His rest, any of you should seem to come short of it. For unto us was the Gospel preached, as well as unto them, but the Word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard it.

Observation: This verse explains the reason why the Word of God can be living and powerful (Hebrews 4:12) and our lives so filled with weakness. We must accept the Word of God as final authority and put it into practice - trusting God.

3. The Word of God must be obeyed in love. I John 5:Re3

For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments, and His commandments are not grievous.

Observation: Here we are shown what it means to love God - it is to obey Him. As God's love for us was manifested in the activity regarding Christ's life and death (Romans 5:8) so our love for God must be an activity of obedience.

Conclusion: Where is the Word of God in your daily priority?