

***“It is written, ‘Man shall not live on bread alone, but on every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God’ (Matthew 4:4).***

Beloved in the Lord,

God’s Word is essential for life. We know that our body cannot live without nourishment, and so too our inner man, our spirit cannot live without spiritual food. Where God’s Word is not present there is no life. A man living without God’s Word is not living in the full sense of the word. A person may exist, existence is not really living. This type of existence is fairly miserable and only hanging on by a thread.

Of course, a person who exists without God’s Word, does not have any understanding of what I am talking about, because the things of God are foolishness to the carnal mind. A person may look at his wealth, his career, his education, his possessions and think to himself, “I am doing alright. I have all I need, I am not lacking anything.” Ah, but what does God say? We get a glimpse in Revelation where Jesus is speaking to the Church at Laodecia: ***“Because you say, ‘I am rich, and have become wealthy, and have need of nothing,’ and you do not know that you are wretched and miserable and poor and blind and naked,<sup>18</sup> I advise you to buy from Me gold refined by fire so that you may become rich, and white garments so that you may clothe yourself, and that the shame of your nakedness will not be revealed; and eye salve to anoint your eyes so that you may see” (Rev.3:17-18).***

The problem is that people who do not feed upon God’s Word are blind. Their eyes are blinded to the truth. It is only when we delve into God’s Word that the eyes of our understanding are opened. The famous Bible teacher Derek Prince used to say: “Remember that when you are reading your Bible, your Bible is reading you.” That is true. God’s Word is Living and Powerful. We read in Hebrews: ***“For the word of God is living and active and sharper than any two-edged sword, and piercing as far as the division of soul and spirit, of both joints and marrow, and able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart.<sup>13</sup> And there is no creature hidden from His sight, but all things are open and laid bare to the eyes of Him with whom we have to do” (Hebrews4:12-13).***

In the amplified version we read: ***“For the Word that God speaks is alive and full of power [making it active, operative, energizing, and effective]; it is sharper than any two-edged sword, penetrating to the dividing line of the breath of life (soul) and [the immortal] spirit, and of joints and marrow [of the deepest parts of our nature], exposing and sifting and analysing and judging the very thoughts and purposes of the heart.<sup>13</sup> And not a creature exists that is concealed from His sight, but all things are open and exposed, naked and defenseless to the eyes of Him with Whom we have to do.”***

There are a number of things in this text which I would like to consider today. Firstly, that the Word of God is living and active. Jesus said about Himself: ***“<sup>25</sup> Jesus said to them, ‘I am the bread of life; he who comes to Me will not hunger, and he who believes in Me will never thirst’ (John 6:35).***

A person who does not feed upon the Bread of Life, is always hungering and thirsting for something. Such a person always wants more of something. The soul cannot be satisfied and find true rest apart from Jesus. The soul will hunger and thirst until it comes to Jesus. The hunger and thirst can only be sated by God's Word. Nothing else can. Jesus taught:

***“Do not work for the food which perishes, but for the food which endures to eternal life, which the Son of Man will give to you, for on Him the Father, God, has set His seal: (John 6:27).”***

In the Message it says: ***“Don't waste your energy striving for perishable food like that. Work for the food that sticks with you, food that nourishes your lasting life, food the Son of Man provides. He and what he does are guaranteed by God the Father to last.”***

The idea here is to continually eat the food that is good, that produces eternal life. It is not enough to read the Bible once. You must continually feed on God's Word. If your Bible is sitting on the shelf unopened it won't help you. That is just as absurd as having a fully laden refrigerator, you are starving, but you never open up the fridge and take the food and eat it.

God's food is good food. It is not corruptible, but eternal. Jesus said that Heaven and earth shall pass away, but God's Word endures forever. See how powerful the Word of God is? It is living. It never perishes or disappears. God said about His Word in Isaiah: ***For as the rain and the snow come down from heaven, And do not return there without watering the earth And making it bear and sprout, And furnishing seed to the sower and bread to the eater;<sup>11</sup> So will My word be which goes forth from My mouth; It will not return to Me empty, Without accomplishing what I desire, And without succeeding in the matter for which I sent it. (Is.55:10-11)***

The Word of God is Living and it fulfils God's commands every time without fail. It is God's Word, not mans. God is living and powerful and He works through His Word. He sent His Spirit to breathe His word into the writers of the Bible. We read in 2. Timothy 3:16-17: ***“All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness;<sup>17</sup> so that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work.”***

Please note the first two words: ALL SCRIPTURE. All of the Bible is inspired by God. It is written by people who were led and inspired by The Holy Spirit. The Bible is not man's Word but God's Word.

So God's Word is living and powerful.

The second thing that we need to notice is that God's Word is our judge. It judges the thoughts and intentions of our hearts.

God's Word is the standard by which all things are measured and judged. God's Word is not only our food, it is also our foundation, our road map, our moral and spiritual compass. The Bible clearly tells us what is right and what is wrong. God's Word gives us His Holy Commandments and as someone rightly said they are God's Ten Commandments and not His ten suggestions. So many seem to think that there are suggestions and no longer tremble at His Word, but interpret it to fit their own sinful ideas.

If we do not navigate our life according to God's Word, then very quickly we find ourselves straying off course. We find ourselves in the depths of sin very quickly.

If we are feeling judged or condemned by God's Word, then that is good, because God does that to bring us to repentance. So that by His grace, we may receive forgiveness through Jesus shed blood.

This brings me to my next point and that is the wonderful and beautiful truth that God's Word is the bearer of Good News – The Gospel. The Gospel message is very simple: ***“For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life. <sup>17</sup> For God did not send the Son into the world to judge the world, but that the world might be saved through Him. <sup>18</sup> He who believes in Him is not judged; he who does not believe has been judged already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.” (John 3:16-18)***

God's Word brings us the great news that Jesus, out of His great love for us, bore the penalty of our sin, died in our place that we may receive forgiveness and have eternal life with Him in The Father's House.

The next thing we need to understand is that God's Word will be our final judge. We read earlier in Hebrews: ***“And not a creature exists that is concealed from His sight, but all things are open and exposed, naked and defenceless to the eyes of Him with Whom we have to do.”***

One day we will stand before Almighty God and give an account of our lives. The measure or standard of judgement will be the Bible, His Holy Word. If we have received it in faith and lived in obedience, then all will be well. If we have rejected God's Word, watered it down, twisted the meaning of it, then we will be judged by that very Word.

God has given us His Word. Let us receive this precious gift. Let us taste and see that the Lord is good. Let us understand that the more we partake of God's Word, the stronger our faith becomes and the more blessed our life is.

We read in Romans 10:17: ***“So faith comes from hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ.”***

Faith comes from hearing God's Word.

As we daily feed upon earthly food for our body, may we daily feed upon spiritual food for our inner man, our soul and spirit.

May we embrace all God gives to us and may we not live upon bread alone, but on every Word that proceeds from the mouth of God.

To Him be all glory, honour and praise.

Amen.

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All Bible quotations taken from New American Standard Bible.