

A. THE WORD ON THE WORD

- The way to understand God's Word is to study what Scripture has to say about itself.
- Last week we discovered that:
 - The Word of God is Jesus Himself. His word and works are the essence of the message of God recorded in the Bible.
 - The very life of Christ is intrinsic in the written Word. It is living and active in the hearts of those who have received and believed it.
- Today we will explore in greater detail the activity of the Word of God in the life of a believer as we examine more of its important characteristics: Heb 4:12-13 AMP--For the word of God is living and active *and* full of power [making it operative, energizing, and effective]. It is sharper than any two-edged sword, penetrating as far as the division of the soul and spirit [the completeness of a person], and of both joints and marrow [the deepest parts of our nature], exposing *and* judging the very thoughts and intentions of the heart. ¹³ And not a creature exists that is concealed from His sight, but all things are open *and* exposed, and revealed to the eyes of Him with whom we have to give account.
- The Lord uses His Word to inspect and interpret the condition of our hearts. He offers us His truth as a means of intervention and integration.
- Insights:

B. INSPECTS

- On this side of heaven we are in constant need of having our hearts searched and hidden things exposed: Ps 139:23-24 NLT--Search me, O God, and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts. Point out anything in me that offends you, and lead me along the path of everlasting life.
- Knowingly or unknowingly we harbor thoughts, feelings, judgments, and attitudes that aren't in agreement with the truth of God's Word. Our actions flow from these.
- God's Word is sharp. It is able to cut keenly and decisively. It penetrates deeply and comprehensively into our lives exposing what is actually there. (Strong's G5114)
- It examines "soul and spirit, "joints and marrow," meaning the entirety of who we are – both our inner and outer selves.
- Although our omniscient God sees it all, He wields the Word with care so that it reveals just exactly the part of us that is needful of His touch and nothing more: John 16:12--I still have many things to say to you, but you cannot bear *them* now.
- Insights:

C. INTERPRETS

- The inner life of a believer is a mix of the fleshly and the spiritual. God uses His Word to discriminate between the two.
- Jesus teaches that what's stored in our hearts is apparent by our words and deeds. (Luke 6:45) The Word sees beyond behaviors, uncovering motives and intentions.
- The Word is like a sword. The Greek word used means a small, precise instrument similar to a surgeon's scalpel, utility knife or a pair of scissors. (Strong's G3162)
- It accurately cuts through anything and everything that is a barrier to living from the truth of God's Word:
 - Fleshly efforts, works-based mindsets
 - "Churchyness," religion, pretension
 - Anxiety, fear, depression
 - Worldly or selfish desires, lust, greed
 - Past hurt or trauma
 - Present day uncertainty, stress, disappointment
 - Feelings!
- God's Word is able to penetrate deeply enough to help us see root causes that may otherwise go unrecognized: Proverbs 20:27 NLT--The LORD's light penetrates the human spirit, exposing every hidden motive.

- LISTENING EXERCISE

Holy Spirit, as I take a few moments to review the list above, I pray that you would highlight 1 or 2 things hiding in my heart that You want to reveal and heal:

- Insights:

D. INTERVENES

- The Lord reveals in order to heal. Jesus said, "Healthy people don't need a doctor—sick people do ... For I have come to call not those who think they are righteous, but those who know they are sinners." (Matthew 9:12-13 NLT)
- His desire is to use the Word to remedy the parts that hinder or pose a danger to us:

○ Error	○ Sin
○ Deception	○ Immaturity
○ Weakness	○ Wounding
- While this type of exposure and cure might be initially painful, God's intention is to:
 - 1) remove the unnecessary or
 - 2) to give us what is lacking.

- The Lord lovingly allows this pain because the outcome is so beneficial: 2 Cor 7:10
MSG--Distress that drives us to God ... turns us around. It gets us back in the way of salvation. We never regret that kind of pain.
- When God enables us to see our true state of heart by His Spirit using His Word, we are motivated to repent ("Re" = do again; "Pent" = from the highest place.)
- Repentance is a gift and it is our love that God love brings us there:
 - Acts 3:19 NIV--Repent, then, and turn to God, so that your sins may be wiped out, that times of refreshing may come from the Lord
 - Rom 2:4b AMP--God's kindness leads you to repentance [that is, to change your inner self, your old way of thinking—seek His purpose for your life]
- Repentance allows us to leave behind what's been ailing us and embrace the Truth.
- LISTENING EXERCISE:
Ask the Lord to bring to mind a time when His Word led you to repentance:

How did that experience impact your emotions, your future thinking and lifestyle?

How did it impact your relationship with God?

Wary, tentative, ashamed

Avoidant or with a sense of unworthiness

Thankful or with the feeling of having been helped

Joyful and with deeper connection to Him

Other

- Because of our union with Christ, God already sees us as holy and without fault: Col 1:22 NLT—He has reconciled you to himself through the death of Christ in his physical body. As a result, he has brought you into his own presence, and you are holy and blameless as you stand before him without a single fault.
- The surgical work of God's Word frees us to live this truth out more fully: Jn 17:17--Sanctify them by Your truth. Your word is truth.
- "Sanctification is the work of God's free grace, whereby we are renewed in the whole man after the image of God, and are enabled more and more to die unto sin, and live unto righteousness." (Westminster Shorter Catechism, Question 35)
- As we listen, believe, and keep our hearts open before the Lord allowing Him to sanctify us by His Word, we will discover the joy and beauty of living in the light: Psalms 19:8 NIV--The precepts of the LORD are right, giving joy to the heart. The commands of the LORD are radiant, giving light to the eyes.
- Insights:

E. PERSONAL APPLICATION**• ONE THING**

The One Thing that I'd like to take away from today's class and believe God to accomplish in my life is:

• PONDER THE TRUTH

Which verse or principle stood out to you this week? Write it below taking some time to review it often. Be still in God's presence, alert for new insights. Record them here.

• PROCESSING THE TRUTH

Prayerfully consider the Listening Exercises from this lesson. Ask the Spirit to guide you into a deeper understanding of the truth and to reveal any specific faith steps He his calling you to take. Write down your insights.