



## *Practical Christian Living*

### *God's Word is Truth*

**New Series on Practical Christian Living**—Our new series will focus on living as a Christian in our contemporary culture. Our world is changing faster than ever before. More and more it is becoming a challenge to apply the timeless and unchanging truth of scripture to an ever changing society. One of the biggest changes in the last 30 years is an all out attack on truth. The result has been a new atmosphere of “anything goes.” This series will offer some practical “nuts and bolts” suggestions to remind us what God has said concerning various issues so that we can stand firm in our beliefs and live the Christian life in our world today.

#### **The Inspired Word of God:**

The Bible (Word of God) is an important part of understanding what God thinks about things. When God speaks that is called “revelation.” When God speaks through the mouths or writings of men it is called “Inspiration.” Inspiration has the same root as the word “respiration.” That is why scripture is called “God breathed” (2 Tim 3:16). The Bible is often called the Word of God because it is a record of what God has said to mankind about a variety of things. The Bible is not like any other book on the shelf because it has been initiated by God and because God is powerful, His Word is also powerful. **Hebrews 4:12** says, “The word of God is living and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart.”

**2 Timothy 3:16-17** says all scripture is God-breathed or inspired. That means it originates from God just as breath originates from a person. Because it comes from God, who is creator of all things, it is powerful. *What do we learn from these two passages that scripture is able to do?*

- Penetrates & divides the soul and spirit, judges the thoughts & attitudes, Teaches, rebukes, corrects, and trains in righteousness

**John 17:17 & Psalm 119:103-105** show us that God’s word is truth and that as truth it gives us guidance.

*How does the psalmist describe that guidance in these verses?*

As a light to his path

*How are truth and light similar?*

They both reveal and expose something for what it really is.

*Why is it important to realize God’s Word is truth?*

- If it is truth it is able to give us faithful and accurate guidance through life.

There are many other scriptures that show the Bible is the recorded words of God (Exodus 17:14, 34:27, Jer 30:2, and many others).

#### **The Problem:**

There is a problem that has existed since the beginning of time. Satan has challenged God’s integrity and has presented lies as if they were truth! **Genesis 3:1-4** we have the story of the very first sin. *What did the serpent call into question?*

- He called into question what God said (the **content** of God’s word) – is that what God really said?

- He called into question why God said it (**God's motive/integrity** for God's word) – Satan tried to convince them that God didn't want them to know the truth.
- The serpent presented an alternate explanation of the tree and the fruit which led Adam and Eve into sin.
- In effect Satan told them that God's word was a lie but that his lies were the truth!

Satan has been doing that ever since. We learned above that God's Word is truth. *What would Satan like for us to believe about God's Word?*

- That it is lies
- That God doesn't want us to have any fun.
- That God actually wants to harm us rather than do us good.

Satan doesn't just use one or two sources to shape our thinking in ungodly ways. Today he has hundreds and thousands of outlets for his message. *What outlets does Satan and the world use to pervert our sense of right and wrong, godly and ungodly?*

- People, media, our own thinking, and even a misuse of the Bible.

Let's use TV as a test case for how the world can change our thinking.

*How many hours each week is the average person exposed to church & scripture and how many hours to TV?*

- Someone in church every time the doors are open = 3 hours of the Bible/week
- Average U.S. household has the TV on 6 hours and 47 minutes per day = 47 hours/week.

What compounds the repetition is the content of what we see on television.

- It has been projected that the average 18 year old has seen over 200,000 violent acts on television in their lifetime.

*What effect can a continuous stream of negative and harmful images have on our ideas of what is right and what is wrong, what is appropriate and what is inappropriate?*

- We begin thinking evil is normal and even okay if we are exposed to it enough times.
- We have men who no longer look at a women appropriately because they have been trained to think women are objects instead of people. Where does that come from? Certainly not scripture.

Is there any wonder people start getting their values and norms from television and the surrounding culture rather than the Bible?

### **Re-establishing the place of Scripture**

If we are going to live as Christians in our culture we have to reestablish scripture's role in our lives. We have to remove the lies the world has told us and replace them with the truth of the Gospel. When we have re-established God's Word as our source of guidance we will have a spiritual renewal in our lives and in our communities similar to what God spoke through the prophet Isaiah in **Isaiah 61:1-4, 7-9** and we will respond with rejoicing to God similar to that found in **61:10-11**.

### **1. Study it**

In order to re-establish the role of scripture as a guiding force in our lives we must study God's Word with the purpose of transformation. That means we don't study it like a self-help book or as a book of good suggestions. We study it because we know it can lead us in a holy direction because it is from God. *Why is familiarity with scripture important in order to make daily decisions?*

### **2. Discuss it**

Do more than read it repeatedly. Make sure you discuss what you are studying with your Christian brothers and sisters. Scripture was meant to be read and studied in community. **Proverbs 27:17** says, "As iron sharpens iron, so one man sharpens another." *What benefit comes from discussing scripture that you cannot get by yourself?*

### **3. Apply it**

It is not enough to read or hear the Word of God. **James 1:22-25**. Application means doing what it says. It means we apply the truth we find in scripture to real life situations.

As we study about Practical Christian Living over the next three months we will be examining what the scriptures have to say about various issues we run into in our culture. Let's not merely form scriptural opinions about these matters. That means nothing if we don't live out what we believe. One final reminder. The Word of God is not meant to be used as a club to smash people with. Instead when we discover truth in scripture we use it to speak the truth in love to others (Eph 4:15).

### **Prayer**