

THE WORD

Ruth Gallagher

What is a Pillar? Most of us understand the concept of a Pillar, they support a building and hold it strong, no matter what the world throws at it. As Pillars bear the weight of the structure and must always stand on a strong foundation to be successful, so is the Word of God to a believer's life. Without the Word of God, you cannot stand amidst a storm.

Who is a believer? Acts 11:26, "...for a whole year Barnabas and Saul met with the church and taught great numbers of people. The disciples were called Christians first at Antioch." They were called "Christians" because their speech and behaviour was like Christ.

Don't copy the behaviour and customs of this world, but let God transform you into a new person by changing the way you think. Then you will learn to know God's will for you, which is good and pleasing and perfect. (Romans 12:2, NLT)

WHAT IS THE WORD OF GOD?

Definition: The Word of God can simply be defined as 'a manifestation of the mind and will of God'.

The phrase, "the Word of God" is used in a number of different ways.

1. **It can be something that God has decreed:** Genesis 1:1-3. "And God said" - It refers to something that God has decreed to come to pass. (Psalm 33:6)
2. **The Word of God may refer to the actual words that God spoke to humans:** For example, God personally spoke to Adam in the Garden of Eden: Genesis 2:16-17. He also personally spoke to Moses, when the Ten Commandments were given: (Exodus 20:1-3)
3. **The Word of God can also be the word God has spoken through the Prophets:** The Bible says that God spoke to His people through the Words of the prophets and the Lord promised that the prophets would speak His Words, (Deuteronomy 18:18-20). God used ordinary human beings and spoke through them in their own language to communicate the Word of God. Consequently, the Words were to be obeyed. Jeremiah 1:7&9, "The LORD said to me, "Do not say, 'I am too young.' But go to whomever I send you and say whatever I tell you." Then the LORD reached out his hand and touched my mouth and said to me, "I will most assuredly give you the words you are to speak for me."

4. Jesus Christ Himself is called the Word of God. (John 1:1)
5. Finally, the phrase "Word of God" can also refer to God's written Word (The Bible)

We believe the Bible is the Word of God because:

- Within the Bible, several verses indicate that it came from God Himself. One example is the phrase "*thus saith the Lord*" appears just over 400 times in the Bible, indicating that God Himself spoke those Words and had them recorded in the Bible for future generations to read. (2 Timothy 3:16)
- The Bible has been passed down accurately over the centuries: Of all the ancient texts ever discovered, the Bible has the most surviving copies of its original documents. The Bible as we know it today has been put together from these copies of original documents, making it an original and reliable text.
- The Bible has diverse origins, was written by over 40 different authors, with its books written in 3 different continents (Asia, Africa, and Europe), yet their messages remain the same and it has an underlying unity of purpose and consistency of thought running through it.

HOW DO WE STUDY THE WORD OF GOD?

There are many methods of studying the Bible and enrich our reading of scripture, these are not exhaustive but we can look at a few of them:

- **A study of the Bible one book at a time:** The advantage of a book study is that it helps us keep Bible verses within their context.
- **Read through the Bible:** Reading through the Bible is a great way to study it. Every page of the Bible reveals God's character, emotions, thoughts, and actions.
- **Character study or biographical study:** In this study you look at one character in the Bible and draw out lessons from their life. You are looking at how God relates to people and how people respond to God.
- **Topical study:** The uniqueness of a topical study is the application of the truth from the Bible to our modern life.

We receive God's wisdom when apply the truths of the Bible to our lives.

- **Memorise scripture:** Memorizing portions of the bible lets you think about the Bible verse any time of the day or night. You can start out with verses that are especially meaningful to you.
- **Meditate on the Word:** To study is to observe and gather facts, analyse them, and come to conclusions. To meditate is to purposely stay narrowly focused on a short phrase or verse and ponder it deeply.

HOW DO WE APPLY THE WORD IN OUR LIVES:

Reading the Bible is not enough but we need to apply the Word in our lives. There's no point in reading and studying the Bible if we don't become doers of the Word by applying scripture to our lives. God's Word is living and active. It's meant to impact the way we live.

You may as well quit reading and hearing the Word of God, and give it to the devil, if you do not desire to live according to it. Martin Luther.

1. **We apply God's Word through prayer.** (Hebrews 4:12, Psalm 138:2). When we speak and pray the scriptures, we are coming into agreement with God, and His power is released to answer our prayers. Praying the Scriptures guides you to the will of God in our prayers.
2. **We apply the Word of God by being obedient:** (Luke 11:28, Joshua 1:8, Isaiah 1:19, John 14:23-24).
3. **We apply God's Word by actively believing in faith that His Word is truth:** (James 2:18). To apply God's Word to your life, you must genuinely and actively put your faith in the fact that what God has said is true. (Hebrews 11:6)

Remember the Holy Spirit helps us to apply the Word of God. John 14:26 *"But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you"*

"The man who thinks he can know the Word of God by mere intellectual study is greatly deceived. Spiritual truth is spiritually discerned." Samuel Chadwick.

WHY IS THE WORD IMPORTANT IN THE BELIVER'S LIFE?

D. L. Moody, *"The Bible was not given to increase our knowledge but to change our lives."*

- God's Word convicts of sin and it has power for salvation. (Romans 10:17, 1 Peter 1:23)

- God's Word sets us free. (John 8:31-32)
- God's Word teaches us, exposes our sin, corrects us and trains us for godliness. (2 Timothy 3:16)
- God's Word is our offensive weapon against Satan. (Ephesians 6:17)
- God's Word gives us hope. (Psalm 119:81, Psalm 119:114) Psalm 130:5, *"I wait for the LORD, my whole being waits, and in his Word, I put my hope."*
- God's Word is an anchor, because it never changes. (Isaiah 55:10-11)
- God's Word never fails: For no Word from God will ever fail. (Luke 1:37NIV)

Conclusion:

How important is the Word of God to you? Does it mean anything to you? Do you consider it crucial to your living? Of what importance is the Word of God to you when you hear it on the pulpit or reading it at home? Your attitude to the Word of God can tell a lot about your relationship with Him. If you value God in your life, you'll value His Word. If you receive it as the Word of God and believe it, it will change your life.