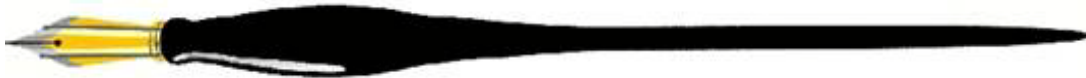


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More Than A Book: When Mixed with our Faith



Introduction:

When one reads Hebrews 3:1 - 4:2 we learn that the children of Israel had been chosen to receive the word of God; but they had refused to bring it into their hearts and mingle it with faith. This essential mixture of instruction and faith will be our focus for today's lesson.

We need to look to God's instructions as our true guide and with that guidance we must mix our personal willingness to be faithful. We know that man cannot survive beyond this life without God. We know that God has provided hope, but what must we do about it? Let's consider these elements in this equation: God's communication; Our Listening; and the Results.

God's Communication:

This amazing volume, known as the Bible, is the record of God's communication with mankind (Hebrews 1:1-2). God has always made His will known to man. Even, in the beginning, in the Garden, God made His will known (Genesis 2:15-17). Later, to the fathers by the prophets, (Isaiah, Ezekiel, Amos, etc) God let His will be known. Now, in the last days—through His Son, Jesus Christ we have been given the word of God (John 12:48-50). God is not silent today, as long as we have His word to listen to and repeat (1 Thessalonians 1:8).

The word "communicate" is important. It is a word that denotes action—it is the action of clearly transferring knowledge from one person to another. God has communicated—clearly delivered His knowledge to us in order to make it our knowledge. It makes good sense that God chose the written word for the purpose of precision and ease of study (Acts 17:11; 1 Timothy 4:13). God did not give us riddles to conceal His will from us—all of the elements of scriptures were designed to clearly convey His will. The Scriptures were written in the language of the people: the Old Testament: Hebrew (Just a small amount of Aramaic). New Testament: Common Greek (the dominant language in the known world at the time).

The Scriptures were always given to be understood. Nehemiah 8:8 records that the words of the Lord were read and understood. 2 Corinthians 1:12-13, speaks of as the word being given in "simplicity" and "godly sincerity" for the need of their reading and understanding. All scripture was given to be profitable to the people of God (2 Timothy 3:16-17).

Our Listening

What use is a stop sign that no one obeys? There are instructions that some people choose to ignore in this life. If we think of the Bible is just another book, then it is just another bunch of rules to ignore. This is what we read, in our very first reading, from Hebrews 3 and 4. The Israelites received the word of God but did not take it into their hearts to mix it with faith—true belief.

There are two points when we talk about biblical faith: there is “The Faith” (Acts 14:21-22; Colossians 1:19-23). The Doctrine of Christ, the instructions, the formula of work and worship that is well pleasing to God. Then there is our “faith” (Acts 6:5; Hebrews 10:22). This faith is our belief, our commitment, our confidence, and our continuation in “The Faith”. It is the second point—our faith, that we must gain from the Faith (Romans 10:17). Unlike the Israelites, we must take the word into our hearts with confidence so we can fully commit to it and continue in it.

What Will The Results Be?

When we make our faith wholly comparable to the Faith we will be more spiritually minded than ever before in our lives. There is no down side to accepting God at His word. All of God’s instructions, when mingled with our commitment to do them, will improve our life. The changes brought about by God’s instructions are all good. We are instructed to improve our character and our actions (Colossians 3:1-15). We will go from a lost state to possessing the daily hope of salvation (Colossians 1:23).

Conclusion:

When we actually base our faith on God’s word we will know: the love of God, as His child (1 John 3:1-3); the joy of God, as His servant (Philippians 4:4); and the peace of God, that cannot be known outside of Christ (Philippians 4:6-7).

Lot’s of people attempt to distract themselves away from confronting the Bible in this life. There is no other hope besides God’s offer. Will you accept God’s offer of hope today? The opportunity to make this Bible much more than a book in your life is now. God’s expectations are here and they are waiting for you. Will you faithfully submit to God today? ~tss

The Gospel Plan

HEAR THE GOSPEL MESSAGE Romans 10:11-16

BELIEVE IT !!! Romans 10:17; Hebrews 11:6

REPENT – CHANGE Luke 13:3; 2 Peter 3:9

**OPENLY CONFESS — JESUS IS THE SON OF GOD
Romans 10:8-10; Acts 8:37**

**BE BAPTIZED — FOR THE REMISSION OF YOUR SINS
Mark 16:16; Acts 2:38-39; 1 Peter 3:21**

LIVE ON FAITHFULLY Hebrews 10:35-39; 1 Peter 1:6-9

If you are enjoying The Messenger and you know someone else who would like to receive it. Please forward this copy to them and send their email address and I will add them to the list.

Sean