

Dt. 8:1-3 (WCF 1:1) "Necessary Bread"

For the Children: Imagine if you went around telling everyone that eating good food was absolutely essential for a healthy body – but made sure you only ever ate junk-food yourself. People would wonder if you really meant what you said. We say God's Word is necessary for our salvation. But people won't take us seriously if we don't take that Word in, remember it, obey it and trust it. **Questions:** What are some different ways in which we depend on the Lord? Why doesn't God speak to us any more through prophets, dreams and so on? How can we show that we really do see God's Word as necessary?

Introduction:

First Point: The Nature of God's Word

- 1) General, Special, Secret and Revealed: When Dt. 8:3/Mt. 4:4 refer to everything/every word that proceeds out of the mouth of the Lord," it refers to God's *spoken* Word. That includes the commands and promises He had written down or spoken to His people, as well as the unfolding of His secret will in His Providence. General Revelation includes Creation and Providence and is seen by all. Special Revelation is given only to some
- 2) Written Revelation: Special revelation alone reveals Christ, the Gospel, the way of salvation. Not all special revelation was recorded, only that which was necessary for future generations. In addition to written revelation, there were other "modes": dreams & visions, prophecies, angelic messages, voices heard, theophanies and interpreted "tongues"
- 3) Fulfilled in Christ: The parts of special revelation that were written down were designed to slot together so they all point to Christ, the climax of the "story." He is the final Word, the fulfillment, the summing up of all revelation (Heb. 12:1-2). Hence the completed Scripture about His Person and work replaces all the former modes of revelation

Second Point: The Necessity of God's Word

- 1) For Learning Salvation: Since only special revelation reveals Christ & salvation, Scripture itself is necessary for salvation. It is also the only source of knowledge about how God wants to be worshipped and obeyed, out of gratitude
- 2) For Life: Dt. 8:3 states that man does not live by bread alone, but by God's utterances. This is true in the sense that we wouldn't exist apart from His will (Acts 17:28) – or apart from His ongoing provision. Israel learned that in the wilderness. It is also true that we depend spiritually on God's written Word – for spiritual life. The material world is not the be-all and end-all
- 3) The Only Mode: The written Word becomes all the more essential in light of the ending of the other modes of special revelation. Both Roman Catholic and Neo-Pentecostal theology undermined the necessity of Scripture by allowing revelation through ongoing prophecy – or through the church/pope. That is an insult to the final nature of the Word and the coming of Christ!

Third Point: The Response to God's Word

- 1) You Shall Remember: Israel was exhorted to "remember" God's will and Word that enabled their survival in the wilderness – so that they would remain sure of the Lord's existence and grateful for His help. Forgetting Him would lead to idolatry
- 2) Be Careful to Do: They were also reminded to obey His commandments in that gratitude. Such fruits of the Spirit are more important than seeking guidance for the future through gifts no longer available (1 Cor. 13). Belief in the necessity of Scripture should lead to such obedience
- 3) Humbly Depend: Belief in the necessity of Scripture should also lead to humble trust and dependency on God's Word. The Lord deprived Israel of food and fed them with manna to teach them this. He "tested" them there to bring out whether that trust was there. The Lord Jesus passed a similar test (Mt. 4), trusting His Father to care for Him and answering temptation with God's Word – from Dt. 8:3

Conclusion: