

Title: The Needfulness of the Word

Scripture: Joshua 1:1-8;

Series: The Word of God

1. Introduction:

- a. The backdrop for our passage is the death of Moses. Moses had been the only leader the Israelite people had ever known.
- b. The people of God needed a shepherd and God in His infinite grace provides Moses' assistant, Joshua as the new leader.
- c. In Verse 2, God commissions Joshua to arise and lead the people into the Promised Land.
 - i. Remember, the people had been waiting for this day for over 40 years.
- d. In verses 3 and 4, God reiterates the promise made to Abraham some 400+ years before. All the land would be given to the people of Israel. They would finally possess the land promised to Abraham.
- e. In verse 5, God makes a further promise. The people of the land would not be able to stand against Joshua and the Israelites. God promises that he would be with Joshua in the same way that He was with Moses. God would never leave this new leader but He would walk with him.
 - i. This was the same promise made to Moses in Deuteronomy 31:6
 - ii. This is the same promise that God makes to all believers in Hebrews 13:5
 1. God will never leave us or forsake us.

- f. In verse 6, we get to the heart of the matter. Joshua is afraid.
 - i. He knows how difficult leadership can be.
 - ii. He feels the immense burden of leading such a great number of people.
 - iii. It seems that Joshua was afraid that he would not be able to deliver the people into the Promised Land.
 - iv. God commands Joshua to be strong and courageous. The outcome is secure!
- g. In verse 7, God instructs Joshua as to the source of strength and courage that he will need to wage the good fight. Strength and Courage are incredible attributes of faith and these attributes are taught in the Word of God.
 - i. Joshua is commanded to be obedient.
 - ii. He is commanded to be singularly focused on the word of God
- h. Today, we will focus our attention to verse 8. In this verse, we will encounter the doctrine of the necessity of Scripture. It is my sincere prayer that God would illuminate our thinking on this matter and bring incredible truths to bear upon our souls.

2. The Uniqueness of Scripture: This Book of the Law

- a. What we first encounter in our verse is the (uniqueness) singularity of the Word of God. God commands Joshua concerning one singular work. Joshua was commanded to come to “**This book of the Law,**” and no other. As much revelation that

comprised the word of God in Joshua’s day, Joshua was to be bound only to it.

- i. God is making the point that only Scripture has what we need! Only scripture can illuminate our path.
- ii. Just like Joshua is instructed, we must pay careful attention to “**This book of the Law,**” and have no other authority.
- iii. We echo the call of the great reformers—Sola Scriptura—Scripture alone
 1. And why only Scripture as the rule for Christians? Because “**This book of the Law,**” has been given to us by God Himself. We read in **2 Timothy 3:16** All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness,
 2. Hence, we are bound to Scripture for it is the very breath of God given unto us by which we can find life.

3. The Needfulness of Talking the Scriptures: ...shall not depart from your mouth,

- a. Here we find a direct reference to the Shema. The prayer that all orthodox Jews pray every morning and evening. Part of that prayer is quoted directly from **Deuteronomy 6:4-9** “Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one. (5) You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might. (6) And these words that I command you today shall be on your heart. (7) You

shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise. (8) You shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes. (9) You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates.

- b. As the leader, Joshua was to constantly and unapologetically speak the word of God with the people. He was to exemplify a bible character.
 - i. Joshua had to speak what he had learned so that the people would benefit from the instruction he was receiving from God.
 - ii. Oh, Beloved, that God would show you the importance of what we are talking about.
 - 1. That you would give yourself to the careful study of God's word and that you would learn it enough to speak it constantly. That the Scripture would drip off your lips.
 - iii. Spurgeon once quoted the following in regards to John Bunyan, "Why, this man is a living Bible!" Prick him anywhere—his blood is Bible, the very essence of the Bible flows from him. He cannot speak without quoting a text, for his very soul is full of the Word of God."

4. The Needfulness of Meditating on Scripture: ...but you shall meditate on it

- a. Joshua was to diligently study, and frequently and on all occasions consider the will of God, as revealed in Scripture.

- i. As a leader, he needed to guide the people of God. He could only do this by meditating on the word of God itself.
- ii. It was in the word of God that Joshua would receive the needed:
 - 1. Discernment
 - 2. Wisdom
 - 3. Guidance
- b. We can be wise and discerning people. We can be people who can discern how to live rightly. Left to ourselves we make the same mistakes continuously. However, if we were to meditate on the Law of God we would be led by His wisdom.
 - i. **Psalms 119:97-99** Oh how I love your law! It is my meditation all the day. (98) Your commandment makes me wiser than my enemies, for it is ever with me. (99) I have more understanding than all my teachers, for your testimonies are my meditation.
 - ii. **Psalms 19:7** The law of the LORD is perfect, reviving the soul; the testimony of the LORD is sure, making wise the simple;

5. The Needfulness of Daily Scripture: ...day and night,
- a. Joshua's new role as a leader would require that he would devote a great amount of time to reading, learning, and applying God's word.
 - b. When the bible speaks of day and night it is speaking figuratively of "all the time."

- i. **Psalms 1:1-2** Blessed is the man who walks not in the counsel of the wicked, nor stands in the way of sinners, nor sits in the seat of scoffers; (2) but his delight is in the law of the LORD, and on his law he meditates day and night.
- c. Beloved, 15 minutes a day is not sufficient to navigate this world. Give-up pastimes, entertainment, and our general busyness. We must invest time in our edification.
 - i. **1 Peter 2:2** Like newborn infants, long for the pure spiritual milk, that by it you may grow up into salvation
 - ii. **Psalms 19:9-10** the fear of the LORD is clean, enduring forever; the rules of the LORD are true, and righteous altogether. (10) More to be desired are they than gold, even much fine gold; sweeter also than honey and drippings of the honeycomb.
 1. Is the word of God more desirable than gold to us? Is it sweeter than honey? A simple examination of your time will answer this question for you.
 - iii. The argument that we are too busy cannot stand in the all-knowing gaze of God! Joshua was to be the leader of a nation of millions of people. He was to lead them from a transient lifestyle to a sedentary one. He was to lead them in conquest and battle and yet God commands that he spend “**day and night**” in meditating on the word of God.

1. For as busy as you and I are, we are not as busy as Joshua was. We must make meditation on the Word a priority. We must view the Word as being more precious than the “**gold**” of this world.

6. The Needfulness of Proper Care with Scripture: ...so that you may be careful

a. All of our studies should set our hearts ablaze with the realization of the holiness of Scripture.

i. If this is God’s Word, then we must carefully and reverentially handle it. We come to the Word of God with humbleness and contriteness of heart.

ii. **2 Timothy 1:14** By the Holy Spirit who dwells within us, guard the good deposit entrusted to you.

iii. **2 Timothy 2:15** Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a worker who has no need to be ashamed, rightly handling the word of truth.

7. The Needfulness of Obeying Scripture: ...to do according to **all** that is written in it.

a. Speaking, and meditating on the Word of God is of no avail if we do not obey God’s Word. As a minister, I am surprised at how many times I encounter Christians that know what the Word of God says and yet fail to put its teaching into practice.

b. Scripture shows us a man like this. King Saul was a man that knew the word and yet would not obey it.

Beloved, it cost him everything. We read Samuel's rebuke of Saul in **1 Samuel 15:22-23** And Samuel said, "Has the LORD as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the LORD? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to listen than the fat of rams. (23) For rebellion is as the sin of divination, and presumption is as iniquity and idolatry. Because you have rejected the word of the LORD, he has also rejected you from being king."

- c. Think of all you know. When does sin enter the family of God? When we disobey his righteous word! When we refuse to do what is commanded or we do that which is forbidden.
 - d. Are not the covenants of God predicated upon obedience?
 - e. How are you doing in this area beloved? That God would grab ahold of our hearts and search them. Oh, that the eternal gaze of God would see right through us today!
 - i. Do you have rebellion to repent of? Father, let your Word do its work in us today!
8. The Reward of obedience to Scripture: For then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have good success.
- a. The only way to be successful as a Christian is to walk in humble obedience with our God.
 - i. We see that Christ is our ultimate example of obedience.
 - ii. Should we not walk as He walked?

1. **Philippians 2:8** And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.
 - b. What success does the obedience of Christ produce?
Is it not our very salvation?
 - i. **Romans 5:19** For as by the one man's disobedience the many were made sinners, so by the one man's obedience the many will be made righteous.
 1. We have our salvation because of His obedience.
 2. Christ is rewarded with a people redeemed!
 - c. Success is measured in faithful obedience. How successful are you today before our God?
9. Benediction:
- a. **Psalms 119:106** I have sworn an oath and confirmed it, to keep your righteous rules.

Public Reading of Scripture
Psalm 119:97-104