



HOW THE BIBLE CHANGES US Hebrews 4:12 (ESV)

Jesus: "The words that I have spoken to you are spirit and life."
John 6:63 (ESV)

"For the word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the division of soul and of spirit, of joints and of marrow, and discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart."
Hebrews 4:12 (ESV)

HOW DOES GOD'S WORD CHANGE ME?

1. IT RECREATES MY LIFE

"Of his own will He brought us forth by the word of truth."
James 1:18 (ESV)

"You have been born again, not of perishable seed but of imperishable, through the living and abiding Word of God"
1 Peter 1:23 (ESV)

2. IT ERADICATES MY GUILT

"Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her, so that he might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word"
Ephesians 5:25-26 (ESV)

"Already you are clean because of the word that I have spoken to you."
John 15:3 (ESV)

3. IT ACTIVATES MY FAITH

"So faith comes from hearing, and hearing through the word of Christ."
Romans 10:17 (ESV)

4. IT STIMULATES MY GROWTH

"And now I commend you to God and to the Word of his grace, which is able to build you up and to give you the inheritance among all those who are sanctified."
Acts 20:32 (ESV)

"All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work."
2 Timothy 3:16-17 (ESV)

5. IT ILLUMINATES MY MIND

"The unfolding of your words gives light; it imparts understanding to the simple."
Psalm 119:130 (ESV)

"Your Word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path."
Psalm 119:105 (ESV)



6. IT ELEVATES MY MOOD

"Everything that was written in the past was written to teach us, so that through endurance and the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope."
Romans 15:4 (ESV)

"You are my hiding place and my shield; I hope in your Word."
Psalm 119:114 (ESV)

7. IT LIBERATES MY POTENTIAL

"If you abide in my Word, you are truly my disciples, and you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free."
John 8:31-32 (ESV)

HOW DO I GAIN THESE BENEFITS?

1. LEARN IT

Jesus said to them, "Is this not the reason you are wrong, because you know neither the Scriptures nor the power of God?"
Mark 12:24 (ESV)

2. ACCEPT IT AS MY AUTHORITY

"When you received the word of God, which you heard from us, you accepted it not as the word of men, but as what it really is, the Word of God, which is at work in you believers."
1 Thessalonians 2:13 (ESV)

3. ACT ON IT

"If you know these things, blessed are you if you do them."
John 13:17 (ESV)

Notes:

*** MEMORY VERSE FOR THIS WEEK ***

"Open my eyes that I may see wonderful things in your law"
Psalm 119:18 (NIV)



Sermon Discussion Guide

How the Bible Changes Us

40 Days in the Word – Part 3

10.13.19

“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.” Hebrews 4:12 (NIV)

The world was spoken into existence by God. His words are so powerful, that he can create through spoken word. Genesis 1:2 tells us that God said, “Let there be light” and there was light. In John 6:63, Jesus reminds that the words he spoke are spirit and life. His Word is active and alive! That is the power of the Word of God, and that is the power that we all have available to us.

God’s word has the ability to change us. It can recreate your life, eradicate any guilt, and activate your faith. It also stimulates your growth as a Christian, illuminates your mind, elevates your mood, and liberates your potential. But in order to gain these benefits, we each need to do our part by learning it, accepting it, and acting on it!

OPEN YOUR GROUP WITH A PRAYER. THIS IS ONLY A GUIDE – SELECT THE POINTS YOU WANT TO DISCUSS.

HOW DOES GOD’S WORD CHANGE ME?

1. **What does it say: Pronounce It!** Three of you take turns reading Hebrews 4:12 above, emphasizing a different key word each time. Which word in the verse stands out most prominently to you and why?
2. **What does it mean:** Share some examples of how you’ve seen God’s Word living and active in your life. How has it affected your thoughts and attitudes?

“All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.” 2 Timothy 3:16-17 (NIV)

3. **What do I do: Probe It!** Substitute your own name for “the man of God” in this verse and read it to yourself several times. How does this exercise personalize God’s promise for you?

“If you continue in My Word, then you are truly disciples of Mine; and you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free!” John 8:31-32 (NASB)

4. **What does it mean: Paraphrase It!** – Put John 8:31-32 in your own words. How would applying this verse change you?

HOW DO I GAIN THESE BENEFITS?

As John 8:31-32 above suggests, believers gain benefits from God’s Word by (1) learning it, (2) accepting it as our authority, and (3) acting on it. John 13:17 (NIV) says, “Now that you know these things, you will be blessed if you do them.” It has been said that, “We’re not blessed for *knowing* the Bible – we’re blessed for *doing* the Bible.” Spend a moment and consider some ways you can *do* the Bible. Share some of your thoughts with the group.

Diving Deeper (optional)

“Jesus said ‘Your trouble is that you don’t know the Scriptures.’” Mark 12:24 (LB)

1. Our problems in life are often how we’re responding to problems! According Mark 12:24 above, how might believers avoid some of their problems in life. What are some of the ways that God helps believers through the Scriptures?

“Your Word is a lamp to my feet and a light for my path.” Psalm 119:105 (NIV)

2. Psalm 119:105 above was written at a time when people typically used oil lamps that often only gave enough light to take the next step. Why do you think it is important for believers to walk in the light they have without delay?



Sermon Discussion Guide Leader Notes

Goals for this Week's Study

- **Icebreaker:** Recall a time when words you heard or read at the right time made a difference in your life.
- **Goal:** Understand more fully how God's Word can change people, and how to gain the benefits promised by God's Word, as declared in Psalm 119:18 (NIV), "Open my eyes that I may see wonderful things in your law."
- **Prayer:** *Heavenly Father, thank you for showing us the power of your Word. We are grateful that you give us access to your Word so that we can know how to change the things we need to change in our own lives. Thank you for allowing us to learn it, to accept it, and to act on it. Give us each the opportunity to apply your Word in our lives this week so that we can serve you more fully. In Jesus' precious name. Amen.*

Preparing to Lead Your Group

- ✓ **PRAY** for insight as you begin to prepare for leading your group. Ask for God's wisdom, that the Holy Spirit will be the teacher and that you will be God's instrument to lead the group to greater understanding and a willingness to commit to becoming more like God. Prayer should be your primary source of personal preparation for leading your group.
- ✓ **PLAN** where you want to take your group in the next 60-90 days. Is your group strong in some areas and weak in others? How can you challenge the members to live more balanced Christian lives? Consider God's five purposes for the church: Fellowship, Discipleship, Ministry, Mission and Worship, and make a plan to encourage your group members to growth and commitment in their weak areas.
- ✓ **PONDER YOUR PROGRESS** after each session and at the end of a series. Reflect on what went well and what didn't. Re-evaluation is key to your growth as a leader. Consider whether your plan is being effective in moving the group to greater understanding and commitment. How are you doing with leading the discussion: is it stimulating, challenging, and meaningful? Are you able to keep the group on track? Do you need to make some changes?

Using This Sermon Discussion Guide

- Talk It Over is a tool to aid you in meeting the needs of your group. We've designed it so as to be easily completed within your regular small group time. Still, it is a good idea for you, the discussion leader, to preview and evaluate the questions, based on the needs of your group. Decide in advance which are most important to focus on, should time not allow for the entire lesson.
- Feel free to adapt the format to meet the needs of your group. If your group is mature and wants to dig deeper, add Scripture and ask suitable questions. Remember that this is only a guide.
- The questions relating to Bible study methods are helpful to develop Bible literacy and spiritual maturity in our lives. You can bring your group to an awareness of their needs in these areas by using these questions as a regular part of each discussion.
- Personal application is key to everyone's growth and should be included in every discussion. When asked how he or she intends to apply a certain principle a group member may say, "I need to spend more time in the Bible and in prayer." It is important for you to help group members make applications that are more specific and commit to a specific plan of action by asking, for example, "How are you going to begin?" An example is to get up 30 minutes earlier each morning, spending 15 minutes reading the Bible and 10 minutes in prayer. Encourage each group member to be accountable to the group for personal progress at the next meeting.
- As the leader your goal is to help bring the group into a stimulating discussion that helps the members recognize their need for personal life change. Ultimately you want them to be willing to commit to change with accountability to the group. Accountability helps us to persevere in our commitments and achieve the blessings of success.