

The Final Word On Truth

Revelation 22:18-21

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Well, that is our purpose and our mission in gathering today, is to magnify and to praise the name of Jesus and the way that we know the testimony of Jesus Christ is through the Word of God and so I'm gonna ask you to take your Bible and open it to the last chapter of the last book of the Bible, Revelation chapter 22 and in just a minute we will a..., read a portion of Scripture that is found there.

Several days ago I was a..., reading an article that appeared in the Washington Post, it was actually picked up and a..., distributed through a..., a variety of different news services and agencies and newspapers. But the title on the article that caught my attention was simply this, "Famous Bible goes digital." And a..., the point of interest in the article was that the Gutenberg Bible is now available in a digitized CD fashion that you can a..., explore and examine. Now I know some of you are immediately going, Guten...what? Guten...who? And a..., so I want to take a minute and refresh your memory about Gutenberg. Actually as I say that it reminds me of a rare book collector who ran into an old friend and they were getting reacquainted with what they were doing in life and a..., as this man mentioned that he was a book collector, his friend said, "Well that's interesting," he said, "You know not long ago I was goin through a variety of old things and," and he said "I came across a very old Bible in an old box." And he said, "Frankly it was so worn and torn and tattered," he said, "I threw it away, but it might have been of interest to you." And he said, "Well, a..., what can you tell me about it?" He said I don't know it was printed by some Guten...somebody." [pause for congregation laughter] The book collector stopped in his tracks, his jaw fell, he said, "It wasn't Gutenberg was it?" He said, "Yeah, that was it, Gutenberg, Gutenberg, that's what it said on in." He said, "You've gotta be kidding me, you threw it away." He said, "Yeah," he said, "I just threw it away." He said, "I...couldn't have been worth anything." He said, "Listen, the last Gutenberg Bible that was auction went for over 1 million dollars." He said, "Were you crazy?" He said, "Well, I don't know," he said, "But I'm just telling you this Bible couldn't have been worth anything." He said, "In fact it was all scribbled, all over by some guy named Martin Luther." Heh, ha, ha, ha, ha, ha, ha! [pause for congregation laughter] Well, for those of you who a..., caught that, thank you! But for the rest of us, [pause for slight congregation laughter] let me just quickly say that Johannes Gutenberg was the first who was able to produce a means of using movable type to print books. For hundreds of years, over a thousand years, the way in which writings were transferred from one generation to another was simply by scribes. They would take a piece of paper, as though it were, not paper as we've known it, but they would use ink and they would

copy and you can only imagine how much time and energy and effort must have gone in to the copying of a book as large as the Bible in order to transmit it from one group to another and of course that's why we have various texts of Scripture through the years, is that they were various copies and sometime a scribe would make an error in that copy, not in the nature of the text itself, but maybe would copy one line or another and so, yet we have these tremendous numbers of biblical text from history that help us to know and to see and to understand the truth and the trustworthiness of the Bible. But I say all of that to say that when Gutenberg developed his printing press, the first book that was ever printed was the Bible and there are about 48 of the original Bibles printed by the Gutenberg press that are still available today and yet the wonder of this printing process is that suddenly the Bible was no longer kept in lock and key in a church it was suddenly able to be given and distributed among the masses. And of course, so much of the development of all of western civilization has been dependent upon the printing press. In fact so significant was the invention of Johannes Gutenberg that *Time Magazine* named him the man of the millennium as we came into this new millennium just a few years ago. Because the communication, the production of material and resource and information to the masses had changed and transformed the world, but none the less the Gutenberg Bible is one of the most significant and one of the most treasured artifacts a..., from history. And so it has been, for many years, that if you ever wanted to see a Gutenberg Bible you had to go to a museum and would be able to look at it. But today, because of the process of the development of computer technology, a digitized version has been made available and you can actually get one and you can look at the text and this whole article, the whole point of the article was about the type of, of ink that was used in the lettering and about the vellum of some of the unique early versions of the Gutenberg Bible and about the decorum that was found in, in the a..., there in the margins of the Bible. And as I read the article I was obviously interested in it. But I laid the article down and immediately thought, hum, isn't that exactly how the world views the Bible? It is a religious relic, it is a piece that is of museum quality. It is something that we look at because of how it has been produced or how it has been disseminated, but very little was said, in fact nothing was said in this article, about the impact of the Bible on the development of western culture or anything about the life impact of the Bible in the life of any individual person. All of the focus was on the Bible being this artifact, being this religious relic, if you will, and a..., while indeed there is great historic quality to the Gutenberg Bible, I really felt as I finished reading that sadly the article has missed the whole point of why Gutenberg had ultimately developed this piece of technology and the Bible had so impacted society.

You see for most people today, the book that you and I hold in our hands this morning is simply a "**FAITH SOURCE**." It's a book of inspiration. It's a faith source, in a sense that if you read, *Reader's Digest*, and come across an article that inspires and motivates you in many ways this is just kind of an old version. It's an old version of histories and stories that have been compiled and transmitted and given from one person to

another and people are often prone to say, if it's a good faith source for you that great, if it inspires and encourages faith in you, that's fine. But I want you to know this morning that the Bible does not allow us to simply see it as a faith source. Now don't, for a moment mistake the fact that faith comes from hearing and studying the Bible. In fact the Bible itself says: [Romans 10:17]

...faith comes by hearing and hearing by the Word of God.

And the Word of God is preached and proclaimed and taught and shared today in order that we might be able to understand the need for faith and have a reason to believe. This book is not simply a faith source, but it is the evidence of faith upon which we rest our lives, our hope and our future. And so therefore it is important for us to see today that this book is not simple a faith source, giving inspiration for the demands of life...

But that it is something much more, it is a "**TRUTH SOURCE**" a foundation upon which you can live and build the future of your life. And so I want you to see the closing words of the Bible. Because in these closing words we find a message that is both confrontational and a message that ends with an exclamation point of truth about the verity, the trustworthiness and the reliability of the Scripture. In Revelation chapter 22 in verse 18, John the apostle, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit closed the final book of the Bible with these words:

¹⁸For I testify to everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this book: If anyone adds to these things, God will add to him the plagues that are written in this book; ¹⁹and if anyone takes away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away His part from the Book of Life, from the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book.

²⁰He who testifies to these things says,...

Would you read it out loud with me?

..."Surely I am coming quickly."...

And then all the people said,

...Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus! ²⁰The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with you all.

And all the church said:

...Amen.

You see the Bible ends with this word of prophecy. Now I know immediately some would say, well that's just the close of the book of Revelation, and that is true. These are the closing words of the prophecy of the Revelation given to John. But in uniquely and significantly in the history of God the book of Revelation, is in fact, the closing book of the canon of Scripture and so not only is it the close of this book of prophecy it

is, as though it were, a reminder, an exclamation point, as I have said, that this book that you and I hold in our hands today, is more than a faith source, it is the very truth of God that is to be embraced, that is to be believed and ultimately that is to be lived. And so today what I want us to do is to look and to consider the significance of this book as a truth source in life. Now every day we do what we do based upon truth sources; architects, engineers, carpenters dream great dreams and build massive structures because there are tools of measures and standards of quality that provide a common truth source so that, that which can be dreamed can be done. Every day in hospitals, in doctors offices, in medical laboratories throughout out nation and around the world, the human body is aided in healing because of chemistries and because of compounds, because of drugs and medicines that are able if taken in appropriate measures, to help the healing process, but if inappropriate measures, could bring death and increase disease and so there is a truth source in the world of medicine that is fine and sure and reliable. Every day in life we are involved in financial transactions. Some of you today will go to an ATM[®] machine and you'll pop a card in that machine and right there on the spot you can punch in a..., a certain series of numbers and you can receive some money, that is if you have any in your account. You can receive some money because that ATM[®] machine has a verifiable source of documentation and that electronic information can be transferred between the bank and you and ultimately in the course of a day's work in business and in banking industry all of these things have a common thread of truth. And it seems that in life, in every arena, we operate in the arena of truth depending upon the reliability of sources of measure and of truth to help us to accomplish objectives. But somehow, when it comes to the world of the Spirit and to the world of morality, everybody goes, no, you have your opinions and I have my opinions, you have your truth and I have my truth, which simply means you do your thing and I'll do my thing. But you see the Bible does not leave that as an option for us. Here's what I want you to hear this morning; this book that I hold is not simply a book that is inspirational, it is a book that is reliable and everything about life, about living, about the future is dependent upon the reliability of this book and if it is not then we oughta close it and go home and forget all this game that we're playing.

Josh McDowell said it this way:

"If the Bible is God's instruction manual for living, our roadmap to heaven and the main means by which we can get to know God, then it becomes extremely important to know whether it's reliable."

And I couldn't agree more. And therefore today what we want to do is to look at the Bible as the truth source, the final word of God given to us and why we can put our faith in the evidence of the Bible. So let me do that in several ways.

First I wanna talk to you about the subject of the...

Fact of the Bible's own testimony concerning itself. The Bible went out on a limb, it presents itself as being the book of truth that is directly from God and in order to help to remind you about what the Bible says about itself, to let it be it's own witness, as though it were, in this examination of evidence this morning, I wanna just remind you what the Scripture says. Now I want you to put on your spiritual jogging shoes and I want you to maybe get a note pad and jot some things down. You won't have time to turn to everyone of these references, but I want you just to get these references today to remind you of the fact of the Bible's own testimony. Isaiah chapter 40, verse 8, repeated again in the New Testament in 1st Peter 1:24 & 25 says this:

"...The grass withers, the flower fades, But the word of our God stands forever."

The Bible is presented as a book of truth that stands, that is built, that is a sure foundation. We look again in the Psalms, Psalm 19 beginning in verse 7:

'The law of the LORD is perfect converting the soul; The testimony of the LORD is sure, making wise the simple; ⁸The statutes of the LORD are right, rejoicing the heart; The commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes; ⁹The fear of the LORD is clean, enduring forever; The judgments of the LORD are true, they are righteous altogether...¹¹Moreover by them is thy servant warned, And in keeping them there is great reward...¹⁰sweeter also than honey and the honey comb.

How precious is this incredible gift of the Word of God, that only stands, but is presented to us as being sufficient, sufficient for every need, every concern, every decision in life. Again we read the Bible and it's own testimony, Psalm 119 in verse 88 [**should be 89**] says:

Forever, O Lord, Your word is settled in heaven.

Not gonna be revised, not gonna be updated, never gonna be politically correct because it's already settled, it's already there, it's already presented and it stands. It is sufficient, it is settled. The New Testament 2nd Timothy chapter 3, beginning in verse 15, Paul was writing to his young protégé in faith and ministry and this is what he says, he says, Timothy:

¹⁵and that from childhood you have known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. ¹⁶All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, ¹⁷that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.

The Bible doesn't say some Scripture; it says all Scripture is given by inspiration of God. And while the Bible is progressive in it's revelation.

We understand more from the beginning as we get to the end and now as we look back and see the whole picture it is equal in truth, it is equal in inspiration and that word inspiration literally means it is God breathed and just as God breaths into mankind the breath of life, God has breathed His living word of truth. ~~1st Peter, excuse me,~~ 2nd Peter, chapter 1, verses 20 and 21:

20 knowing this first, that no prophecy of Scripture is for any private interpretation, 21 for prophecy came not by the will of men...man, but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Spirit.

It is a supernatural book with a supernatural source, the work of the Holy Spirit of God. And then the words of Jesus Himself in Matthew 5:17 & 18:

"Do not think that I came to destroy the Law or the Prophets. I did not come to destroy but to fulfill. For assuredly, I say to you, till heaven and earth pass away, one jot or one tittle..."

Literally that means, not one stroke or one letter will by no means pass away till all of the Law is fulfilled. Now what is significant about these highlighted verses that I've shared with you this morning? What is significant is this. The fact that the Bible is absolute truth is not a theory about the Bible, it is the testimony of the Bible itself. It's not some theory. When we say we believe the Bible's the Word of God, when we say we believe in the inerrancy of Scripture, that's not just some theory about the Bible, it is the very testimony of the Bible, of the center figure of the Bible, Jesus Christ Himself, and therefore when we stand and open this book we have to understand the fact of the Bible's own testimony. It says, this is the Word of God. But there's something else that we wanna see and that is the...

Integrity of the history and the prophecy of the Bible. The integrity of the prophecy and the history of the Bible. Listen very carefully, do you wanna know what distinguishes the Bible from all other religious writings and works? I'm talking about the Koran, I'm talking about the Begodgita???, of the Hindu writings, the writings of Confucius, the teachings of the Buddha, every other religious work, every other teacher that has come along. Yes, there is morality. Yes, there is the inspiration of faith. Yes, there is history found and culture in all of these writings but the one thing that distinguishes the book that you and I hold today is the fact that this book is filled with prophecy and with history, prophecy that is fulfilled in history and has been confirmed time and time again. Listen to what God says in Isaiah 46: [9-11]

9 "Remember the former things of old, For I am God, and there is no other; I am God, and there is none like Me, 10 Declaring the end from the beginning, And from ancient times things that are not done, Saying, (quote) 'My counsel shall stand, And I will do all My pleasure,' 11... Indeed I've spoken it; I will also bring it to pass. I have purposed it; I will also do it."

God says, I know, because I live in eternity, because I am God I am able

to work past, present and future and to bring it all together and therefore the testimony of this book is the testimony of prophecy that is fulfilled in history. You go to the book of Ezekiel chapter 26, you read the prophecy of the destruction of an ancient city, the city of Tyre. The Bible declares through the prophet Ezekiel that there will come a day when this ancient city will be pillaged and plundered, that it will be so destroyed that it will lie as ruins, that one day the foundation of the city would be scrapped clean, that it would never be built upon again and that some day the fishermen would dry their nets on the foundations of Tyre. Well, indeed Nebuchadnezzar an accordant to the fulfillment of the prophet Ezekiel's testimony came and destroyed the ancient city of Tyre. Have you heard that word, that name Nebuchadnezzar? Do you know that, that was the idol that was the ambition that was the mentor, though through the ages of Saddam Hussein, who said that he wanted to rebuild the kingdom of Nebuchadnezzar and the glorious years of the Babylonians? **< turn tape >** ...destroy Tyre, it was left in ruins. Later in history, indeed, all of the foundation was scrapped back and to this day the fishermen go there along the shores of the sea and put their nets on the ancient foundations of the old city of Tyre. You see holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Spirit of God. There are other prophecies that have been fulfilled in the Bible. We know that in the book of Daniel, Daniel saw the development of history, that there would be the Babylonian Empire, the Medo-Persian Empire, the Greeks and the Romans and indeed, according to the word of God, history now tells us that these are the cornerstones of civilization as it has grown and been developed. We see judgments that were prophesized in the Word of God. The Old Testament prophets and Jesus Himself, spoke of the day when the city of Jerusalem would be destroyed and the people of Israel would be scattered and that there would be a great, as though it were, tremor in the heart and in the life of the Jewish people. After the ministry of Jesus Christ, His crucifixion, His burial and His resurrection in 70 AD, Titus, the Roman general marched into Jerusalem and destroyed the temple and destroyed the city and took the people and scattered them among the peoples of the earth. For 1,900 years, there was no nation of Israel, there was no homeland of the Jewish people and the Jewish people were, as though it were, scattered and assimilated among all of the peoples of the earth. But you and I know that in modern history, as a result of what happened that led to the 2nd World War, that Jews who indeed, had been separatists and had maintained their identity became oppressed and persecuted by Adolph Hitler. Ultimately in the defeat of Hitler and in the freedom of the Jewish people in May of 1947, the state of Israel was reborn. Hebrew, an ancient language was again a, a vitalized language, a people were regathered and as recently as this week the headline news event was the meeting of Ariel Sharon and the President of The United States and the issues of the Palestinians, it is current history prophesized in ancient times. How? Holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Spirit of God, and then of course when it comes to prophecy, the ultimate prophecy of the Bible is the revealing of God's work in time and history for the coming of Jesus Christ. All of the Bible is about Jesus and therefore it would not surprise you that every book of the Bible gives testimony to the coming of Jesus. I just wanna quickly remind you of the significance of this and this is by no means and

exhaustive list, but it's simply just a reminder of how specific the Bible's message is about the coming of Christ.

In Genesis chapter 3, in verse 15 we read the prophecy following the fall of Adam and Eve and there the judgment of the serpent, that God is going to send a deliver who is gonna take away the curse of death and of sin and that He will be born of a virgin.

That was clarified again in the prophet Isaiah in Isaiah 7:14:

"...Behold, a virgin will conceive and bring forth a Son..."

In Micha 5:2, we learned that Jesus is going to be born in Bethlehem. In Isaiah 53:3, that He is going to be rejected of His own.

In Isaiah 42, we learned that He is going to be the Light of the Gentiles. In Psalm 8, verse 2, we learned that Jesus is going to be praised by children.

In Zechariah chapter 9, in verse 9, we discover that Jesus triumphal entry into the city, riding on a donkey is prophesized in the Scripture.

And in Zechariah 11:12 & 13 we understand that He would be sold and betrayed for 30 pieces of silver, the price of a potter's field.

In Psalm 22, in verse 16, we discover that He is gonna be pierced in His hands and in His feet.

In Isaiah 53:12, that He would be crucified among 2 thieves.

In Daniel 7:9, that He is going to be visible following His resurrection. And in Psalm 24:7 thru 10, that He is going to ascend into heaven.

This is just a dozen quick details prophesized concerning the coming of Jesus Christ. Yet every one of them fulfilled in precision and exacting order according to the prophecy of the Word of God. You see God has provided, predictive prophecy as an evidence of the reliability of the Word of God. So there's the fact of the Bible's own testimony, there's the integrity of prophecy and of history. But there's another reason that the Bible is the final word of truth and that is the...

Nature of God Himself, the nature of God. God is presented in the Bible as being the God of truth and therefore it is unthinkable that the God of truth would give us and imperfect, an untrue record of Himself. In fact, one of the greatest evidences of the truth of this book is the precision with which it is assembled and in which it is blended to have one message with many different human instruments. You see one of the things that speaks so greatly to the reality of God is the precision of creation. No matter how much science and scientific development moves to try to dispel God from the beginning, the reality is, is that scientists cannot get beyond this incredible issue of intelligent design. I mean, for all of the times that we've tried to say there was an explosion and then

slime and poof here we are talking on cell phones, riding in airplanes, living like we live. Somehow it just doesn't make sense. And frankly, the only thing that makes sense when you study a human eye, when you look at human anatomy, when you look at the structure and the complac...complexity and the inter dependency of life and the way that it all operates in planet earth, you cannot help but say somehow this was intended, it was designed. And that same issue of precision happens when you come to the Word of God. You see there were 40 different human instruments, 40 authors, who over the course of 1,600 years spoke 3 to 4 different languages, writing 66 different books that were preserved and protected and brought together according to the plan of Scripture and yet every book, as though it locked together, came together as one and you can even go out in our atrium this morning and look up there in those stained glass windows and see that in Genesis and Exodus and Leviticus and all the way to Revelation there is a scarlet thread of redemption, the unveiling of the coming of Jesus Christ. It is the message of the Bible and it is the miracle of the Bible that this book is not a hodge-podge, that this book has never been updated, it has never been revised. It has never had to be corrected because it somehow was in conflict or contradiction. It is simply the precision of the Scripture that is according to the very nature of God Himself. Because our God is a God of order, of design and of structure. But there's also the preservation of the Bible that speaks of God. God is eternal and only an eternal God can produce a book that will have eternal life. You know how many books are written and have a short shelf life? You can't walk in the front door of a *Barnes And Noble*, or any other bookstore without havin a big sale table where they're tryin to unload stuff that wasn't popular so that they can bring in the latest editions. And when I think of all the books and all the volumes that have come and that have gone and had short life spans and I look at the life span of this book, yet a book that has been attacked, a book that has had the most formable intellectual minds try to come against it and even armies that have tried to destroy it, this book has stood and has lived and has continued to be a book that impacts lives, changes the world. In 303 AD Diocletian, the Roman Emperor, tired and frustrated by this movement of Christianity across the ancient Roman world, made an order that every Bible would be destroyed, that every reference, that every popery would be destroyed and every Christian community would be scattered and so great was his persecution of the Christians in 303, that he erected a column as the Romans would do to memorialize an event and on the bottom of that column he wrote, *Exstinguo Nomina Christoriamam*, which literally mean, extinguished the name of Christ. But 20 years later Constantine the Roman General, the Roman Emperor stood to ultimately proclaim Christianity as the religion of Rome and today Rome, the city that most persecuted Christianity is now the city that is most associated with the Christian faith. How did this happen? It happened because of the preservation of God and of His Word and of His truth. Voltaire who lived in the 18th Century was a French philosopher who was defiant and who tried in every way that he could to destroy the credibility of the Bible. Voltaire, one day, said,

"50 years from now I have so dismembered the Bible that there will not be any Bibles left for anyone to believe, because enlightenment has moved us

beyond the myth and the legend of the Bible."

But 50 years later, heh, the Geneva Bible Society was printing Bibles in the very house in which Voltaire has once lived. Thomas Paine, *The Age of Reason*, as the beginning of the American Revolution, made this statement,

"5 years from now there will not be a Bible in America, I've gone through the Bible with an axe and cut down all it's trees."

How many of you have a Bible this morning? [pause for slight congregation laughter] False prophet, I would say. [AMEN!] Ladies and gentlemen I'm simply saying to you that the very nature of God, is that He is a God of precision, He is a God of preservation and therefore the book that you hold in your hand, according to His nature is the word of truth because He is the God of truth. It is a perfect book and you can believe this truth source. [AMEN!] There's another thing that I want you to see and that is the..

Archeological evidence of the Bible. Oh there's so many of these. Obviously I can't begin to be exhaustive with this but, for so many years scholars have tried to make the biblical text nothing more than myth and folklore and legend and they've simply tried to say that all that the Bible is, is just a transmission of different people in different cultures in different times; stories that have been told, stories that have been shared, oh the story of the Bible. Just prior to the turn of the last century, Abraham, it was never believed he in fact be a significant figure in history. It has been said that no one had ever heard of the ancient city of Ur of the Chaldeans. But in 1922, Sir Leonard Woolly dug up an ancient Mesopotamian city in what is currently today Iraq and today one of the Iraqi artifacts is the ancient city of Ur. And indeed Abraham, the man lived, and he lived in the city of Ur. A hundred years ago, anyone who believed in all of the references to the ancient a..., nomadic peoples of the Bible, you know all the, the Hittites and the Jebusites and the Amorites and the chigger-bites and you know all of that stuff in the Bible. [pause for congregation laughter] It was said that anybody who believed that was just foolish because there were no records anywhere in history that any of those civilizations exists, but let me tell you today you can get a PHD in Hittite studies at the University of Chicago. You see the Bible has only been verified through the turn of the archeologists spade and no where has archeology brought greater support and greater encouragement to the reliability of the Scripture then in that which has been disc...covered of the copies of the Scripture of the text of Scripture either in fragments or in a..., papayrite type form that have been found and have been available to show the consistency of the message Old And New Testament. Obviously the greatest of these studies was dis...discoveries was the Dead Sea Scrolls. In 1947 in a cave at Qumran, there were a series of scrolls that were discovered wi...that dated a hundred and fifty years prior to the time of Christ. For so many years people said all this stuff about Jesus was just mythology, that the New Testament writers, the followers were so committed to their cause that they went back and, and imprinted on the Old Testament writings these prophecies of Scripture. But suddenly

with the discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls, we have an entire, as though it were, canon of the Old Testament with everything excepting the book of Esther and every Scripture and scriptural reference was affirmed predating the time and the coming of Jesus Christ. And today when it comes to the New Testament, there are over 24,000 early copies of the New Testament that have survived from antiquity. Now I'm not talking about the original writing of Paul, but I'm talking about the early copies of those letters preserved and scattered among the churches. So great is the consistency and the textual accuracy, verity of the New Testament that the next closest document from antiquity is Homer's Iliad and there're only 643 copies of that. I'm just simply saying to you, that never revised, never updated, never changed archeological evidence says this book is the final word of truth. But there's one more thing that I want you to see and that is not only the fact of the Bible's own testimony, the integrity of prophecy and history, the nature of God Himself, the archeological evidence, but ultimately the wonder of this book is that this book has...

Life changing power. It is a book that changes lives. It's not a dead book. It's not a dusty old religious relic. The Bible says, concerning itself, that: [Hebrews 4:12]

...the Word of God is quick and powerful, that is living sharper than any two-edged sword dividing between soul and spirit,...

And this is a book of life and it is a book therefore that brings power to live and power to change. The thing that is amazing about the Bible is that when you make this book the truth source of your life then this book begins to be the "**POWER SOURCE**" of your life. It's not just a faith source that gives you a I hope get inspiration from it, but it is evidence upon which you can build your life, you can build your family, you can build your future, you can do your finances, you can grow...you can parent your children and you can establish what you will do with life because it is truth that gives power for living every day.

I was 15 years of age when this book became the true source of my life, or it had been a faith source, I honored it, I believed it to be a, a good book. But I'm telling you at 15 when I met the Lord Jesus Christ this book suddenly became the truth of my life and from that true source to which I plugged in as a teenagers I received the moral guidance, the decision wisdom and all that has been needed in life to give me power to live every day and to have hope and to have a future. And the Word of God is the power source that is needed in every life. Most people today have built their life on faulty sources. What is the true source of your life? Well, listen to me, the strength of your life is going to be in proportion to the source of your life. So you tell me what your source is, I'll tell you what your strength will be. What's your source? Everybody uses a source. Every decision is based on some source. Every moral choice is based on some source. Is it the *National Inquirer*? Inquiring minds wanna know! [pause for slight congregation laughter] Is it *People Magazine*? They're doin it, he's doin it, she's doin it, we're doin it! Is it *CNN*? Up to date headline news! Is it philosophy? Is it knowledge? You know far too many of

our young people today are told to go to the university so that they can just fill their heads with knowledge. But I want you to know knowledge is an inadequate source for life. Truth is a source for life and then it will give strength to life. The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom and it's only when a mind is brought in submission and therefore built upon the evidence and the foundation of the truth of the Word of God that, that mind can then be used as a power source for living. And God's Word has been given to us so that we can have a word powered life and where the word gives comfort it can be our comfort and where the word gives wisdom it can be our wisdom and where the word gives guidance it can be our guidance. And the tragedy is that life after life is built on a faulty source and therefore it has a failed strength. So ladies and gentlemen today my plea to you is that you would know and experience the Word of God which is the true source for living and the power source for life. Our faith isn't just a blind leap in the dark, it's not just some, I hope, I hope, I hope, I hope. It's not just pump me up with good stories, it is truth that you can depend on. It's just like that stool over there. I can look at that stool and say to you that I believe that stool has strength and power and ability to hold me up. I can talk to you about the construction of that stool and I can tell you all about the things that happen on it. Now I'd feel a little better if it had 4 legs like most of em. I don't know these, I'm always a little concerned about these. But for all that I can say about what I believe about that stool, I do not have evidence that I believe in that stool until I make it the object of my faith. But the moment that I trust myself to the stool it becomes the object of my faith and of my dependency. It's not just something I believe in, in my mind, it's something I've trusted with my life. And what the Bible is calling you and me to do is to trust our lives in His truth and therefore to honor the testimony of Scripture about life, about faith, about death, about heaven, about sin and about all that is to come. You see there is an objective source of truth and it is the Word of God. Is your faith and trust in the Lord Jesus Christ? It was Mark Twain, the American writer who said:

"My greatest problem in life is that people seem to be bothered about the passages of Scripture they can't understand, but" he said, "the Scripture that troubles me is the Scripture I do understand."

[pause for slight congregation laughter] And I guess I wonder about you today. Oh it's easy to pop up intellectual philosophical questions, but let me ask you what you've done with the knowledge that you have? Have you responded to the Word of God? The Bible says, do not be hearers of the word but be doers of the word.

Be doers of the word that you might not deceive yourselves and the Bible calls us to respond to the truth of the Word of God. The greatest truth in the Word of God is that you can have a new life source, that the source of your life does not have to be dependent upon you and what you can get out of it but it can be dependent upon God and what He has given. In John 1, verse 12 it says:

But as many as received Him...

That is Jesus.

...to them He gave the right to become the children of God even to those who believe on His name.

And today if you will put your faith in the Lord Jesus Christ trusting in Him, believing the evidence of Scripture that He has come from heaven, died on the cross, been buried, raised again. Listen to me, today you can receive a new life source and you can have life that is eternal. If you've trusted Christ, have you followed Him in baptism like these we saw earlier today? One of the simplest most specific things that the Bible tells every believer is that we're to follow Christ in Baptism. In the book of Acts when Peter preached the message the Bible says that the response was then those who gladly received his word were baptized and that day 3,000 souls were added to the church. Heh, I've always wanted to see the guys that baptized that day. Can you imagine how wrinkled they were at the end of 3,000 baptisms? [pause for congregation laughter] But the incredible thing is they preached, they sang and then they baptized 3,000 people. But Jesus said: [John 14:15]

"If you love Me keep My commandments."

And every believer is to follow Christ. It's a simple teaching of the Bible. What about the church? Is church just a place you come and sit on the bench and spectate, stay for a few innings and head out and do your own thing? No! The Bible says we're not to be forsaking the assembling of ourselves together as the manner of some is, but exhorting one another in so much the more as the day is approaching. Being a part of a church is not just being a spectator and oca...occasional visitor, a sermon taster. It's being someone who's connected and committed to the church to make a difference in life. And then Jesus has told us that we are to be servants, that just as He washed the feet of His disciples that we are to so wash one another's feet. And a part of living the Christian life is to be washing others feet, doing to others as He has done and to us and fulfilling the fellowship of Christ by living out His example in life.

And so today I'm gonna close this message asking you to be a doer of the word. Some of you may have nodded and said, yeah, I believe it's a faith source. But I wanna appeal to the person who would say, yes I believe this is God's truth and today whether you are single or married, a child, a student, a young adult, senior adult, if you've never confessed Christ I wanna ask you to act on that truth. Not my word, God's Word. And I wanna appeal to you to make a commitment to be a follower of Christ, to connect with His church here at Prestonwood. We'd love to have you come and help us spread the Word of God, the word of truth.