

The Word of God in Our Lives



SABBATH—MAY 12

READ FOR THIS WEEK'S STUDY: Psalm 19:7-10; Psalm 119:105; Romans 10:17; 2 Corinthians 5:17; Ephesians 4:24; 2 Timothy 3:16, 17; Hebrews 4:12; 1 Peter 2:24.

MEMORY VERSE: “The word of God is living and active. It is sharper than any sword that has two edges. It cuts deep enough to cut soul from spirit [to reach our inmost thoughts]. It can separate joints from bones. It judges the thoughts and purposes of the heart” (Hebrews 4:12, NIV).

KEY THOUGHT: The Bible must change how we live our lives.

SAM TANNYHILL WAS SENTENCED TO DEATH FOR MURDER. He was sent to prison. Two Seventh-day Adventists visited Sam while he was in prison. They gave Sam a Bible. Sam became angry and threw the Bible against the wall. But one night Sam was filled with guilt, fear, and bitterness. He wanted something to take his mind off his bad thoughts and feelings. So he picked up the Bible. At first, he did not understand what he read. So he tore the Bible apart. But then he started reading again. The more Sam read, the more he came to know Jesus. Sam found Jesus Christ as his Savior in a lonely prison cell as he read the Bible. Sam's whole life changed right there in jail. The bitterness and anger that bothered Sam his whole life left him. Sam knelt and sobbed. He said, “God, if You will have me, I am Yours tonight. I want Your forgiveness, Your peace, Your power. Lord, change me.” God changed him. Sam went with faith and peace to his death.

What is it about the Bible that can change the worst among us? Not all stories are so powerful as Sam's. But millions of people can talk about how the Bible has turned around their lives.

SUNDAY—MAY 13**THE BIBLE, THE AGENT¹
OF CHANGE (Romans 6:4)****How has the promise in 2 Corinthians 5:17 changed your life?**

The Bible often paints a grim (harsh) picture of human nature (Isaiah 59:2-4; Jeremiah 13:23; Romans 3:10-12). That grim view often comes under attack by critics of the Bible. But even a quick review of history proves this grim view to be right. So often our efforts to improve our lifestyle fail. Many of the great ideas of the past few centuries have been presented to make life better for people. Instead, these ideas often make things worse.

But there is hope for us. There is hope in the Bible for anyone who wants to be changed. The Bible points us to Jesus Christ, our Creator and Savior. Christ has given us wonderful life-changing promises.

By studying the Bible, a sinner can get to know Jesus, who is the Truth. Jesus has the saving and healing power to change us.

What promises does God give us in the following verses? Psalm 19:7; John 17:17; Romans 6:4; Ephesians 4:24; Hebrews 4:12; and 1 Peter 2:24.

God's Word can change our lives.

The Bible pours out a flood of light on us. This light from the Bible pushes back spiritual darkness. The Bible shows to the world the truth about a loving, powerful God. The Bible tells us God wants to change the lives of all who come to Him in faith. Millions of people have a story to tell about the power of the Word of God and how it has changed their lives. All who give themselves in faith and obedience to God will learn for themselves what a powerful change God can make in them. This change can even happen to the worst of sinners.

Pick one area of your life that has been changed through reading God's Word. What is that area? What changes have come? And what changes are you still hoping to make?

MONDAY—MAY 14**DOERS OF THE WORD OF GOD
(James 1:22)**

Do we sometimes feel as Paul did when he said, "What a terrible failure I am! Who will save me from this sin that brings death to my body" (Romans 7:24, NIV)? How thankful we are that in the next verse, Paul gives the answer to this question: Jesus Christ alone will rescue (save) us.

Salvation starts with Jesus. "God's grace has saved you because of your

¹agent—a person or thing that brings about a certain result.

faith in Christ. Your salvation doesn't [does not] come from anything you do. It is God's gift. It is not based on anything you have done. No one can brag about earning it" (Ephesians 2:8, 9, NIV). Faith is a gift of God. But how do we receive this gift of faith from God?

How does the Bible help us receive faith? Romans 10:17.

The more we read the Bible, the more we know Jesus. The more we know Jesus, the more faith we have. When we obey the Word of God, our faith in God will grow. The more we obey God, the more we experience the power of God to change our lives.

But many read the Bible and do not change. Some scribes and Pharisees² of Jesus' time knew the Bible well, but what good did their knowledge do them?

What important Bible principle³ is seen in John 5:39, 40 and James 1:22?

Bible knowledge alone does not make us good. A teachable spirit and a mind open to the Holy Spirit are important for Bible study. What we need most is a desire to obey the Bible's teaching. Reading the Word of God is not enough. We must follow it (Matthew 7:24-29). God blesses

those who follow His Word. We need to study the Bible with a desire to let it renew our lives through Jesus. We also need to adjust (change) our lives according to the Bible's teachings. We must come to the Bible with a humble spirit and a desire to do God's will. When we do this, God will give us a life-changing faith that will influence⁴ all we do.

Do you read the Bible with a humble and teachable heart? Or do you read the Bible with a critical⁵ eye, a rebellious⁶ attitude (feeling), or a lack of trust? If you do feel rebellious, why not open the Word right now with a prayerful heart? Ask the Lord to show you His will and to give you faith and power to follow it. Asking the Lord for this is the only way your life will change for the better.



We must come to the Bible with a prayerful heart.

²scribes and Pharisees—religious leaders of Jesus' day who believed a person must keep God's law to be saved.

³principle—a basic rule of life.

⁴influence—to have power or an effect over persons or things.

⁵critical—finding fault; disapproving.

⁶rebellious—fighting or struggling against authority (laws or rules) or any kind of control.

TUESDAY—MAY 15**PRINCIPLES⁷ OF LIFE
(Psalm 19:7-10)**

What promises are found in the following verses? What do these promises tell us about how the Bible should guide our lives? Psalm 19:7-10; Psalm 119:105; 2 Timothy 3:16, 17.

Every day we face difficult (hard) decisions⁸ on how to live. How do we make the right choices? There are so many different ideas about how to live life. Making the right choice about how to live life can be hard. Here is one idea on what to do with old people: One thinker has brought up the idea that we should kill old people who cannot take care of themselves. But this thinker also argues against killing animals for food!

But God's Word teaches us how we should live. The Bible may give us biographies,⁹ the life and teachings of Jesus, or very clear instructions. But mainly the Bible gives us principles to guide our lives.

How might one take the principles found in the following verses and use them in real-life situations today? Be ready to share your answers in class on Sabbath. Genesis 39:7-14; John 8:3-11; and Philippians 2:3, 4.

⁷principles—basic rules of life.

⁸decisions—the act or results of making up one's mind.

⁹biographies—the stories of people's lives.

The Bible does not claim to give instruction on every problem known to man. But it does give us wonderful principles that we can use in our daily lives. With these principles, common sense, and the Holy Spirit, we can learn to walk in the Spirit. We can learn to let God lead us. We can learn the example of Bible heroes. And we can follow the guidelines of the Bible. Doing this will change our lives.

We must see the Bible as more than a collection of historical or spiritual facts. We need to see it as the will of God. He desires the best for our lives. For that reason the Bible can teach us right from wrong. The Bible can tell us what God expects us to do. God has shown us in His Word how to live. When we follow God's guidance for our happiness, our lives will be changed by His power.

WEDNESDAY—MAY 16**WHAT DOES THE WORD OF
GOD SAY? (James 2:15, 16)**

Yesterday we looked at some Bible verses that gave us principles on how the Lord would have us live. Today let us look at several situations and ask, *What help does the Bible offer, if any, in these situations?* Which verses could you use to guide other people in the following situations?

A fellow co-worker, in great need,

is stealing money from the place where you both work. What should you do? Forget what your co-worker is doing? Tell your boss? What does the Word of God say?

A young unmarried woman gets pregnant. She and her boyfriend do not have enough money to take care of the child. She wants to marry her boyfriend, but he wants her to get an abortion.¹⁰ What does the Word of God say?

A homeless man stands on the sidewalk and holds out his hand for money. What does the Word of God say?

A person you are witnessing¹¹ to invites you over for a meal and places pork on the table before



What would Jesus do?

you. What does the Word of God say?

An elderly parent is in a coma.¹² The equipment¹³ that keeps her alive costs a lot of money. The family spends almost all its money to keep their mother alive. Should she be kept alive as long as possible? Or should the family let her die? What does the Word of God say?

Did you find these questions easy to answer? Or were they hard questions? Was the Bible very clear in giving answers for all the situations? Also, if you did not have the Bible as your guide, how different might your answers have been? Be ready to share your answers in class on Sabbath.

THURSDAY—MAY 17

REVIVAL AND REFORMATION¹⁴ (2 Kings 23:3)

So far we have been looking at how God's Word works in our lives. What should the Word of God do for us as a church?

What happened in 2 Kings 22:8–23:25? What part did the Bible have in this story?

¹⁰abortion—the act of taking out an embryo or fetus (unborn baby) from its mother's womb before the embryo or fetus is old enough to stay alive.

¹¹witnessing—teaching people about God and living a Christian life.

¹²coma—a condition like a deep, long sleep, caused by sickness or from getting hurt.

¹³equipment—the special things, such as machines or tools, needed for some purpose.

¹⁴revival and reformation—a time when people renew their faith in God and ask Him to change their lives.

There was a great reformation in Judah. The Word of God started the reformation. The entire nation of Judah experienced this reformation.



From his earliest years, Josiah honored God's law.

“From his earliest years as king, Josiah used his position as king to honor the principles of God's holy law. When Shaphan the scribe read to Josiah out of the book of the law, the king found in this book a treasure of knowledge. Josiah believed that the book of the law could be a powerful friend in the work of reform all over Judah. Josiah vowed [promised] to walk in the light of its good advice and warnings. He also wanted to do all in his power to help his people understand its teachings. He wanted to lead his people to have deep respect and love for the law of heaven.”—Adapted from Ellen G. White, *Prophets and Kings*, p. 398.

Another example of revival and reformation can be found in the time of King Jehoshaphat. He sent Bible teachers to teach the law of God. “They taught people all through Judah. They took the Scroll [roll] of the Law of the Lord with them. They went around to all of the towns of Judah. And they taught the people” (2 Chronicles 17:9, NIV). The Bible does not say which book or books were used. But the point is that the Written Word, the Bible, was the basis of this revival and reformation.



King Jehoshaphat sent teachers to read the law to his people.

Jehoshaphat changed the judging system to fit with the teaching of the Bible. In 2 Chronicles 19:4-11, we can see the reformation Jehoshaphat made in the judging system: “ ‘Think carefully about what you do’ ” (2 Chronicles 19:6, NIV), “ ‘judge carefully’ ” (verse 7, NIV), treat “ ‘everyone the

same' ” and do not “ ‘take money from people who want special favors’ ” (verse 7, NIV), “ ‘serve faithfully’ ” (verse 9, NIV), “ ‘warn them [the people] not to sin against the Lord’ ” (verse 10, NIV), and “ ‘act with courage’ ” (verse 11, NIV). All these principles (rules) are found in the Bible.

The whole church can very easily backslide from God’s Word. What can we do to keep our church from making the same mistakes that old Israel made?

FRIDAY—MAY 18

ADDITIONAL STUDY: Ellen G. White, “Jehoshaphat,” pp. 190–203; “Hezekiah,” pp. 331–339, in *Prophets and Kings*; “Revival and Reformation,”¹⁵ pp. 119–152, in *Selected Messages*, book 1.

“When the Holy Spirit changes the heart to agree with the Word of God, a new life will spring up within you. A new light will shine upon every line of the Bible. The Bible will become the voice of God to your soul.”—Adapted from Ellen G. White, *Fundamentals*¹⁶ of *Christian Education*, p. 183.

“In the Bible are found the only safe principles [rules] of action. The Bible is a written statement of the will of God. The Bible reveals God’s wisdom. God’s Word opens to our understanding the great problems of life. To all who listen to it, the Bible will be a perfect guide. It

will keep people from wasting their lives doing useless and wrong things.”—Adapted from Ellen G. White, *The Acts of the Apostles*,¹⁷ p. 506.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

- ❶ Bible study is important in bringing change to our lives. Bible study also encourages revival and reformation among God’s people. So, how can we renew our focus on Bible study? How can we begin the revival and reformation that we need as persons and as a church?
- ❷ As a class go over the questions in Tuesday’s and Wednesday’s daily study. How close were your answers to the answers of your class members? How were they different? What can we learn from one another’s answers?
- ❸ Do you sense a need for the Word of God to have a greater influence¹⁸ on our lives, not just as persons, but as a church? As a class, put together a midweek Bible study and invite as many members as possible.
- ❹ Let members of the class give a testimony to the power of the Word. Have each of the members share what the Bible has done in their lives.
- ❺ How can you help someone who tries to have the Bible change his life but nothing seems to be happening? What would you tell this person to do?

¹⁵revival and reformation—a time when people renew their faith in God and ask Him to change their lives.

¹⁶fundamentals—very necessary parts; the basics.

¹⁷apostles—God’s disciples (followers) who preached the gospel after Jesus returned to heaven.

¹⁸influence—the power to act on or affect persons or things.