

RAISING UP THE NEXT GENERATION FOR THE CHURCH LIFE

Message Two

The Proper Understanding of Teaching and Receiving the Word as the Breath of God to Produce God-men

Scripture Reading: 2 Tim. 3:16-17; John 6:63; Matt. 4:4; Eph. 6:17-18; 1 Tim. 2:4

I. The Scriptures teach us the things of God and the things concerning God, even teaching us God Himself; there is a great difference between teaching about God and teaching God—2 Tim. 3:16-17; John 6:63; Eph. 6:17:

- A. According to 2 Timothy 3:16, the Scriptures are God-breathed, indicating that the Scriptures are the breathing out of God and our reading of the Scriptures should be our receiving of God's breath.
- B. We need a clear understanding of the nature of our teaching the truth; we are handling the divine truth which is the reality of the Triune God:
 - 1. In a sense, our teaching the truth should be like a "restaurant"; our intention is to serve, to minister, God as different "dishes" for eating; the nature of our speaking is a matter of ministering the Triune God to the young people.
 - 2. Through our teaching, everyone should be brought to God; we need to labor to bring every young person to the Triune God, so that by the time we have finished they will have gained the Triune God, not mere knowledge about God in letters.

II. Whereas all secular books are the same in nature, the Bible is different from other books; we need to see the uniqueness of the Bible:

- A. The Bible is God's breath, and God's breath is the Spirit of God, for God is Spirit; we must be a person who is continually breathing the Lord, a person who is always inhaling God; our reading of the Bible should be a kind of inhaling, and our teaching of the Bible should be a kind of exhaling—2 Tim. 3:16; John 4:24; cf. 20:22.
- B. The Lord's words are Spirit and life, the embodiment of the Spirit of life; when we receive His words by exercising our spirit, we get the Spirit, who gives life; when we read the Bible, we should receive life; and when we teach others concerning the Bible, they should receive life—6:63.
- C. The Word of God is the sword of the Spirit; it is common for Christians to be enlightened, rebuked, corrected, and instructed by the Bible, but not many experience the word of the Bible as a sword that kills the enemy—Eph. 6:17-18:
 - 1. Paul speaks of "the sword of the Spirit, which Spirit is the word of God" (v. 17); the sword is not the word directly; rather, the sword is the Spirit directly, and then the Spirit is the word:
 - a. This indicates that if we would deal with the enemy Satan, the Bible must become the Spirit; if we would use the word of the Bible as a sword to kill the enemy, in our experience the word must be the Spirit.
 - b. If we would take the word of the Bible as a sword for fighting the enemy, we must touch the Bible in a way that is full of the Spirit.
 - 2. Ephesians reveals that our enemies are the evil spirits, "the world-rulers of this darkness," "the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenlies"; experientially, the word we receive as the Spirit becomes the sword to slay these enemies—Eph. 6:12, 17:
 - a. We need to realize that things such as our opinion, thought, temper, emotion, natural life, and point of view are often used by the powers of darkness in the air to damage the Body life.
 - b. If the enemy is to be defeated, we must learn to receive the word as the Spirit, which becomes the sword to deal with the enemy.

3. Without the word as the Spirit to be the killing sword, there would be no way for us to be kept in the church life over the years; we can be kept in the church life and in the ministry through the killing of the word as the Spirit.
4. The word becoming the Spirit which becomes a killing sword may be compared to the effect of an antibiotic on the germs that cause illness in our body:
 - a. In order for our body to be saved, the germs need to be killed by an antibiotic; the word that we receive in a living way as the Spirit is a spiritual antibiotic that kills the “germs” within us.
 - b. When the germs are killed, the evil forces in the air have no way to take advantage of us; then we can live a healthy Body life, a healthy church life.
- D. The word that proceeds out of the mouth of God is our real food indicating that the Bible is not only for life-imparting but also for nourishing; when we teach the Bible to others, we should nourish them—Matt. 4:4.

III. On God’s side the Bible is God’s breathing; on our side the Bible is for us to receive profit in four matters—teaching, conviction or reproof, correction, and instruction—2 Tim. 3:16-17:

- A. If we have the proper and adequate spiritual experience, we will realize that teaching equals revelation; teaching is actually nothing less than a divine revelation:
 1. A revelation is the opening of a veil; as we are teaching the young people, we should be taking away a veil so that they may see something of the Triune God.
 2. To teach is to roll away the veil; go to the meeting for the purpose of rolling away the veils.
- B. Whenever we see something of God, we realize our mistakes, wrongdoings, shortcomings, and our sins; the result is that we are reproofed; this reproof comes from the revelation we receive.
- C. Conviction is followed by correction; correction is a matter of setting right what is wrong, turning someone to the right way, and restoring to an upright state.
- D. After we have been corrected, we will receive the proper instruction—the instruction in righteousness; righteousness is a matter of being right.
- E. The issue of teaching, reproof, correction, and instruction in righteousness is that the man of God becomes complete; such a God-man, such a man of God, is produced by God’s breathing out of Himself; God’s breathing produces God-men—v. 17.

IV. Our burden and our purpose is to bring our young people not only into God’s salvation but also into the full knowledge of the truth; we should endeavor to bring the young people into the experiential knowledge of the reality of the Triune God—1 Tim. 2:4.