



Date: May 31, 2009

Title: "The Word" (Part 4 of the GROW series)

Text: James 1:19-25

Speaker: Brad Evangelista

Intro:

Spiritual growth has many components to it. But, at least three of those components are essential. In order to be a healthy growing Christian, a person must be vitally connected to the Word of God, the Community of God, and the Spirit of God. Cultivating intimacy with all three is critical. Lack in any of these areas stunts our growth. In this message, we look at the centrality and necessity of the Word in the life of a believer as they are transformed into the image of Christ.

James 1:19-25

ABLE TO SAVE YOUR SOULS

1. Salvation comes through the Word

1 Peter 1:3, 23-25

Question: How does salvation come about?—through the Gospel—the message of Christ's work.

Implications of this:

1.1 Worship more deeply. You didn't cause your salvation by your own grit. Salvation isn't about morality or deciding to do better. It's grace from beginning to end. Therefore, this should cause us to worship God more passionately in response to our salvation, which gives God more glory, which makes him more attractive to a lost world.

2.2 Stop resisting. If you are not a Christian or not sure if you are a Christian and you are even thinking about where you stand with God then that may very well be strong evidence that the Spirit of God is hitting you and grace is coming upon your soul and you are in the process of being born again. And, for some, it can be a longer process than others. Labor is different for every baby.

3.3 Have confidence. We should have great confidence in the Word that saves! So, if you have a friend or loved one that has not yet responded to God, put your trust and effort into speaking the Gospel to them, not trying to cajole them with guilt or brow beating. Yes, of course we pray and explain and model Christ for them, but we should remember that there is within the Gospel itself miraculous power to save.

- Romans 1:16

2. Transformation comes through the Word

In addition to being the catalyst in our salvation, the Word also continues to work on us in our sanctification.

1 Thessalonians 2:13
Matthew 4:4
2 Timothy 3:14-17
Psalm 19:7-11
Psalm 119:9-11
Romans 10:17

2.1 There is spiritual power in the Word—health comes through it. You are what you eat.

2.2 It's much harder to sin when your Bible is constantly open and you are reading it.

RECEIVE WITH MEEKNESS THE IMPLANTED WORD

1. Definition of meekness: “It is that attitude of spirit we accept God’s dealings with us as good and do not dispute or resist.”

Hebrews 4:12-13

2. Our culture often cripples our the biblical concept of meekness. We have to realize that our finite minds are polluted with the residue and broken mindsets of this world and thus we need to approach the Word with great humility and hunger.

BE DOERS OF THE WORD

1. Some suggestions on how to engage the Bible?

1. Establish a routine
2. Make it digestible
3. Have a good study Bible (I recommend the ESV Study Bible. It's an outstanding resource).
4. Do it in community (spouse, friends)
5. Be honest about where you are.

2. Common Objections

1. It's hard to understand. (So was English when you were a baby)
2. I get easily distracted. (That's because there's a war going on. You have to fight for this)

1 Peter 2:1-3