

PROGRAM 83 TEASER

The wisest man that ever lived said there is no end to people writing books. I myself have written several. But Solomon warned us that our eyes and minds would soon tire of all the books and words of man. How different are the Scriptures. We could be locked in prison with only a few verses of the Bible, but they would speak with new freshness to the end of our days. And why not?! All books are man-breathed and mortal. The Bible is God-breathed and as eternal as its Author—the Holy Spirit. What does this have to do with you? Only life and death! Heaven or hell! Love, joy and peace—or guilt, fear and no purpose to life. Come with me—Frank Eiklor— and we'll explore the only Book that is More Than Talk.

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THE ONLY BOOK THAT IS MORE THAN TALK

PAGE 1 The Truth, the Whole Truth and Nothing But the Truth!

"Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth."

2 Timothy 2:15

If angels looking in - and those closest to you looking on - were asked what they observed most regularly in your daily life, what would it be? Humorously, though sadly, according to W. J. Bowerman and Dr. W. E. Harris in their book "Jogging", the most common exercises indulged in by the average middle-aged American are "running down their friends, jumping to conclusions, side-stepping responsibility and pushing their luck."

But then there's you and me. Let's be known for an unbreakable habit - that of daily studying and applying the Word of God. Scriptures not only provide a roadmap for heaven but a blueprint for daily living. And the Holy Spirit is eager to have you as His student. That's the neat thing about God - no problems with overcrowded classrooms. He tutors us individually.

I love today's verse. It was one of the first I memorized as a new Christian. First we are to study - and that spells time, concentration and effort. Second, this is not to impress people with our knowledge but to be approved of God who tests our motives to see if they are centered on His praise and not our own. Third, we are not to be like some in the world - life-long students gaining more and more degrees by packing their heads while their lives may be a mess. You and I must be a "student-workman" - that is, "He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me..." (John 14:21). All truth must be applied to all of life. And fourth, we are to "rightly divide" : "correctly analyzing and accurately dividing - rightly handling and skillfully teaching the Word of Truth." (v 15 Amplified) Then we won't be ashamed at our failure to know God's Word nor will we fall into the traps that await the spiritually lazy - including devilish doctrines and devious leaders.

My Prayer:

"Father, I'm turning with a new zest to the study of Your precious Word. Teach me the golden truths contained in both Testaments - all 66 books - and show me how to apply those truths to my life."

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PAGE 2 The Book that Breathes

“That I may make you know the certainty of the words of truth, that you may answer words of truth to those who send to you?” Proverbs 22:21

God never wastes words. So when He repeats the phrase "the words of truth", we ought to view His Word, the Bible, with a fresh awe and reverence. The wisest man that ever lived said there is no end to people writing books, including this one. But Solomon warned us that our eyes and minds would soon tire of all the books and words of man. How different are the Scriptures. We could be locked in prison with only a few verses of the Bible, but they would speak with new freshness to the end of our days. And no wonder, for only the Bible is God-breathed and such "truthful truth" that we can speak it to any and all with certainty.

A mature Christian should know the Word of God like a surgeon knows his instruments and a mechanic knows his tools. I dare say that spiritually developed Christians should be as acquainted with the general knowledge of the Bible as is a pastor (though the minister might know specific subject matter more fully than the lay Christian). Only a thirst for the Word of God will keep Jesus as my "first love", and my level of boldness and knowledge equal to any task or test.

How certain were those who walked with the Messiah that He alone - and the Scriptures alone - were the truth? Men may live for a lie, but they won't die for one. Matthew suffered martyrdom by being slain with a sword. Mark was dragged to death. Luke was hanged. Peter was crucified. James was beheaded. Bartholomew was flayed alive. Barnabas was stoned. Paul was beheaded. All but John died as martyrs - certain of the words of truth. Their torch has now come down to us. Whatever the future holds, we can be certain that we hold, in the Scriptures, the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth.

My prayer: "I praise You, my Father, for the firm foundation of Your Word. Help me to boldly speak the words of truth to others."

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PAGE 3 Buy the Truth and Never Sell It

"Buy the truth, and do not sell it, also wisdom and instruction and understanding."
Proverbs 23:23

If truth was a commodity to be bought and sold on the stock market, few would recognize its value. Fewer still would buy it up, no matter the cost, and refuse to sell it. Yet in this verse, the Lord of glory calls the wise to buy the truth and that which follows in truth's wake - wisdom, instruction and understanding. To me, buying the truth is to so know and live in the Word of God that I know how to apply the Word - its promises, commands and warnings - in every situation of life. The risen Messiah counseled us to buy from Him gold tried in the fire (God's character), white raiment for our clothing (God's purity) and eye salve to give clear spiritual eyesight (God's Word taken in liberal doses). Is there any better way to buy the truth than to memorize great verses and portions of scripture? The saints of

old loved God's Word enough to memorize much of it. That is sadly missing in the Church today - foolishly viewed as "legalism" by those looking for excuses not to have to love God with more of their minds!

Knowing the truth of God will prepare us for the tests allowed by God. We sell the truth by failing to live by it. Jesus said that the one who keeps His commandments is the one who loves Him. I recently faced a real estate transaction where I was told to fudge "just a little" on a certain point in order to obtain the loan. The Holy Spirit pointed me to this very verse and simply said, "If you ever compromise the truth, you have sold it!" After that midnight warning, I couldn't wait for morning when I told those involved that there could be no compromising honesty. One of them was a new Christian watching my action. He thanked me for a lesson not found in books!

My prayer: "Help me, my Lord, to buy the truth of Your Word through diligent study so that I will settle for only truth in every area and facet of my life."

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PAGE 4 When Castles Come Tumbling Down

"Wisdom and knowledge will be the stability of your times, and the strength of salvation; the fear of the LORD is His treasure." Isaiah 33:6

The world's books contain the accumulated wisdom and knowledge of man and are limited in scope from the womb to the tomb. God's one Book contains the wisdom and knowledge of the Creator and offers unlimited light in the path from time to eternity. What a treasure we hold in the Bible and its 66 books of God's revelation to man. Here we find the greatest pearls of wisdom - what God intends us to be and to do - and here we find his keys of knowledge - how to use His wisdom to His glory.

As the end nears, the world grows more uncertain and unstable. Man's own inventions often bring his most tormenting fears, as witnessed by the splitting of the atom. But the wisdom and knowledge that God gives to those who

love Him lead to no regrets. Instead, these two spiritual virtues help conform us into Christ's own image by the strength of His salvation working in us. And stability is the result - that quiet confidence in the sovereignty of God no matter how dangerous or deluded the world becomes.

Let the return of the Lord be your hope and the fear of the Lord be your treasure. How can we know we truly fear (reverence) Him? 1) By a daily turning to Scripture for God's mind; 2) an awareness of what grieves and pleases the Holy Spirit; 3) a setting of priorities based on God's will; 4) an urgency to redeem the time in that which counts for eternity; and 5) a hatred and fear of allowing "self" on the throne. This is what it means to build one's house on the Rock that will remain stable when castles shall come tumbling down.

My prayer: "Thank You, my Father, for the anchor of Your Word. So cause me to grow in Your wisdom and knowledge that my greatest treasure will be to reverence You. Be my stability in an unstable world."

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PAGE 5 Wise Or Foolish—The Difference Maker

“Ho! Everyone who thirsts, come to the waters; and you who have no money, come, buy and eat. yes, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price.” Isaiah 55:1

This verse enraptured me the moment I first laid eyes on it. In my day, U.S. Marines received no "salary" - just a stipend of a few dollars, most of which I sent home to help my poor parents. Yet, suddenly, I knew I was rich! The word "Ho" caught my attention. It didn't take a rocket scientist to know God was about to say something important. He had something great for the thirsty and hungry that would cost no money and yet had to be bought. I knew immediately what the Lord had in mind - at least for me. I couldn't stop filling my thirsting and starving soul with the purest of water, the sweetest of wine and the most wholesome of milk - His wonderful Word!

Like the man lost in the desert who suddenly locates water - like the starving prisoner who is freed and offered food - I drank and ate and ate and drank the Word, the Word, the Word! And just like he said, I got so full that rivers of this living water started flowing out of my inner being.

That was over 40 years ago; yet the experience is ongoing. That's why I genuinely weep for Christians who, though saved, do not thirst and hunger daily for the most nourishing of all foods - the Word of God.

Such laziness and lukewarmness can only lead to regret. The Lord tells us to "buy" that which He offers free. How can that be? Though He has given us a whole storehouse of riches, we must pay a price - commitment, dedication and discipline -to search out His Word and set our hearts on obeying it. The wise do it! The foolish don't!

My prayer: "Father, Your Word never returns empty. Cause me to so eat and drink the Scriptures in daily spiritual meals that my soul will have no empty places."