

THE FLORAL HEIGHTS INFORMER

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The LIVING Word of God

The author of Hebrews writes, “*For the word of God is living, and active, and sharper than any two-edged sword, and piercing even to the dividing of soul and spirit, of both joints and marrow, and quick to discern the thoughts and intents of the heart*” (Heb. 4:12). There is apparently confusion among skeptics and unbelievers over the term “living” word of God that I would like to discuss in this article. Some have concluded that a “living” word of God must be ever evolving and multi-interpreted. The idea of “living,” they say, is the idea of ever changing to fit the norms of society. What is truth today could not possibly be the truth of Jesus’ day. What is truth to you cannot be truth for me. To each his own truth! This article will thereby examine the meaning of the Bible term, “living” word of God.

Why is the Word of God termed “living?”

After a discussion over the need for man to be obedient to the word of God in order to be saved from the consequences of sin the author of Hebrews refers to God’s word as “*living*” (cf. Heb. 4:12 above). God’s word is alive in the sense that it is “*active*.” The **activity** of the word of God is conviction of sin and making distinctions between holy and ungodly thoughts of man’s heart (see Heb. 4:12-13). Jesus promised the apostles that he would send the Holy Spirit to guide them in all truth. The content of the Holy Spirit’s message, i.e., the word of God, would be designed to “*convict the world in respect of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment*” (Jn. 16:7-13). A dead and inactive word could not possibly perform the work of convicting man of sin. The same was said of the Mosaic Law. When Israel heard the Ten Commandments spoken from God at Mount Sinai they were words that convicted them of right and wrong. This conviction of right and wrong is termed “*living oracles*” at Acts 7:38. The law of God identified sin in man’s life and is thereby termed alive (cf. Rom. 7:7; Gal. 3:19). Peter was thereby able to “*prick*” the hearts of sinners with the word of God due to its active work of convicting one of sin (Acts 2:37).

Is the “living word of God” ever changing?

Local News:

Welcome to all our visitors. We pray that you will be edified by our service and that you will ask questions if things are not as you are accustomed to seeing. Please come back at your every opportunity.

Let us continue to pray for Jimmy and Wayne Duty (Brothers of Tolene Witherspoon). Both Tolene's brothers face battles with cancer.

Keep **Nina Gray** in your prayers too. Nina has been confined to her bed so that the swelling in her knees can go down.

Appreciation is in order for **Nicolas Long** and **Jim Hall**. Both these men filled in for John while he was away in Houston for the funeral of Kasey's dad.

Continue to pray for our shut-ins:

Stella Davidson
696-1030 (Home)

Calvin York
692-0489 (Home).

Bessie Murphy
4600 Taft Blvd, Apt. 538

Please note that if one concludes that the living word of God is ever changing then the identity of sin is ever changing. What is sin? Sin is a violation of God's laws (cf. I Jn. 3:4). To say that sin exists in the world is to say that there is law to follow (cf. Rom. 4:15). Those who change the identity of sin on the premises of changing times have taken law into their own hands (James 4:11-12). Are those of you who change the identity of sin a god? Note that the apostle Paul terms you the "*son of perdition*" and "*lawless one*" (cf. II Thess. 2:3-8). One must ask, "What law of God do I choose to make void and why?" The moment you change one law of God you make a liar out of Jesus. Jesus said, "*Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away*" (Matt. 24:35). Two thousand plus years has passed since Jesus made that statement. The author of Hebrews states, "*Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and to-day, yea and for ever*" (Heb. 13:8). To miss the connection between Jesus Christ and the living word of God is fatal (read Col. 1:25-27; 2:2, 8). Both Jesus and his living word are eternal. Christians have great hope that God will never change (cf. Malachi 3:6). He has made great promises and we continue to hope in those pledges. Man lives and dies upon the earth, along with their varying religious convictions, yet truth remains alive and never changing (cf. Zech. 1:5-6). The one true constant in life is truth!

One Law that all are able to Understand Alike

To say that God's living word is ever changing and subject to personal interpretation is to pollute the word of God. The Bible tells us that there is only one truth (Eph. 4:1ff) and it is not subject to an individual's special or private interpretation (II Pet. 1:20-21). The oneness of truth lends way to unity among Bible believers (cf. I Cor. 1:10). Jesus' prayer at John 17 identifies the oneness of truth and God's demand for all to understand it alike in unity (cf. Jn. 17:17ff). If truth is subject to change and personal interpretation then where is unity? The only unity in such an environment exists in the minds of like believing people. One group of people has a different interpretation than another group and so they congregate together. Current religious statistics prove that the multiplicity of religious thought has led denominationalism to splinter into 30,000 different directions (World Religions 2003 to 2004; iv. Ramdas Lamb). Said splintering of religious thought leaves the world confused over who is right or wrong. Let us always remember that God is not the author of confusion (I Cor. 14:33) but rather a loving God who desires to see all people saved from the consequences of their sins (II Pet. 3:9). God has not delivered one set of instructions for one group of people and another set of instructions for others (Eph. 4:11-15). One word demands our ability to understand it alike no matter what our race, economic, and sociological background may be (Jn. 8:31-32; Eph. 5:17). Why not let God's living word expose your errors now before its everlasting too late?

John C. Robertson

Strange Words

Introduction:

Have you ever heard someone tell you something that didn't quite sound like the total truth? You may have responded, "That sounds strange." Words that have to do with the eternity of our souls can in no way be strange. Strange words are identified as such when measured by a standard. Spiritual words that do not ring with a "thus saith Jehovah" (cf. Col. 3:17) ought to sound strange to us. When the word of God sounds strange something is certainly amiss in the lives of Christians (cf. Hos. 8:10-12). The Bible gives examples of people doing strange things in relation to truth (ex. Lev. 10:1). When these strange events occur they are never acceptable to God (cf. I Kings 12:25-33). Let us be sure to speak, worship, pray, and act in ways that are not strange to God.

I. Strange uses of the Tongue:

- A. A lack of self control (James 3:1-12)
- B. Gossip (I Pet. 2:1)
- C. Filthy language (Eph. 4:29)
- D. Worldliness (James 4:13)
- E. Pride (I Pet. 5:5)
- F. Teaching (Rom. 16:18; Titus 1:11; Heb. 13:9)

II. How should we respond to "strange" religious words?

- A. Identify them as strange and be willing to study with the one who made the statement (Acts 17:20) (it may be a strange idea because we were ignorant of some truth... the words may be strange because they are not found in God's word).
- B. Expose erroneous words as strange (Eph. 5:11).

III. What are ordinary (standard) uses of one's Tongue?

- A. Seasoned with the salt of the gospel (Col. 4:6)
- B. Sound / Truth (Titus 2:1, 8)
- C. Edification (Eph. 4:11-12)
- D. Singing praises to God (Col. 3:16)
- E. Praying (I Thess. 5:17-18)
- F. Calling upon the name of God (Zeph. 3:9; Acts 22:16ff)
- G. Contending for truth (Jude 3)
- H. Avoid filthy language (I Pet. 3:10) and gossip (Titus 3:2)

Conclusion:

Jesus said, "A good man out of the good treasure of his heart bringeth forth that which is good; and an evil man out of the evil treasure of his heart bringeth forth that which is evil: for of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaketh" (Lk. 6:45). Solomon said, "Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life" (Prov. 4:23). The words that come from our lips originate in the heart and will expose what is within. When one speaks strange words, in relation to truth, he is identified as one who is ignorant of God's word or dishonest. Ignorance is acceptable as long as one seeks to remedy the lack of knowledge whereas dishonest dealings with God's word are never acceptable.