

Light Brings Salt

Volume 4, Issue 27

July 9, 2006



Iron Range Bible Church

Dedicated to the Systematic Exposition of the Word of God



The Word's Importance to the Believer in Life

C. H. Mackintosh

Note: The following article is taken from the Notes on Deuteronomy volume 2 chapter 8 published in 1880. He makes some very valuable points to remind us just how important to our lives the Word of God is if we're to realize the provisions available to us in time.

The one special point for us to seize and learn from is that our Great Exemplar, when meeting all the temptations of the enemy, used only the weapon which we have in our possession, namely, the simple, precious, written, word of God.

We say, "all the temptations," because in all the three instances our Lord's unvarying reply is, "*It is written.*" He does not say, "I know" — "I think" — "I feel" — "I believe" this, that or the other; He simply appeals to the written word of God — the book of Deuteronomy in particular, that very book which infidels have dared to insult, but which is pre-eminently the book for every obedient man, in the face of total, universal, hopeless wreck and ruin.

This is of unspeakable moment for us, beloved reader. It is as though our Lord Christ had said to the adversary, "Whether I am the Son of God or not, is

not now the question, but how man is to live, and the answer to this question is only to be found in holy scripture; and it is to be found there as clear as a sunbeam, quite irrespective of all questions respecting me. Whoever I am, the scripture is the same, "Man doth not live by bread only, but by every word that proceeds out of the mouth of the Lord."

Here we have the only true, the only safe, the only happy attitude for man, namely, hanging in earnest dependence upon "every word that proceeds out of the mouth of the Lord." Blessed attitude! we may well say; there is nothing like it in all this world. It brings the soul into direct, living, personal contact with the Lord Himself, by means of His word. It makes the word so absolutely essential to us, in everything; we cannot do without it.

As the natural life is sustained by bread, so the spiritual life is sustained by the word of God. It is not merely going to the Bible to find doctrines there, or to have our opinions or views confirmed; it is very much more than this; it is going to the Bible for the staple commodity of life — the life of the new man; it is going there for food, for light, for guidance, for comfort, for authority, for strength, for all, in short, that the soul can possibly need, from first to last.

And let us specially note the force and value of the expression, "every word." How fully it shows that we cannot afford to dispense with a single word that has proceeded out of the mouth of the Lord. We want it all. We cannot tell the moment in which some exigency may present itself for which scripture has already provided. We may not; perhaps, have specially noticed the scripture before, but when the difficulty arises, if we are in a right condition of soul, the true posture of heart, the Spirit of God will furnish us with the needed scripture; and we shall see a force, beauty, depth and moral adaptation in the passage which we had never seen before.

Scripture is a divine, and therefore exhaustless treasury in which God has made ample provision for all the need of His people, and for each believer in particular, right on to the end. Hence we should study it all, ponder it, dig deeply into it, and have it treasured up in our hearts, ready for use when the demand arises.

There is not a single crisis occurring in the entire history of the church of God, not a single difficulty in the entire path of any individual believer, from beginning to end, which has not been perfectly provided for in the Bible. We have all we want in that blessed volume; and hence we should be ever seeking to make ourselves more and more acquainted with what that volume contains so as to be "thoroughly furnished" for whatever may arise, whether it be a temptation of the devil, an allurements of the world, or a lust of the flesh; or, on the other hand, for equipment for that path of good works which God has afore prepared that we should walk in.

And we should further give special attention to the expression, "*Out of the mouth of the Lord.*" This is unspeakably precious. It brings the Lord so very near to us, and gives us such a sense of the reality of feeding upon His every word, yea, of hanging upon it as something absolutely essential and indispensable. It sets forth the blessed fact that our souls can no more exist without the word than our bodies could without food. In a word, we are taught by this passage that man's true position, his proper attitude, his only place of strength, safety, rest and blessing is to be found in habitual dependence upon the word of God.

This is the life of faith which we are called to live, life of dependence — the life of obedience — the life that Jesus lived perfectly. That blessed One would not move a step, utter a word, or do a single thing save by the authority of the word of God. No doubt He could have turned the stone into bread, but He had no command from God to do that; and inasmuch as He had no command, He had no motive for action. Hence Satan's temptations were perfectly powerless. He could do nothing with a Man who would only act on the authority of the word of God.

And we may also note, with very much interest and profit, that the Lord does not quote scripture for the purpose of silencing the adversary; but simply as authority for His position and conduct. Here is where we are so apt to fail; we do not sufficiently use the precious word of God in this way; we quote it, at times, more for victory over the enemy than for power and authority for our own souls. Thus it loses its power in our hearts. We want to use the word as a hungry man uses bread, or as a mariner uses his chart and his compass;

it is that on which we live and by which we move and act, and think and speak. Such it really is, and the more fully we prove it to be all this to us, the more we shall know of its infinite preciousness. Who is it that knows most of the real value of bread? Is it a chemist? No; but a hungry man. A chemist may analyze it and discuss its component parts, but a hungry man proves its worth. Who knows most of the real value of a chart; is it the teacher of navigation? No; but the mariner as he sails along an unknown and dangerous coast.

These are but feeble figures to illustrate what the word of God is to the true Christian. He cannot do without it. It is absolutely indispensable, in every relationship of life, and in every sphere of action. His hidden life is fed and sustained by it; his practical life is guided by it; in all the scenes and circumstances of his personal and domestic history, in the privacy of his life, in the bosom of his family, in the management of his affairs, he is cast upon the word of God for guidance and counsel.

And it never fails those who simply cleave to it, and confide in it. We may trust scripture without a single shade of misgiving. Go to it when we will, we shall always find what we want. Are we in sorrow? Is the poor heart bereaved, crushed and desolate? What can soothe and comfort us like the balmy words which the Holy Spirit has penned for us? One sentence of holy scripture can do more, in the way of comfort and consolation, than all the letters of condolence that ever were penned by human hand. Are we discouraged, faint-hearted and cast down?

The word of God meets us with its bright and soul-stirring assurances. Are we pressed by pinching poverty? The Holy Spirit brings home to our hearts some golden promise from the page of inspiration, recalling us to Him who is "The Possessor of heaven and earth," and who, in His infinite grace, has pledged Himself to "supply all our need according to his riches in glory, by Christ Jesus." Are we perplexed

and harassed by the conflicting opinions of men, by the dogmas of conflicting schools of divinity, by religious and theological difficulties? A few sentences of holy scripture will pour in a flood of divine light upon the heart and conscience, and set us at perfect rest, answering every question, solving every difficulty, removing every doubt, chasing away every cloud, giving us to know the mind of God, putting an end to conflicting opinions by the one divinely competent authority.

What a boon, therefore, is holy scripture! What a precious treasure we possess in the word of God! How we should bless His holy Name for having given it to us! Truly precious are these words of Scripture to the heart of the believer! C.H.M.

In a broadcast entitled "The root of all evil?" British evolutionist Richard Dawkins engaged in a rant against what he considers the greatest threat facing humanity.

"I'm very concerned about the religious indoctrination of children. I want to show how faith acts like a virus that attacks the young and infects generation after generation . . . It's time to question the abuse of childhood innocence with superstitious ideas of hellfire and damnation. And I want to show how the scriptural roots of the Judeo-Christian moral edifice are cruel and brutish . . . What in the 21st century are we doing venerating a book [the Bible] that contains such stuff? . . . The God of the Old Testament has got to be the most unpleasant character in all fiction -- jealous and proud of it, petty, vindictive, unjust, unforgiving, racist, an ethnic cleanser urging His people on to acts of genocide . . . When it comes to children, I think of religion as a dangerous virus. It's a virus which is transmitted partly through teachers and clergy, but also down the generations from parent to child to grandchild. Children are especially vulnerable to infection by the virus of religion."