

HEARING GOD: BIBLE PREACHING & READING

The Bible points to itself as a necessary instrument to spiritual vitality. Therefore all Christians must attend to hearing God's Word. The primary way we receive God's Word is in attending to its public ministry at our church. The second way we receive God's Word is in our own private reading and meditation on it.

WHAT THE WORD OF GOD DOES FOR BELIEVERS

The Bible does more than fill our heads with facts about God. The Word of God repeatedly makes an important claim about itself, that it is actually used by the Spirit of God as an effectual instrument of spiritual growth.

1. What does Jesus want new to happen to all his disciples in **Matt 28:20**?

2. In **Psa 19:7**, what two things does the word (law) of God accomplish?

3. In **John 17:17**, how, does Jesus say, believers are sanctified (made holy)?

4. What the word of God do in believers at the end of **1 Thes 2:13**?

5. The instruction of the Scriptures leads to what two things in **Rom 15:4**?

6. According to **2 Pet 3:18**, in what two things should believers grow?

7. What was the effect of the Scriptures on the two disciples in **Luke 24:32**?

8. According to passages like **Acts 10:44**, **Eph 1:3**, and **1 Thes 1:5**, who is it that uses the Word to accomplish its beneficial and gracious results?

➤ It is the will of Christ for you to be taught the word, and he has promised that he will use the word of God to grow his children in the grace of Christ.

OUR RESPONSIBILITY TO THE WORD OF GOD

All Christians ought to love to hear the voice of Christ in the Bible (Eph 3:8), and from this impulse they ought to be active *hearers* of the Word of God.

1. According to **Heb 4:2**, the word of God came to the children of Israel but it did not benefit them. What reason does the verse give for this?

2. In **Rev 1:3**, what two responses should we have to the word of God?

3. How did Jesus' followers treat his teaching in **Luke 4:20, 19:48 & 21:38**?

4. In **Heb 2:1**, what keeps us from drifting away from the Word?

➤ Hearing the Word of God means more than merely hearing it with our ears. When King Jesus speaks, we ought to *listen*. We must attend actively to the Word of God with faith, obedience, and affectionate interest.

THE PUBLIC MINISTRY OF THE WORD (PREACHING & TEACHING)

Where do you hear the Word? The New Testament repeatedly points to the importance of hearing God's Word through the public ministry of the Word preached by Christ's servants in the context of a local church.

1. In **1 Thes 2:13**, how did Paul want believers to receive his word? (*cf.* Heb 13:7)

Note: Not everything a preacher says is God's word, but where the Bible is faithfully explained and applied, it should be received as God's Word.

2. What are some of the reasons in **Eph 4:11-16** that Christ gave ministers of the word to his churches? (Provide at least three reasons.) (*cf.* Tit 1:9)

3. What is the responsibility of Gospel ministers in **2 Tim 4:1-5**?

4. In **Acts 2:42**, what is the first thing the new converts were devoted to?

➤ New Testament churches make much of proclaiming Christ. True believers will joyfully give attention to the word preached in their church.

THE PRIVATE MINISTRY OF THE WORD (DAILY BIBLE READING)

Those who "hear God" seek not only to hear from him with other believers at church gatherings, but daily, throughout the week, they seek him privately.

1. What made the Bereans so praiseworthy in **Acts 17:11**? (*cf.* 2 Tim 4:13)

2. What does the Word do for us according to **1 Tim 3:16**?

3. What should be our attitude toward the word of God in **James 1:21-25**?

4. Per **Psa 119:97**, how often does the true saint meditate on God's word?

➤ We believe that personal Bible reading and meditation is a vital part of a true saint's godly life today. Develop now the habit of reading the Bible daily.