

Matthew 22:15-22 “... When they had heard *these words*, they marvelled, and left him, and went their way”

Pharisees, smart guys, laid what they had carefully thought up as the perfect trap for Jesus.

What did Jesus do to them? He stopped their mouths and they left.

How did he do it? Through his words!

The **truth** of Jesus' words completely shut them down. That illustrates the premise of today's Sermon:

God works on man through His Truth – the Word, and His Word is enough to get the job done. And the job is – our salvation – to bring us back to God

2 Peter 3:9 “The Lord is ... longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.”

God's word does this - We have this all in one verse:

John 17:17 Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth.

Now VERY IMPORTANT! This NOT the word only – because GOD is necessary. He is a rewarder of them which diligently seek him (Heb 11:6)

The word is the **medium** through which God operates.

THE WORD IS SUFFICIENT

Is the word sufficient for that? Yes, because it is the Word of **GOD!**
Let's not make the mistake of judging God by our standards.

If **we** write a letter or send an email to someone, we might need to write again to answer questions. “If you have any questions ...”

For important, serious things, we often want to meet face to face and talk to get things straight.

That's us. But, God is not like us.

We can give people directions and anticipate different things that might happen.

We might tell our children, finish your homework and If Johnny comes over, you can't go out and play, till you're finished.

Or, to someone driving we might say, “If you pass the Walmart you've gone too far”.

We can anticipate different events and circumstances.

How much more thorough and knowledgeable is God?

It's not unreasonable to believe He can do anything he wants to through His Word.

After all, he spoke the Universe into existence.

Genesis 1:3 And God **said**, Let there be light: and there was light

He has told us he has given us everything we need to know, to live with God and be pleasing to Him.

2 Peter 1:3 According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that *pertain* unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue:

He has done this through His **divine power** – not the ordinary power some of us might have, in giving us his word by which we have the knowledge of God.

He tells us this – how we have this knowledge of God:

John 16:13,14 Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, *that* shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come. He shall glorify me: for he shall receive of mine, and shall shew *it* unto you

The knowledge of God, ALL truth nothing left out, the things of Jesus, brought to us by the Holy Spirit through the truth, the word, he gave the Apostles.

God works on man through His truth – His word! “Sanctify them through thy truth” He has anticipated and answered every necessary question – ***all things***.

There is no necessity for **anything** else.

By his divine power he has **given** us everything we need to know – **if** we want to know it. The scripture tells us as much in the account of Lazarus and the rich man:

Luke 16:30,31 And he said, Nay, father Abraham: but if one went unto them from the dead, they will repent. And he said unto him, If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead.

Obviously, Moses and the prophets were long dead, he was referring to their writings – the words they wrote.

What then are we saying if we say something else is needed?

We are saying His word is NOT ENOUGH!

And there is a MOTIVE, a reason that this might be, to give credence to it..

“Every false teacher must, to save his cause, repudiate the Bible as a guide in religion.”
—**G.K. Wallace**, introduction to ***The Mission and Medium of the Holy Spirit*** by Foy Wallace.

This happened right away in the 1st century:

Galatians 1:6,7 I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel: Which is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ.

People that claim or want some direct operation of the Holy Spirit **disparage** the Word of God, they want **another** gospel than what we have recorded in the word of God.

Will the Holy Spirit tell us something different today than we have recorded in the Bible? No, he can't! A spirit that says something different is NOT HOLY.

Galatians 1:8 But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed.

Has God left something out that he needs to tell us now? No, he says he hasn't!

Jude V3 Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort *you* that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints.

If we have some new, necessary, revelation today, what of all those who have gone before that didn't have that special revelation? They'll still be with Jesus

1 Thessalonians 4:16 “ ... and the dead in Christ shall rise first:”

No, we don't need anything more than what God has written, that we have in the Bible.

But why the word?

WHY THE WORD

Have you ever made a deal with someone?

If it's important and subject to misinterpretation what do wise people do?

PUT IT IN WRITING!

With God, we're talking of life and death, eternal life with Him or eternal death – separation from him.

We are His creation. It is right and just that He tell us what he expects of us.

He has chosen to do so through **words** we can understand for two important reasons:

- 1) The words do not change.
- 2) We are free moral agents – no coercion. We can read words privately, study them fully at our leisure.

In the account of the Roman coin we started the sermon with, Jesus could have used a miracle – Coin talked or turned into dove and flown away. He didn't, he used words, God's words. Why?

We have to choose to come to him.

Not be coerced by a gun to our head in the form of a miracle.

Hebrews 11:6 But without faith *it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.*

Is believing in the power of the word of God a matter of faith? Of Belief? Yes! Consider Doubting Thomas, we know the account.

John 20:27 Then saith he to Thomas, Reach hither thy finger, and behold my hands; and reach hither thy hand, and thrust *it* into my side: and be not faithless, but believing.

What was it Thomas did not believe? Thomas did not believe the reports of the other disciples – he did not believe their words – he wanted more. He wanted a miracle. Jesus said that was “faithless”, and Jesus told him what else he thought of that:

John 20:28 “Jesus saith unto him, Thomas, because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed: blessed *are* they that have not seen, and *yet* have believed.

Blessed are the ones who believe through what they hear.
And he continued to state the importance of the thing which were written:

John 20:29-31 And many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book: But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name.

Faith in God means having faith in his written word. THAT was the purpose of the miracle – to confirm the word.

To want more, or something else, is to be faithless – or worse as Jesus said:

Matt 12:39 An evil and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign; and there shall no sign be given to it, but the sign of the prophet Jonas:

What sign? - the WORD of the prophet Jonas as recorded in the scriptures.

God provided his written word for us to believe that Jesus is the Christ and for us to have life through his name.

The Word of God, as recorded in the BIBLE is the medium through which God, in the person of the Holy Spirit works on man today by giving man the truth of God.

This truth will produce faith in men. It will make us believers – if we let it.
It won't overpower us – we have free will.

This is shown by the Pharisees. They had the word of God, they even had the miracles of Jesus, but they denied him.

Acts 4:16 What shall we do to these men? for that indeed a notable miracle hath been done by them *is* manifest to all them that dwell in Jerusalem; and we cannot deny *it*.

REFERENCES TO THE SPIRIT

The bible plainly says in many places that the Holy Spirit dwells in us.

Romans 8:11 But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you.

True! We can believe every passage.

But citing all the verses that say the Holy Spirit dwells in us and works in us does nothing to clarify **HOW** the Holy Spirit dwells and works in us.

HOW does he quicken us – make us alive? How does He dwell in us?

Is it up to us to figure this out? Can we develop our own theories?

No! God has told us **how** in his word, we do not need, and should not go, elsewhere.

For example:

We are saved by faith –Yes! But in any way we choose?

No, we choose to be saved, but we cannot choose the method of our salvation.

Denominationalists say that, but can't find scripture to support it.

No, God says in his word that we are not saved apart from obedience in baptism.

Mark 16:16 He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved;

The Holy Spirit dwells in us and works in us – Yes, but in any way we choose?

Denominationalists say that, but can't find scripture to support it.

No, God says in His word that the Holy Spirit dwells and works in us **through** that word of God. We'll look at this in detail in a moment.

First though, there are only two ways Holy Spirit can work:

Immediate – without any intermediary – directly – Prophets and apostles.

Mediate - through a mediator – something between him and us.

For example, His word.

It is important to establish HOW the Holy Spirit works, because God's word is inerrant, it does not disagree with itself, it is in **harmony** with itself. For example:

It is established that remission of sins is through baptism:

Acts 2:38 Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins,

Acts 22:16 And now why tarriest thou? Arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord.

Therefore, it not necessary for God to mention baptism every time remission of sins is mentioned, it is understood.

1 John 2:12 I write unto you, little children, because your sins are forgiven you for his name's sake.

How were their sins forgiven? To harmonize with the other scriptures we understand that belief and faith and obedience in being baptized, are all necessary, no need to mention them here.

In a similar fashion, when it is established that baptism is by immersion, then it is not necessary for God to specify that fact every time baptism is mentioned, it is understood. Other passages must be understood in harmony with that.

And likewise, when it is established that the Holy Spirit works on man through the word, then other references to the work of the Holy Spirit must be understood in harmony with that.

It is not necessary for God to repeat the medium with every mention of the operation or indwelling of the Holy Spirit.

When we look at the scripture we find that from beginning to end, from start to finish, God works on man today by the Holy Spirit **through the word**. Let's see:

1) Spiritually begotten – let's start at the beginning – we are begotten. How?

James 1:18 Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth,

1 Corinthians 4:15 For in Christ Jesus I have begotten you through the gospel.

Are we "honorary" children? No! We are fully the children of God - begotten by God - through His word!

2) After conception we grow and as a result are born Spiritually, How?

1 Peter 1:23 Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever.

All life generated through SEED. And what is that seed?

Luke 8:11 The seed is the word of God.

Seed brings forth fruit after its kind and that's the ONLY way to get that fruit.

Corn comes from corn seed – nothing else.

Wheat comes from wheat seed – nothing else.

If we don't have wheat or corn seed – we can't grow wheat or corn.

God's word is the only in which we can have spiritual life.

God's word is Incorruptible and brings forth incorruptible – eternal – life in us.

Eternal life is produced in us in NO OTHER FASHION – only by the Word of God.

3) We must grow after we're conceived and born – how?

1 Peter 2:2 As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby:

The Word is all sufficient for this growth. Interestingly, **Sincere** here means pure, "unadulterated"

4) We start to work as growth is obtained? What is it that works within us and builds us up?

1 Thessalonians 2:13 For this cause also thank we God without ceasing, because, when ye received the word of God which ye heard of us, ye received *it not as* the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which effectually worketh also in you that believe.

Effectual working – accomplishing desired effect – adequate, no supplements are needed.

5) At full growth, we're expected to produce fruit – how?

Colossians 1:9-11 For this cause we also, since the day we heard *it*, do not cease to pray for you, and to desire that ye might be filled with the knowledge of his will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding; That ye might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God; Strengthened with all might, according to his glorious power, unto all patience and longsuffering with joyfulness;

No “word” underlined here? Gotcha Preacher!

How are we filled with the knowledge of his will?

How do we obtain all wisdom and spiritual understanding?

How do we walk worthy to all pleasing?

How are we fruitful in EVERY good work?

How are strengthened with all might?

Look right before this, the preceding verses tell us how:

Colossians 1:5,6 For the hope which is laid up for you in heaven, whereof ye heard before in the word of the truth of the gospel; Which is come unto you, as *it is* in all the world; and bringeth forth fruit, as *it doth* also in you, since the day ye heard *of it*, and knew the grace of God in truth

Word – truth – gospel - the grace of God - brings fruit IN them “**it** doth”

The Holy Spirit is not an “it”, the Holy Spirit is a HE, the Word is an “it”.

So, how are we filled with the spirit?

Ephesians 5:18,19 ... but be filled with the Spirit; Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord;

There it is! Filled with the Spirit! What could be plainer? But how? A parallel passage explains:

Colossians 3:16 Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord

Dwell in us – to fill us – the Word of Christ – brought to the Apostles by the Holy Spirit. And, there's a reason he tells us to let the Word dwell in us and fill us:

6) Builds us up and gives us an inheritance – the end of the matter

God's word will produce fruit in us and ultimately gives us the inheritance of God – it completes us – again, nothing else is needed:

Acts 20:32 And now, brethren, I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified.

Able? Not will? No, we have to choose to follow it – It WILL ... if we let it!

We begin by learning of Christ, how? Through the word – if we listen.

How do we know of Baptism? Through the word – if we listen.

And finally, our Soul is saved how?

By our receiving the word – if we listen – and OBEY!

James 1:21,22 Wherefore lay apart all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness, and receive with meekness the engrafted word, which is able to save your souls. But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves.

What should we receive? The word.

It is able to save us. Does not say "it **does** save us".

What else is needed? OBEDIENCE!

We need to be Doers? God says so, For our Justification...

Romans 2:13 For not the hearers of the law *are* just before God, but the doers of the law shall be justified.

And what Law is that, he continues?

Romans 2:16 - In the day when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ according to my gospel.

The law is that which we are judged by– the law we live under now is the Gospel of Christ – the Word of God. And there **WILL** be a judgment:

Romans 14:10 for we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ

We are **CONCEIVED** by the Word
 We are **BORN** by the Word
 We **GROW** by the Word
 We **PRODUCE FRUIT** by the Word
 We are **BUILT UP AND COMPLETED** by the Word

And what is it that will judge us?

We will be judged by the Word of Christ

John 12:47,48 And if any man hear my words, and believe not, I judge him not: for I came not to judge the world, but to save the world. He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him: the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day.

There will be a judgment – whether we believe it or not.

God is fair, he has put in writing the standard by which all will be judged.

These words are plain:

Mark 16:16 He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned.

Do you believe that Jesus is the son of God?
 That he came here to die for our sins.
 If so, then you'll repent – turn towards God.

2 Corinthians 5:15 And *that* he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again.

And with that repentance, that good conscience toward God, you'll be baptized:

1 Peter 3:21 The like figure whereunto *even* baptism doth also now save us (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God,)

The WORD OF GOD – you have heard it. On Pentecost people heard, believed and obeyed the words of the Holy Spirit given by the Apostles – and the Lord added them to his church.

Acts 2:47 And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved

We have those same words today, here in the Bible. Do as they did and you will be, as they were, – added to His church, the church of Christ.

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