

God's Word Is Like...

*How do **you** view the Word of God?*

One of the powerful inner motivations for learning is our attitude toward Scripture. And the Spirit of God gives us insight into His Word.

"God does not hide truth **from** us, but He hides it **for** us that the discovery is more precious" (A. Nonomous).

How valuable do we see the Bible? And do our life-responses match this?

If I were given land with a gold producing mine on it, I would first begin to explore the possibilities that exist. Just as God has chosen to hide gold in the rock so we must dig it out, we also need to dig out the treasure in His Word.

Read the verses below and identify the word-picture. *What does this natural metaphor convey? How does this relate to God's Word?* Amplify with your own responses before going on to read my suggestions. Enjoy the adventure. And be blown away as you are resourced by God's amazing Word, revealed through these powerful word-pictures below. Savor them. Personalize each one. Maybe even doodle a picture in the margin to make it memorable to stretch our visual learning.

I have treasured the words of his mouth more than my daily bread (Job 23:12).

How sweet are your words to my taste, sweeter than honey to my mouth (Psalm 119:103).

For you have been born again, not of perishable seed, but of imperishable, through the living and enduring word of God (1 Peter 1:23, cp also Luke 8:11).

Take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God (Ephesians 6:17).

*1. **Food** for satisfying my hunger.*

I have treasured the words of his mouth more than my daily bread (Job 23:12).

How often do you eat food each week? If we don't eat, our body goes into crisis mode. When we eat, our body metabolizes nutrition into a form that our bodies can use to renew itself. Similarly, in the spiritual realm, we intake spiritual nutrition as fuel and metabolize by responding to form experience over time to renew our minds (Romans 12:2).

The aim is for us to see life differently, from a God's-eye view. Studies show that this renewing actually changes the neurological structure in our brain. Over time it's then modified by our experience, reinternalized in a different fashion, and given more fuel to further consolidate this truth.

Listening to a sermon on Sunday once a week is good. One pre-digested snack per week, however, will make a person anemic and weak. If we will ever mature to become all that God has for us, we must fetch our own knife and fork. Begin to feed ourselves spiritually with the same intensity that we eat physically instead of being satisfied to only be spoon-fed pre-digested food by others. No matter how tasty! Eat a meal from Scripture at least daily for spiritual health.

*2. **Honey** for delighting my taste.*

How sweet are your words to my taste, sweeter than honey to my mouth (Psalm 119:103).

As we personally experience the love of the Lord, we know how sweet He is. Honey in those days was sweet, thick, and was not gobbled quickly. Their type of honey slid down slowly so they could savor it. Honey is designed to linger, like with Scripture.

We discover the care of the relational Trinity for us (Father, Son and Holy Spirit) most clearly through His Word, His Love-letter to us. Jeremiah says that the Word is a delight and joy to his heart (Jeremiah 15:16). Jesus quoted or alluded to Scripture hundreds of times. The Word of God is sweet to the Spirit-enlightened person because the Spirit co-authored the Bible. Read Palm 119, like Jesus must have. Be captivated by the emotional love the psalmist had for God's Word.

3. *Seed for bearing ripe fruit.*

For you have been born again, not of perishable seed, but of imperishable, through the living and enduring word of God (1 Peter 1:23, cp also Luke 8:11).

As we input the Word, we are planting spiritual seed deep within. Seed has life in itself. Seed reaches out beyond itself into its environment for what it needs to flourish, thrive and blossom. Seed takes time to mature and bear fruit in its season, so keep patiently sowing into and tilling the garden of your heart. "Feed & Weed." Feed our lives through the Word of God in order to grow and weed whatever resists God's truth.

4. *Sword for protecting from the enemy.*

Take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God (Ephesians 6:17).

Satan is the father of lies. We are at his whim when we don't know Reality through this Word. A well-known adage goes like this: "If you don't know what you stand for, you'll fall for anything." God's Word is living and powerful, judging the thoughts and intents of our hearts (Hebrews 4:12-13). Particularly take note of where God's Word cuts across the fiber of the self-absorbed and flesh-driven desires of our lives. God longs for us to give Him wholehearted allegiance.

5. *Lamp & light for guiding my pathway.*

Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light for my path (Psalm 119:105).

In those days, a small lamp was fastened to their feet as they walked at night. It only illuminated the next step. God's Word is a lamp that lights up our next step of obedience, no more. After responding in faith, God flashes one step more of illumination. The Bible is also a light that guides my path, like a beacon in the far-off window of my destination. To modernize the picture, think of it also as a miner's light, like a powerful LE super bright LED headlamp to illuminate the way. We receive thousands of messages a day. For instance, most advertising sells us with "discover real life in our product." How do we discern what is true and what is deceitful? The Word of God acts like a guide so we can learn a way of life that is God's way, in contrast to society's way. It also provides big-picture guidance, revealing priorities in life

6. *Fire for burning useless chaff and a hammer for shattering resistance.*

"Is not my word like fire," declares the Lord, "and like a hammer that breaks a rock in pieces?" (Jeremiah 23:29).

The prophetic side of this double picture speaks to those things that need to be purged from our lives. Take the portions of Scripture seriously when we feel uncomfortable. Expect an uncreated God to be beyond what created beings can fully grasp. This is one reason for the "???" and the "**D – Difficulties**" in *S-T-U-D-Y*. These are often windows into our inner struggles, blocking the

freedom that is our inheritance. God's Word is a fire for burning up what is useless or a hammer for shattering barriers or hard places in our lives that hinder growth and intimacy.

7. Scalpel for cutting to the heart of a matter.

For the word of God is living and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow (Hebrews 4:12).

The Word is like a sharp scalpel that a skillful surgeon uses to cut out cancer that destroys health. The surgeon is precise and cuts only enough, yet it is painful in the short-term. The Word goes deep down inside us and chooses between what is good and harmful.

8. Mirror for reflecting reality.

Anyone who listens to the word but does not do what it says is like a man who looks at his face in a mirror and...goes away and immediately forgets what he looks like (James 1:23-24).

Don't just read the Bible, but let the Bible read you.

The Word reveals what is real and true so we can make appropriate changes. Don't be like the man who looks in the mirror in the morning at a smudge on his face, but then ignores it, leaving it there for all to observe. Switching metaphors, it's kind of like a dance. God leads and we follow. Society falsely says, "all truth is relative." By sharp contrast, we have a Word from the God who designed us and His world. His truth is absolute truth...Reality. We grow by adjusting our lives to this Reality.

9. Bowl of clean water for washing away dirt.

...Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her to make her holy, cleansing her by the washing with water through the word... (Ephesians 5:26).

Because we live in a fallen world (and God has sent us here as His ambassadors), our heart can be affected by the messages from the world. Engaging the Bible daily is like a refreshing shower that cleanses us.

10. Precipitation for sprouting seed.

As the rain and the snow come down from heaven, and do not return to it without watering the earth and making it bud and flourish,...so is my word that goes out from my mouth: It will not return to me empty, but will accomplish what I desire and achieve the purpose for which I sent it (Isaiah 55:10-11).

God has set up various "means of grace," or channels where He has promised to pour out his grace most lavishly. Some are prayer, fellowship, service...and the Word of God. Place yourself in a position to be blessed with life to experience the "drenching" of the Word like a good spring shower that produces spring flowers.

11. Milk for nourishing a baby.

Like newborn babies, crave pure spiritual milk, so that by it you may grow up in your salvation, now that you have tasted that the Lord is good (1 Peter 2:2).

Have you ever been around a hungry newborn baby? Everyone around knows her or his passion for milk. A newborn eats regularly and nursing is a very personal event. A Christian cannot grow up without a regular, healthy input of God's Word. Milk is the healthy basics of the Word, like the Trinity's relational first-love for us, the cross which removes all barriers, and His call of service on our lives as we partner together.

12. **Treasure** enriching my life.

My son, if you accept my words,...and if you look for it as for silver and search for it as for hidden treasure... (Proverbs 2:1f).

God's Word is more precious and valuable than gold or rubies or diamonds...by far! In our minds, pile up all the treasures in the world today on one side of an old fashioned balance scale. Now stack wisdom from God's Word enlightened by the Spirit on the other side. There would be no comparison between the weighty values of the two. God's Word is inexhaustible in its value.

And we also thank God continually because, when you received the word of God,... you accepted it not as the word of men, but as it actually is, the word of God, which is **at work in you** who believe (1 Thessalonians 2:13, **emphasis**).

God's Word interpreted and applied by His Spirit is like a javelin thrown at its mark. His Words are living speech, hurled from one mind to another.

"God's word has this aimed, intentional, personal nature. When we are spoken to this way, piercingly and penetratingly, we are not the same. These words get inside us and work their meaning in us."¹

I wonder if you could take a few moments now and summarize a few of the powerful benefits the relational Trinity offers to you and me through His Word. Take a listening posture towards God. Which one, specific benefit is most appropriate for today? Take a listening posture towards God.

My Summary of How Important God's Word Is to my Relationship with Him:

Bonus exercise. Read Psalm 119, the longest Psalm. Almost every verse uses a synonym for God's Word. Read rapidly, focusing on just two ideas.

1. What is the Psalmist's **attitude** towards God's Word?
2. What **benefits** do we discover for those who engage with the Word and act on it?

¹ Eugene Peterson, *Answering God*, HarperCollins Publishers, 1989, p. 25.