

DAY 13 The Living Word

TODAY'S READING: Hebrews 4:12 (NIV)

by John Tedford

Burn a Bible—we shrug. Use the pages as wrapping paper or toilet paper—we sigh. It doesn't seem to matter to Christendom what you do with our printed Scriptures. The sacredness of the Christian's Holy Book comes not from the ink and paper used, not from the physical words—be they Greek or Hebrew or Aramaic or English or Urdu or Arabic, and not from any physical or earthly properties, but from the reality that they are the living Words of the living God, the Creator of heaven and earth. Do whatever you want to the written page, God's Word won't disappear!

God being God, the only true God, the Creator, the Source of all life, and Sustainer of all life, brought forth life by His Word. He spoke and life sprang into existence. His purpose was to glorify Himself by the existence of life, so His creation reflects His nature. Although His creation reveals His nature, humans who are lost and dead because of sin, required more revelation than creation to bring us back to a state of life. So God in His grace gave us His written Word. Life to bring life.

People say to me, “I am not going to line my life up with something that was written 2,000 to 3,000 years ago by men who are long dead!” If the words in the Bible contained are the words of men who are now long dead, I would agree wholeheartedly, BUT the Bible contains the Words of a God who is very much alive and therefore those Words are alive!

We know God is alive because we see His activity everywhere in creation, and we sense His Presence. We know His Word is alive because we see its activity in people's lives, and we see His Presence in its pages. Why do the lyrics of songs written 3,000 years ago in an archaic language that were put to music long lost, still speak into the hearts of modern people like us? Because the Psalms are the living Word of a living God and He shows Himself to us in those lyrics! Why do adults who have been living destructive lives, suddenly begin to live in ways that benefit themselves, their families and their communities? In ways that glorify their Creator? Because they discover that the Words contained in the Scriptures bring life, and bring it to abundance!

Moses told the Israelites these Words are life (Deuteronomy 32:47), the Lord Jesus told Satan that these Words are life (Matthew 4:4) and Peter declared that Jesus had the Words of eternal life (John 6:68). John tells us that Jesus is the Word — which taken literally means that Jesus is Scripture come to life, and also means that the Word of God (the speech of God) is the second person of the Trinity. The writer to the Hebrews declares that the Word of God is living and active.

God established Scripture, God made it alive, God gave it authority, and God will defend Scripture. The printed words on the pages of our Bibles by themselves are just words, but combined with the work of the Holy Spirit, they become alive and bring life to all who obey. The Bible calls those who say there is no God “fools” but our Lord called those of us who read the Scripture but don't obey it “fools”. So friend, let us open our Bibles in whatever language we speak — let us bow before the living God, and ask Him to open our minds that we might discover the meaning, to open our hearts that we might decide to obey, and to open our eyes that we might see Him as He truly is!

—John Tedford serves as Senior Pastor at Parkdale Baptist in Belleville, Ontario. He and his wife Wanda have seven children, with three still living at home.

“For the word of God is alive and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart.”

—Hebrews 4:12

The Bible brings LIFE to any who would obey it.