

Title: The Power of the Word
Scripture: Jeremiah 23:25-29
Series: The Word of God

1. Introduction:

- a. Over the last couple of months, we have spent much time discussing the Word of God. Specifically we have preached the following sermons:
 - i. The Beauty of the Word,
 - ii. The Sufficiency of the Word,
 - iii. The Perfection of the Word,
 - iv. ...and The Necessity of the Word.
- b. It has been my prayer that this small series has had an indelible impact on your Christian walk.
- c. We have seen through these sermons that the Christian is to have the highest view of the Word of God.
 - i. In our sermon entitled The Beauty of the Word, we experienced the miracle of a people coming back to the Lord through the preaching of His Word. The Prophet Ezra read the scriptures and the immediate impact upon the spiritual lives of the returning captives was a blessed grace. We saw a people openly crying because for the first time they understood the beauty and majesty of God through His Word. We saw a people anxious to learn more and live biblically.
 - ii. In our sermon entitled The Sufficiency of the Word, we saw Christ both rebuke and teach the Sadducees in regards to the doctrine of the resurrection from the dead. We understood that the bible is sufficient and has all that we need in

order to know and love Christ correctly. Jesus taught that the bible is sufficient down to the very verb tenses it employs. We were challenged to come to the Word and acknowledge its truth in all subject matter.

- iii. In the sermon entitled The Perfection of the Word, we saw that the word of God is so sure and perfect that it must be kept whole-heartedly. Christ is not interested in a mere outward keeping of rules and traditions but in an inward fulfilling of the Word of God through transformed hearts. We were blessed to see that Christ kept and fulfilled the very law that we could not in our unconverted state. We realized that we are now law keepers in that we rely on Christ's righteous keeping of the Law on our behalf. It is the Christian that can now fulfill the law of God by keeping the two commandments that Christ taught:

1. We must love God with all our heart, mind, soul, and strength
2. We must love our neighbor and treat him the way we would want to be treated.

- iv. Finally, in our sermon entitled The Necessity of the Word, we learned that we are in desperate need of God's Word in order to navigate the perils of this world. We saw in the life of Joshua, how God commanded Joshua to

1. Have only one singular authority: **This Book of the Law**
2. Continuously speak the Word of God: **shall not depart from your mouth,**

3. Think deeply about the word: **but you shall meditate on it**
 4. Let his meditation take extensive time: **day and night,**
 5. Be careful to obey: **so that you may be careful to do according**
 6. Under submission to the entirety of the Word: **to all that is written in it.**
 7. Mark success in being a genuine follower of God: **For then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have good success.**
 8. We learned that in order to live rightly the Word of God must be at the core of our Christian life.
- d. Today, by God's grace, we are going to study The Power of the Word of God as it does its work both in the life of those who will believe and those that will not. The setting for our passage is simple.
- i. Jeremiah the prophet finds himself ministering to an ever increasingly sinful people.
 1. He calls them to repent and believe the Gospel but the people are convinced that they are a saved people by virtue of their ethnicity. The false prophets have convinced a majority of them that they were God's people by because they were Jewish.
 2. Jeremiah reminds them repeatedly that true religion is one of the heart. A heart converted by and sensitive to the Word of God.

- ii. The problem in Israel at the time was that the nation was filled with deceptive competing voices from the false prophets.
- iii. In the midst of this, it would have been easy for Jeremiah to loose heart and yet God would not allow it.
 - 1. If Jeremiah is to be the only true teacher in a sea of false and terrible ministers, Jeremiah's ministry would have the divine effect. God's Word has the power to convert those whom God has elected unto salvation and to condemn those that refuse God.

2. Verses 25-27: The Evil of the False Minsters: I have heard what the prophets have said who prophesy lies in my name, saying, 'I have dreamed, I have dreamed!' (26) How long shall there be lies in the heart of the prophets who prophesy lies, and who prophesy the deceit of their own heart, (27) who think to make my people forget my name by their dreams that they tell one another, even as their fathers forgot my name for Baal?

- a. Verse 25 begins with a stark statement. God has heard the false prophets as they minister lies instead of truth. God has taken noticed and recorded their evil. Their evil will not go unpunished
 - i. Beloved, nothing escapes the attention of God. This is an incredible reassuring word for us today because like Jeremiah, it seems that many deceivers have infiltrated the church. We are to

take note that God has heard and one day He will judge these false minsters with incredible severity.

1. Beloved, one day, purity will reign.

b. In verse 26, God poses a question. How long will these deceivers continue to lie and claim that God has sent them?

i. We find that their message does not come from God but instead from their own evil hearts. As we have learned in our study through Timothy, they prophesy in order to seek ungodly gain.

1. This has always been the case:

a. **1 Kings 22:6-8** Then the king of Israel gathered the prophets together, about four hundred men, and said to them, “Shall I go to battle against Ramoth-gilead, or shall I refrain?” And they said, “Go up, for the Lord will give it into the hand of the king.” (7) But Jehoshaphat said, “Is there not here another prophet of the LORD of whom we may inquire?” (8) And the king of Israel said to Jehoshaphat, “There is yet one man by whom we may inquire of the LORD, Micaiah the son of Imlah, but I hate him, for he never prophesies good concerning me, but evil.” And Jehoshaphat said, “Let not the king say so.”

- c. Verse 27 then exposes the outcome of the ministry of these false teachers. All false teachers will lead you away from God's Gospel and from God Himself. They will cause you, through their lies and false life example, to forget the true God and give yourself over to idolatry.
 - i. This is why we must guard our hearts and listen to the only true voice of our Savior. If we are His, we will follow only Him.
 - 1. **John 10:27-28** My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me. (28) I give them eternal life, and they will never perish, and no one will snatch them out of my hand.
3. Verse 28: God Allows Us to Compare the False with the True: Let the prophet who has a dream tell the dream, but let him who has my word speak my word faithfully. What has straw in common with wheat? declares the LORD.
- a. God's solution to the pandemic of false teaching is clearly laid before us. God allows them to continue their false ministry. He allows them to continue their work because God's truth will ultimately win.
 - i. Beloved, rejoice with me in this. The true Word of God always and definitely wins. We might be in the minority today, and we might seem to be losing ground to the false but Beloved, we will win because God's Word will never pass nor fail. Praise be His name!
 - ii. Notice that God allows the false so that we can see it compared alongside the true. Let the false

prophet speak his lies but let the man of God that has God's holy Word speak God's Word faithfully.

1. Beloved, this is you and I. In the midst of this crazy world with so much false teaching, let us faithfully preach God's truth.
 - a. The Gospel and our need for Christ
- iii. What is the outcome? Quite simply, to those that God is pleased to save, the Word will shine in its brilliance.

1. **What has straw in common with wheat?**

- a. False teaching is **straw**. It cannot satisfy nor feed the desperate soul. It is useless for human consumption. Those that eat straw will die!
 - b. True teaching is **wheat**. It nourishes. It is the bread that sustains us. It is essential for preserving life. Those that eat wheat will live!
 - c. Beloved, this is our message to the world. Come and eat God's wheat and live or eat the world's straw and die.
2. Compare both! Examine both! Those that have been made hungry by God will choose the wheat.
 - a. **Psalms 81:10** I am the LORD your God, who brought you up out of the land of Egypt. Open your mouth wide, and I will fill it.
 - b. **Isaiah 55:1-2** "Come, everyone who thirsts, come to the waters; and he who

has no money, come, buy and eat!
Come, buy wine and milk without
money and without price. (2) Why do
you spend your money for that which is
not bread, and your labor for that which
does not satisfy? Listen diligently to
me, and eat what is good, and delight
yourselves in rich food.

- c. **John 6:33-35** For the bread of God is
he who comes down from heaven and
gives life to the world.” (34) They
said to him, “Sir, give us this bread
always.” (35) Jesus said to them, “I
am the bread of life; whoever comes to
me shall not hunger, and whoever
believes in me shall never thirst.

4. Verse 29: The Power of the Word to Destroy Wickedness:
Is not my word like fire, declares the LORD, and like a
hammer that breaks the rock in pieces?

- a. In this verse God uses two similes (figurative language
in which he compares two things using the word like)
to describe the power of His Word to deal with the
false teacher.
- i. The first comparison is to fire. The Word of God
is a fire that consumes and devours the false. If
the Word is wheat to the spiritually hungry, it
must also be a fire that destroys those that would
pervert the way.

- ii. The second comparison is to a hammer that breaks and tears the false into pieces and destroys them.
 - iii. If men despise God's word, it cannot be deprived of its strength and power to judge said men. If it is not wheat to them, it will be like fire or like a hammer that utterly consumes and shatters them on the day of judgement.
- b. This is the Power of God's Word. It saves the elect and convicts the obstinate. Therefore, we must preach this Word. It is this word that can save:
 - i. **Romans 10:17** So faith comes from hearing, and hearing through the word of Christ.
 - ii. Our job is to preach with sincerity and passion. **2 Corinthians 5:20** Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, God making his appeal through us. We implore you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God.
 - iii. However, we are to let the Word do that which God destined it to do. **2 Corinthians 2:15-16** For we are the aroma of Christ to God among those who are being saved and among those who are perishing, (16) to one a fragrance from death to death, to the other a fragrance from life to life. Who is sufficient for these things?

5. Benediction:

- a. **Ezekiel 34:11-13** "For thus says the Lord GOD: Behold, I, I myself will search for my sheep and will seek them out. (12) As a shepherd seeks out his flock when he is among his sheep that have been scattered,

so will I seek out my sheep, and I will rescue them from all places where they have been scattered on a day of clouds and thick darkness. (13) And I will bring them out from the peoples and gather them from the countries, and will bring them into their own land. And I will feed them on the mountains of Israel, by the ravines, and in all the inhabited places of the country.

**Public Reading of Scripture:
Ezequiel 34:1-10**