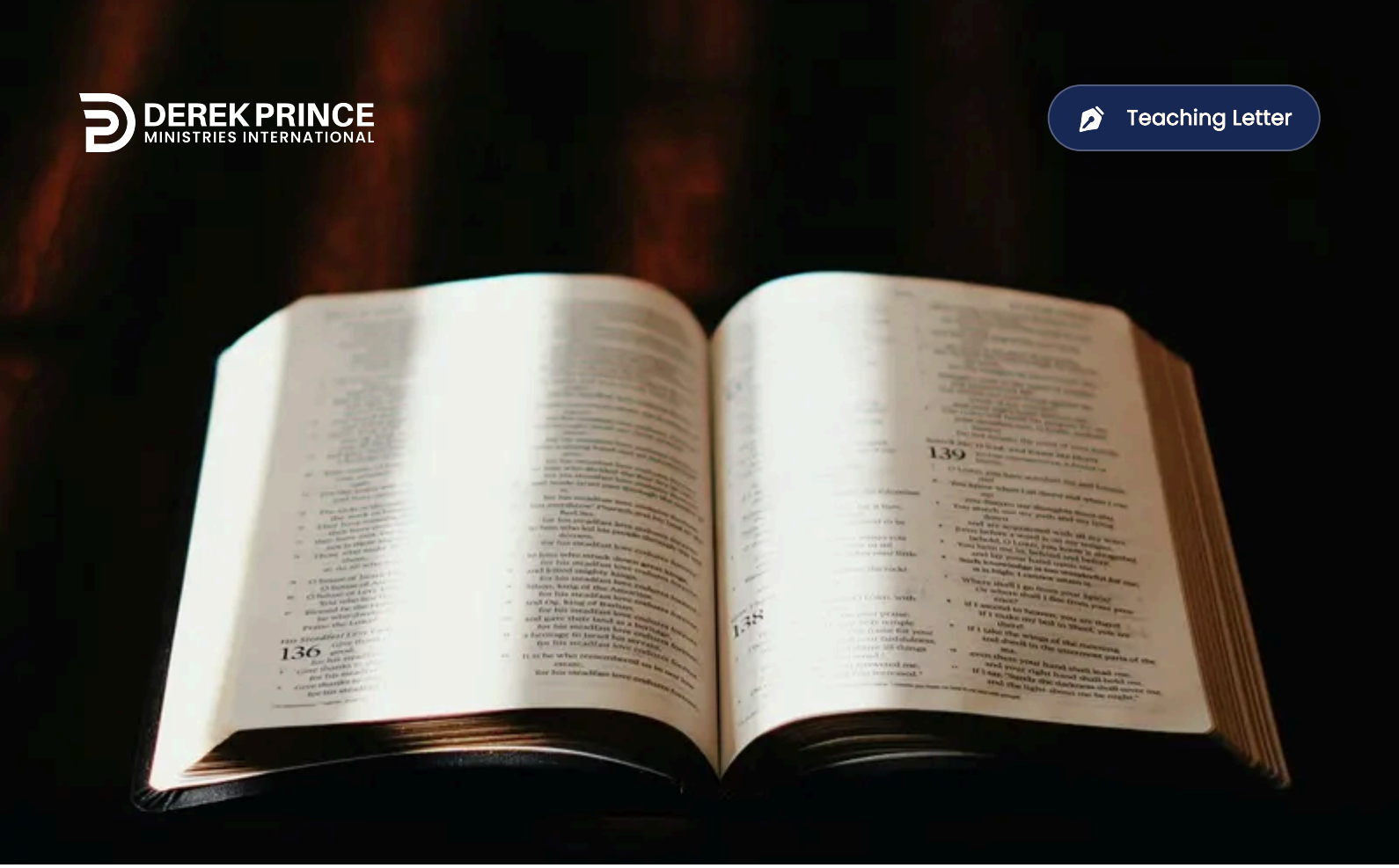
DEREK PRINCE
MINISTRIES INTERNATIONAL

Teaching Letter



The Active and Powerful Word



Part 6/6

Standing Strong

By Derek Prince

In the last teaching letter, we began exploring the comprehensive authority of the Word of God. We learned from Paul in 2 Timothy 3:16–17 that:

> All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.

If you want to be complete and thoroughly equipped for every good work, the source of it all is Scripture.

We also examined Jesus' relationship to the Word—both spoken and written—and found Him to both completely support and fulfill the authority of the Scripture.

Throughout all of this, we saw that God established His Holy Spirit as His means of directing the writing and implementation of His Word. I concluded with an illustration from John of the fact that the Holy Spirit always glorifies Jesus. If you ever are confronted by spiritual manifestations that do not glorify Jesus, but give glory in some other direction, you can be sure that it is not the Holy Spirit. The supreme ministry of the Holy Spirit is to reveal and to glorify Jesus.

What Can the Word Do?

In Hebrews 4 we get an analysis of the nature of the Word of God:

> For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart. (v. 12)

The Word of God is not dead—it is not just black marks on white paper. It is alive, and wherever it comes it brings life. It is more powerful than all the lies with which Satan has filled the world.

© 2021 - Derek Prince Ministries, International, Inc.

The Bible also reveals that man is a triune being (spirit, soul and body) created in the likeness of a triune God (Father, Son and Holy Spirit). The only way we can learn to distinguish between the soul and the spirit is by the Word of God. It is the only instrument that is sharp enough to penetrate and separate what is soulish from what is spiritual. In 1 Corinthians 2, Paul says that "the natural [soulish] man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God ..., for they are spiritually discerned" (v. 14).

The Word can also divide between the joints and the marrow. This speaks of the remarkable penetration of the Word—it goes deeper than any surgeon's scalpel or psychiatrist's probing can penetrate. It is the only tool that takes us right into the very depths of human personality.

Somebody once told me, "When you're reading your Bible, your Bible is also reading you." That is so vivid to me because when I started to read the Bible, I was simply a professional philosopher. But as I went on reading I began to feel different about myself—my self-conceit, my pride, my arrogance and my intellectual assurance all began to wilt before the Scripture. And yet, I didn't believe it at the time—but the Word was still doing its work.

You Must Receive

In 1 Thessalonians Paul is writing to believers who had responded in a wonderful way to the gospel.

> For this reason we also thank God without ceasing, because when you received the word of God which you heard from us, you welcomed it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which also effectively works in you who believe. (1 Thessalonians 1:13)

What the Bible will do in us depends in part on how we receive it. When we receive the Word from God, we have access to something truly remarkable.

> His divine power has given to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him who called us by glory and virtue, by which have been given to us exceedingly great and precious promises, that through these you may be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust. (2 Peter 1:3–4)

That is an amazing statement! God's divine, omnipotent power has already given to us everything we are ever going to need! New Age philosophy essentially teaches that you can become a god. That is obviously false for one basic reason: God is uncreated; we are created. The created can never become uncreated. It is a deception. But we can become partakers of the nature of God as we receive and apply the promises in His Word. It is the key to our success. It is the most precious gift that God has ever given us.

Special Effects

Paul said to the Thessalonians that God's Word works effectively in you because you believe it. So I want to look at eight effects that God's Word can have in your life.

God's Word produces faith. During World War II, I was in the hospital for an entire year in the deserts of North Africa with a skin disease that the doctors couldn't cure. I was a new Christian and I kept saying to myself, "I know if I had faith God would heal me." But the next thing I always said was, "But I don't have faith."

Then one day Romans 10:17 jumped off the page: "So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." If you don't have faith, you can get it. You don't need to stay without it.

In the time of the New Testament, the majority of the people who could read would read out loud, even if they were by themselves. There is benefit in reading out loud because even when you hear yourself read, faith comes.

God's Word is the seed of the new birth. It is by His Word that we are actually brought into His family.

> Since you have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit in sincere love of the brethren, love one another fervently with a pure heart, having been born again, not of corruptible seed but incorruptible, through the word of God which lives and abides forever. (1 Peter 1:22–23)

The "incorruptible seed" is God's Word received into the heart by faith, producing the new birth. The nature of a seed determines the nature of the life that comes from it. If you plant an apple seed, you don't get an orange tree. The

Word of God is incorruptible and the life it produces is incorruptible—it's divine, holy, eternal.

God's Word is spiritual nourishment. Once you have been born again, you need nourishment. God's Word has provided suitable nourishment for spiritual growth. When you are a spiritual infant you need milk:

> ... as newborn babes, desire the pure milk of the word, that you may grow thereby. (1 Peter 2:2)

Many of us could testify that when we were first born again the one thing we wanted to do was read the Bible. We were born healthy infants with a healthy appetite for the one thing that could really nourish us.

As we grow, we need more solid food. In Hebrews 5 the writer is telling Jewish people—who had knowledge of the Scripture from their background—what some of us may need to hear: that because of all you know, you should be doing better than you are.

> For though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you again the first principles of the oracles of God; and you have come to need milk and not solid food. For everyone who partakes only of milk is unskilled in the word of righteousness, for he is a babe. But solid food belongs to those who are of full age, that is, those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil. (v. 12–14)

To mature you need to apply the Word of God. You need to use it to recognize the forces that you are dealing with. If you don't live actively by the Word of God, you will never be able to take more than milk. Solid food is for those who have practiced, exercised, and applied the Word diligently and regularly in their lives.

God's Word brings mental illumination. In Psalm 119, the psalmist is speaking to God and he says:

> The entrance of Your words gives light: it gives understanding to the simple. (v. 130)

The entrance of God's Word into our minds and into our hearts gives light. It is different from education. Education is not light; you can be educated and be totally in the dark. You may be seeking education, but are you also finding wisdom? They are not the same. Education is useful, but it is not light.

God's Word provides physical healing. I say this out of my own personal experience.

> Fools, because of their transgression, and because of their iniquities, were afflicted. Their soul abhorred all manner of food, and they drew near to the gates of death. Then they cried out to the Lord in their trouble, and He saved them out of their distresses. He sent His word and healed them, and delivered them from their destructions. (Psalm 107:17–20)

These people were at the point of death, and it suddenly occurred to them it might help to pray. And God "saved them out of their distresses." Notice three things that God does when He sends His Word: He saves, He heals and He delivers. The three great acts of God's mercy—saving from sin, healing from sickness and delivering from demon power—He accomplishes primarily through His Word.

> My son, give attention to my words; incline your ear to my sayings. Do not let them depart from your eyes; keep them in the midst of your heart. For they are life to those who find them, and health to all their flesh. (Proverbs 4:20–22)

I had been in the hospital in North Africa for about seven months when I discovered Romans 10:17: "Faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." I began to look through the Scripture again with a new hope. But I had a problem. I read promise after promise about healing, but I thought, "That only means He heals my soul. He's not really interested in my body—that's just corrupt, it's going to die anyhow." But when I got to Proverbs 4:22, I couldn't get around it. God says His words are "life to those who find them, and health to all their flesh." Not even a philosopher can make "flesh" mean anything but flesh.

Then I looked in the margin, and the alternative reading for "health" was "medicine." I thought, "How do people take their medicine?" The answer often is: three times daily, after meals. Over a period of a few months, I took God's Word as my medicine three times daily after every meal, and it gave me complete and permanent healing in one of the most unhealthy climates in the world!

God's Word is the key to victory over sin and Satan. Many of our young people today question whether it is possible to lead a pure life. Most of their educators will tell them it isn't. But the Bible says it is.

> How can a young man cleanse his way? By taking heed according to Your Word. Your word I have hidden in my heart, that I might not sin against You. (Psalm 119:9, 11)

I thank God that when I worked amongst African young people, I saw those words fulfilled time and time again. They were made pure and they led clean lives because they gave heed to the Word of God.

God's Word cleanses us. It makes us holy and acceptable to Him.

> Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her, that He might sanctify and cleanse her with the washing of water by the word, that He might present her to Himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that she should be holy and without blemish. (Ephesians 5:25–27)

Husbands, that is not a suggestion; it is a command! How will Jesus provide Himself with a bride who is holy and without blemish? Through the washing of water by the Word of God. The Word of God sanctifies us; it cleanses us. By the blood of Jesus' sacrifice He redeems us, but by the water of His Word He cleanses and sanctifies us. We need both. We are redeemed by the blood that we might be cleansed by the Word.

God's Word is a spiritual mirror. When you look into it, it doesn't show your physical appearance, but what you are really like inside.

> For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man observing his natural face in a mirror; for he observes himself, goes away, and immediately forgets what kind of man he was. But he who looks into the perfect law of liberty and continues in it, and is not a forgetful hearer but a doer of the work, this one will be blessed in what he does. (James 1:23–25)

When you look in a mirror and see something wrong, the sensible thing to do is tend to it. If your hair is out of order, you brush it. James says you need to do that when you look in the mirror of the Word of God. You need to see your spiritual self in it and act on whatever it shows you that you need to do.

If, when God's mirror first reveals to us the truth of our own sin, we immediately act upon this revelation—repent, believe, and obey the gospel—then the next time we look into the mirror, we no longer see our old sinful nature. Instead we see ourselves as God now sees us in Christ: forgiven, cleansed, justified—a new creation. We are made to understand that a glorious miracle has taken place.



© 2021 - Derek Prince Ministries, International, Inc.