



**Bible Studies on**

# **Listening to God**

**(Studies about the Word of God)**

**Leader Notes**

**4 studies**

**Study 1: God's Word is Like God (Psalm 19)**

**Study 2: God and The Word (an OT survey)**

**Study 3: Jesus and The Word (Gospel of John)**

**Study 4: The Holy Spirit and The Word (a NT survey)**

*'Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God.'*  
*Deuteronomy 8:3 and Matthew 4:4*

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## INTRODUCTION

Welcome to this four-part series of Bible Studies on the Bible! Listening to God.

The aim of these studies to do a quick systematic survey of what the Bible says about itself. There are four general areas that these studies will seek to cover:

Study 1 - God's Word is Like God: Beautiful, True and Good

Study 2 - God and The Word

Study 3 - Jesus and The Word

Study 4 - The Holy Spirit and The Word

As the Bible is a big book, you will not be surprised to find that we will look at a lot of Bible references in these studies. Most are printed in this booklet to make it easy and quick to find in a group setting. It is hoped that in reading and discussing these words that you might help one another grow in your love as your knowledge and depth of insight expands. May this discussion of the Bible texts also help you grow in confidence so that you might know how to discern what is best (Phil 1:9-11).

We can pray that in looking at the wonderful Words of God, that we might indeed follow them and put what they say into practice. May your study be one which encourages you to consider your Bible reading disciplines and, as James says: to not merely listen to the Word but also do what it says (James 1:21).

Enjoy.

## Study 1: GOD'S WORD IS LIKE GOD: BEAUTIFUL, TRUE AND GOOD

*[LEADER: Study's aim is to grow in love of God's word – so that we keep delighting in it, obeying it and eating it.]*

Introduction

### **Q1. What aspect/s about God's Word (the Bible) that you find most difficult?**

*[LEADER: keep a list of the questions – in the next few weeks you might find we cover some of these aspects.]*

We often have many questions about the Bible, usually focusing on its trustworthiness, sufficiency, clarity, and authority. Today, we will look at what the Bible says about itself in Psalm 19. We will learn what the Bible most often says about itself: that God's word is just like God – it is beautiful, true, and good.

In the following three weeks, we will cover:

- God and the Word
- Jesus and the Word
- The Holy Spirit and the Word

### **Psalm 19 (NIV2011) <sup>[a]</sup>**

#### **For the director of music. A psalm of David.**

<sup>1</sup>The heavens declare the glory of God;  
the skies proclaim the work of his hands.

<sup>2</sup>Day after day they pour forth speech;  
night after night they reveal knowledge.

<sup>3</sup>They have no speech, they use no words;  
no sound is heard from them.

<sup>4</sup>Yet their voice<sup>[b]</sup> goes out into all the earth,  
their words to the ends of the world.

In the heavens God has pitched a tent for the sun.

<sup>5</sup> It is like a bridegroom coming out of his chamber,  
like a champion rejoicing to run his course.

<sup>6</sup>It rises at one end of the heavens  
and makes its circuit to the other;  
nothing is deprived of its warmth.

<sup>7</sup>The law of the Lord is perfect,  
refreshing the soul.

The statutes of the Lord are trustworthy,  
making wise the simple.

<sup>8</sup>The precepts of the Lord are right,  
giving joy to the heart.

The commands of the Lord are radiant,  
giving light to the eyes.

<sup>9</sup>The fear of the Lord is pure,  
enduring forever.  
The decrees of the Lord are firm,  
and all of them are righteous.

<sup>10</sup>They are more precious than gold,  
than much pure gold;  
they are sweeter than honey,  
than honey from the honeycomb.

<sup>11</sup>By them your servant is warned;  
in keeping them there is great reward.

<sup>12</sup>But who can discern their own errors?  
Forgive my hidden faults.

<sup>13</sup>Keep your servant also from willful sins;  
may they not rule over me.  
Then I will be blameless,  
innocent of great transgression.

<sup>14</sup>May these words of my mouth and this meditation of my heart  
be pleasing in your sight,  
Lord, my Rock and my Redeemer.

Footnotes

- a. [Psalm 19:1](#) In Hebrew texts 19:1-14 is numbered 19:2-15.
- b. [Psalm 19:4](#) Septuagint, Jerome and Syriac; Hebrew *measuring line*

Psalm 19 sparkles with the glory of God in his beautiful, true and good Word. We will look at each of these in turn.

## A. GOD'S WORD IN CREATION – It is beautiful!

### Read Psalm 19:1-6

- Highlight all the references to words and speaking.

### Q2. David depicts the creation – the heavens, day and night, the sun – as speaking.

#### Consider:

- **What do they speak about? 19:1-2**
  
- **To whom do they speak? 19:3-4**
  
- **What does the sun tell us about God's glory in 19:5-6?**

*[LEADER: Creation, God's handiwork, declares/proclaims/pours out speech/reveals knowledge/gives voice to God's glory. This message goes to all the world – everywhere the sun shines, the night falls, everywhere under heaven. His glory is seen in the sun – it is like the joy of a groom leaving his wedding chamber, or an athlete running a race.]*

Creation speaks in inaudible words that our ears cannot hear. David hears creation speaking of God's glory because he listens to God's Word. Psalm 19:1-6 parallels the creation account in Genesis 1:1-16 – see table below. The Bible helps David see and hear how creation reveals the beauty of God's speech.

<b>Genesis 1:1-16</b>	<b>Psalm 19:1-6</b>
<sup>1</sup> In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. <sup>2</sup> Now the earth was formless and empty, darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God was hovering over the waters.	<sup>1</sup> The heavens declare the glory of God; the skies proclaim the work of his hands.
<sup>3</sup> And God said, "Let there be light," and there was light. <sup>4</sup> God saw that the light was good, and he separated the light from the darkness. <sup>5</sup> <b>God called the light "day," and the darkness he called "night."</b> And there was evening, and there was morning—the first day...	<sup>2</sup> Day after day they pour forth speech; night after night they reveal knowledge. <sup>3</sup> They have no speech, they use no words; no sound is heard from them. <sup>4</sup> Yet their voice goes out into all the earth, their words to the ends of the world. In the heavens God has pitched a tent for the sun.

<p><sup>14</sup> And God said, “Let there be lights in the vault of the sky to separate the day from the night, and let them serve as signs to mark sacred times, and days and years, <sup>15</sup> and let them be lights in the vault of the sky to give light on the earth.” And it was so. <sup>16</sup> <b>God made two great lights—the greater light to govern the day and the lesser light to govern the night. He also made the stars.</b></p>	<p>In the heavens God has pitched a tent for the sun.</p> <p><sup>5</sup> It is like a bridegroom coming out of his chamber, like a champion rejoicing to run his course.</p> <p><sup>6</sup> It rises at one end of the heavens and makes its circuit to the other; nothing is deprived of its warmth.</p>
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**Q3. How do you think considering creation in the light of God’s word moves David? How does it move you?** (Remember David has written a poetic response to creation that is meant to move you.)

*[LEADER: David is filled with awe, wonder and joy when he considers how creation reveals how glorious its creator is.]*

**B. GOD’S WORD IN HIS LAW – it is true!**

David continues to reflect on God’s Word, this time on God’s law. *Law, statutes, precepts, command, fear, and decrees of the LORD* are different terms for God’s Word – see 1 Kings 2:1-3. They primarily refer to the first five books of the Bible (The Pentateuch), written by Moses, which are the foundation of the relationship between God and his people. The rest of the Bible builds on and fulfils these teachings.

*[LEADER:*

- *Law - the first five books of the Bible describing God’s relationship with his people.*
- *Statutes – God’s directives which help us to understand something about what he is concerned about. ESV translates this ‘testimonies’.*
- *Precepts – God’s directives for upright living*
- *Commands – God’s way for the how the righteous are to live*
- *Fear of the Lord is closely associated with God’s word e.g. Psalm 25:12-14, Proverbs 1:1-7.*
- *Decrees – rules which imply judgement.]*

**Read Psalm 19:7-9**

- Highlight the six characteristics of God’s word.
- Highlight the six things the word of God does.
- What are the four parts of us that are referred to?

**Q4. Read this chart and in your own words fill in the column “God’s word is able to ...”**

<b>Because God’s word is ...</b>	<b>God’s word is able to ...</b>
<b>Perfect</b> – integrity, wholeness, flawless. (No gaps or internal contradictions.)	<i>Revive the <u>soul</u> = restoring, return, repentance - right with God</i>
<b>Trustworthy</b> – sure, the true account of reality and what should be done. (No lies.)	<i>Make wise the simple (<u>mind</u>). Made foolish by sin we need the right beliefs to live the happy life of holy living.</i>
<b>Right</b> – for our good. (Different from what our culture in its rebellion against God says.)	<i>Give Joy in the <u>heart</u> - no sorrow of guilt and shame</i>
<b>Radiant</b> – beautiful in holiness. (Not corrupting.)	<i>Enlighten <u>eyes</u> - can see, no longer remain in the darkness of sin</i>
<b>Pure</b> – ritual purity that enables us to enter God’s presence. (Not defiling.)	<i>Last forever – guarantee we enter God’s presence</i>
<b>Firm and righteous</b> – God will always act justly – what he says he does. (Not unjust, not saying one thing and doing another.)	<i>Stands against sin and brings justice.</i>

**C. GOD’S WORD IN DAVID’S LIFE – it is good!**

**Read Psalm 19:10-14**

- Highlight the blessings that God’s word gives us.

When David meditates on God’s Word, he is moved by its goodness in wooing and warning him. God’s Word shows David that he is God’s servant in need of God’s Word and God’s mercy.

**Q5. How does God's Word impact David's desires and emotions in 19:10-11?**

*[LEADER: God’s word is valuable and delightful – it woos and it warns. The Word of God shapes David's desires, influencing what he finds pleasurable. While gold and honey are delightful, God's Word surpasses them, renewing the soul, imparting wisdom, enlightening the eyes, and bringing joy to the heart. God's Word uniquely woos and warns, revealing the goodness, truth and beauty of God and his way. When we have David’s attitude to God and his Word we will mine God’s Word for it’s good, beautiful and true delights and warnings.]*

**Q6. David knows that God's Word will reveal his sin and need for God's mercy – how does this shape his prayer in 19:12-14?**

*[LEADER: David knows that God's Word will reveal his sin and need for God's mercy. He implores God for forgiveness of hidden sins and seeks protection from intentional, hardened transgressions. We are often blind to our own sin, but God's Word exposes our hidden and presumptuous sins. As we read the Scriptures our sins are exposed and God's forgiveness is proclaimed. We respond in repentance and faith, knowing we are dependent on God's mercy to forgive our sin, to expose and pardon our sins, preventing us from persisting in actions that jeopardize our faith in the gospel. Unaddressed hidden sins can escalate to presumptuous sins, posing a threat to our faith. Recognising the glory of God in his Word, and acknowledging God as his rock and redeemer, David offers a profound prayer. He desires that his words and thoughts be pleasing to God. God is present with us in his Word and through his Word he changes our words and thoughts and deeds.]*

How wonderful it is that in Jesus this is our prayer too. Jesus is our Rock and our Redeemer. His flawless thoughts, words and sacrifice secured our sure redemption.

**Implications**

**Q7. How does Psalm 19 deepen your appreciation for the goodness, beauty, and truth of God's Word? Then consider –**

- How does this influence your attitude and approach to God's Word?
- Share a time that the goodness, beauty and truth of God's Word has warned or wooed you.
- Why or when doesn't this seem true for you when you read the Scriptures?

**For reflection this week**

Psalm 119 is another Psalm (a long lone) that celebrates the beauty, truth and goodness of God's word. Take time to read and reflect on Psalm 119 this week.

*[LEADER: It may be helpful to have a discussion about personal Bible reading habits. It would be good if this series helped to encourage the discipline of personal Bible reading.]*

## Study 2 - GOD AND THE WORD

### Recap

God's Word is beautiful, good and true. Share how this week you have been wooed and warned by God's Word.

### God and his words

*"... you have exalted above all things your name and your word."  
Psalm 138:2*

Our God communicates with us in human words that we can understand! In Psalm 138, God tells us that his word is on par with God himself, and like God it is above all things!

### Intro Discussion: What do our words do? Why do they matter?

*[LEADER: Speech is an act; we speak to achieve things. Words communicate our thoughts, requests, feelings, our very selves. They perform actions e.g. build up or tear down. If we don't understand what a person's words are trying to achieve, we don't understand the person. But speech does more than conveying information or actions. It creates relationships of trust and obligation between us. To say, "I trust your words" is to say, "I trust you." Words are the means by which we reveal ourselves and have relationship with each other.]*

What does the Bible say is happening when God speaks? Today we consider what the Bible teaches us about the relationship between God, his Word and us. The Bible makes it clear that we cannot separate God and his Word, and his Word is integral to the relationship we enjoy with him. We will see:

- A. God acts through his Word
- B. God relates to us through his Word
- C. We relate to God through his Word

## **A. GOD ACTS THROUGH HIS WORD**

### **Q1. What do these verses teach us about God, his Word and his actions?**

#### **Genesis 1:3**

<sup>3</sup>And God said, “Let there be light”, and there was light.

#### **Isaiah 55:10-11**

<sup>10</sup> 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 that it yields seed for the sower and bread for the eater,

<sup>11</sup> 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.

#### **Hebrews 4:12**

<sup>12</sup> 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.

God's speech and action are inseparable. When we read the Bible, we encounter God actively speaking and working simultaneously.

### **Q2. Does anything strike you about God and his Word?**

## **B. GOD RELATES WITH US THROUGH HIS WORD**

Just as God created the world by his word, God establishes relationship with us and relates with us through his Word.

### **Q3. Genesis records God's first conversation with humankind. What do we learn about God, his words, and people in this passage?**

*[LEADER: Think - Who is God speaking to at each point in the passage? What is the purpose of his words? What does this mean for us?]*

#### **Genesis 1:26-28**

<sup>26</sup> Then God said, "Let us make mankind in our image, in our likeness, so that they may rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky, over the livestock and all the wild animals, and over all the creatures that move along the ground."

<sup>27</sup> So God created mankind in his own image,  
in the image of God he created them;  
male and female he created them.

<sup>28</sup> God blessed them and said to them, "Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it. Rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky and over every living creature that moves on the ground."

*[LEADER: The passage conveys God's words to us – God tells us his conversation within the Trinity (1:26), he tells us what he did and why he did it, when directly addressing humankind in 1:28. God relates to his creatures with his word. As beings made in God's "image" - including the ability to communicate through speech - we are designed to listen to and understand God's word, which reveals the purpose behind his creative acts. God does not merely make us by his word, he uses language to convey meaning and invite us into a personal relationship with him as our Creator.]*

God created the world and humanity by speaking, and he continues to relate to us through words. The entire Bible, not just direct quotes, is God speaking to us. We can only understand God, ourselves, and our world through his word. What a privilege (and imperative) to listen carefully to what he says!

But God's Word does more than describe relationship with God. It also reconciles us to him.

**Q4. After the Fall, God made a covenant – he spoke a word of promise – to save Abraham and his descendants (recall Genesis 12:1-3). Read Genesis 15:1-7 and highlight references to “the word of the Lord”.**

**Genesis 15:1-7**

<sup>1</sup> After this, the word of the Lord came to Abram in a vision:

“Do not be afraid, Abram. I am your shield, your very great reward.”

<sup>2</sup> But Abram said, “Sovereign Lord, what can you give me since I remain childless and the one who will inherit my estate is Eliezer of Damascus?” <sup>3</sup> And Abram said, “You have given me no children; so a servant in my household will be my heir.”

<sup>4</sup> Then the word of the Lord came to him: “This man will not be your heir, but a son who is your own flesh and blood will be your heir.” <sup>5</sup> He took him outside and said, “Look up at the sky and count the stars—if indeed you can count them.” Then he said to him, “So shall your offspring be.”

<sup>6</sup> Abram believed the Lord, and he credited it to him as righteousness.

<sup>7</sup> He also said to him, “I am the Lord, who brought you out of Ur of the Chaldeans to give you this land to take possession of it.”

**In 15:2-3, Abraham is doubting God’s promise of salvation because Abraham is childless.**

- **What is Abraham believing in 15:6?**
- **Where does Abraham’s faith/belief start?**
- **How does this passage demonstrate that God invites relationship through his word?**

*[LEADER: God's word creates and sustains faith. When Abraham hears the Lord's word, faith is produced – he trusts in God's promise, entering into a relationship with him. Abraham didn't earn righteousness; he simply trusted God's word, goodness, and faithfulness to keep his promises. God counts this trust as righteousness.]*

**Q5. What has struck you about how God relates to us through his Word?**

## C. WE RELATE TO GOD THROUGH HIS WORD

God's Word not only reconciles us to him, but it is also how we relate to God.

### Q6. What do these passages from Genesis teach us about how we are to relate to God?

*[LEADER: Think: What does obeying God involve? How does rejection of God come about?]*

#### **Genesis 2:15-17**

<sup>15</sup> The Lord God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to work it and take care of it. <sup>16</sup> And the Lord God commanded the man, "You are free to eat from any tree in the garden; <sup>17</sup> but you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for when you eat from it you will certainly die..."

#### **Genesis 3:1-6 and 23**

<sup>1</sup> Now the serpent was more crafty than any of the wild animals the Lord God had made. He said to the woman, "Did God really say, 'You must not eat from any tree in the garden?'" <sup>2</sup> The woman said to the serpent, "We may eat fruit from the trees in the garden, <sup>3</sup> but God did say, 'You must not eat fruit from the tree that is in the middle of the garden, and you must not touch it, or you will die.'" <sup>4</sup> "You will not certainly die," the serpent said to the woman. <sup>5</sup> "For God knows that when you eat from it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil." <sup>6</sup> When the woman saw that the fruit of the tree was good for food and pleasing to the eye, and also desirable for gaining wisdom, she took some and ate it. She also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate it.

...<sup>23</sup> So the Lord God banished him from the Garden of Eden to work the ground from which he had been taken.

Life comes from obeying God's word, while sin and death come from rejecting it. Rejecting God's Word is equivalent to rejecting God himself, and obeying his word is the same as obeying him. How we treat God's Word is how we treat God.

**Q7. When God miraculously redeemed his people from Egypt, they heard him speak at Mt Sinai (for more details see Exodus 19). Did those who saw God's incredible acts and heard his voice at Mt Sinai have a fuller experience of God than we do today? Discuss.**

The Bible recounts how the generation that witnessed God's mighty acts and heard his voice still failed to trust him, dying in the wilderness. In Deuteronomy 4, Moses addresses the next generation as they prepare to enter the Promised Land. Notably, Moses speaks about the encounter with God at Mt Sinai (Horeb) as if they had been present, even though they weren't born then. This is evident in the italicised words in Deuteronomy 4 below.

**Q8. What does Deuteronomy 4 teach us about how we meet and experience God?**

*[LEADER: Think: What are we to do? What aren't we to do?]*

**Deuteronomy 4:1 and 9-12 and 15-16 and 19** *(italics added)*

<sup>1</sup> Now, Israel, hear the decrees and laws I am about to teach you. Follow them so that you may live and may go in and take possession of the land the Lord, the God of your ancestors, is giving you.

<sup>9</sup> Only be careful, and watch yourselves closely so that you do not forget the things *your eyes have seen* or let them fade from your heart as long as you live. Teach them to your children and to their children after them. <sup>10</sup> Remember the day *you stood before the Lord your God at Horeb*, when he said to me, "Assemble the people before me to hear my words so that they may learn to revere me as long as they live in the land and may teach them to their children." <sup>11</sup> *You came near* and stood at the foot of the mountain while it blazed with fire to the very heavens, with black clouds and deep darkness. <sup>12</sup> *Then the Lord spoke to you out of the fire. You heard* the sound of words but saw no form; there was only a voice.

... <sup>15</sup> *You saw no form of any kind the day the Lord spoke to you at Horeb out of the fire.* Therefore watch yourselves very carefully, <sup>16</sup> so that you do not become corrupt and make for yourselves an idol, an image of any shape, whether formed like a man or a woman... <sup>19</sup> And when you look up to the sky and see the sun, the moon and the stars—all the heavenly array—do not be enticed into bowing down to them and worshiping things the Lord your God has apportioned to all the nations under heaven.

**Q9. What does Deuteronomy 4 teach us about how we meet and experience God?**

*[LEADER: Think: What are we to do? What aren't we to do? We meet God in his word. We do not have to have personally experienced the events in the Bible to be in relationship with God. It is hearing and obeying the Word that brings us into relationship with God. Note the Bible speaks the same way about us and the cross e.g. Gal 2:20 and Col 2:20 and 3:1-3. We are not to relate to God by worshipping idols or worshipping creation. It can be easy for us to see God's glory and goodness in his creation and not in his word.]*

God makes it clear – we are to meet him in his word! The life of faith is word shaped. We relate with God by listening to and obeying his Word.

**Q10. Looking closely at Deuteronomy 6, what is it to love God?**

**Deuteronomy 6:1-7**

<sup>1</sup> These are the commands, decrees and laws the Lord your God directed me to teach you to observe in the land that you are crossing the Jordan to possess, <sup>2</sup> so that you, your children and their children after them may fear the Lord your God as long as you live by keeping all his decrees and commands that I give you, and so that you may enjoy long life. <sup>3</sup> Hear, Israel, and be careful to obey so that it may go well with you and that you may increase greatly in a land flowing with milk and honey, just as the Lord, the God of your ancestors, promised you.

<sup>4</sup> Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one. <sup>5</sup> Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength. <sup>6</sup> These commandments that I give you today are to be on your hearts. <sup>7</sup> Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up.

*[LEADER: Loving God is obedience to his word and it overflows into teaching others God's word. You cannot separate loving God from God's word.]*

To love God is to listen to and obey his Word.

**Q11. How does what we have learned about God’s word in the Old Testament apply to us today? Highlight any references to God’s word in these verses from 1 Peter, then answer the questions below.**

**1 Peter 1:3 and 1:23-2:3**

<sup>3</sup> Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! In his great mercy he has given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, ... <sup>23</sup> For you have been born again, not of perishable seed, but of imperishable, through the living and enduring word of God. <sup>24</sup> For,

“All people are like grass, and all their glory is like the flowers of the field; the grass withers and the flowers fall, <sup>25</sup> but the word of the Lord endures forever.”

And this is the word that was preached to you.

<sup>2</sup> Therefore, rid yourselves of all malice and all deceit, hypocrisy, envy, and slander of every kind. <sup>2</sup> Like newborn babies, crave pure spiritual milk, so that by it you may grow up in your salvation, <sup>3</sup> now that you have tasted that the Lord is good.

- **How does Peter describe the role of God’s word in our lives?**
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- **How should we expect people will come to know who God is and believe in him?**

We have been brought into relationship with God “through the living and abiding word of God” and this same word is “the pure spiritual milk” that grows our relationship with God and his people. As we speak the word others come to believe in God and become members of his household.

**Q12. Has anything struck you about how God relates to us through his Word?**

## Implications

### Q13. What are the key truths you have learned today about God and his word:

*[LEADER: God uses human words in the Bible as his words to reveal himself and relate to us. Our response to God's word is our response to God himself. Our life with God is a life of hearing and obeying his word. God's word always achieves his purposes. It is living and active now, even in (and especially in!) its written form. God's word doesn't just describe our salvation - God's word accomplishes it. God uses the instrument of his word to bring about new birth for his people. That same word feeds and grows his people. Our relationship with God and our understanding of his person and actions come solely through his word.]*

These truths have many implications for our lives! Two of the implications are summarised in Isaiah –

#### Isaiah 66:1-2

This is what the Lord says:

“Heaven is my throne,  
and the earth is my footstool.

Where is the house you will build for me?

Where will my resting place be?

<sup>2</sup>Has not my hand made all these things,  
and so they came into being?”

declares the Lord.

“These are the ones I look on with favor:  
those who are humble and contrite in spirit,  
and who tremble at my word.

*[LEADER: It is easy to get distracted by doing big things for God. But God looks to the one who trembles before his word – to those who come humbly to the Bible to be mastered by it.]*

#### Isaiah 50:4

The Sovereign Lord has given me a well-instructed tongue,  
to know the word that sustains the weary.

He wakens me morning by morning,  
wakens my ear to listen like one being instructed.

*[LEADER: We are to teach or instruct others with God's word, we first need to be an attentive listener to God's word]*

- In what ways can we help each other tremble before the Word of God – to rightly engage with the word of God?
  
- In what ways are you listening to the word of God and teaching it to others?

**For reflection this week**

How can you be best placed to listen to the Word of God when it is preached? What helps you focus? What might help you consider it further beyond Sunday? What might help you apply it?

## Study 3 - JESUS AND THE WORD

### Recap

Last week we saw how God's word is central to our relationship with God. Share how you went with listening to and obeying God's word in the past week.

### Jesus and his words

*<sup>45</sup> Finally the temple guards went back to the chief priests and the Pharisees, who asked them, "Why didn't you bring him in?" <sup>46</sup> "No one ever spoke the way this man does," the guards replied. John 7:45-46*

Like God, Jesus communicates with us in human words that we can understand!

The Gospels often highlight the extraordinary nature of Jesus' captivating speech which left crowds in awe. Despite knowing his humble origins, people marvelled at the gracious words from his mouth (Luke 4:22). Even hardened law enforcement agents sent to arrest Jesus returned empty-handed, declaring, "No one ever spoke the way this man does" (John 7:46). Imagine words so powerful and utterly devoid of sin that they could disarm determined soldiers. Such is the impact of Jesus' speech.

Today, we'll examine the Gospel of John to understand what the Bible teaches about the relationship between Jesus, his Word, and us. The Bible clearly shows that Jesus and his Word are inseparable, and his Word is essential to our relationship with him and the Father. We will see:

- A. Jesus makes God known through his God-given life-giving words
- B. We receive the life Jesus offers by believing his words
- C. Jesus' words are written down for us by the Apostles through the Spirit

## **A. JESUS MAKES GOD KNOWN THROUGH HIS GOD-GIVEN, LIFE-GIVING WORDS**

**Q1. The apostle John opens his gospel by describing Jesus as the Word. Read these verses from the opening of John's gospel and answer the questions below.**

### **John 1:1-5, 14 & 16-18**

**1** In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. **2** He was with God in the beginning. **3** Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made. **4** In him was life, and that life was the light of all mankind. **5** The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it....

**14** The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the one and only Son, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.... **16** Out of his fullness we have all received grace in place of grace already given. **17** For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. **18** No one has ever seen God, but the one and only Son, who is himself God and is in closest relationship with the Father, has made him known.

- **What do we learn about the Word in 1:1-3?**
- **What difference does the Word make in 1:4-5?**
- **Why did the Word, the eternal Son of God the Father, become a man? 1:14-18**
- **Think: How does this connect to what we learnt about God in the Old Testament last week?**

*[LEADER: The Word is God, the creator of everything. He gives life and he gives light so we understand life. This Word, the eternal Son of God the Father, became human as Jesus, allowing us to know God the Father. Jesus perfectly shows us what God is like - divine, creative, eternal, and the source of all life. "Grace upon grace" In the Old Testament, God made himself known through his Word given to Moses. This was a gift/grace that let people know God. Now, we have an even greater gift in Jesus, who is the Word made human. Jesus fulfils everything the OT pointed to and perfectly expresses who God is.]*

In Jesus the eternal Word, God gives us "grace upon grace". First, God graciously revealed himself through his Word to Moses in the Old Testament. Now, we have an even greater gift in Jesus, the Word made flesh, who fulfils the Old Testament and perfectly reveals God to us.

## Q2. How are the words that Jesus spoke described in these passages?

### John 3:31-34

<sup>31</sup> The one who comes from above is above all; the one who is from the earth belongs to the earth, and speaks as one from the earth. The one who comes from heaven is above all. <sup>32</sup> He testifies to what he has seen and heard, but no one accepts his testimony. <sup>33</sup> Whoever has accepted it has certified that God is truthful. <sup>34</sup> For the one whom God has sent speaks the words of God, for God gives the Spirit without limit.

### John 7:14-16

<sup>14</sup> Not until halfway through the festival did Jesus go up to the temple courts and begin to teach. <sup>15</sup> The Jews there were amazed and asked, "How did this man get such learning without having been taught?" <sup>16</sup> Jesus answered, "My teaching is not my own. It comes from the one who sent me.

### John 8:28 & 38

<sup>28</sup> So Jesus said, "When you have lifted up the Son of Man, then you will know that I am he and that I do nothing on my own but speak just what the Father has taught me...." <sup>38</sup> I am telling you what I have seen in the Father's presence, and you are doing what you have heard from your father.

### John 17:6-8

<sup>6</sup> "I have revealed you to those whom you gave me out of the world. They were yours; you gave them to me and they have obeyed your word. <sup>7</sup> Now they know that everything you have given me comes from you. <sup>8</sup> For I gave them the words you gave me and they accepted them. They knew with certainty that I came from you, and they believed that you sent me.

*[LEADER: Jesus spoke only what the Father had given him to say. Jesus makes the Father known by words that have come from God – Jesus has the Spirit without limit (3:34). "These words of Jesus are the overflow on earth of the life and love of the Holy Trinity in eternity." (Ash p 29). They are a fuller revelation of the conversation between the persons of the Trinity, first hinted at in Genesis 1:26.]*

Jesus speaks God's words. You cannot put a wedge between Jesus and the Word of God. You cannot say, "I am a Jesus Christian, but I am not a Bible Christian".

## **B. WE RECEIVE THE LIFE JESUS OFFERS BY BELIEVING HIS WORDS**

In John 6, Jesus explains how we receive the life his death brings.

### **John 6:51, 63, 66-69**

<sup>51</sup> I am the living bread that came down from heaven. Whoever eats this bread will live forever. This bread is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world.”...

<sup>63</sup> The Spirit gives life; the flesh counts for nothing. The words I have spoken to you—they are full of the Spirit and life.... <sup>66</sup> From this time many of his disciples turned back and no longer followed him. <sup>67</sup> “You do not want to leave too, do you?” Jesus asked the Twelve. <sup>68</sup> Simon Peter answered him, “Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life. <sup>69</sup> We have come to believe and to know that you are the Holy One of God.”

### **Q3. What is the bread that Jesus gives (6:51)? How do we “eat” this bread (6:68-69)?**

*[LEADER: The bread that Jesus gives is eternal life accomplished through his death (51). We eat his bread, that is receive his eternal life won by his death, by believing his words which are of the Spirit and give life. To believe in Jesus, to receive eternal life, is to feed on his word – 6:63, 68.]*

### **Q4. Why does our response to Jesus’ words matter? Consider -**

#### **John 5:24**

<sup>24</sup> “Very truly I tell you, whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life and will not be judged but has crossed over from death to life.

#### **John 8:31**

<sup>31</sup> To the Jews who had believed him, Jesus said, “If you hold to my teaching, you are really my disciples.’

#### **John 8:51**

<sup>51</sup> Very truly I tell you, whoever obeys my word will never see death.”

#### **John 12:48**

<sup>48</sup> There is a judge for the one who rejects me and does not accept my words; the very words I have spoken will condemn them at the last day.

#### **John 14:15, 21, 23-24**

<sup>15</sup> “If you love me, keep my commands:... <sup>21</sup> Whoever has my commands and keeps them is the one who loves me. The one who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I too will love them and show myself to them.”... <sup>23</sup> Jesus replied, “Anyone who loves me will obey my teaching. My Father will love them, and we will come to them and make our home with them. <sup>24</sup> Anyone who does

not love me will not obey my teaching. These words you hear are not my own; they belong to the Father who sent me.

*[LEADER: Our response to Jesus' words is our response to him and determines our destiny. To accept Jesus' word is to accept Jesus; to reject Jesus' word is to reject Jesus. To 'abide' and 'keep' is to obey, preserve, pass on. God's aim in Scripture is to lead us to true devotion to Christ, and this impinges on every area of life. So we need to comprehend the authority of Christ in his word and pay more appropriate attention to the Scripture God has given to us and grow in understanding it.]*

What we do to Jesus' word is what we do to Jesus. We receive Jesus and the life he offers by believing his word.

**Q5. Do you think those who saw and heard Jesus when he became man had a fuller experience of Jesus and his word than we do today? What do we learn about how we relate to Jesus from these verses?**

**John 5:25**

<sup>25</sup> Very truly I tell you, a time is coming and has now come when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God and those who hear will live.

**John 10:3-4**

<sup>3</sup> The gatekeeper opens the gate for him, and the sheep listen to his voice. He calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. <sup>4</sup> When he has brought out all his own, he goes on ahead of them, and his sheep follow him because they know his voice.

**John 18:37**

<sup>37</sup> "You are a king, then!" said Pilate. Jesus answered, "You say that I am a king. In fact, the reason I was born and came into the world is to testify to the truth. Everyone on the side of truth listens to me."

**John 20:14-16**

<sup>14</sup> At this, she turned around and saw Jesus standing there, but she did not realize that it was Jesus. <sup>15</sup> He asked her, "Woman, why are you crying? Who is it you are looking for?" Thinking he was the gardener, she said, "Sir, if you have carried him away, tell me where you have put him, and I will get him." <sup>16</sup> Jesus said to her, "Mary." She turned toward him and cried out in Aramaic, "Rabboni!" (which means "Teacher").

**John 20:27-31**

<sup>27</sup> Then he said to Thomas, "Put your finger here; see my hands. Reach out your hand and put it into my side. Stop doubting and believe." <sup>28</sup> Thomas said to him, "My Lord and my God!" <sup>29</sup> Then Jesus told him, "Because you have seen me, you have believed; blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed."

<sup>30</sup> Jesus performed many other signs in the presence of his disciples, which are not recorded in this book. <sup>31</sup> But these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.

After his ascension Jesus is known by his word – faith comes not by seeing but through hearing Jesus’ word.

### **C. WORDS ARE WRITTEN DOWN FOR US BY THE APOSTLES THROUGH THE SPIRIT**

In John chapters 14-17, on the eve of his crucifixion, Jesus speaks extensively about his word as he addresses his apostles and prays to his Father.

#### **Q6. Who does Jesus say will bear witness to him?**

##### **John 15:26-27**

<sup>26</sup> “When the Advocate comes, whom I will send to you from the Father—the Spirit of truth who goes out from the Father—he will testify about me. <sup>27</sup> And you also must testify, for you have been with me from the beginning.

#### **Q7. How are the apostles able to bear witness to Jesus?**

##### **John 15:27**

<sup>27</sup> And you [The Apostles] also must testify, for you have been with me from the beginning.

##### **John 14:25-26**

<sup>25</sup> “All this I have spoken while still with you. <sup>26</sup> But the Advocate, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you.

##### **John 16:13-15**

<sup>13</sup> But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all the truth. He will not speak on his own; he will speak only what he hears, and he will tell you what is yet to come. <sup>14</sup> He will glorify me because it is from me that he will receive what he will make known to you. <sup>15</sup> All that belongs to the Father is mine. That is why I said the Spirit will receive from me what he will make known to you.”

As eyewitnesses to Jesus, the apostles were uniquely positioned to recount his life, death, resurrection, and ascension, along with their implications. While humans are fallible, Jesus promised that the Holy Spirit would remind and teach the apostles his words, ensuring they remembered and understood correctly. After Jesus' death and resurrection, we see examples of the apostles gaining new understanding:

**Q8. What do these passages teach us about the authority of the apostles' word in our lives?**

**John 17:8 and 20**

<sup>8</sup> For I gave them [they Apostles] the words you gave me and they accepted them. They knew with certainty that I came from you, and they believed that you sent me....<sup>20</sup> “My prayer is not for them alone. I pray also for those who will believe in me through their message,

**John 15:20**

<sup>20</sup> Remember what I told you: ‘A servant is not greater than his master.’ If they persecuted me, they will persecute you also. If they obeyed my teaching, they will obey yours also.

**Matthew 10:14-15 and 40** (*Note: Jesus addressed these words to the apostles, not us*)

<sup>14</sup> If anyone will not welcome you or listen to your words, leave that home or town and shake the dust off your feet. <sup>15</sup> Truly I tell you, it will be more bearable for Sodom and Gomorrah on the day of judgment than for that town. ... <sup>40</sup> “Anyone who welcomes you welcomes me, and anyone who welcomes me welcomes the one who sent me.

Jesus emphasised that people would relate to him through the apostles' written words. Our response to their message is our response to Jesus himself. Rejecting the apostles' words means rejecting Jesus. We can't accept Jesus while rejecting the teachings of Peter or Paul or the other apostles.

## Implications

### Q9. What key truths you have learned today about Jesus and his word?

*[LEADER: Jesus the eternal Word became man, and makes the Father known by his words, he speaks the words of God, and these words give life. Jesus' words are written down for us by the apostles through the Spirit in the New Testament. Our response to Jesus' words, the apostolic word, is our response to him and determines our destiny.]*

#### **Matthew 4:4 quoting Deuteronomy 8:3 , Jesus said:**

“It is written: ‘Man shall not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.’”

Life in Jesus is shaped by God's word. Studying the Bible is crucial for proper worship and discipleship. It's amazing that we, who deserve God's wrath, hear Jesus' life-saving words. How do we ensure that we engage with it more deeply?

God's word is like bread - a staple in our lives. It may not always seem exciting, but it's essential. Sometimes it profoundly affects us like a gourmet meal, other times it quietly nourishes us without fanfare. Either way, it sustains our spiritual life.

- Growth Group is meant to be a place where the Bible is central - and where the group can explore, discuss, understand and apply God's Word – in order to prayerfully grow one another in Christian mission and ministry. In what ways does our Growth Group treat the Word of God highly? Should our Growth Group review any of what it does?
- What practical steps can you take to engage with Scripture more deeply – personally and as a growth group? How can you most helpfully hold each other accountable week to week?

#### **For reflection this week**

Try and read a Bible Passage each day in the coming week (it does not need to be a long passage). And ask: What is God saying in this passage? Does he ask anything of me in this passage – to consider, to change, to do, to say? Pray about that – and find a way to apply that request in some way during the day.

## Study 4 - THE HOLY SPIRIT AND THE WORD

### Recap

The Word of God is key to our relationship with God and Jesus. We meet and relate to them through the Bible. Share how you listened to and obeyed God's Word this past week.

So far, we have seen the relationship between a) God, his Word, and believers, and b) between Jesus, the Word and believers. Today we will explore what the Bible says about the relationship between the Holy Spirit, the Word, and believers.

### The Holy Spirit and his words

*It is written:*

*“What no eye has seen, what no ear has heard, and what no human mind has conceived” - the things God has prepared for those who love him—*

*<sup>10</sup>these are the things God has revealed to us by his Spirit. The Spirit searches all things, even the deep things of God...<sup>13</sup>This is what we speak, not in words taught us by human wisdom but in words taught by the Spirit, explaining spiritual realities with Spirit-taught words. (1 Cor 2:9-10, 13)*

Like God and Jesus, the Holy Spirit communicates with us in words that we can understand! The Spirit's words in the Bible are so amazing that they enable us to understand the deep things of God.

### Intro Discussion

Some people suggest God speaks directly to us today by his Spirit. What do you think about this view?

*[LEADER: this is an exploration question to get opinions on the table. No need to resolve or determine this matter at this point – the study will help to address this matter]*

The Bible shows that the Holy Spirit and the God's Word are inseparable, and that the Spirit works through the Scriptures to play a vital role in the life of believers. We will see:

- A. The Spirit creates the Word of God
- B. The Spirit and the Word work together to bring new life
- C. The Spirit transforms us through our daily reading of the Word.

## A. THE SPIRIT CREATES THE WORD OF GOD

### Q1. What do these passages tell us about the relationship between the Spirit and the Word of God?

**2 Timothy 3:16** *(Note: the words for Spirit and breath are closely related, for example, my words come to you by my breath.)*

<sup>16</sup> All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness

#### **2 Peter 1:19-21**

<sup>19</sup> We also have the prophetic message as something completely reliable, and you will do well to pay attention to it, as to a light shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts. <sup>20</sup> Above all, you must understand that no prophecy of Scripture came about by the prophet's own interpretation of things. <sup>21</sup> For prophecy never had its origin in the human will, but prophets, though human, spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit.

**John 16:13-14** *(Note: Jesus spoke these words to the apostles about them writing the New Testament.)*

<sup>13</sup> But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all the truth. He will not speak on his own; he will speak only what he hears, and he will tell you what is yet to come. <sup>14</sup> He will glorify me because it is from me that he will receive what he will make known to you.

The Holy Spirit gave the Bible authors God's words to write. While reflecting the authors' personalities and experiences, this process was divinely guided. In God's sovereignty, actions in the Bible can be both God's and human (Genesis 45:8 and Acts 2:23). This makes Scripture a trustworthy, authoritative revelation from God.

### Q2. When the Spirit caused human authors to write the Bible, they addressed specific people in specific circumstances. What do these passages teach us about the relevance of Scripture, written to people in the past, for us today?

#### **Romans 15:4**

<sup>4</sup> For everything that was written in the past was written to teach us, so that through the endurance taught in the Scriptures and the encouragement they provide we might have hope.

### **1 Corinthians 10:1-6 and 11**

For I do not want you to be ignorant of the fact, brothers and sisters, that our ancestors were all under the cloud and that they all passed through the sea. <sup>2</sup>They were all baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea. <sup>3</sup>They all ate the same spiritual food <sup>4</sup>and drank the same spiritual drink; for they drank from the spiritual rock that accompanied them, and that rock was Christ. <sup>5</sup>Nevertheless, God was not pleased with most of them; their bodies were scattered in the wilderness. <sup>6</sup>Now these things occurred as examples to keep us from setting our hearts on evil things as they did.

... <sup>11</sup> These things happened to them as examples and were written down as warnings for us, on whom the culmination of the ages has come.

### **1 Peter 1:10-12**

<sup>10</sup> Concerning this salvation, the prophets, who spoke of the grace that was to come to you, searched intently and with the greatest care, <sup>11</sup> trying to find out the time and circumstances to which the Spirit of Christ in them was pointing when he predicted the sufferings of the Messiah and the glories that would follow. <sup>12</sup> It was revealed to them that they were not serving themselves but you, when they spoke of the things that have now been told you by those who have preached the gospel to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven. Even angels long to look into these things.

### **Hebrews 3:7-8 quoting Psalm 95:7**

<sup>7</sup> So, as the Holy Spirit says:

“Today, if you hear his voice, <sup>8</sup>do not harden your hearts as you did in the rebellion, during the time of testing in the wilderness

### **Hebrews 10:15-16 quoting Jeremiah 31:33**

<sup>15</sup> The Holy Spirit also testifies to us about this. First he says:

<sup>16</sup> “This is the covenant I will make with them after that time, says the Lord. I will put my laws in their hearts, and I will write them on their minds.”

God’s Spirit-breathed Word is a living word that speaks to us today.

## **B. THE SPIRIT AND THE WORD WORK TOGETHER TO BRING NEW LIFE**

The Spirit and the Word work together to bring new life

In our last study, we saw Jesus is the Word of God who spoke life-giving words to reconcile sinners to God. Yet John summarises the three years of Jesus' public ministry with these words:

<sup>37</sup> Even after Jesus had performed so many signs in their presence, they still would not believe in him. (John 12:37)

Even Jesus' closest followers struggled to understand his words – see John 14:8-10.

### **Q3. Why couldn't people hear Jesus' word even though he was present with them?**

#### **John 8:43-44**

<sup>43</sup> Why is my language not clear to you? Because you are unable to hear what I say. <sup>44</sup> You belong to your father, the devil, and you want to carry out your father's desires. He was a murderer from the beginning, not holding to the truth, for there is no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks his native language, for he is a liar and the father of lies.

*[LEADER: People cannot hear Jesus' word because they were in bondage to Satan.]*

### **Q4. We have a spiritual problem that requires a spiritual solution. How is it that we can hear the Word of God and be saved?**

#### **John 16:8-11**

<sup>8</sup> When he [the Spirit] comes, he will prove the world to be in the wrong about sin and righteousness and judgment: <sup>9</sup> about sin, because people do not believe in me; <sup>10</sup> about righteousness, because I am going to the Father, where you can see me no longer; <sup>11</sup> and about judgment, because the prince of this world now stands condemned.

### **Q5. Optional Extra:**

*[LEADER: This question will involve reading Acts 2:14-28]*

**When Jesus ascended to heaven, he poured out his Spirit on the day of Pentecost. The Apostle Peter addressed the crowd as recorded in Acts 2:14-38. What is Peter's main point – is it:**

- a. The coming of the Holy Spirit**
- b. The preaching of the gospel**
- c. The coming of the Holy Spirit enables people to hear the gospel and repent.**

*[LEADER: When the Holy Spirit came, the focus was the preaching of the word of God, not the Spirit.]*

### **Q6. Read through these verses and highlight the connection between the Spirit and the Word of God.**

#### **Ephesians 1:13**

<sup>13</sup> And you also were included in Christ when you heard the message of truth, the gospel of your salvation. When you believed, you were marked in him with a seal, the promised Holy Spirit

#### **1 Thessalonians 1:4-6**

<sup>4</sup> For we know, brothers and sisters loved by God, that he has chosen you, <sup>5</sup> because our gospel came to you not simply with words but also with power, with the Holy Spirit and deep conviction. You know how we lived among you for your sake. <sup>6</sup> You became imitators of us and of the Lord, for you welcomed the message in the midst of severe suffering with the joy given by the Holy Spirit.

#### **1 Peter 1:10-12**

<sup>10</sup> Concerning this salvation, the prophets, who spoke of the grace that was to come to you, searched intently and with the greatest care, <sup>11</sup> trying to find out the time and circumstances to which the Spirit of Christ in them was pointing when he predicted the sufferings of the Messiah and the glories that would follow. <sup>12</sup> It was revealed to them that they were not serving themselves but you, when they spoke of the things that have now been told you by those who have preached the gospel to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven. Even angels long to look into these things.

#### **John 3:5 compared with 1 Peter 1:23**

<sup>5</sup> Jesus answered, "Very truly I tell you, no one can enter the kingdom of God unless they are born of water and the Spirit. (John 3:5)

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)

### **Acts 7:51 and 53**

<sup>51</sup> “You stiff-necked people! Your hearts and ears are still uncircumcised. You are just like your ancestors: You always resist the Holy Spirit! ... <sup>53</sup> you who have received the law that was given through angels but have not obeyed it.”

The Spirit and God's Word are inseparable. The Spirit uses God's Word to convict us of gospel truth. Our response to Scripture is our response to the Spirit, determining our eternal destiny.

## **C. THE SPIRIT TRANSFORMS US THROUGH OUR DIALY READING OF THE WORD**

**Q7. The Spirit does more than convict us of the gospel through the Word of God. What does the Spirit do in our lives? How does the Spirit do this? What does this mean for our lives each day?**

### **2 Corinthians 3:12-18**

<sup>12</sup> Therefore, since we have such a hope, we are very bold. <sup>13</sup> We are not like Moses, who would put a veil over his face to prevent the Israelites from seeing the end of what was passing away. <sup>14</sup> But their minds were made dull, for to this day the same veil remains when the old covenant is read. It has not been removed, because only in Christ is it taken away. <sup>15</sup> Even to this day when Moses is read, a veil covers their hearts. <sup>16</sup> But whenever anyone turns to the Lord, the veil is taken away. <sup>17</sup> Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom. <sup>18</sup> And we all, who with unveiled faces contemplate the Lord's glory, are being transformed into his image with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit. ...

*[LEADER: How do we behold Christ's glory – it is reading the Bible even the OT.]*

### **Ephesians 1:17-18**

<sup>17</sup> I keep asking that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the glorious Father, may give you the Spirit of wisdom and revelation, so that you may know him better. <sup>18</sup> I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened in order that you may know the hope to which he has called you, the riches of his glorious inheritance in his holy people

### **Ephesians 6:10-11 and 17**

<sup>10</sup> Finally, be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power. <sup>11</sup> Put on the full armour of God, so that you can take your stand against the devil's schemes... <sup>17</sup> Take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.

### **Consider the parallel between Ephesians 5:18-19 and Colossians 3:16**

...be filled with the Spirit, <sup>19</sup> speaking to one another with psalms, hymns, and songs from the Spirit. Sing and make music from your heart to the Lord.  
(Ephesians 5:18b-19)

<sup>16</sup> Let the message of Christ dwell among you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom through psalms, hymns, and songs from the Spirit, singing to God with gratitude in your hearts. (Colossians 3:16)

*[LEADER: The command to “Let the message of Christ dwell among you richly” stands in the place of the command, “Be filled with the Spirit” because the indwelling of the word is the way we experience the indwelling Spirit. If you want to be full of the Spirit, pursue the fullness of the word.]*

### **2 Timothy 3:16-17**

<sup>16</sup> All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, <sup>17</sup> so that the servant of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.

As believers read, study, and meditate on the Scripture, the Spirit works to:

- Transform them into Christ's likeness
- Deepen their understanding of the gospel
- Equip them to share God's word and do his work.

### **Implications**

**Q8. What key truths you have learned today about the Holy Spirit and his word?**

### **Romans 15:13**

<sup>13</sup> May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.

The Holy Spirit uses Scripture to accomplish God's purposes: creating and nurturing his people, the church. This is why God's Word is central to our faith and ministry.

- Our primary goal should be to ensure God's Word is heard, understood, and believed. How does this transform your attitude to hearing and speaking the Word of God –
  - In your daily life?
  - At church on Sundays and in our ministries?
  
- Reading the Bible is a supernatural act possible only through our relationship with God the Father, Jesus the Son, and the Holy Spirit.
  - It is God who shines supernatural light into our hearts so that we can see his glory (2 Corinthians 4:6).
  - It is Jesus who opens our minds to understand Scripture (Luke 24:44-45).
  - It is the Spirit of wisdom and revelation that enlightens the eyes of our hearts (Ephesians 1:17-18).

How can this truth shape our prayers?

**For reflection this week**

Pick a verse from this Bible study which stood out – this week try and commit it to memory.