

Glad Tidings

“And we bring you good tidings of the promise made unto the fathers...” (Acts 13:32)

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The Living Word

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Living is a relative term. One might be technically “alive” but exist in a vegetative or inactive state. In most people, “living” conveys thoughts of activity and vibrancy. For a few decades now, the United States Constitution has been viewed by some as a “living document.” To such “progressives,” “living” means that one is not bound to interpret the eighteenth-century document by what the words actually mean but are free to broaden the meaning of the text to accommodate modern agendas. Is this the way we should interpret the Word of God? Is God’s Word living in the sense of technically alive but not very effectual in producing much in our lives?

The Hebrew writer makes a great claim concerning God’s Word: “*For the word of God is living, and active, and sharper than any two-edged sword, and piercing even to the dividing of soul and spirit, of both joints and marrow, and quick to discern the thoughts and intents of the heart*” (Hebrews 4:12). Notice the word “active” alongside the word “living” describing God’s Word. The Greek word is “*energes*” denoting something “powerful” and “effectual.” Do you see our English word “energy” in this Greek word? We are not talking about something that is living, but ineffectual because of abiding in

a vegetative state. We are speaking about the Word as a living oracle, sharp with piercing power to reach the depths of man’s being. It exposes, sifts, and analyzes man’s innermost thoughts and intentions.

As seed contains life, God’s word is seed for spiritual life (*Luke 8:11*). Because God is the source of life, His living word offers life. Peter speaks of Christians “*having been begotten again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible through the word of God, which liveth and abideth*” (*I Peter 1:23*). God’s Word is not only living, produces new life, but never will it pass away. It “*abideth forever*” (*I Peter 1:25*). Grasp the implication of this verse. We will never have to be looking for some new seed because God’s Word has lost its power. The Word will continue to live with all its begetting potency. We will never have to be looking for some new seed because God’s Word died. It will continue to abide and live.

As the Word of God abides through the centuries, God never has to issue an updated revelation to make His Word relevant. Man’s actions still proceed from the thoughts of his heart in our century. Fornications, thefts, murders, adulteries, covetings, etc. are issues of the

heart now as they were in the first century A.D. when the Gospels were penned (*Mark 7:21-23, Matthew 15:8-10*). Spend your life objectively investigating man’s actions and you will see outward actions generating first in the evil heart (*Genesis 3:6, 4:7*). Unchangeable facts of Jesus’ death and resurrection will always be the foundation for the remission of sins and the hope of heaven (*I Corinthians 15:1-4, 17; I Peter 1:3*).

Man errs when he thinks the Word of God is open to new interpretations in different times just because it is “living.” For example, you will never be able to take the living Word of God and accurately interpret “capital punishment” as being wrong (*Romans 13:4*), or “homosexuality” as being acceptable to God (*Romans 1:26-27*).

Do you respect the “living word” to allow it to speak for itself in your heart and mind? Are you energized by the modernity of God’s Word, believing it has not outlived its relevancy? Are you seeking to make disciples, knowing that the living word still works in believers (*cf. I Thessalonians 2:13*)? Continue to pray that this living productive Word has free course in your life and in the lives of others (*2 Thessalonians 3:1*)!