

100823 "The Words of God" Psalm 19:7-10

1. We often think of the Bible as just an old-fashioned story. Because it was written a long time ago and the culture is quite different. So, people either read the Bible in an extremely limited way, or they think it's too far away to apply the words of God to their lives. However, if you study Christian history, you will see that many people's lives were changed by this one book, the Bible. It was truly amazing to hear the stories of many people from various times and cultures reading the Bible and seeing their lives changed. At our church, we have a professor who is an expert on religious reformer Martin Luther. One of Luther's achievements was to translate the Latin Bible into German so that ordinary believers could read it.

When I was in high school, I remember my mother regularly giving me orange juice in a thermos. At that time, lunch was not provided by the school and students had to bring their own lunch. I remember drinking a cup of juice during break time to quench my thirst, replenish vitamin C, and feel like it gave me a little boost of energy at the time. Then, one of the students in my class saw me drinking juice and asked for it too. Well, I can share a glass of juice, right? I happily shared a cup of juice with him. However, the next day, he came to me again and said, Young, can you give me a glass of juice again? I gave him. He came to me the next day and asked for another glass of juice. What I was willing to give at first gradually turned into dislike. Later, I started forcing myself to give it. He came to me every day and asked me for cup of juice as if he had left it to me, so my pleasant feelings became unreasonable and I felt bad.

Then one day, I suddenly remembered the Bible verses I heard during the Sunday service. It was Matthew 5:39b-42. "...if anyone strikes you on the right cheek, turn the other also; and if anyone wants to sue you and take your coat, give your cloak as well; and if anyone forces you to go one mile, go also the second mile. Give to everyone who begs from you, and do not refuse anyone who wants to borrow from you."

I heard this verse on Sunday, and it just came to mind at that moment. I

wondered, "How do I keep these words? If someone forces me to go one mile, go also the second mile? If someone hits my right cheek, turn the other also? Is that possible? Is that right?" I had these strong doubts and thought, 'What will happen if I really keep these words?' He came to me again to ask a cup of juice. But this time, I said to him, "take two cups of juice today instead of just one!" Then, he looked at me strangely, took two cups of juice and left. And the next day, an amazing thing happened. He didn't come to me and ask for juice anymore! So the memory is still vivid. I thought it was just nonsense, but it was a moment when I realized, 'Wow, the words of God are really alive!'

Of course, it is necessary to read and interpret the Bible in context and taking into account the situation at the time. However, perhaps we have too many preconceptions to read the Bible, and because of that, we do not read it and we do not experience that the words of God are still alive today.

In Psalm 1, prosperity is promised to those who read and keep the word of God. "Blessed is the man who does not walk in the counsel of the wicked, nor stand in the way of sinners, nor sit in the seat of mockers; but his delight is in the law of the Lord, and on his law he meditates day and night. He is like a tree planted by streams of water, which brings forth fruit in its season. He is like a leaf that produces fruit and does not wither; everything he does will prosper." I earnestly pray in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ that this promise may come true in your lives.

2.The psalm 19 is attributed to David. The psalm considers the glory of God in creation, and moves to reflect on the character and use of "the law of the Lord."

Psalm 19 is sung as a praise song today, and it is a verse that often appears when praying or preaching. For example, before I start preaching, I often quote Psalm 19:14, "May the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable in your sight o God. You are our rock. You are our redeemer." The Psalm 19 talks about two main things. Verses 1 to 6 speak of God's revelation through things in nature, and verses 7 to 14 sing of God's word that leads the soul to life.

The word of God at that time refers to the Pentateuch of Moses. And

according to Jewish tradition, there are 613 laws that must be observed. It is called "the 613 Mitzvot." The basis of these laws is the Ten Commandments, given by God to the Jewish people. And Jesus summarized it and taught, "Love God and your neighbor as yourself (Matthew 22:37-39)."

Verses 7-9 speak of God's word in six different expressions. What's surprising is that verses 7, 8, and 9 are written with ten Hebrew words reminding people of the 'Ten Commandments.' If you read today's psalm in Hebrew, it is very rhythmic and poetic. 10 Hebrew words in verse 7, 10 Hebrew words in verse 8, and 10 Hebrew words in verse 9. It's remarkable!

3. Also, today's psalm expresses 12 characteristics of God's word. Of course, due to time constraints, we cannot share it all. However, today, as I organized the 12 characteristics of God's Word in my own way, I was eventually able to condense it into two words: wholeness/perfection and life. In fact, perfection is not a property of creature. All creature, including humans, can never be perfect. There is only one perfect being, God, who created this world. Since God is perfect and still alive and working today through His words, His words become the standard of life for those who believe in God.

Those words are life to us even today. Many thoughts and materials in the world seem to give us life. However, what the world can give does not last long. It's only for a moment. It's fleeting. However, the word of God revives our souls every day. Even when our lives are difficult, weary, discouraged, and have no strength to get up after a major fall, the word of God becomes the power to lift us up. Hebrews 4:12, "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, joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart."

4. In George Foreman's book, *God in My Corner*, the former heavyweight boxing champion writes: "In 1974, before I went to Africa to fight Muhammad Ali, a friend gave me a Bible to take along on my trip. He said, 'George, keep this with you for good luck.' I believed the Bible was just a shepherd's handbook, probably because the only verse I knew was 'the Lord

is my shepherd.' But I was always looking for luck, so I carried that Bible with me. I had lucky pennies and good luck charms, so now I added the 'lucky' Bible to my collection of superstitious items.

After I lost the fight, I threw the Bible away. I never even opened it. I thought, The Bible didn't help me win, so why do I need it? I thought I'd get power simply from owning it; I didn't realize that I needed to read it and believe what it says. Since then, I've come to understand that the Bible is my road map, not my good luck charm."

Dear beloved sisters and brothers in Christ, 1 Timothy 4:5 says, (saints) 'are sanctified by the word of God and prayer.' I hope that you and I would enjoy getting closer to the Bible and reading it more than anything else in the world. News from the world can confuse us. However, as you read and meditate on the Word of God day and night, I believe that God will organize your today and tomorrow, open your life, and allow you to see the glory of God. Fairfield Grace, may God's grace, peace, goodness, and mercy be with you, your family, your business, your studies, and with the lives of your children. Amen.