

APPLICATION  
LESSON EIGHT – LEARNING THE STORY; LIVING THE STORY

## INTRODUCTION

We are coming full circle. We have begun with observation and are now ending with application. Our presuppositions began with inspiration, which led to inerrancy, and this in turn took us to infallibility. Thus, "all authority comes from the Word of God -- not from men, not from the church, rather from God through His wonderful, righteous Word." (Mayhue, p. 169)

Because this is God's Word "we must be willing to submit ourselves to the authority of the Word of God in order to ultimately 'cut it straight.'" (Mayhue, p. 169) Unless we are willing to submit ourselves under God's Word, we will never honor Him. How do we express a spirit of submission before Him? How can I honor Him through honoring His Word? There are four practical ways in which a spirit of submission can be expressed.

### I. We submit when we are committed to receiving His word

"We are to receive the Bible as it is preached, as the absolute, unswerving, inerrant, infallible Word of God." (Mayhue, p. 170). "We can reject the Word of God, but that doesn't change its reality." (Mayhue, p. 171). There are two passages of Scripture, which point out this initial concept.

#### A. Making the word feel at home (1 Thess. 2:13)

First Thessalonians 2:13 For this cause also thank we God without ceasing, because, when ye received the word of God which ye heard of us, ye received it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which effectually worketh also in you that believe.

The first word used in our passage for "receive" is a compound word (παραλαμβάνω). It speaks of the idea of taking to own or secure, to possess, and to make one's own. The second word translated "receive" is different than the first. The second word is δεχομαι. It means, "to welcome into your home." It carries the idea of hospitality," of making the Word of God feel at home or welcomed in your life.

Do you make the Word feel at home in your life or is the Word a stranger? Your attitude toward the Word makes all the difference in the world.

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B. Mixing the word with faith (Hebrews 4:2)

Hebrews 4:2 For unto us was the gospel preached, as well as unto them: but the word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard *it*.

This passage has always intrigued me. Why? Because both parties were the recipients of God's Word. Both had the same material to work with and yet only one group profited or benefited from the Word that was given. Why? The key is found in the word "mixed". It is a fascinating word. It is only found two times in the entire New Testament. First, in 1 Corinthians 12:24 where it is translated in this way, "God hath *tempered* the body *together*" and then in Hebrews 4:2 where it is translated by the phrase, "*being mixed with*". The thought is that of putting together or blending two objects so that they become one.

Has the Word of God blended with your life in such a way as to become inseparably linked with your life? You will submitted yourself to God's Word when you have made it feel at home as well as having mixed it with faith.

II. We will be submitting when we are committed to feeding on His word

If the Word is God's sole means whereby the believer is to find spiritual nourishment, then without it no growth can even be anticipated. "If we're not feeding on the Word of God we'll be without power and we'll be without fruit." (Mayhue, p. 174).

A. The pursuit of one's soul (1 Peter 2:2)

1 Peter 2:2 As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby:

The word "desire" is a very graphic word. Depending on the context it can mean "to lust after". The word speaks of craving after. Is your life marked by a pursuit of God's Word? Is a large portion of each day marked by an intake of His Word?

B. The provision of one's soul (Matt. 4:4)

Matthew 4:4 But he answered and said, It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.

Do you see God's Word as being the sustainer of your life? How long can you go without actually absorbing His truth? How long can you go without His Word before it

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actually starts to affect you? We are submitting to His Word when we are feeding on His Word. Anything less is a lie.

C. The pleasure of one's soul (Jere. 15:16)

Jeremiah 15:16 Thy words were found, and I did eat them; and thy word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of mine heart: for I am called by thy name, O LORD God of hosts.

Does the Word of God bring joy and rejoicing to our hearts? Do we see His Word as being the satisfier of our souls? We have for too long-lived lives of empty pursuit seeking hollow pleasures when He invites us to feed upon His Word.

III. We will be submitting when we are committed to obeying His word

"If we don't obey, we may rob ourselves of the full assurance of salvation. Or disobedience could even mean that a person is not God's child at all." (Mayhue, p. 176). We have allowed ourselves to fall prey to a false faith that proclaims a profession of one's lips apart from the practice of one's life. Such a faith is vain and without promise.

Turn to Acts 12:13, "And as Peter knocked at the door of the gate, a damsel came to hearken, named Rhoda." The word chose for "hearken" is a compound word (ὑπακούω). It literally means "to hear under." The idea is "to place oneself under the instruction of another for the purpose of obeying."

Obedience means, "listening to hear." The idea is that of submission. Obedience is application oriented. Notice the idea of obedience in Mark 1:27 and Mark 4:41. Obedience is application oriented. Remember, the interpreters task is never finished until you have APPLIED the Author's Intended Meaning to your own life.

IV. We will be submitting when we are committed to respecting His word

Look with me at Nehemiah 8:1-12. Notice the progression of the passage.

- 1 ¶ And all the people gathered themselves together as one man into the street that *was* before the water gate; and they spake unto Ezra the scribe to bring the book of the law of Moses, which the LORD had commanded to Israel. 2 And Ezra the priest brought the law before the congregation both of men and women, and all that could hear with understanding, upon the first day of the seventh month. 3 And he read therein before the street that *was* before the water gate from the morning until midday, before the men and the women, and those that

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could understand; and the ears of all the people *were attentive* unto the book of the law. 4 And Ezra the scribe stood upon a pulpit of wood, which they had made for the purpose; and beside him stood Mattithiah, and Shema, and Anaiah, and Urijah, and Hilkiah, and Maaseiah, on his right hand; and on his left hand, Pedaiah, and Mishael, and Malchiah, and Hashum, and Hashbadana, Zechariah, and Meshullam. 5 And Ezra opened the book in the sight of all the people; (for he was above all the people;) and when he opened it, all the people stood up: 6 And Ezra blessed the LORD, the great God. And all the people answered, Amen, Amen, with lifting up their hands: and they bowed their heads, and worshipped the LORD with *their* faces to the ground. 7 Also Jeshua, and Bani, and Sherebiah, Jamin, Akkub, Shabbethai, Hodijah, Maaseiah, Kelita, Azariah, Jozabad, Hanan, Pelaiah, and the Levites, caused the people to understand the law: and the people *stood* in their place. 8 So they read in the book in the law of God distinctly, and gave the sense, and caused *them* to understand the reading. 9 ¶ And Nehemiah, which *is* the Tirshatha, and Ezra the priest the scribe, and the Levites that taught the people, said unto all the people, This day *is* holy unto the LORD your God; mourn not, nor weep. For all the people wept, when they heard the words of the law. 10 Then he said unto them, Go your way, eat the fat, and drink the sweet, and send portions unto them for whom nothing is prepared: for *this* day *is* holy unto our Lord: neither be ye sorry; for the joy of the LORD is your strength. 11 So the Levites stilled all the people, saying, Hold your peace, for the day *is* holy; neither be ye grieved. 12 And all the people went their way to eat, and to drink, and to send portions, and to make great mirth, because they had understood the words that were declared unto them. 13 ¶ And on the second day were gathered together the chief of the fathers of all the people, the priests, and the Levites, unto Ezra the scribe, even to understand the words of the law. 14 And they found written in the law which the LORD had commanded by Moses, that the children of Israel should dwell in booths in the feast of the seventh month: 15 And that they should publish and proclaim in all their cities, and in Jerusalem, saying, Go forth unto the mount, and fetch olive branches, and pine branches, and myrtle branches, and palm branches, and branches of thick trees, to make booths, as *it is* written. 16 So the people went forth, and brought *them*, and made themselves booths, every one upon the roof of his house, and in their courts, and in the courts of the house of God, and in the street of the water gate, and in the street of the gate of Ephraim. 17 And all the congregation of them that were come again out of the captivity made booths, and sat under the booths: for since the days of Jeshua the son of Nun unto that day had not the children of Israel done so. And there was very great gladness. 18 Also day by day, from the first day unto the last day, he read in the book of the law of God. And they kept the feast seven days; and on the eighth day *was* a solemn assembly, according unto the manner.

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There are four actions expressed by the people as they heard the Word read and then applied.

- A. They stood when the word was read (V. 5 "And As He Opened It, They Stood")

It was an unsolicited reaction. Why did they stand? BECAUSE GOD WAS SPEAKING! This great host of people stood in response to the Word being opened. Why? Oh how we have fallen in our respect for God's Word.

- B. They listened when the word was read (V. 3 "Morning Until Midday [NIV 'Daybreak - 1st Light]")

They were attentive. A period of about six hours had elapsed. Six Hours! Can you imagine the power of desire and concentration being exhibited in that place. They gave their 'ears' to what was being said. It is the same idea as hupakouw. The NIV translates the phrase "ears" w/ "listened attentively". They were seeking the A.I.M. (vv7, 8,9,12).

A rabbi (Maimonides - Hilchot Tephillah, c. 12. sect. 9.) had this to say concerning the passage, "that as soon as the reader begins the reading of the law, it is not lawful to speak about anything, not even the constitutions of the law, but silently to attend to what is read."

- C. They worshipped when the word was read (V. 6 They Were In A Position Of Worship.)

Out of humble adoration they lifted up their hands and bowed their entire bodies before the Word of God. Why? Were they worshipping the book? No, they were worshipping God through the book. The book was God's Voice, thus they bowed before it. Oh that we would have such an attitude toward God's Word.

Verse seven gives us an interesting thought. As the Word was being read the priests of God were "causing the people to understand". They were explaining the author's intended meaning. The priests were the interpreters of their day. They were exegetes without equal. Verse eight says the Word was "distinct" or clear. They did not muddy the waters through their explanation of the text. They were determined that the people both hear and understand the Word of God. When the people understood God's Word, they wept.

- D. They wept when the word was read (Vv. 9, 10, 11)

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The Word exposed their sinful behavior and they repented. Here we see application. "There is only one right response to the living God, and that is to bow down and worship Him." (Mayhue, p. 178). What I find fascinating is that the priests did not want the people to stay in their forlorn position. They wanted the people to rejoice and be glad. Why? Because the Word brings deliverance through a proper knowledge of God.

"The proclamation of the Word of God, the teaching of the Word of God, is not to be considered commonplace, just something we have heard done all of our lives. That's profaning the Book and its Author. It is a great privilege to have the Bible in our hands, to know it and understand it, to receive it, to feed on it, and obey it." (Mayhue, p. 179).