

INTEGRITY OF GOD'S WORD

Andrew Wommack

In our previous lessons we discussed a number of things, and hopefully, you've now made a commitment of your life to the Lord to know Him personally. The most important thing for growth in the Christian life is knowledge of God's Word and understanding of its power. When I was teaching that we have a new identity and that our spirit has been changed, I quoted John 6:63 which says that the only way you can understand the Spirit is through the Word of God. The Word is Spirit and life. God has communicated things to us in His Word that reveal His life and the change that has taken place in our hearts.

Mark 4 is a tremendous chapter about the integrity God's Word has—the power, the character, and the faith in it. There were at least ten parables taught during this one day. You have to compare Mark 4 with Matthew 13 and Luke 8 to come up with that. There were a number of parables, one of which was about the sower sowing seed. The Lord compared the Word of God to a seed, and said that you can't grow a crop without planting seed. In the same way, you can't really have God's life come into your physical realm without taking the seed of His Word and planting it in your heart so it will produce. God's Word teaches us attitudes, thoughts, etc.

In Mark 4:26-27 it says, "So is the kingdom of God, as if a man should cast seed into the ground." Remember that in verse 14 it says this seed is the Word of God. God isn't really teaching you how to be a farmer, but using a natural thing to illustrate spiritual truth. "So is the kingdom of God, as if a man should cast seed into the ground; And should sleep, and rise night and day, and the seed should spring and grow up, he knoweth not how." Now, I believe that's important. It says the man doesn't really understand. He doesn't know how this is happening.

Some people say, "I just don't understand what you're talking about. How can reading the Word of God really change me and cause God's life to come alive inside me?" I don't totally understand it, but I know it works. I don't understand how you can put a tiny seed in the ground and have an entire stalk of corn come up with ears of corn on it and reproduce a hundred fold. Nobody fully understands it, but it works, and I tell you that this works. Reading God's Word and letting it begin to saturate you changes your attitude, your experience, and your perceptions.

Verse 28 says, "For the earth bringeth forth fruit of herself." The earth was made to incubate seed, and to germinate and release that life. Your heart was made for the Word of God—it really was. God's Word was created to be placed in your heart. Just taking a Bible and holding it close, putting it on your coffee table, or carrying it with you doesn't have any virtue. It doesn't release power in your life. You have to take the Word, make it a seed, and plant it in your heart. When you do that, your heart is designed to bring forth fruit of itself. It will automatically change, the way things work in your life. The verse continues, "first the blade, then the ear, after that the full corn in the ear." This implies that there are stages or steps to growth and maturity. People come to me all the time expressing that they're believing God for something really good, a godly thing I can agree with. But if they have never done anything, if they have never led a person to the Lord, I can guarantee they aren't going to have a television or radio ministry within the next few weeks.

You have to do things in steps. There are stages to receiving from God, and that's what this parable is illustrating. First of all you have to start, and then comes the hope, and then the faith, and then it produces results. There are always steps to victory. No one is going to go from zero to 1,000 miles per hour all at once. Though it may be a godly desire, it isn't going to work that way. This Scripture is showing that the kingdom of God is like a seed. The Word has to be planted in your heart and growth comes in stages: first the blade, then the ear, then the full corn in the ear. The next verse says, "But when the fruit is brought forth, immediately he putteth in the sickle, because the harvest is come." There are stages, but eventually there will come a time of fruitfulness and maturity.

The point is made in verse 35, "And the same day when the even was come, he saith unto them, Let us pass over unto the other side." Jesus had been teaching them all day about the power of the Word, how the Word is like a seed, how it will release God's life into your life. He'd been teaching them this in at least ten parables, so here He gives them a test. He tells them, "Alright, here's the word—let's go to the other side." He didn't say, "let's get into the boat, go half way across the lake, and drown," but "let's go to the other side." Then He got into the boat and went to sleep. The story goes that a great storm came and filled the boat. You have to remember that this wasn't a cabin cruiser with berths below deck where Jesus was dry and didn't know what was going on. It was an open boat and Jesus was asleep, sloshing around in the water. The reason this was significant is because He knew what was going on, but He was still trying to sleep. The disciples got upset, came to Him, and said, "master don't you care that we perish?" In other words, "do something—get a pail and bail water, row, do something. You're not pulling your weight."

Many times people do the same thing with God today and say, "God, why haven't you done something?" God has done something—he's provided everything we need through the atonement of the Lord Jesus. He has produced His Word and given us all these seeds. It's our job to sow them into our hearts. It's not our job to call out, "Oh, God, why haven't you healed me?" God has healed you. "By his stripes you were healed" (1 Peter 2:24). He's given us that Scripture, and it's our job to take the seed, put it in our hearts, and meditate on it until it releases life. But the disciples wanted to wake Jesus up and say, "Why don't you do something?" He got up, rebuked the wind and the waves, they ceased, and then He turned around and said, "Why are you so fearful? How is it you have no faith?" He didn't say, "Hey, guys, I'm sorry. I should have done something." No, His part was to teach them the Word and give them promises, and it was their part to take the Word, believe the promises, and make them come to pass.

It's the same with you; God's Word is exactly that powerful in your life. It has everything in it you will ever need—prosperity, healing, deliverance, how to live in relationship with other people, how to have joy and peace. It's a total recipe for victory. God has provided everything through Jesus coming to this earth. He gave you everything it takes to succeed in every area of your life in seed form in the Word. All you have to do is take the seeds of the Word of God and plant them in your hearts through reading it, meditating on it, thinking on it, and letting it take root on the inside of you. As we do that, we will be able to stand up and stop the storms in our lives.

I believe God's best was for these disciples to take the teaching Jesus gave them that day and say, "Let's go over to the other side." They could have said, "According to everything He taught to us today, this is a promise. This is the creator of the universe who said let's go to the other side, not let's go half way and drown. They could have taken that word, mixed it with faith, and rebuked the wind and the waves. That's exactly what Jesus said: "Oh you of little faith, why did you doubt?" You know what? We need to believe God's Word.

A scripture we need to close this with and that you need to recognize is Hebrews 4:2, "but the word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard it." God's Word will not work without being mixed with faith in your heart. It's just like a seed. Archaeologists have actually taken seeds from the Pharaohs' tombs that had lain dormant for thousands of years, and when planted and given nourishment, those seeds began to grow.

This Word has all the power in it you will ever need, but it has to be put in your heart and mixed with faith in order to release its power. If you will do that, the integrity and power of God's Word will be more than enough for anything you need. The most important thing you'll ever do in your Christian life is to regularly take in God's Word and mix it with faith so that it will release its power in your life.

INTEGRITY OF GOD'S WORD (Outline)

Mark 4:26-29, "And he said, So is the kingdom of God, as if a man should cast seed into the ground; ²⁷And should sleep, and rise night and day, and the seed should spring and grow up, he knoweth not how. ²⁸For the earth bringeth forth fruit of herself; first the blade, then the ear, after that the full corn in the ear. ²⁹But when the fruit is brought forth, immediately he putteth in the sickle, because the harvest is come."

THE most important thing to growth in the Christian life is a knowledge of God's Word and understanding its power.

The only way you can understand the Spirit is through the Word of God. The Word is Spirit and life. John 6:63, "It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life."

In the same way that you can't grow a crop without planting a seed, you can't have God's life transformed into your physical realm without taking the seed of God's Word and planting it in your heart. The fight is over the seed.

Mark 4:14-20, "The sower soweth the word. ¹⁵And these are they by the way side, where the word is sown; but when they have heard, Satan cometh immediately, and taketh away the word that was sown in their hearts. ¹⁶And these are they likewise which are sown on stony ground; who, when they have heard the word, immediately receive it with gladness; ¹⁷And have no root in themselves, and so endure but for a time: afterward, when affliction or persecution ariseth for the word's sake, immediately they are offended. ¹⁸And these are they which are sown among thorns; such as hear the word, ¹⁹And the cares of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, and the lusts of other things entering in, choke the word, and it becometh unfruitful. ²⁰And these are they which are sown on good ground; such as hear the word, and receive it, and bring forth fruit, some thirtyfold, some sixty, and some an hundred."

The Bible compares the Word of God to a seed. Just as you cannot understand how a seed can produce a plant, you cannot understand how reading God's Word can change you and cause God's life to come alive in you. Mark 4:26-27, "And he said, So is the kingdom of God, as if a man should cast seed into the ground; ²⁷And should sleep, and rise night and day, and the seed should spring and grow up, he knoweth not how."

Reading and letting God's Word saturate you changes your attitude, your perceptions and your experience.

The earth was made to incubate, germinate and release the life of the seed, as so your heart was made for the Word of God. God's Word was created to be placed in your heart as a seed and then your heart was designed to automatically release the power of God to change the way things work in your life. Mark 4:28, "For the earth bringeth forth fruit of herself; first the blade, then the ear, after that the full corn in the ear."

There are steps to growth, maturity and receiving from God. You must first plant the Word. Then hope, followed by faith, will produce the victory.

God has provided everything we need through the atonement of the Lord Jesus. He produced His Word—the seed—and it's our job to take the seed, sow it in our hearts and meditate on it until it releases His life.

Mark 4:35-41, "And the same day, when the even was come, he saith unto them, Let us pass over unto the other side. ³⁶And when they had sent away the multitude, they took him even as he was in the ship. And there were also with him other little ships. ³⁷And there arose a great storm of wind, and the waves beat into the ship, so that it was now full. ³⁸And he was in the hinder part of the ship, asleep on a pillow: and they awake him, and say unto him, Master, carest thou not that we perish? ³⁹And he arose, and rebuked the wind, and said unto the sea, Peace, be still. And the wind ceased, and there was a great calm. ⁴⁰And he said unto them, Why are ye so fearful? how is it that ye have no faith? ⁴¹And they feared exceedingly, and said one to another, What manner of man is this, that even the wind and the sea obey him?"

God's Word has everything you need to succeed and have victory in every area of your life. It's in seed form in the Word of God. As you read and think on these seeds, they'll take root and will be able to stop the storms in your life.

God's Word will not work without being mixed with faith in your heart. The Word has all the power you'll ever need, but it has to be put in your heart and mixed with faith for it to release its power.

The most important thing you'll ever do in your Christian life is to have a regular intake of God's Word mixed with faith.

INTEGRITY OF GOD'S WORD (Teacher's Guide)

1. A. According to John 6:63, the words of Jesus or the Word of God is what?

 Spirit and Life.

 B. According to Romans 8:6, to be spiritually minded is what?

 Life and peace.
2. According to Mark 4:14, what is the seed sown in this verse?

 The Word of God. See also Luke 8:11.
3. A. According to Mark 4:26-28, does the Word (which is the seed) produce right away?

 No, usually there are stages of growth.

 B. According to Mark 4:28, what are those stages of growth?

 First the blade, then the ear, then the grain (full corn).
4. We need to plant God's Word in our hearts and wait for it to produce (as it does in nature). How does Luke 8:15 teach this?

 The Word must be received in a honest and good heart; it must be heard, and kept (retained). It will then bring forth fruit with patience (endurance).
5. A. In Hebrews 4:2, the children of Israel heard the Word but it did not profit them. Why?

 It wasn't mixed with faith.

 B. According to James 1:25 the Word will benefit us if we do what?

 Hear it, continue in it and put it into practice (believe it).

INTEGRITY OF GOD'S WORD (Detailed Teacher's Guide)

Note: The following information may be read out loud (a numbered section at a time) with person(s) being disciplined. After each numbered section is read, pause and ask the question(s) that correspond to the paragraph(s), and then discuss them.

¹ In Mark 4:26-29 Jesus used well-known truths about seeds to illustrate truths about how God's Word works, that very few people know. The first truth He taught was that God's Word has to be planted in our hearts for it to work. Just as a seed doesn't release its life until it is planted, God's Word will not set us free until we get it into our hearts. Having a Bible on our tables, in our hands, or in our heads is not sufficient. We have to commit God's Word to our hearts.

² Second, the man in Jesus' parable who sowed the seed slept and rose, day after day. This means that it takes time for a seed to germinate. You can't plant a seed one day and expect to see it grow the next day. If you dig up the seed every day to see if anything has happened, it will never grow. You must have faith that the seed is sprouting and leave it alone. Likewise, we can't just meditate on God's Word for one day and get the results we want. We can't just get into God's Word one day a week and live differently the other six days. That's like digging up the seed. The scripture has to abide in us (John 15:7).

¹ If we do not plant God's Word into our hearts, what will happen to it according to Matthew 13:19?
The wicked one will take it away so it cannot produce in our lives.

² According to Joshua 1:8 for us to do something with God's Word, how long must we meditate on it?
Day and night.

³Next, Jesus shared one of the most important truths about this parable. He said, “. . . the seed should spring and grow up, he knoweth not how” Mark 4:27. This is an amazing statement. No one knows how a seed works. Mankind, with all its understanding has not unlocked the miracle of a seed. We can make things that look like seeds, taste like seeds, and have the same chemical elements as seeds, but if you put a man-made seed in the ground, it won’t grow. We haven’t figured out what makes these seeds release life, but that hasn’t stopped us from using them. For thousands of years, people have been planting seeds and reaping the harvest without understanding how it all works.

In a similar way, I don’t understand how God’s Word works. I can’t explain how reading God’s Word differs from other words that I read. I don’t comprehend it all, but I know it works. I’ve experienced the supernatural life that God’s Word imparts. The Bible has God’s life in it, and when planted in our hearts and left there, it releases that life. Godly change comes effortlessly when His Word is alive in our hearts, just as plants and fruits are the natural byproducts of physical seeds.

⁴This is such a simple truth that most people miss it. People are looking for some spectacular encounter with the Lord that will transform their lives instantly. Few are willing to grow. They want to microwave their miracle. Some are willing to spend hours in prayer asking for a miracle instead of planting the Word of God in their hearts, which will produce the miracle. Prayer, to the Word, is like what water and fertilizer are to a seed. It helps the Word release its life. You can water and fertilize barren soil all you want, but it won’t produce fruit. It’s the seed that has life, not the water. Likewise, prayer is not a substitute for planting God’s Word in your heart. Prayer without the Word is religion at best, and complaining at worst.

⁵Romans 12:2 gives us the key to experiencing God’s transformation in our lives. It says, “And be not conformed to this world: but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is the good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.” The English word “transformed” was translated from the Greek word “Metamorphoo” from which we derive the English word “metamorphosis” describing the miraculous change of a cocoon to a butterfly. If we want to be changed in nature and appearance as drastically as a cocoon becomes a butterfly, the way we do it is by renewing our minds. Meditating on God’s Word is the primary way of accomplishing this.

³(a) God’s Word is what, according to John 6:63? Spirit & Life.

(b) God’s Word is what kind of weapon, according to Ephesians 6:17? Sword.

(c) Can a sword do damage to its enemy? Yes.

⁴When we give the proper place to God’s Word in our lives, what will happen? (Romans 8:6)

⁵As we behold the Lord through His Word, what kind of image are we changed into? (2 Corinthians 3:18)

INTEGRITY OF GOD'S WORD (Discipleship Questions)

Read 2 Timothy 3:16

1. How is scripture given?
2. Scripture is profitable for
 - A. _____
 - B. _____
 - C. _____
 - D. _____ in righteousness.

Read 2 Peter 1:20-21

3. Is the prophecy of Scripture of
 - a. For private interpretation
 - b. By inspiration of the Holy Spirit
 - c. By someone's fertile imagination?

Read Luke 21:33

4. What does Jesus say about the Word of God?

Read Luke 11:28

5. What are you if you hear the Word of God and keep it?

Read John 6:63

6. What is the Word of God? _____ and _____

Read John 1:1-5, 14

7. Who is the Word?
8. Since Jesus Christ is the foundation of our faith, can we trust Him?
9. If we can trust Jesus Christ as our Savior, can we also trust the written word of God?

Read Mark 4:14

10. What is the seed sown in these verses?
11. In verse 20, what are the conditions that must be present for the Seed, Word of God, to bear fruit in our lives?

Read Mark 4:26-28

12. Does the Word of God (which is the seed) produce right away?

13. What are the stages of growth in verse 28?

A. _____

B. _____

C. _____

Read Luke 8:15

14. What must the condition of our hearts be in order to receive the Word?

A. _____ B. _____

15. Once we have heard the Word of God, what must we do with it?

A. _____ B. _____

16. How must we do these two things? With

Read Hebrews 4:2

17. Why didn't the Word of God profit the Israelites?

Read James 1:21-22

18. What must we receive with meekness?

19. What is it able to do?

20. In verse 22, what are we commanded to do?

21. If we don't follow this command, what are we?

Read James 1:25

22. What must we do for the Word to benefit us?

A. _____

B. _____

C. _____

Read Romans 1:16

23. What is the gospel, or the Word of God?

Read Ephesians 6:17

24. What is the Word of God in this passage?

Read Romans 8:6

25. To be spiritually minded, to be in the Word of God, what fruit will we see in our lives?
_____ and _____.

Read Joshua 1:8

26. How long must we meditate on God's word?

Read 2 Corinthians 3:18

27. As we behold the Lord through His Word, whose image are we changed into?

Read Deuteronomy 28:1-14

28. All these blessings will come upon you if you do what (verses 1-2)?
A. _____
B. _____

The rest of Deuteronomy 28 warns you of the curses that will befall if God's commandments are not kept. Many see this as God being vengeful, but the truth is that if you don't follow God's commandments—His Word—you will subject yourself to the workings of the enemy. God cannot protect you if you are walking outside of His will.

29. Which would you rather have? Blessings Cursings
30. What must you do to receive the blessings?

INTEGRITY OF GOD'S WORD
(Discipleship Answer Key)

- | | |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1. By the inspiration of God | 19. Save our souls |
| 2. A. Doctrine
B. Reproof
C. Correction
D. Instruction in righteousness | 20. Be doers of the word |
| 3. B. By inspiration of the Holy Spirit | 21. Deceived |
| 4. It will by no means pass away | 22. A. Continue in it
B. Be not a forgetful hearer
C. Be a doer |
| 5. Blessed | 23. The power of God unto Salvation |
| 6. Spirit and life | 24. Sword of the Spirit |
| 7. Jesus | 25. Life and peace |
| 8. Yes | 26. Day and night |
| 9. Yes | 27. The Lord's, from glory to glory |
| 10. Word of God | 28. A. Diligently obey the voice of God
B. Observe all His commands |
| 11. Sown on good ground and accept the word | 29. Blessings |
| 12. No | 30. Believe, love, and obey the Lord |
| 13. A. Blade
B. Head
C. Full grain in head | |
| 14. A. Noble
B. Good | |
| 15. A. Keep it
B. Bear fruit | |
| 16. Patience | |
| 17. It wasn't mixed with faith | |
| 18. The implanted word | |

INTEGRITY OF GOD'S WORD (Additional Information)

Word of God

(Hebrews 4:12) The Bible is so called because the writers of its several books were God's instruments in communicating His will to men. It is His "word," because He speaks to us in its sacred pages. Whatever the inspired writers here declare to be true and binding upon us, God declares to be true and binding. This word is infallible because it was written under the guidance and inspiration of the Holy Spirit and is therefore free from all error of fact or doctrine or precept.

All saving knowledge is obtained from the Word of God. It is an indispensable means of salvation, and is efficacious thereunto by the gracious influence of the Holy Spirit.
(John 17:17, 2 Timothy 3:15-16, and 1 Peter 1:23)

Bible

Bible, the English form of the Greek name *Biblia*, meaning "books," is the name which in the fifth century began to be given to the entire collection of sacred books, the "Library of Divine Revelation." The name Bible was adopted by Wycliffe, and came gradually into use in our English language. The Bible consists of sixty-six different books, composed by many different writers, in three different languages, and under different circumstances. The writers were of almost every social rank—statesmen and peasants, kings, herdsmen, fishermen, priests, tax-gatherers, tentmakers; educated and uneducated, Jews and Gentiles. Most of them were unknown to each other, and they were writing at various periods during the space of about 1600 years. Yet, it is only one book dealing with only one subject in its numberless aspects and relations—the subject of man's redemption. It is divided into the Old Testament, containing thirty-nine books, and the New Testament, containing twenty-seven books. The names given to the Old in the writings of the New are as follows:

1. The Scriptures (Matthew 21:42)
2. Scripture (2 Peter 1:20)
3. The Holy Scriptures (Romans 1:2)
4. The Law (John 12:34)
5. The Law of Moses, the Prophets, and the Psalms (Luke 24:44)
6. The Law and the Prophets (Matthew 5:17)
7. The Old Covenant (2 Corinthians 3:14 RV)

There is a break of 400 years between the Old Testament and the New. The Old Testament is divided into three parts:

1. The Law (Torah), consisting of the Pentateuch, or five books of Moses.
2. The Prophets, consisting of the following books:
 - A. The former, namely; Joshua, Judges, the Books of Samuel, and the Books of Kings.
 - B. The latter, namely; the greater prophets: Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel, and the twelve minor prophets.
3. The Hagiographa, or holy writings, including the rest of the books. These are ranked in three divisions:
 - A. The Psalms, Proverbs, and Job, distinguished by the Hebrew name, a word formed of the initial letters of these books, “emeth,” meaning truth.
 - B. Canticles (Song of Solomon), Ruth, Lamentations, Ecclesiastes, and Esther, called the five rolls, as being written for the synagogue use on five separate rolls.
 - C. Daniel, Ezra, Nehemiah, and 1 and 2 Chronicles.

Between the Old and the New Testament, no addition was made to the revelation God had already given. The period of New Testament revelation, extending over a century, began with the appearance of John the Baptist. The New Testament consists of the following books:

1. The historical books: the Gospels, and the Acts of the Apostles.
2. The Epistles.
3. The book of prophecy, the Revelation.

The division of the Bible into chapters and verses is altogether of human invention, designed to facilitate reference to it. The ancient Jews divided the Old Testament into certain sections for use in the synagogue service, and then at a later period, in the ninth century AD, into verses. Our modern system of chapters for all the books of the Bible was introduced by Cardinal Hugo in about the middle of the thirteenth century (he died 1263). The system of verses for the New Testament was introduced by Robert Stephanus in 1551 and generally adopted; although neither Tyndale’s nor Coverdale’s English translation of the Bible has verses. The division is not always wisely made, yet it is very useful. (Adopted from Easton’s Bible Dictionary, 1897)