

By Every Word

Jesus, in answer to a temptation by the devil, quoted Scripture: "*It is written, 'MAN SHALL NOT LIVE ON BREAD ALONE, BUT ON EVERY WORD THAT PROCEEDS OUT OF THE MOUTH OF GOD'*" (**Matthew 4:4**). This quotation comes from the book of Deuteronomy and is a reminder that even though the Israelites ate the manna God provided for them in the wilderness, real sustenance would come from them keeping all the commandments of the LORD (**Deuteronomy 8:1-6**). This is an eternal principle.

We, also, are to live by *every* word of God that applies to us. For instance, since we are under the new covenant, the law of Christ, we are not required to make the animal sacrifices of the first covenant because Christ has been "*offered once to bear the sins of many*" (**Hebrews 9:28**). However, "*whatever was written in earlier times was written for our instruction, so that through perseverance and the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope*" (**Romans 15:4**). Paul also wrote, "*Now these things happened to them as an example, and they were written for our instruction, upon whom the ends of the ages have come*" (**1Corinthians 10:11**).

We are to live by every word of God in its proper setting and meaning. When the tempter quoted scripture, but did not handle the word of God aright, Jesus said, "*On the other hand, it is written ...*" (**Matthew 4:7**) and then made the proper application of the word of God.

We are to live by every word of God:

In His Plan of Salvation

Some make light of reference to God's plan of salvation, saying that salvation is in the man, not the plan. They think that man does not need to follow God's plan, only be happy with Jesus and call Him Savior. However, it still turns out that God has a plan of salvation for man. It consists of what He does to effect man's salvation, and that which man must do in order to be saved. Who can deny that salvation is in Christ? Additionally, God tells us what we must do in order to be in Christ, where is every spiritual blessing.

God saves (**Titus 3:4,5**). *Christ saves* (**Matthew 1:21**). *The Holy Spirit saves* (**1Corinthians 6:11**). *Grace saves* (**Ephesians 2:5**). *Faith saves* (**Ephesians 2:8**). *Works save* (**James 2:24**). *The blood of Christ saves* (**Romans 5:9; Ephesians 1:7**). *The gospel saves* (**Romans 1:16**). *Baptism saves* (**1Peter 3:21**). *Hope saves* (**Romans 8:24**).

In view of the fact that we are to live by *every* word of God, what right does one have to preach that salvation is by "grace, plus nothing, minus nothing," or that salvation is by "faith only," or "baptism only," or anything "only"? All of these elements are involved in man's salvation, and when we do our part in seeking salvation through obedience, we can be assured that God will do his part in forgiving us that we might be new creatures in Christ, with the old things passed away (**2Corinthians 5:17**).

In Our Worship

God would have true worshippers to worship Him. *“But an hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth; for such people the Father seeks to be His worshipers. God is spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth”* (**John 4:23,24**).

People who gladly receive the word, and are baptized into Christ, have a burning desire in their hearts to worship Him. *“So then, those who had received his word were baptized; and that day there were added about three thousand souls. They were continually devoting themselves to the apostles’ teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer”* (**Acts 2:41,42**). This worship consisted in the study of God’s word—the apostles’ doctrine—in the “fellowship,” that is, in their coming together and in their sharing—even contributing as the Lord had prospered them (**1Corinthians 16:1,2**). There was also the breaking of bread, that is, the fellowship of the Lord’s supper, and fellowship in prayers. Other passages show us that they also engaged in singing, speaking to each another in psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in their heart to the Lord. (**Ephesians 5:19**).

If we are to live by every word of God, we are to do that which He has revealed to us in the completeness of His revelation on any subject wherein He has revealed His will to us. At the same time, we are to have such respect for His word that we dare not go beyond that which is written to engage in activities for which there is no authority in His word.

If we are to live by every word God has given to us in regard to the manner in which Christians worship, we will recognize how important it is to be regular and faithful in assemblies as well: *“Not forsaking our own assembling together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another; and all the more as you see the day drawing near”* (**Hebrews 10:25**).

In Our Walk

God has prepared good works in which we are to walk (**Ephesians 2:10**). He has also revealed His will to us in regard to our conduct. For instance, what about our speech? It is to be true (**Matthew 5:37**). It is not to be idle (**Matthew 12:36,37**). It is not to be corrupt (**Ephesians 4:29**). It is to edify and give grace (**Ephesians 4:29; Colossians 4:6**). One may not engage in profanity or vulgar speech, but at the same time not speak as to edify. He, then, is not living by every word of God.

God has revealed His will to us in regard to moral purity. The warnings in the word of God ring out clear and strong in regard to immoral conduct: *“Or do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived; neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor homosexuals, nor thieves, nor the covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor swindlers, will inherit the kingdom of God”* (**1Corinthians 6:9,10**). Paul tells Christians how to avoid such a corrupt, destructive way of life: *“Finally, brethren, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is of good repute, if there is any excellence and if anything worthy of praise, dwell on these things. The things you have learned and received and heard and seen in me, practice these things, and the God of peace will be with you”* (**Philippians 4:8-9**).

If we will live by every word of God, we will be following a course of life that will not close us out of the eternal kingdom of God, but one that will enable us to hear, “*Well done, good and faithful slave ... enter into the joy of your master*” (**Matthew 25:21**).