

Power in the Word

#0008

Study Given by W. D. Frazee—November 10, 1972

[Opening prayer by Brother Mark Finley]

I invite you to kneel as we seek God at the mercy seat.

Our Father in Heaven, tonight we thank Thee that the words that have been just sung are true. We thank Thee, Father, that we can kneel before Thy throne, and by faith, lay our burdens, and our cares, and our anxieties upon Jesus. We thank Thee that Jesus Christ became a man and bore the trials and difficulties and anxieties that each one of us must go through individually.

We thank Thee that our God understands us, and that we can present the deepest longings and burdens and cares of our hearts to Him and know that there is help.

Father, tonight we come to this meeting with open hearts. We desire a great spiritual blessing. We desire Thy Spirit to speak to our hearts personally, individually. As the Word of God is preached, may it be like food which nourishes the body.

Father, we pray tonight that our hearts and minds would be built up in the faith. Lord, give us principles here tonight that will change our lives. May we learn things that we can put in practice this coming week and apply the message of tonight.

Father, bless Elder Frazee as he speaks to us tonight. May his lips be anointed with a coal from off Thine altar. May each heart be moved and touched. We thank Thee that You will make this meeting the greatest meeting of our lives because we've asked it in Jesus' name, amen.

[Elder W. D. Frazee begins speaking.]

This evening I would like to study with you for a little while God's purpose in this wonderful Book. I invite you to turn to 1 Corinthians the first chapter, verses 23 and 24.

“But we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumbling-block, and unto the Greeks foolishness; But unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God”
1 Corinthians 1:23–24.

Wisdom tells us what to do; power enables us to do it. We need both. God has provided both in Christ. He offered this help to men when He was here in the flesh. The same help is available for us today through His Word and by His Spirit.

Let's turn to the Gospel of John, the first chapter, beginning with the first verse. Christ, the power of God and the wisdom of God, is here spoken of as the Word, God's thought made audible.

"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by Him"
John 1:1-3.

Now this One who was called the Word, Who was with God through all eternity, and through Whom all things were created, came down to live with us. The 14th verse:

"And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory" John 1:14.

I repeat: Christ is set forth as the Word, the Word made flesh. God's thought revealed to men in living. As Jesus lived from day to day, He was the expression of God's ideal.

But why is He called the Word here? Because it is through *Him* that God's thinking reached us, just as I may speak to my friend with a word and he gets what's in my mind over into his mind, so through Christ the thought of God was made available to us. Looking at Jesus, we learn what God thinks of us and His ideal for us.

But now that same glorious revelation which was manifest in the flesh in Christ is given to us in this Book. This also is called the Word of God. Is it not? And so it is. And here we have God's thought made audible. And here, the listening ear can discern the Creator's message.

Oh, I'm so thankful that Christ has given us this Book that we may not only read about His life, but may receive His life.

Notice the sixth chapter of this same Gospel. 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" John 6:63.

The very life of God, which was in the word that Christ spoke to the demoniac, to the leper, to Lazarus in the tomb, that very life of God is present in these words which we have from Him. Oh, my friends, there is more than wisdom here, there is power. Creative power. Christ, the power of God and the wisdom of God. I repeat, we need both.

Suppose I'm taking a trip across the country, and I've never been over the way. Well, I'll probably need a road map. But I'll need more than that, friends. I'll need some gas in the tank renewed from point to point. Am I right? That's right. Without the road map, I may get lost. But without the gas, you know what I'll get, don't you?

The wisdom of God given us in this Book is like the road map showing us where to go in life: what to do. But there's more. Here in this Book, we have the gasoline if you please; the motive power which pushes us along the highway of life by revealing to us the *why* and the *how*.

In other words, in this Word we have not only what to do, but why God wants us to do it and how it's to be done through His almighty power, His creative power.

Now perhaps everyone here tonight has some concept of this, but I've been very impressed this week, dear friends, that there's *far* more potential in this Book than any of us has yet realized. Far more potential in this Book than any of us has yet realized. Wouldn't it be a shame to be living at a low level in Christian experience when we could be having glorious victories? Wouldn't it be a shame to be timid and weak in our witness when we might be triumphant soul winners, sharing with God in winning others to Him from time to time?

Now in order that we may do this, we must cooperate with God in using this powerhouse, this source of wisdom and strength that He has given us. This involves reading the Book, studying the Book, memorizing the commands and promises, and then using them in resisting temptation and in witnessing to others.

When men tell us something to do, that's merely a directive. When *God* tells us something to do, there is something *infinitely* more in it. There is power. May I share a few thoughts from the Inspired Commentary on this? In the book *Thoughts from the Mount of Blessing*, page 76.

"In every command or injunction that God gives, there is a promise, the most positive, underlying the command"
Thoughts from the Mount of Blessing, page 76.

What is in every command? A promise. Again, *Volume 2*, page 166.

"He will not give commands without giving with them power for their performance" *Testimonies for the Church*, *Volume 2*, page 166.

What does He give with the command? Power. And what is it that He won't do? He won't give a command without giving along with it, the power to do it. Isn't that wonderful, friend? You know, I don't care how big a bill comes to me Monday morning if in the same mail there comes the money to pay it. What do you say? [Audience laughter] And in everything God asks us to do, in everything He commands us to do, there is right along with it the *power to do it*.

Well, what does it take to believe that? Faith. What does it take to do it? Faith. That's all it takes. Just to believe God. If we really believe that He knows what is best and that He has the power to enable us to do what He says, it will enable us quickly to accept what we read in this Book as truth and quickly to put it into action, not waiting long periods of time.

I'm impressed, dear friends, that there are men and women and youth here tonight that God wants to help to take a step now, tonight. Now with some of you, it will be one step, some another. But tell me, is there something in your experience that you've been looking at for a while, something you've read in this Holy Bible, something that you've read in the Inspired Commentary of the Spirit of Prophecy and you've thought in your soul, "Oh, someday, surely, I ought to do that! Some day, surely, I ought to take that step."

Well, what are you waiting for? What are you waiting for? Are you waiting for the Devil to get tamer? He won't. Are you waiting for the world to get better? It won't. Are you waiting for God to get stronger? He won't. Thank God, we don't have to wait for anything. God has been waiting for us to use, to take hold of the wisdom and power that He has put in this Book, in His Holy Word there is power, my friend, wisdom to know what to do, and power to do it.

Here is another wonderful statement. This is in the book *Christ's Object Lessons*, page 38.

"The word of God is the seed... There is life in God's word. Christ says, 'The words that I speak unto you, they are Spirit, and they are life.' John 6:63... In every command and in every promise of the Word of God is the power, the very life of God, by which the command may be fulfilled and the promise realized. He who by faith receives the Word is receiving the very life and character of God" *Christ's Object Lessons*, page 38.

Now let me illustrate this. I just wanted to get these tables of the law because these Ten Commandments are the entire will of God *concentrated*, focused in these ten precepts.

Now, what have we read here that every command is? A promise. So we have here not merely Ten Commandments, we have ten what? Ten promises. I was meditating on it that First Commandment. Will you say it with me?

"Thou shalt have no other gods before me" Exodus 20:3.

Now notice, in the light of what we've studied so far, this is not merely a prohibition. This is not merely saying, "You *must* not,"; it is a promise to the Christian, to the converted heart, "You *will* not have any other gods before Me. I will keep you. I will so write My law in your heart that you will love Me, the true God, with all your soul. And *everything* else will come in secondary. You will have no other gods before Me."

And if a man is converted, do you know what he says? He says, “Oh, Lord, I thank You with all my heart for that promise.” Instead of the command awakening antagonism, it awakens a thankful response.

Here is this commandment:

“Thou shalt not take the name of the LORD thy God in vain” Exodus 20:7.

There’s a promise. God says, “You won’t take My name in vain; I’m going to help you. I’m going to control your mind, and your thoughts, and your lips, and when you’re in danger of speaking the wrong thing, I’ll prompt you.” And what does the converted heart say? “Oh Lord, I do thank You for that promise that You’ll keep me.”

Here is this Fourth Commandment.

“Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labour, and do all thy work: But the seventh day *is* the Sabbath of the LORD thy God: *in it* thou shalt not do any work...” Ezekiel 20:8–10.

Is that just a command hanging over us? Oh no, it’s a promise. And it is the promise that the One who made the world will make us like Himself. It is the promise—don’t miss it—that He will enable us to keep this *day* holy because He keeps *us* holy.

“I gave them my Sabbaths, to be a sign between me and them, that they might know that I *am* the LORD that sanctify them” Ezekiel 20:12.

To sanctify means to make holy. The God who sanctified the Sabbath wants to sanctify all His children. He wants them to keep the Sabbath as the *sign* of that. But, remember, every command is a what? A promise.

Look at this Sixth Commandment.

“Thou shalt not kill” Exodus 20:13.

Oh, I am so glad that God has promised to keep me from murdering somebody.

Ah, you say, “Brother Frazee, I don’t think you’re in danger of that anyway.”

Listen. When this wonderful Bible, the Word of God, puts the magnifying glass on that Sixth Commandment, it says whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer. (See Matthew 6:21–22.) I know this poor heart well enough to know, friends, that it takes a miracle to keep that commandment, to refrain from hating anybody. But oh, the promise is, “I will put My law in your heart, I will write it in your mind,” and then we can love even our enemies for Christ’s sake. We can pray like Jesus on the cross:

“Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do.”
Luke 23:34.

I repeat, that’s a miracle. Isn’t it, friends? Yes. And notice, it isn’t merely a negative command. It is a positive promise. He says, “You won’t kill. You won’t hate. You won’t show any malice. You will love. You will have a tender regard for every human being.” Why? Ah, because “I will put My law in your mind and heart. I will write it on those very brain cells.”

Friends, aren’t you glad for this wonderful power that there is in God’s Word? And it is not merely in what is written on those tables of stone. The entire Bible from Genesis to Revelation is God’s magnifying glass on this law. And He has given us, both in the Old Testament and in the New Testament, various ordinances to express our faith and to lay hold of that power.

Look, for instance, at Acts the second chapter and the 38th verse. This is Peter speaking on the day of Pentecost. Thousands of people were gathered, listening to his sermon. He was proving from the Old Testament scriptures that the Jesus they had crucified was indeed God’s Messiah. And that He had risen from the dead, gone to Heaven, been enthroned as Priest and King in the sanctuary, and had poured out the Spirit of God upon His church.

Now the 37th verse says:

“Now when they heard *this*, they were pricked in their heart...” Acts 2:37.

They were convicted of sin.

“...and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men *and* brethren, what shall we do? Then Peter said unto them...” Acts 2:37–38.

What?

“...Repent...” Acts 2:38.

And then what?

“...and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. For the promise...” Acts 2:38–39.

Notice, it’s not only a command, it’s a what? A promise.

“...is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, *even* as many as the Lord our God shall call” Acts 2:39.

My dear friends, God has promised the power of His Spirit to those who repent and are baptized, and they come in that order. What is repentance? It's being sorry for sin, and sin is the transgression of the law. Sorry for sin; how sorry? Sorry enough to give it up. Sorry enough to turn it over to God. That's repentance.

Have you given yourself, your sins, to Jesus? Well then, what's the next step? Be baptized.

Ah, somebody says, "I think I will someday."

What? Some day? Turn to Acts the 22nd chapter and the 16th verse. Acts 22:16. Hear the word of the Living God as it sounds down to *this* hour in *this* chapel this evening.

"And now why tarriest thou? Arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord"
Acts 22:16.

Oh, my dear friends, I want to tell you something. If a person understands this question, he wants to be baptized just as soon as possible.

Well, you say, "Then why not baptize people the minute they decide?" God has laid upon the church and the ministry acting for the church a great responsibility in being sure that people are properly instructed, and that they are truly converted before they are baptized. Because, obviously, to merely put people in the water and bring them out again does not in itself impart any virtue or any blessing. It is only those who are born of the Spirit that receive a blessing from water baptism.

But having said that, may I stress the urgency of this text?

"And now why tarriest thou? arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord"
Acts 22:16.

Somebody says, "Brother Frazee, do you think baptism is essential for salvation?" What I think about it, my friend, has nothing in the world to do with it. Jesus made it plain to Nicodemus in John the third chapter, verses 3 and 5, that "except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God."

What about somebody that has no opportunity to be baptized? Well, that's like the thief on the cross. Jesus promised him he would be saved. There he was nailed to the wooden bar. He had no opportunity to be baptized. But, oh my friends, what a pity that would be to take the example of that poor thief that was nailed to the cross and use that to keep *me* from obeying the command of God to repent and be baptized when I'm *not* nailed to the tree. I am free. My hands and feet are free; my heart is free. I can come and go as I please.

Oh, if I haven't been baptized, if my sins have stood between the Lord and me, then do you see the urgency of entering into this experience that God has called for here?

May I put it this way? There are two great dangers in this matter of baptism. One is the danger that people will be baptized when they are not ready. The other, the danger that they won't be baptized when they *are* ready. The Devil works both sides. He works hard on both sides. The Devil is trying to get people baptized that aren't ready. And he's trying desperately to get people to put off their baptism that ought to make an urgent effort to enter the experience that God has called for here.

And when it comes to the practical outworking of this, dear friends, do you see that if we receive the Word of God, there is in this Book as we have seen the very power to do the thing that God commands?

Several years ago, I was holding a baptismal class in a large city. We had studied a number of weeks with this class. The night before the baptismal service was to be held, I got a telephone call. There was a woman and her daughter, who were in the group that was to be baptized. She said, "Brother Frazee, I am sorry, but we're not going to be able to be baptized tomorrow."

Well, I got with them and we sat down and talked about it. What was the matter? Ah, she said, "As we've studied these things, we just feel that we're not ready."

Well, I said, "Now, what is the problem?"

Well, she said, "We just see that there are certain temptations we have, and we don't know whether we're going to be strong enough to meet them or not."

I said, "Do you plan to yield to the enemy and fall when those temptations come?"

"Oh no, we don't want to. We're just not sure."

And then I helped them to see, dear friends, that the very act of baptism means that we put ourselves in the hands of Jesus Christ, trusting *Him* to keep us. Baptism means that we are giving up everything to *Him*, and believing that *He* will keep us from falling.

Well, thank God, they went ahead. And this was one of the verses we studied that Friday night.

"And now why tarriest thou? Arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord"
Acts 22:16.

I remember another person that was getting ready for baptism. As we drew near the time, this individual said, "Well, I'm afraid that I'm not good enough. I'm afraid that I'm not good enough."

Well, I said, "In our church, we don't baptize good people."

"You don't?"

"No. The only people we baptize are bad people. People that are so bad that they know they ought to be buried and put out of sight forever. But they *believe* that Jesus loves them and died for them, and that through faith in Him they can be raised to new life, a different life."

Oh, my dear friends, I'm impressed that there are men and women here tonight that ought to make up their minds, and young people, that they are going to knock at the door of the church and plead with God and the church until they are a part of the church. This isn't just a matter of somebody laying hold of you and pulling you into something. Oh no, friends, the shoe needs to be on the other foot. You need to be like that man in the chariot that said to Philip, "What doth hinder me to be baptized?" (Acts 8:36). What is there standing between me and this holy step, this blessed experience?

Oh, friend, listen. If God can help you tonight to see this as it's presented here in this Book, you will want to be baptized as *soon* as you can, and you'll want to be studying and pressing upon those who can study with you, "Help me to learn what I need to learn, help me to experience what I need to experience so that I can enter in with all my heart."

Let me tell you something: if somebody has to be begged and helped, and plead with, and pulled along, how in this world are they ever going to go through what's ahead? Oh, I plead with your heart tonight, this is my plea: that God helps you to see the importance of laying hold of this Word *yourself* and acting on what He says.

"And now why tarriest thou? Arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord"
Acts 22:16.

Remember, friends, baptism isn't graduation. Baptism is enrollment in God's school. Baptism isn't the end of the road, it's the beginning. Baptism isn't being perfect. It's settling it with God and your soul that you want to be *made* perfect.

But now I have mentioned this matter of no other gods before Him, and Sabbath-keeping, and the Sixth Commandment, and baptism as illustrations. There are so many other things in this law, and in the Word as a whole, in which, you and I, if we are studying, can find a command that meets the particular need that we have. It can set before us the next step that God wants us to take.

And every command is a what? A promise. Every command is a promise.

Now let's turn to the 119th Psalm. The 11th verse. This is the longest chapter in the Bible, and here in this 11th verse, we have something right now for everyone. Let's read it together.

“Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against Thee” Psalm 119:11.

Where is the word to be put? In our hearts. In our minds and souls. What does this mean? Well, it includes learning it, friends. Certainly, the Word is not hidden in our hearts if we don't know what it says. Is it? It includes more than this. It includes loving it. Meditating on it.

I'd like to ask you a question, but I don't want you to answer *me*. I want you to answer it to yourself and the Lord. If the time of trouble should burst upon us tomorrow, and you had no longer the printed volume, how much of this book would you be able to carry with you to prison, or to the wilderness? How much? How many verses do you have stored away?

Here is a little statement in the book *My Life Today*, page 28.

“Keep close to the Scriptures... Let us commit its precious promises to memory, so that, when we are deprived of our Bibles, we may still be in possession of the Word of God” *My Life Today*, page 28.

Thank God, friends, the converted Christian that fills his mind with this Book will not always be dependent on the printed volume. The only way that the Devil can get rid of the Word of God in *that* man is to burn him up like they did with Huss and Jerome. But even that doesn't get rid of it because our life is hid with Christ in God, and when Christ, Who is our life, shall appear, then shall we also appear with Him in glory.

Oh friends, I'm hoping that literally hundreds of people here tonight will make up their minds to memorize this Word more than you ever had before. Now you won't memorize it a book at a time, or a chapter at a time, you will memorize it a *verse* at a time.

But do you know by memorizing just one verse a day, you can memorize chapter after chapter, book after book, and pretty soon, oh what a blessing it can be! I remember when I was just a little boy, an evangelist came into town where we lived and held meetings. And he told us this experience. Several years before he had been a streetcar employee, and in those days the streetcars ran up and down the streets of the city; some of you remember them. And he had heard, although he was not a church member, he had heard that memorizing the Bible was a great help in developing a strong memory. And it is, friends.

So he started to memorize it. He would copy out some quotation from the Bible on a little card and He'd have it there. Whenever the streetcar was going along and there was an opportunity, he would glance at it, and keep quoting it, and memorizing it, and going over it. By the time he had learned about 500 texts, it had begun to get not only in his mind but in his heart. It began to do something for him besides strengthen his memory. And friends, it led him right into this blessed truth.

Do you know the best Seventh-day Adventist book in all the world? It's this Bible. All over the world, there have been people who started to keep the Sabbath and never knew a Seventh-day Adventist. They just read it in this book, and there was power in what they read, not only to tell them what to do but to give them the strength to do it.

And so with the other commands. My point is—this man began to obey what he was learning. And he became a member of God's remnant church. And he kept on memorizing. And on into the ministry. And that man knew so many hundreds of texts, literally hundreds, that when he was preaching, if he wanted to read from the Bible, he just opened it anywhere and started quoting the text he wanted. He had them right up here.

Now they could have put that man in prison and taken his Bible away, and friends, he would have had plenty to last him until the pearly gates. It was all up here, you understand.

Oh, will you tonight make up your mind that *you* will memorize the Word of God?

"Ah but," somebody says, "Brother Frazee, you don't understand; I have such a poor memory."

I wish I could get hold of the person that has the poorest memory here tonight. I wish I could get them to come up here. I don't suppose they would want to come. I don't suppose we'd know for sure who it was. But listen, suppose you think you have a poor memory, can I talk to you right where you are? I want to see whether you have a poor memory or not. There are people that have amnesia, you know. They have a poor memory. But I doubt if there's anybody like that here tonight.

So my dear friend, with the poor memory, may I ask you a question? Do you know what your name is? "Oh," you say, "Sure. That's different." No. That isn't any different. Listen. The first time you heard that name, it didn't mean a thing to you. Come now, am I telling the truth? Yes. How is it that if somebody would wake you up at midnight tonight and say, "What is your name?"

Would you say, "Oh, now wait a minute. I'll have to think about that. I'll have to scratch my head a little." Why you'd say, "No, it's John Jones, Mary Smith"; just come like a snap of the fingers.

I say if you can remember that, you can remember this. That's right. You memorize by hearing something over and over again. That's the only way anybody memorizes anything. I understand there are some people that have what's called a photographic memory. They can hear or see it once and that's it. Well, they don't need my talk on this part of it tonight. We won't worry about them.

I am dealing with common folks just like you and me. And most of us, friends, have to hear a thing more than once to really memorize it. Am I right? Do you know how many times it takes for you to memorize something? No. You don't need to know. Just keep going over it *until* you have it. Make up your mind, friends, that no

matter how many times it takes, 5 times, 10 times, 20 times, 50 times, 100 times, you're going to take some promise of God, some command of God, and every command is a promise, and you're going to go over that until it is hid where? In the heart, in the mind, and then that's yours.

But now I'll tell you something. If you don't use it, you'll lose it. The way to keep it is to give it away. As fast as you learn a text, start quoting it to somebody else. Start telling somebody else the wonderful command or promise that you've gotten from this Book and help them to get a blessing from it too. Use that text to bless others.

You know, it's using things that makes us familiar with them. Suppose I walk up to a carpenter here, and he's building a house. And I say, "What's that in your hand?" And he says, "Wait a minute. I studied in school what the name of that was; let me see if I can recall."

Does he do that? No. Why, he says, "That's a hammer." What's that over there? "Well, that's a keg of nails." What's this? "That's a saw." And he can just rattle that off like that.

He memorized it, didn't he, friends? How did he memorize it? By hearing about it and using it. That's it. This is the same way you memorize the Word of God. I want every one of you to be full of the Word of God because in it, Christ has given you and me His life.

"We preach Christ crucified... the power of God, and the wisdom of God" 1 Corinthians 1:23–24.

This is not some nebulous theory, not some religious mystery. This is practical, down-to-earth experience. If you and I will feed on this Word, believe it, and act upon it, we shall find in our own lives that here indeed is wisdom to know what to do, and power to do it.

Oh, I'm so glad for this tonight. What do you say?

Precious Lord, in the arms of faith and love, we present to Thee each one. Just now reach down Thy loving hand and touch us. Seal to our hearts the decisions that have been made. Write in our souls Thy Word. May we experience not only the wisdom but the power of God. We ask it in Jesus' name, amen.

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