

“How To Listen To A Sermon”

Faith in the Authority of God’s Word Comes Before Experiencing its Power

Today’s Scripture: **1 Thess 2:13**

“Our language can be made by God to speak truthfully of him because our language has its origin in him and in some ways is like his own”

Timothy Ward, “Words of Life” p. 34

1. The Mystery of Divine Authority

Knowing this first of all, that no prophecy of Scripture comes from someone’s own interpretation. For no prophecy was ever produced by the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit. **2Peter 1:20-21**

2. The Discernment of Divine Authority

No one comprehends the thoughts of God except the Spirit of God. Now we have received not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, that we might understand the things freely given us by God....The natural person does not accept the things of the Spirit of God, for they are folly to him, and he is not able to understand them because they are spiritually discerned. **1Corinthians 2:11-12,14**

Those who are perishing, because they refused to love the truth and so be saved. Therefore God sends them a strong delusion, so that they may believe what is false, in order that all may be condemned who did not believe the truth but had pleasure in unrighteousness. **2Thessalonians 2:10-12**

If the Good News we preach is hidden behind a veil, it is hidden only from people who are perishing. Satan, who is the god of this world, has blinded the minds of those who don't believe. They are unable to see the glorious light of the Good News. They don't understand this message about the glory of Christ, who is the exact likeness of God.

2Corinthians 4:3-4 NLT

Jesus spoke to them, saying, "I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life." **John 8:12**

3. The Experience of Divine Authority

"To encounter the words of Scripture is to encounter God in action... God's actions, including his verbal actions, are **a kind of extension of him**" **Timothy Ward**, "Words of Life" p. 48, 31

"Now to him who is able to do far more abundantly than all that we ask or think, according to the power at **work** within us" **Ephesians 3:20**

For this I toil, struggling with all his energy that he powerfully **works** within me. **Colossians 1:29**

The Scriptures are an extension of God himself!

For the word of God is **living and active**, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the division of soul and of spirit, of joints and of marrow, and discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart.

Hebrews 4:12

Whoever is of God hears the words of God. The reason why you do not hear them is that you are not of God. **John 8:47**