



Message **Transcript**

What do You Say About the Word?

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Lord Jesus, we give you all the glory and honor and praise for who you are.

Lord, our desire is always to put you on display because you are worthy of all of our adoration. And Lord, we gather here today to hear your living and active word convict our hearts and change who we are for your glory. And so Lord, as we gather here, for all of us gathered for all of you are here, who are gathered, who desire to hear His word, believe what He says, and by faith we'll put into practice what he shows you. Will you agree with me very loudly this morning by saying the word Amen. Amen.

Amen.

Well, today we are going to conclude our series on the word of God. If you say that you believe God's word that it's inherent that all 66 books are true and that you're going to bank your life on it. If you walk around and tell people that, you will ultimately get some people that will roll their eyes or look at you and say to you, "Say what? You really believe this book? You really believe that's true? You really believe all those made up stories are really real? You really believe all that? How can you possibly believe what this book says?"

What we've been doing as a church is we've been walking through over the last four weeks, this is week five, describing what the word says about the word, what God says about the word, what history says about the word, and ultimately what the word says about you. Today's message is the most important of all five. This is what you say about the word. What you say about the word of God will determine the trajectory of your life for this life and the next. I've been fired up to preach all these in

the series. This is the one I'm most fired up to preach.

If you're joining us today, you haven't got to hear the other messages. You can hear them online, but let me bring you up to speed a little bit. What we've been talking about just to review is that the devil has a strategy for your life. The devil is a real being and what he desires in your life is to get you, whether you're a Christian or a non-Christian to doubt God's word. In the garden, he came to Eve, Adam was there with her. He said, "Did God really say that?" Are you really believing what God says?" He gets them to doubt God's word. In your life, his number one strategy is to get you to doubt God's word.

We said, if you doubt God's word, you'll ultimately doubt's goodness. You'll doubt God's justice. You'll doubt God's authority, and you won't it to who He is. What we've been doing in this series is to take a look objectively at different things. We've said first week, what does the word say about the word? In other words, what is the word's testimony about itself? We listed five major things. One is that it's eternal. That it's inspired by God. These are God read words. That it's infallible, which means it's trustworthy. That it's inherent, which means there's no errs. And that this book is supernatural.

In other words, you may not believe the Bible. You may say, "I don't believe that it's just made up." The Bible believes the Bible. The Bible believes that everything in the Bible is true. The Bible is testifying that all that I'm saying to you is true. The Bible would say of itself, if there's one err, there may as well be a 100,000 errs. Because everything that the Bible is testifying to is telling you that it's testimony is true. We also

said when we studied the Bible, what the Bible has to say about the Bible is that the Bible reveals the living word. That in the beginning was the word and the word was with God, and the word was God, and the word became flesh.

So we began to talk about the living word and the living word is Jesus Christ. So what does Jesus Christ say about the word? What does God in flesh say about the word? And that's what we looked at at week two. And we said this, that the living word believed that all the written word testified about him. Jesus Christ said that you diligently study the scriptures because you think that in them, you have life yet you refuse to come to me to have life.

In other words, Jesus said, everything you read about from Genesis 1:1 through the end of revelation 22, every word in there is talking about me. That's what Jesus said. What Jesus is painting a picture of in Genesis 1:1 when God spoke the world into existence, who was doing the speaking? It was Jesus Christ. In Exodus, when God spoke through a burning Bush to Moses, who was the one speaking to Moses, but that was Jesus Christ. When Elijah called down fire from heaven, who was the one sending heaven. That was Jesus Christ.

I mean, we see that everything in scripture is testifying about him. Jesus made sure that we understood that he believed that everything written in the Bible was all about him and him alone, which means to reject some of the word is to reject some of who Jesus is. So God's testimony on the word is that the word testifies about him. He said the word also testifies to the truth that everything in this book is true. That

everything in Jesus Christ is true. He's the way, the truth, and the life.

Testifies about God. That Jesus Christ himself is God. When going to be stoned and killed at different times, Jesus would say for what are you going to stone me? What have I done wrong? They said, "Well, nothing. You haven't done anything wrong, but you a mere man claim to be God." And what was his answer? "I am. I am. I am the way, the truth and life. I am. Before Abraham was, I am. I'm God, and you'll someday that I'm God." That's who he is. And then he also made this testimony too, that he's central to all salvation. That he's the way, the truth and the life.

Here's what Jesus made the claim of, nobody comes through the father except through him, which means this, when Jesus Christ came to the earth and he died on a cross, according to the scriptures and he was buried and he was raised according to the scriptures, he was saying this, "I'm God who's paid for all the sin of humanity and I'm the only way you can have a relationship with God." I'm it. I'm exclusive. Now I'll take anybody that comes, but I'm the exclusive route. I'm the exclusive way. That was the testimony.

So again, you may not believe the Bible's true. The Bible believes that the Bible's true. You may not believe Jesus is God, Jesus believes not only is he God, but he's the only God. That's what he believes. So then we took a look at history, because a lot of people will say, "Well, it's just made up. It's just a manmade book." We took a look at how over 1500 years, there were 40 different authors that put this together. And we took a look at the canonization. In other words, how scripture came to be and that we have these words that we have in our hands. Why these 66 books? Why these 39 old

Testament? Why these 27 New Testament?

We looked at history from three different perspectives. One was the literary perspective. The history of canonization. What we discovered was that there is so much evidence historically to show that the Bible that we hold in our hands is original. There's over 5,800 manuscripts of the New Testament alone. I mean, we have more jigsaw puzzle pieces than we do places to put them. I mean, if you don't believe the Bible, you can't believe Julius Caesar crossing the Rubicon. You can't believe in Homer's Iliad.

We took a look from a literary perspective. If you're just being objective, the Bible passes the historic literary tests that everything in it's true. Then we took a look at the history of prophecy. We took a look at the prophetic tests and the prophetic tests are this, that every prophecy ever made has come in the exact same way that the Bible said it was. How do you get 40 different authors over 1500 years to make history play out a certain way? The answer is you can't. How come Jesus was born in Bethlehem? Because Micah said he was going to be.

How come Jesus was pierced through for our transgressions? Because 750 years before he was born, Isaiah said he would be. How come he was born of a Virgin? Because Isaiah said he would be. Everything has happened. If there were just 10 prophecies that came true, it'd be pretty compelling. There's hundreds of them. The only ones that haven't come true will come true. And then we took a look at the history of response. Even if you don't believe any of this, even for people that say in every

generation, the Bible's no good. It's not true. It's never going to stand the test of time.

In every generation, there are testimonies of people that believe that Jesus is the Christ whose lives have been transformed from death to life because Jesus Christ is alive and you can't stop him. Amen?

Amen.

And then last week we took a look at, okay, so what does the word say about you? We took a look at a Biblical perspective from a world view that you're created and you're unique and that God has purpose for you. But the problem is that you're a sinner, which means you're dead to the things of God. You're dead spiritually, but God so loved the world. He loved you and you're accountable to that love. How you respond to the Lord Jesus Christ will echo in your ears for all eternity. Either you will respond to him as Lord, or he will reject you when he meets you. That's what the Bible testifies to.

So here's the question. How are you going to respond? What do you say about the word? What do you say about the word? Because the only thing you can do is you can say, I believe or I don't believe, but here's the evidence the Bible's going to say we believe everything's true. Jesus is going to say, "I believe everything is true." History's going to validate that everything we're saying is true. And the word of the God penetrates your heart so that you know it's true. So here's the question, what do you say about the word?

Now, we've been talking about the word. Now in the Greek, there's three different words for word. The first one is graphe. The graphe is scriptures. It's the

written word. What you hold in your hand. If you have a Bible this morning or you took one from under your chair, that's the written word to God. These are the scriptures. This is God's word given to us. The purpose of the written word is information and communication. This gives you a message telling you who God is and how you're called to respond.

This is a book that tells you if you respond to God in this way, here's the things that will happen. If you respond to of God in that way, here's the things that will happen. That's what the writings do. That's the graphe of God. That's the written word of God. Now we said that the written word of God revealed the living word. That's the second word. Graphe is the written word, the logos is the living word. The word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword. That's not the written word. That's the living word of Jesus Christ that penetrates both soul and spirit. Joins in marrow judges, the attitudes and intentions of your heart.

This written word reveals the living word and the living word embodies the written word, but there's another word we haven't talked about yet. There's another word that is so powerful that we need to understand as believers. To see it, I want you to turn to Ephesians 6. In Ephesians 6, we're going to see a different kind of word and this word is called the rhema word or the spoken word. Let me just tell you from the onset that the spoken word magnifies and manifests the living word. The rhema of word of God is when the written word of God is spoken and believed in, in such a way that the Holy Spirit magnifies Christ and manifests Christ.

Another way of saying it would be this, when the word of God, the written word

of God is spoken by a blood bought saint that has their identity in Christ and believes that the word of God is true, the Holy Spirit manifests and magnifies and showcases the Lord Jesus Christ. That's what he does. Now, take a look at Ephesians 6. In Ephesians 6 starting in verse 10, the Bible tells us to be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his might and to put on the full armor of God so that you'd be able to stand firm against the schemes of the devil. Why? Verse 12, "For our struggle," think about where you're struggling right now. Think about what you're struggling with right now. Think about that. Here's what it tells about your struggle. "For our struggle is not against flesh and blood."

Your struggle is not against another person. You may think it's another person. It's never another person. "For our struggle is not against fleshing blood, but against the rulers, against the powers, against the world forces of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenly places. Therefore, take up the full armor of God so you will be able to resist in the evil day and having done everything to stand firm." So here's the introduction to spiritual warfare. Spiritual warfare is a place that the rhema word, the spoken word works in spiritual warfare.

Why? Because whatever you go through in life, it's first and foremost, a spiritual issue. Whatever you're struggling with is first and foremost, a spiritual issue. You're struggling in your marriage? You may have all sorts of challenges in your marriage, but the root of the challenge that you have in your marriage is a spiritual problem. You may be struggling with your kids. There may be all sorts of reasons you're struggling with your kids, but the root of the problem as to why you're struggling with your kids is a

spiritual issue.

You may be struggling with your finances, but the root to the problem that you have financially is a spiritual issue. Everything has a spiritual root to whatever you're dealing with. How do you know that? Because Ephesians 6:12 tells me that our struggle is not against flesh and blood. My struggle is never against another person. Your struggle is never against another person. Where's your struggle? Your struggle always starts in the unseen, invisible world and manifests itself in the visible and seen world.

Every struggle you have is taking place in a spiritual realm that you do not see, which means you need weaponry that helps you in the realm you don't see because what you have in the realm that you do see won't help you for the problem that you actually have. If your problem is a spiritual problem, which the root of all of them are, and you're using manmade methods to conquer that problem, it will never ever work. Your flesh and blood cannot solve a spiritual issue.

So God tells us I know this, so I've given you some armor. And He walks through six pieces of equipment that were to have and to take up, notice what he says, verse 14, "Stand firm therefore, having girded your loins with the truth and having put on the breastplate of righteousness and having shot your feet with the preparation of the gospel of peace.

Now, have you heard the word stand firm, stand firm, stand firm. I mean he keeps saying stand firm. So you'll be able to stand. You got to stand. Why is he

saying? Because he wants us to hold the line. When it comes to the things of God, he says, hold the line, stand firm. Don't turn around. Don't retreat. You stand firm. He doesn't say take ground. He doesn't say advance. He doesn't say, you better go do this for me. He says, just hold the line and you keep walking with me. Just hold the line. Stand, stand. I don't want you down on the ground. Why? Because a soldier that's down on the ground is in a compromised position.

Amen.

Stand now, what are the weaponry we've talked about so far? We got the belt of truth, got the breastplate of righteousness. We have our feet shod with the preparation of the gospel. We're standing firm in truth, in the righteousness of Christ that he gave us when we trusted in him through shed blood on Calvary. And we have the third piece of the weaponry, which is the gospel of Jesus Christ. He says, "In addition to all this," in verse 16, "taking up the shield of faith with which you will be able to distinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one."

So notice this in order to see God at work, faith is important. Faith is believing in what we do not see. Why would faith be important in spiritual warfare? Because every place that your battles taking place, you can't see. That's why you need faith to believe that God is moving when you can't see God move. So I'm taking up the shield of faith. In addition to that, what is the next piece of equipment? He says, "And take the helmet of salvation." The helmet of salvation is my salvation. It's my identity in Christ. That is who I am.

So now I got five pieces of armor on. got five pieces. Notice what they are, truth, the righteousness of Christ, my readiness, faith. What else? My identity, and then he gives this final weapon. Now all the other weapons we've talked about so far, they're all protective defensive weapons, except for one. The Christian is given one offensive weapon and notice what it is. And the sword of the spirit, which is the rhema of God. The sword of the spirit, which is the spoken word of God.

Now this sword that he's describing here is not some big, long sword. It's a dagger. It's razor sharp. It's six to 18 inches. They would've had it in their pocket. They would've pulled it out. It is for hand-to-hand, combat to plunge into the enemy. How many you ever felt the enemy in your life? Ever felt the enemy in your life, breathing down your neck, telling you he's going to destroy your marriage, telling you he's going to destroy your life, telling you he's destroy your job, telling you he's going to destroy your relationships?

Why? Because his job is to seek and to kill and destroy. That's why he always lies to you and tells you, your situation is not going to work out. It's not going to happen the way you think. God is not good. Don't believe Him. That's what his job is. That's what he's always saying, but He's given us all this weaponry to stand firm. And then he gives us one offensive weapon, this dagger. This razor sharp two-edged dagger, the sword of the spirit, which is the word of God. The rhema of God. The spoken word of God. Now, if you've been given one offensive weapon and you're in war, do you think it'd be important that you know how to use it?

Yeah.

I mean, if you're going to go into battle and you're in the infantry and you have weaponry, but you don't know how to use it, it's useless to you. Most Christians don't know how to use the spoken word of God for the situation that they're in, which is why I'm so fired. Because you can have Bibles in your house. You can have like 30 of them. You can have big ones that you sit on the coffee table. You can put one under your pillow every night and it won't do a thing for you. But if you believe the message and the information and communication that's coming across and you align your mouth with what you believe because of your faith in Christ, your identity and who he is, his righteousness, and you speak that word, you showcase Jesus.

He will manifest himself and the Holy Spirit will magnify him in your situation. Now you think about this. It's so important for us to understand this because I said it before, like a bell isn't a bell until you ring it. And a song isn't a song until you sing it. And a word isn't a manifested word of God until you speak it. Isn't it interesting when it comes to salvation in Romans 10:9? How do you know if you saved that? If you what? Confess with your mouth, that Jesus Lord and believe in your heart God raised him from the dead. You'll be saved. What's he asking us to do? Speak it.

There's nothing in the Bible that says, "Hey, just pray a prayer and just close your eyes and bow your head and just don't tell anybody ever make it really private." No speak it. When Thomas saw Jesus post resurrection, what did he say? "My Lord and my God." Spoke it. Speak it. Speak the word. Now, how does that work in spiritual

warfare? I want you to turn to Matthew 4. In Matthew 4, we get a picture. I'm going to read 11 verses of how Jesus began his ministry and what he did and how he was led.

It says this, let me just read the 11 verses and we'll unpack it. It says, "Then Jesus was led up by the spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. And after he had fasted for 40 days and 40 nights, he then became hungry. And the tempter came and said to him, 'If you were the son of God, command that these stones become bread.' But he answered and said, 'It is written, man shall not live on bread alone. But on every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God.'"

Then the devil took him into the holy city and had him stand on the pinnacle of the temple and he said to him, 'If you are the son of God, throw yourself down. For it is written, he will command his angels concerning you and on their hands, they will bear you up so that you will not strike your foot against the stone.' And Jesus said to him, 'On the other hand, it is written, you shall not put the Lord your God to the test.'"

Again, the devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world in their glory, and he said to him, 'All these things, I will give you if you fall down and worship me.' Then Jesus said, 'Go Satan for it is written you shall worship the Lord, your God and serve him only.' The devil left him and behold angels came and ministered to him." Jesus Christ is God's one and only son. He's perfect in every way. What did the devil try to do to Jesus in the same way he tries to do to us, doubt God's word. Doubt God's word.

He comes to him after he had fasted 40 days and 40 nights. And I love the

scripture, how honest it is. And he was hungry. Yeah, duh. I mean, if you fast 40 days and 40 nights, you'll be hungry. So where does Satan manifest himself in the life of Jesus? To provide food. Why? Because he's hungry. What does Satan always want to do? I'll meet your physical needs. You don't need to trust God for them. I'll provide them for you. We call it the lust of the flesh.

If you hold your finger here and turn to 1 John 2:16, you'll see Satan's strategy. 1 John 2:16 tells us, "For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and the boastful pride of life is not from the father, but is from the world." Lust of the flesh, lust of the eyes, the pride of life. What are you? If you are the son of God, really, it means this, it's a first class conditional sentence. It means since you are the son of God, or I think you're the son of God, but why don't you prove it to me?

If you're really the son of God, turn these stones to bread. Since that's who you are. What was he trying to do? The lust of the flesh. What does Satan try to do to you? He tries to get you to fill legitimate needs in an illegitimate way. Singles, he'll tell you this, "If God were good, He'd already given you a spouse. He didn't give you a spouse. You're old enough now you don't need to wait anymore. Just engage in sexual activity. It's no big deal. If your God was good, he would've already provided for you."

Married couples, "If your God was good, he would've had you marry somebody else or he would've changed them by now. And there's no way He's changing them and it ain't getting any better. And if He were good, that would be the case. So I'll tell you what? I can get you out of this one and I can show you somebody better for you."

"Hey, you know what? If your God was good, you'd have a job. If your God was good,

He'd provide more money. If your God was good, you wouldn't struggle in this trial. If your God was good, you wouldn't deal with this hell's challenge. If your God was good, you'd never have to go through that."

You ever heard those voices before? That's the voice of the enemy. That's what he did to Jesus. Now notice Jesus, how he answers him all three times. Did you catch that? He answered and said what? It is written. And then what does he do? He speaks the word. He quotes Deuteronomy 8:3, "Man shall not live by bread alone, but from every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God." Now, why is this important? Jesus is the perfect son of God. Jesus has never sinned. Jesus has perfect motivation. He's got perfect decision making skills. What does he not do? He doesn't debate with the devil. He doesn't argue with the devil and he doesn't tell the devil about his circumstance. He quotes the word of God.

Now, why is this important? Because the devil will always take you to your circumstance and he'll show you how bad it is. And he'll show you the trial that you're in. He'll show you, what's wrong. He'll show you how it's never. He'll show you this, and he'll try to get you into an invitation because if you'll dialogue with him, you'll become a victim. You'll become the victim. And when you become the victim, he's got you because you'll begin to think, "God's not good." Jesus knows. He's good. Jesus knows his dad's good. So all he does is quote the word.

I don't need your food program. My God will supply all my needs according to His glorious riches and Christ Jesus. Man does not live by bread alone, but from every

word that comes from the mouth of God. I'm fed. I have food to eat you don't know anything about. If Jesus needed to say it is written, how much more do we need to do that? The lust of the flesh denying God's goodness for his physical appetite. He's like, "Nope, I'm just going to quote the word because my dad's good."

So then the devil takes him to the holy city and has him stand on the pinnacle temple and he said to him, "If you're the son of God, throw yourself down for it is written." And he quotes Psalm 91, but he leaves a couple verses out. Leaves a little part of it out, twists it a little bit. And basically he says this, "You know what? You can doubt God's justice. Your dad would never let you hurt your foot. Your dad would never let anything bad happen to you. There's no way. He cares about you." But what does he say? Jesus says "Again, on the other hand, it is written."

He quotes Deuteronomy 6:16. It says, "You should not put the Lord of God to the test." So the devil's like, "Oh man, this is not working out." Strike two. Again, the devil took him to a very high mountain. He showed him all the kingdoms of the world and all their glory. And here's what he tells him, "All these things, I will give you if you fall down and worship me." Isn't it interesting? Satan doesn't own all the kingdoms of the world. He doesn't have the ability to give the kingdoms of the world.

Jesus owns all the kingdoms of the world, but even the devil was trying to promise Jesus, all the kingdoms of the world. What's the devil ultimately looking for you to do? He's looking for you to bow your knee. Just get down on one knee for me and I'll give you everything you want. You live for this world? I'll give you what you desire. Now he can't deliver on his promise, but that's what he wants you to do. Because he

wants you to worship him. Now you see the progression here? Doubt God's goodness, because he didn't provide you food. Doubt God's justice. There's no way He'll let you die. And now it's what? Doubt God's authority.

You don't need to bow to God. You can bow to me. And Jesus says to him, "Go Satan." Quotes Deuteronomy 6:13, and 10:20. "For it is written you shall worship the Lord, your God and serve him only." And guess what happened? The devil left him and behold angels came and began to minister to him. You remember the old Superman shows with Clark Kent? Just an ordinary reporter, walking into a telephone booth, come out, and all of a sudden he is faster than a speeding bullet. More powerful than a locomotive and able to leap tall buildings in a single bound? Because he's Superman.

But Superman had a problem. Remember what his problem was? It was kryptonite. He could do all these things unless kryptonite was around him. When kryptonite was around him, he was powerless to do anything. The word, the spoken word of God is spiritual kryptonite for the devil. He can't beat that. Now he can beat any of your opinions because a lot of us, when it comes to our situation, we like to complain as a victim. "Well, this happened and my wife this and my husband that and my kids that. And this is my job and my boss, this I'm a victim, my problems, my this." Or we think we're going to help our situations like, "Well, I think this and well, I think that, and my pastor says this and BRAVE Church says that."

And every time you talk like that, the devil's like, "Awesome." Because I have power over all that. For many of us, we want to see our situation change, but when we

hear the word of God, here's what most of us say. "Yeah, I need to work on that a little bit. I need to work on it. Not doing very good with my finances. I need to work on that. Not doing good in my marriage. I need to work on that. Man, when I hear how generous Jesus was, I need to work on that. When I think about how kind he was, well, I'm not there yet. I need to work on that. When I think about my anger issues, I got to work on that. I just got a lot of stuff to work on."

Let me ask you this question, how's your working on it, working for you? Your working on your stuff won't change a doggone thing. If it's a spiritual problem and you're working in the flesh, the devil says, "I already got you beat." And here's how most Christians think. Most Christians picture Satan as deity. Like he's this big guy over here that's got us down and man, it's Satan. He's all over me. I can't defeat him. Let me tell you something about Satan, you blood bought saints. He's a defeated foe. He has zero power over you. Your debt was canceled at the cross.

When you realize that you're a victor and you're tired of being pushed around and you speak the word, he will flee. He has to. He's allergic to the word of God. He can't stand on the word of God. The way you keep marching forward is you plunge that dagger, the word of God, right into your situation and you watch the manifested presence of Jesus Christ take it over. That's the word. That's how important the word is. But so many of us, we don't speak the word. We speak about our problem. We tell everybody how bad it is and what's going on and how come I can't and why don't I?

I mean, you think about it. I don't know how many times, I mean, of reading the pair requests over the last nine years of my marriage is in trouble. My marriage is in

trouble. We got this problem. We got that problem. Let me tell you something, if you're married, you got some problems. That's a great place for an amen. You know why? Because one of you is a man and one of you is a woman. So you got problem communicating already. You got irreconcilable differences already, because you're both sinners already. You got two different worldviews already. You're coming together.

But if you understand marriage that God intended it, it's a supernatural, spiritual entity. It's not an earthly thing. It's something that God's joining together between two people and God has a lot to say about what marriage is. So oftentimes we'll hear and we'll read Ephesians 5 and wives will start cringing when we start the passage, "Wives submit to your husbands as to the Lord in everything." You're like, "Pastor keep moving on because I don't like that part." Or for godly women, like so many of y'all that are here, you walk home and you're like, "I got to work on that because there's areas of my life, I'm not so submissive to my husband and that's hard. I got to work on that. I got to work on that."

And husbands you'll hear the word and it'll be like, "Hey, love your wife like Christ loved the church." And then you begin to think about, well, how did he love the church? Well, he loved the church enough to step out of glory and be spit upon and be beaten and be abused and be pinned to cross and even die while people were mocking him. While they were doing that, he was offering forgiveness and love.

Now most guys, when we hear that and we really want to grow in our marriages,

husbands are like, "I need to work on that. I'm not there yet." But I find that working on things doesn't change anything. But when you begin to speak the word, God begins to change things. Now I can't speak with any authority on a wife. My wife could tell you about this, but I can speak with authority on what it means to be a husband. I know our marriage began to change when I stopped just praying about God change Kim and I started speaking the word and saying, "God, this is who I am. Change me."

See, when I started realizing what Christ had done and how he laid down his life for me, and then I began to speak that and said, "God, your word says that Kim and I are one and that you care about our marriage and that you want to flourish it and you want to make it awesome. And Lord, I can't change her, but I'm responsible for me. So Lord teach me to love Kim, the way that you would love Kim, if you were the one living through me and change my behaviors and patterns, because I don't know how to change them. And help me become a better listener.

And Lord, I'm going to read 1 Corinthians 13. But instead of just reading that love is patient and kind, Lord, I want to read my name into it and I'm going to tell you that because Christ is in me, I'm patient and I'm kind, and I'm not jealous and I'm not boastful and I'm not arrogant and I'm not rude. I'm not going to insist on my own way. And Lord, anytime my life doesn't align with that, allow your Holy Spirit to apprehend me so that I can honor my wife in a way where she really believes she's the most important person on the planet."

Now I can tell you what happened to me. God changed me, but it was really interesting. As God changed me, He changed my wife why? Because I spoke the

word. You say, "Well, I'm not married Pastor Jeff." I'll give you another example. When I became a believer, I loved the Lord, but I was having a hard time walking it out.

There's a lot of you here like that. You know that if you died today, you know Jesus, you've trusted him for his death on the cross and his resurrection from that. You know you're going to heaven, but when it comes to walking out your daily life, you're walking and then you get snapped back into the world. And then you're walking with him, you're snapped back into the world and you're going through this routine of Lord, I love you. I'm sorry again. Lord, I love you. I'm sorry again.

That was my walk early on. Then I started to speak the word. I started to memorize the word. There were two scriptures I memorized. One was 2 Corinthians 5:17, "Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. Behold, old things have passed away. All things have been made new." And Galatians 2:20 says, "I've been crucified with Christ. It's No longer I who live. It's Christ who lives in me. And the life I live, I live by faith in the son of God who loved me and gave himself for me." So I started praying different.

Instead of praying to prayer like, "Lord, I'm sorry again. However many times I've done it. I promise y'all do it again. I'll totally commit. I'll work on it." And nothing ever changed. I started praying like this, "Lord, I'm done doing what I did. Now, my behavior would dictate that's what I did, but that's not who I am. I'm a son of the most high God. Lord change my life. Teach me to love what you love. Teach me to hate what you hate. Lord, bring people into my life that reflect you. Lord, teach me how to walk in your ways. I want what you want. I want to love people like you love people. I want to hate

the things of sin that you ate. I want my life to be a reflection of who you are. And Lord, I claim that because I have a new identity, because I've been born again by the spirit of God. That's who I am."

When I began to speak that in my prayer, guess what happened? My life began to change. I remember looking over my shoulder one time, because I was at a wedding and all the people were going out, getting drunk and I wasn't. I went home. And I was praying that night. I'm like, "Lord, you changed me. I'm different. I don't have a desire for that anymore." It wasn't because I was working on it. Because I don't have a desire for that. God changed me.

Now, can I just say something to you? I don't mean to hurt anybody's feelings in here, but I get this question a lot as a pastor. "Hey pastor Jeff, I've traveled around the world. I've been to India. I've been to other places. I've been to Mexico. Oftentimes in meetings, I see God do things. I don't see him do in America. I just don't see it. Like we've seen healings. We've seen demons being casted out. We've seen all this stuff on the mission field. How come we don't see it in America?" Can I answer the question for you?

Yes.

Because you don't want to.

That's right.

You don't want to. Now I'm going to paint a clear picture of the New Testament church. I want to be crystal clear. There weren't any perfect churches in the New

Testament. A quick read through the book of 1 Corinthians would let you know it was messed up beyond belief. You had these legalistic Galatians, you had these licentious Corinthians, you had Ephesus that lost their first love. I mean, there was no perfect church in any generation. No perfect church now, but here's what they had. They had the Holy Spirit of God, they had of scriptures, and they spoke the word of God with boldness and the gospel spread all over the world.

They didn't have any seminaries. They didn't have any ordained pastors. They didn't have any buildings. What they did have was those three things. Guess what? We still have those three things available to us. But oftentimes instead of showcasing Jesus, we want to show something else. If you're not heralding the word of God, teaching the word of God, encouraging people with the word of God, you're not showcasing Jesus. Who are you showcasing?

Yourself.

You're showcasing yourself. Can I say a word to you future pastors out there? If God has called you to ministry, for Christ's sake and for the sake of his coming kingdom, preach the word. Open the Bible and preach Christ. Amen? If you need to tell a story to amplify something in the Bible, fantastic. But teach the Bible, preach the Bible. If you go to a place where the Bible is never opened and people don't believe the Bible and people don't communicate the Bible, leave. I mean, if God's not being showcased, why would you want to be there anyway? What's the point of even going?

Be somewhere where word of God is heralded. Where the people in the

community say, "We care about Jesus. We care about his word. We want to teach people his word so they can speak his word." Now this should motivate you in your heart, because if you don't know the word very well, you don't have much to speak. If you don't read the word very much, you have nothing to speak. Because I want to about a rhema word and what it's not. A rhema word is always the written word that's being spoken.

That's a Ram word. A rhema word that's been hijacked by some people in the body of Christ means this, I'll speak whatever I want and then God's got to turn that into existence. That's not what I'm saying. God told me to tell you, "Hey, this year here's what's going to happen. Here's who's winning the super bowl. God me." I mean, nonsense. I'm talking about the written word of God being proclaimed in faith with someone who has their identity as a blood bought saint with the righteousness of God claiming this is what the word says. I believe it. Because when I read my Bible, here's what it says, "Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, forever."

When I preach in India, I see a lot. Oftentimes I have prophetic words for people that I've never met. Oftentimes I've seen people healed. Oftentimes I've seen demons cast out. It's fairly normative when I go there. But you know what is also fairly normative when I go there? When I arrive on a Sunday morning to preach somewhere, there's always hundreds of people out in front of the church that have been there for two or three hours, praying that God would show up and do something.

The people that have come to church, many of them have traveled about seven hours on foot or tractor or whatever to get there so they can hear the word. And

they're not leaving until they have an encounter with the manifested Jesus Christ in their presence. When we call for prayer, about 90% of the people will come forward. They'll wait longer than the service just to get prayed for. You know why? Because they're desperate for the manifestation of Jesus Christ to show up in their circumstance. Why don't we see that here? Here's why, because for most of us we come to church and we don't care whether Jesus shows up or not.

As long as we feel a little bit better about ourselves, we'll work on our marriages during the week. We'll see our counselor over here. We'll go get this taken care of. Our financial guy will help us with that. We're totally going to eat. We're fine. We're good. I don't really need Jesus to show up. If he shows up, great. That's awesome. That's like a bonus. If he doesn't, I'm fine. But when you're desperate for Jesus and what's going off in your heart is your marriage ain't going to make it without Jesus.

And you don't care anymore who hears and you don't care anymore what people say. You're like, "Lord, as long as it's up to me, I want you to show up in my marriage and I will stay there and I will be in your presence and I will speak your word until I see you change my situation." When your health is this way and you're like, "Lord, you're this same God that heals all my sins, who forgives all my iniquities, who heals all my diseases. That's what the Psalm 103 says. So I'm claiming that I'm holding on it."

Now, listen, I'm not telling you we dictate to God and he does everything we want. I'm saying we speak His word and God is always faithful to His word and it never ever comes back void. Amen. You have power in your life you don't realize you have

access to. When you speak your words to your friends, when you speak your somber words to yourself, "I'm no good. I'm lousy. I know this is not going to happen. This church did this. This pastor did this. My boss did this. My mom and dad did that." When you whine and complain about your situation, here's what the devil does. Got you. I got you.

But when you begin to stand firm on the word of God, "And Lord, you said this, that you would give me a heritage. That you would leave a legacy. That you would let me use my life for your glory. I'm standing on that promise. And Lord, you love my wayward kid more than I love my kid and I'm standing on the promises that you'll go after and get them. Until you do, I'm praying my socks off." When there's a church that comes together collectively and starts praying for those things, that's when we begin to see the supernatural of God. That's when people come to church for more than just, "I like the pastor or whatever." They come to church because they want to experience a resurrected Christ in their situation.

When you're down on your money, God doesn't say, "I promise you a new job tomorrow." I can't find that scripture. What I can find is that my God we'll meet all of your needs according to His glorious riches in Christ Jesus. But if I just read it like, okay, that's good. I know that he will do that. When I speak that God manifests Himself. He shows up. And you see in the garden, devil got them to deny God's goodness. Eve saw that it was good for food. They denied God's justice. Devil said, "You surely won't die." They died. They're not here. They denied God's authority. They saw that it was a delight to the eyes. "I can be like, God." And they fell.

First character we have in the Bible that did this right is Jesus Christ. He's the only one that can do it right, which is why you need to speak his word. It's his word that changes everything. And spiritual warfare, it's the only way you're going to win is through him. Now, one more thing about this word. This word is not magic. I'm not talking about a magic book where you say, "Okay, I'm going to go learn the scripture and speak it and then hope that God does it." No, you saw the weapons of warfare. You have to have the righteousness of Christ. You must be born again.

The helmet of salvation, your identity, the shield of faith, believing that God will actually do it, and then speaking the rhema word of God into existence. Speaking it. There's an interesting story in Acts 19. In Acts 19, what we read about is a group of people on one of Paul's missionary journeys, when he's in Ephesus. Paul was casting out demons and doing all sorts of great things. And so some of the Jewish high priests are like, "We'd like to get in on the action. We want some of the power that God has." That's cool. I mean, if Paul can do it, we can probably do it too. So we've watched what Paul does and we're going to mimic Paul."

And so what they began to do is there was one guy that had demons all in him, and so there was a certain high priest named Sceva. He had seven sons, the seven sons started prophesying and speaking to the demons, trying to cast the demons out. In Acts 19, the evil spirit inside the man answered and spoke to the seven priests, and he said to them, "I recognize Jesus, and I know about Paul, but who are you?" Check out what happened. "And the man in whom was the evil spirit leaped on them and subdued all of them and overpowered them so that they fled out of the house naked

and wounded."

In other words, you can't mimic the power of God. You can't say, "I'm just going to speak the word and then God's going to do stuff." No, you must be born again, and then by faith and your identity in Christ, believe that the word that you're speaking is actually going to be manifested. That's when you see the power of God. You can't just say, "Well, Pastor Jeff said that and worked for him. So I'm just going to say that it'll work for me." It won't work for you. It comes through salvation, which is only found in Christ Jesus, but saints, I'm telling you, you have weapons of warfare you don't even know how powerful you have.

You are not a victim of your circumstance. You are not a victim in relationships. Let me just tell you something flat out. You're a child of the most high God. You're not a victim. You are a victor. And when you operate from that and pray that way, that's what God does. Now, not only is this good in spiritual warfare, but the word of God is good because the word of God convicts hearts. And convicting hearts God is so good.

Let me show you a story in Luke 24. We won't have time to go over the whole thing, but on the day that Jesus rose from the dead, there were two men. One of them was Cleopas and they were traveling from Jerusalem, a seven mile journey to Emmaus. And as they're on the road, the resurrected Jesus shows up and begins to talk to them. The Bible says that they were kept from knowing who Jesus was. So they were blinded to the fact they were talking to the resurrected Christ, but Jesus begins to have a conversation and says to them, "Hey, what were you guys talking

about on the road?"

And they're like, "Are you like a foreigner or something? Have you not heard what's happened in Jerusalem? I mean, there was this man that was a prophet mighty indeed and works. And he was crucified. Now it's been like three days and some of our women went to the tomb and he's not there. We don't even know what's going on. That's what we're talking about." And Jesus says in Luke 24:25, "Oh foolish men's slow of heart to believe in all the prophets have spoken. Was it not necessary for the Christ to suffer these things and to enter into his glory?" Verse 27 is one of my favorite verses in the entire New Testament.

If I could transport myself back into time to any story in the New Testament, this would be a contender. "Then beginning with Moses and with all the prophets, he explained to them the things concerning himself in all the scriptures." Jesus Christ, himself who all the scripture reveals is going to start with Moses and the Pentateuch at the creation story and work his way through the entire Bible up until the cross and the resurrection explaining that he's the Christ.

Now think about this, Jesus is God, Jesus is perfect. How is he going to reveal himself to people? Using the word. It's the scriptures. He to speak the written word. He's speaking the word. Now, check this out. As they arrive at the place that they were going, it looked like Jesus was going to go along a little further. So they welcomed him in to their house and they had a meal together. And it says, when he reclined at the table with them, he took the bread and blessed it and breaking it. He began giving it to them and then their eyes were open and they recognized him and he vanished from

their sight.

So they invite him in for dinner. He reclined at the table. He takes bread and blesses it and breaks it. He takes wine and passes it out. All of a sudden it dawns on them like, "We did the street, but that's Jesus." I don't know if his sleeve came down and they saw the scars in his hand. We don't know, but they recognized him as the Lord. And as soon as they did, boom, he's gone. Now watch their testimony. Watch what they say. Love this verse. Verse 32, "Then they said to one another, 'Were not our hearts burning within us while he was speaking to us on the road, and while he was explaining the scriptures to us?'"

When the word of God is being faithfully proclaimed by a saint that loves Jesus, and by faith believers that God uses that to change people's life, our hearts can burn when we hear the word proclaimed. God is the one who changes hearts. For too many pastors in our generation say, "We don't need the word of God anymore. The Old Testament's not that important." The old Testament reveals everything that Jesus is.

Amen.

The scriptures reveal who he is. If Jesus uses scripture and spiritual warfare and Jesus uses scripture to reveal himself and Jesus use the scripture to change hearts, how much more do we need to do that? The enemy will lie to you and tell you the word of God's not true. It's not that important. You don't need to read it. You don't need it, because he knows; if you ever by faith, believe the word of God owned it and spoke it, he has zero power over your life. The only way he has power in your life is if you let

him.

He doesn't care about your opinions. He doesn't care about your ideas. He just doesn't want you to speak the living word of God and believe that that's true. Where in your life do you need to speak the word? Where in your life have you fallen victim? Where in your life have you said, "This is never going to work out?" Where in your life have you said, "Man, this is my situation." Where in your life has said, "There's a better way. I know it's not God's way but I'm just going to do it." You need to learn God's word and speak his word into your situation so you can experience the manifested Christ.

Jesus used the scripture. I remember hearing Tony Evans preach at Dallas Seminary once and he held this book up and he said, "If you want to be a big dog in ministry, know this book and preach this because this is all that matters." I didn't totally understand everything he was talking about at this point in time, but I do now. Everything I preached in the last five weeks, at my fiber of my being, I believe that the word of God is completely true and all that it testifies to. I believe Jesus Christ is the embodiment of that. I believe history will play out and show that everything is true. I believe that God created us, loves us, we're sinners, he came for us. And by trusting in him alone is the only way we have salvation and we're completely accountable to Christ.

I believe that by speaking the written word of God, the logos, the risen Christ manifests himself and has magnified in my presence. I believe all of it, but I can tell you this, preaching this over the last five weeks has only given me more conviction.

Speaking it, has only given me more conviction. I believe it at a new level. I already believed it before I preached it. Now I believe it times 100. Like this is true. As long as I'm pastor of this church, this is the book I'm going to open. This is the book I'm going to explain. This is the book I'm going to preach. This is the book I'm going to read from, because why? Because I want to showcase Jesus Christ.

Because I know that one day, every knee will bow and every tongue confess that he is Lord. I want people that come to BRAVE Church to know that they can come here and they can hear a word about the resurrected Christ who is still alive, who will speak to their hearts and change them. Do we need the word? Yeah. Amen.? Because if you don't have the word, how are you going to even know if you're saved? 1

Corinthians 15:3-4 tells me that Christ died according to the scriptures and that he was buried and that he was raised according to the scriptures.

If the scriptures don't teach it, then it's not true. I believe in Jesus because of what God's objective word reveals about his living word. And this word is living in active and sharper than any two-edged sword. Now not only is this good for spiritual warfare and for convicting hearts, it's also good for changing the world. You are going to be told in this generation, keep your church stuff to yourself. Don't bring the Bible into the marketplace. Don't share it at the school. Don't talk about it at business. Don't talk about God. Don't do this. That's the world's pressure from Satan saying, shut it down now.

We're called to proclaim it. We're called to preach it. We're called to share it.

We're called to take light into the darkness. Now can I show you how this works? Go all the way back to the biggest miracle in the entire Bible, Genesis 1. This is where we started. In Genesis 1, the greatest miracle that ever took place was over six days where God created everything seen and unseen in six literal days and he rested on the seventh. That's what the Bible teaches. Now check this out. "In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth." Now chapter, ones going to tell us how he did this.

Now it says in verse two, "The earth was formless and void and darkness was over the surface of the deep and the spirit of God was moving over the surface of the waters." Now get this picture. Where's the spirit of God? He's clearly hovering over the waters. He's moving on the waters, but how big is the spirit of God? He's not a substance. He's God, He's everywhere. The spirit of God is everywhere, and what's He doing? He's readying himself. He's at a track ready to hear the gun blow. "I'm ready. I'm ready. Jesus, just say the word. It's done. You say the word, I got this."

Spirit of God's hovering over the water. Now, how did God create the world? I mean, obviously He designed it. Obviously, He thought about it. But He didn't sketch it out. He didn't use his hands to build it. What did He do? I'm going to tell you what the word says. Then God said. God spoke. When God spoke, when Jesus Christ spoke, he said, "Let there be light." And there was light. Well, where was the light? Everywhere the spirit of God was, which was where? Everywhere.

Jesus said, "Let there be light." And all the light went on everywhere in the universe at one given time. How do you know? Because the light went on everywhere the spirit was. The spirit's like, "Man, you keep speaking. I got more work to do. Just

tell me what to do. Jesus, you tell me what to do. I'll do it." Awesome. The spirit of God is always ready to magnify and manifest the risen Christ when we speak his word. The world came into existence through the spoken word. You get saved by confessing with your mouth that Jesus is Lord. You speak the word.

The spoken word unleashes the Holy Spirit to manifest and magnify the resurrected Christ. God said, "Go and there it was." You say, "Well, how do you know it was light over the whole world?" Because that's where the Holy Spirit was. But think about this, I mean, in the New Testament, when they're out on a boat, I mean they're on a boat all the time, but there was one specific time where they were on a boat. There was a furious squall welled up. I mean, waves are going everywhere and they're calling out to Jesus. And when he gets into the boat, what does he say? "Be still." Spoke and what happens?

The Bible says immediately calm. It doesn't say he spoke and then the waves they got around the boat and they just settled down. He spoke. That's why the disciples looked at one another and it's like, "Dude, who is this? Even the winds and the waves obey him. He spoke and it was. Jesus gives us the power in Ephesians 6 through the spoken word to hold a two-edged dagger that can defeat anything in the spiritual realm, so that in the natural realm, God can bring it to pass. That awesome? Do you realize the power that you have? I mean, what do you say about the word?

That's why Paul tells us to preach the word. When we're preaching the word accurately, he gives us a statement in Luke 10:16, it's pretty awesome for a preacher.

When you accurately proclaim the word of God, here's what he says. "The one who listens to you listens to me and the one who rejects you rejects me, and he who rejects me, rejects the one who sent me. What's he saying? He says, "Hey pastor, when you preach the word and people say, 'I heard something today, I needed to change.' They're hearing God." When people hear the word spoken, like, "I reject that pastor." They're not rejecting the pastor. They're rejecting Jesus, and also the one who's sent him, father.

Preach the word, teach the word, use the word. If you want to be effective in ministry, know the word, study the word. Here's my final question. So what do you say about the word? What do you say about the word? I'm going to tell you this. You can't hear it enough. You can't read it enough. You can't study it enough. You can't memorize it enough. You can't meditate it enough, but it's like this. The more you know, the more you're going to be ready for the spiritual battle that you face. When trials hit, they reveal whether you know the word or not. It can't just be, "If I go through this, then I'll start studying the word for that, and if I go through this..."

Now you want to be thoroughly equipped for every good work. You're going to study yourself to be approved unto God. The more you know of the word, and the more you spend time with the Holy Spirit and Jesus Christ, knowing the word and letting God speak to you through the word, the more you have in your arsenal to speak the word for your own life, and guess what? The trajectory of all those around you. See, when you're with blood bought believing saints who know they've been saved, who have the righteousness of Christ, who have their feet fitted with the gospel, who

believe in the truth, who are by faith are holding up the shield, who are resting their identity with the helmet, and they're speaking the word. That's why Jesus says the prayer of a righteous man availeth much.

We can see God do more than what we see God do, if we believe that our battle is in the spiritual realm and we speak the word. When we speak the word, we are showcasing Jesus. If you refuse to speak the word, you are showcasing yourself. I encourage you to grow in the word of God. I'll be the first to tell you as your pastor, I wish I knew the word of God better than what I know. I realize if I study the word, which I will continue to do every day for the rest of my life, that I will still never be at a place before I enter heaven where I'll know it all. But I know that's not one jot or tittle from the word will ever be turned away.

Amen.

So here's my question. What do you say about the word? For some of you today, the way you need to respond is to recognize that Jesus Christ loves you, but he knows you're a sinner. And that he came here in your place to die in the cross for your sins and was buried and got up out of the grave and said, "I'm the way, the truth and the life. I'm looking for your Lordship. I'm looking for you to turn from your sin and confess me as Lord." And for others of you, you would say, "I know that I'm a believer. I know, but pastor Jeff there areas in my life, I've been struggling, trials, all this that's normal, but instead of fighting in the spiritual realm with the word of God and the sword of the spirit speaking the truth, I've been fighting on my own, trying to work it. It's not working."

Let me tell you, it never will. Do you know the word of God well enough to hold onto some of his promises? The way we're going to end our us today is by doing what we call scripture symphony. I'm going to have several of you read the word of God. Maybe it's a word that's been really important to you in this season. Maybe it's a word that you haven't seen realize, but you're trusting God for it. You get the privilege of reading one scripture and one scripture only just for time's sake. But after I get done praying, I'm just going to have a couple lines down each side of the auditorium and just have several of us just one after another, one after another, just read a verse of scripture out loud and loudly so we can hear God as we speak the word of God. Amen.

So would you stand with me as we close in prayer today? Lord Jesus, we give you all the glory and honor for who you are. We love you, Lord. If you're here today and you say, "I don't know that I'm a believer, but I want to be." You can admit to God right now. Lord, I admit I'm a sinner, but I believe you died on the cross from my sins and got out of the grave. And I want to confess you in this place with my lips, that you are the Lord of my life. My desire is to turn from my sin and my desires to receive you. And Lord, for those of us who know you, we are praying that you would teach us your word in such a way we would speak it accurately into the things that we are dealing with.

And Lord, we know that your spoken word aligned with your written word reveals the living word who manifests himself, that's you, Jesus. Do a work in our midst this

morning as we speak your word. We give you all the praise and glory in Jesus name.

Amen. Can we give God praise this morning for his word?