

Practicing the Word of God

Luke 11:28 --- Blessed rather are those who hear the Word of God and obey it.

Have you ever wondered why people in un-westernized countries seem to, without questioning or doubting, experience powerful moves of God in their lives the minute they believe and accept Jesus Christ? The answer to this question resides in focus: ours on our materialistic culture; theirs on God and His power and grace.

The culture that we enjoy in America fosters a self-focus rather than a God-focus and limits what God can accomplish in and through our lives. By so doing, we tend to trust ourselves vs. God. No wonder we see God's work limited in our lives and in our country.

We are filled with information through preaching and teaching in our churches which many times compromises the Word because of our obsession with self, fed by the culture surrounding us. We absorb immense quantities of materials including the Bible through seminars and conferences which tickle our ears, but gather dust in our hearts and on our bookshelves after an event is over.

We acknowledge the importance and need to act upon what we have heard and learned, but do little or nothing to implement these truths into our lives. It seems everything else is more important. We become like the Dead Sea, stagnant without life

Jesus said in Matthew 18:3 – "I tell you the truth, unless you change and become like little children, you will never enter the kingdom of Heaven."

Have you ever noticed how small children trust their parents to be there for them? I can remember my children when they were small, they had no fear of jumping into my arms at any opportunity. They never asked if I would catch them. They always knew that Daddy would not let them down. This is the same kind of trust that God expects from us as His children.

God has never and will never let us down, so in every way we should trust Him, remembering His promise in Hebrews 13:5 - "Never will I leave you; never will I forsake you."

If we say that we love Him, His response to us in John 14:21 is "Whoever has My commands and obeys them, he is the one who loves Me,---."

Can we say that we consistently obey Him while we allow sinful behavior to rule in our lives? Are we truly loving one another, treating others better than ourselves, free from unforgiveness, bitterness, resentment, anxiousness, worry and doubt? Are we guilty of judging others and excusing our own sin?

In order for us to say that we PRACTICE the Word of God, we must examine our own hearts, repent, and out of obedience, change our behavior. Making the changes God wants to make in our lives tells God and others that we truly love Him.

How broken and repentive we should be when we find ourselves focusing and trusting in ourselves and the things of this world rather than God. Can we say that our fleshly behavior truly pleases God? And yet we expect everyone else to PRACTICE the Word and judge them if they don't. By so doing, we are no better than the Pharisees. In Matthew 23:3,5 Jesus told the crowds and His disciples, "--- Do not do what they do, for they do not PRACTICE what they preach --- Everything they do is for men to see---." Are we guilty of the same judgment?

In Matthew 7:24-27 - Jesus said, "Therefore everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into PRACTICE is like a wise man who built his house on the rock. The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house; yet it did not fall, because it had its foundation on the rock. But everyone who hears these words of mine and does not put them into PRACTICE is like a foolish man who built his house upon the sand. The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell with a great crash."

Jesus also said in Luke 8:21, " --- My mother and brothers are those who hear God's Word and put it into PRACTICE."

Do we understand why the power of the Holy Spirit is thwarted in this country when we act like the Pharisees? God promises us a blessing when we obey the Word.

Psalms 1:1,2 - Blessed is the man who does not walk in the counsel of the wicked or stand in the way of sinners or sit in the seat of mockers. But his delight is in the law of the Lord, and on His law he meditates day and night.

In James 1:6,7 we are told that when we ask God to act upon His Word, we "must believe and not doubt, because he who doubts is like the wave of the sea, blown and tossed by the wind. That man should not think he will receive anything from the Lord; he is a double-minded man, unstable in all he does."

We must become single minded in our focus on God in order to see Him move in and through our lives and in the lives of others. We cannot allow the cares and culture of this world to interfere with our un-wavering trust in God.

The words in this column have been very strong and I make no apology for them for I believe they are straight from the heart of God.

I personally am convicted by these words and trust that you will be too. Let's quit being religious like the Pharisees and obey God's Word by PRACTICING it every day of our lives. If we do, then we will see a move of God in our lives and in this country and around the world like we have never experienced before in our lifetime. I want to see God move in power in and through my life and I know that if you love Jesus, that is your desire also.

Won't you join me in obeying God and PRACTICING His Word 24/7?