

The Authority of the Bible

References:

Notes For Servants:

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Objectives:

General: To learn about the power of the Bible in our lives.

Specific:

1. Understand that God's peace is Great and Comforting.
2. Realize that the Bible is God's word and a key to experiencing true joy.
3. Discover that the Bible is helpful, even when dealing with everyday problems.

Instructions:

1. Pray before and after Sunday school.
2. Review last week's lesson.
3. Church occasion.
4. Present the lesson, add some of your own examples/stories.
5. Memorize verse with the class.

Bible Verse:

"Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path."

(Ps 119:105)

Lesson:

The Authority of the Bible

First: Patrology

The fathers of the Church call the Holy Scriptures "the fountain of the Holy Spirit, the field of the kingdom of God, and the paradise of eternity." They consider it a paradise more important than the paradise of Adam. God Has planted it in "the souls of the believers in every part of the world." St. John Chrysostom blesses the man who drinks from this holy spring always, he receives in his soul the flood of the Holy Spirit.

According to St. Gregory, the scripture is the message of God and His revelation about Himself. Another saint says, "It is an icon of God."

Reading the Bible with reverence, openness, and repentance is a purification of the soul according to St. John Chrysostom as if it were baptism.

There is another mystery in the reading of the Bible that is mystery of the Gospel. Our Lord said, "Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you." (John 15:3)

Origin says, "Neglecting the regular reading of the Scriptures by reverence and examination is not less guilt than whoever eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lard in an unworthy manner."

Second: The Authority of the Bible in the Church

Orthodox Church, from its beginning, has been a Biblical Church. Evangelism and the oral doctrine, given by the Apostles, side by side with the written Scripture. The basis upon which the Church has built its daily life and practices. Portions of the Bible are read in every prayer especially in the Orlogion during the day and night. It is read also in all liturgical services. The wading is usually followed sermons and a commenting on the Biblical portion which has been read. The liturgical service of the communion is always preceded by the liturgy of the Catechumen as a preparation of the Holy Sacrament.

+ In the Orthodox Church, the Bible is connected with the practices of daily life. It is present in all the life of the Church so that the congregation absorbs it from the home life and the life of the Church. On this basis, the Orthodox Church considers the tradition and the Bible complementary in everything.

To understand the Bible in its spirit, we need the tradition.

+ The Biblical power and its authority in personal behaviors; (Refer to Psalm-19:7-14.)

According to this Psalm, God's word differs from man's "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away." (Matt 24:35) The authority of the word does not affect the life of the people until they surrender their lives to God and His Will and are guided by His Holy Spirit.

"So shall my word be that goes forth from my mouth; it shall not return to me empty, but it shall accomplish that which I purpose, and prosper in the thing for which I sent it." (Is. 55:11) When the word of God fills the heart of man, it leads him to eternal life. "He who hears my word and believes Him who sent me, has eternal life; he does not come into judgement, but has passed from death to life." (John 5:24) He will then obtain the blessing of sanctity, piety, and new life. And when he surrenders himself to God, he feels the power and guidance of the word which gives him power over worldly desires and bodily lusts.

Third: the Bible and Contemporary Problems

Today the world faces desperate currents which rise from its civilized and learned centres. Existentialism, Marxism, Intellectualism, Materialism, Religious Criticism are all mental fashions of the day imposing their authority on the brains of the learned youth and separating them from God's way. The believer has to face the anxiety, recklessness, weakness of faith and the break down of the people as a sure result of neglecting the spiritual life through the word of God, its authority and promises. We should be confident that the scripture has all the remedies as it heals the illness from its roots.

Fourth: Examples of Modern Problems

Existentialism:

You can find the significance of the true freedom in the Bible. It is the freedom of right. It is to be free from oneself and not from God.

Materialism:

In the Bible, you find "But he answered and said, It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." (Matt 4:4) "Vanity of vanities is vanity and a striving after wind, and there was nothing to be gained under the sun." And that matter is unable to bring mankind to his full potential.

Gabriel Marseille, the Christian philosopher said, "Man is lost in the wheel of the material life, and has become one single cog in the machine of the material thought. He has lost his nature in the useless movement, noisy music and the opinions of the psychologist. There is no escape to man except through faith alone. No hope for the problem of solitude except through love alone, and no salvation except through Jesus alone and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom, joy and complete peace.

DIRECTIONS AND ACTIVITIES

Open the Holy Bible whenever you face modern problems and seek a spiritual solution. Look at the life through the Holy Scripture. Let not your heart be troubled for the restlessness of others, but depend upon God's faithful promises.

Enjoy God's Promises, which are revealed daily in the Bible.

When you go to the Church stand with reverence, open your heart and listen to the Gospel. Make use of God's teaching in the Holy Scripture.

"Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things." (Phil 4:8)

Conclusion:

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