

## **BUILDING FOR ETERNITY**

### **6. Personal Devotions – ‘The Word Comes Alive’**



#### **INTRODUCTION**

As we discovered in our previous study, one of the keys that will help us live out the truths we are learning, is to have a daily time alone with God. Often we refer to this time as our devotions or quiet time. Just as we grow in our relationships with others by spending time together, and by sharing and listening to each another, it is also true in our relationship with God. In this study we will focus on learning to listen to God.

#### **4. A Relationship Means: Listening**

Another important part of our relationship with God is listening to him. Some people talk all the time, and seldom listen to others! The friends we value the most are those who want to listen to us and are interested in what we are doing. Most Christians find it easy to talk to God and tell him their problems, but he wants to speak to us too. How can we learn to listen to God?

*Group Discussion: Divide into smaller groups for 10 minutes and ask the groups to discuss the following:*

- How does God speak to us?*
- Why is God's Word important to us?*
- Share one verse that God has spoken to you from in the past few months.*

*Ask each group to share their answers.*

#### **A. How does God speak to us?**

The main way God speaks to us is through his Word. The Holy Spirit takes God's Word and makes it alive in our spirits. It may be as we are reading our Bibles, or listening to a Bible Study or message, or even as a friend is sharing God's Word with us.

There are two words used in the Greek language for the 'word of God'.

- Logos:** This word is used for the written Word of God. All Scripture, from Genesis to Revelation is the Logos, or Word of God.
- Rhema:** This is speaking of the Word of God which is quickened in our spirits by the Holy Spirit.

We need to read all of God's Word, or the 'logos' daily. There may be times when it seems dry and boring! Often the reason is because we are using our natural minds, instead of asking the help of the Holy Spirit. If we come with an earnest desire for God to speak to us, with total dependence on him, and an expectation that he will – then the Holy Spirit will speak to us and the 'logos' will become a 'rhema' to us.

There are other ways God can speak to us: through dreams and visions, or the still small voice of the Holy Spirit speaking directly to us, however we always need to check what we hear with the Word of God.

#### **B. Why is God's Word so important to us?**

Let's look up the following scriptures that will answer this question for us:-

Matthew 4:4	We need God's Word to live.
1 Peter 2:2	God's Word helps us grow up into our salvation.
Hebrews 4:12	God's Word convicts us and deals with our inner attitudes.

2 Timothy 3:16-17	God's Word rebukes us, corrects us, teaches and trains us in righteousness.
John 15:3	God's Word makes us clean.
Psalms 1:2-3	God's Word makes us fruitful.
Psalms 119:105	God's Word gives us direction and guidance.

### C. How can we read God's Word?

Previously we have spoken about spending time in worship and prayer during our quiet time. Now it is time to read our Bibles, but where do we start? Here are some suggestions.

#### a. Choose a book to read

If you are a new Christian, then begin by reading one of the gospels – either Matthew, Mark, Luke or John. This will help you learn more about the life of Jesus. Once you have finished that, then read the book of Acts, which tells us about the early church. Following that you could read one of Paul's letters, like Ephesians or Philippians. Then you may wish to go to the book of Genesis at the beginning of the Old Testament. Just as you begin Year 1 at school and progress up, it is the same with reading the Bible. Begin with books that are easier to understand, and then go on to the more difficult ones.

It is NOT a good idea to jump from one place to another in the Bible, trying to find a nice verse for the day. If you do this it won't be long before you are bored and you won't be sure if it is God giving you direction, or something you found by yourself! Choose one book to read, and then read a section each day until that book is complete.

#### b. Ask the help of the Holy Spirit

God wants to speak to you! Come with an earnest desire and complete dependence on him. Be expectant that he will speak as he has promised.

#### c. Read a section each day

There are times when we can read through chapters at a time, but during our quiet time or devotion it is good to read a smaller portion and think about it. Meditate on it. Read through the passage several times, with an open heart, so the Holy Spirit can speak to you. Here are some questions you can use to meditate on the passage.

- What do I learn about God the Father, or Jesus, or the Holy Spirit from these verses?
- Are there any promises for me to claim from these verses?
- Are there any examples or warnings to take note of?
- Is there anything that I need to do?

There may be a verse or several verses you really like and you find yourself looking back at them again. This is possibly because the Holy Spirit is quickening those verses to you. Underline them, or write them in a notebook, and then think about them during the day.

## **Conclusion**

A relationship means listening, not just talking! God wants to speak to us. Abraham was called a friend of God because God could share what was on his heart with him. He wants you and me as his friends too. Let's learn to listen.