

# Living In The Name Of The Lord

## Lesson 2: God Has Spoken Through Jesus



Discovering God's Word  
Bible Study Series

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## Introduction

A. We have seen the authority God has given to Jesus, who is now King and Lord. As such, we must do everything in the name of (by the authority of) the Lord Jesus (Colossians 3:17).

B. But, how do we know what is pleasing to God and what Jesus approves? How is it that God communicates His will to us today?

C. All Scripture is inspired (breathed out) by God Himself (2 Timothy 3:16-17). So, we should expect that these words contain truth that has been revealed by God (John 17:17).

D. We must search the Scriptures to learn if God has said anything about how He has communicated in the past and how He communicates today.

E. Purpose: To learn how God has spoken in various ways in the past and how He speaks to us today through Jesus in the Scriptures.

## 1. God Has Spoken In Various Ways

A. Hebrews 1:1

1. Throughout the Old Testament (from Genesis to Malachi), God spoke to people in a variety of ways and revealed His will in pieces. During this time, there was always the possibility that God would speak again in some way.

2. Those God would speak to are called “prophets” in the Bible. These would be told God’s will and then were also expected to share it with others. Please note that prophecy was *not* always about foretelling future events (though it could involve this).

3. Consider some particularly notable ways God has spoken in the past.

B. Through direct revelation to specific individuals

1. In the early days of the Bible story, we see God directly communicating with specific individuals (usually to the heads of the households/patriarchs). Think about Adam, Noah, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

2. Example – God spoke to Noah concerning the wickedness of this world and gave instructions for Noah to make an ark (Genesis 6:13-14). Later, read that Noah is called a preacher of righteousness (2 Peter 1:5), perhaps indicating that he was actively warning those who lived contrary to God’s will.

#### C. Through the Law of Moses

1. God used His prophet Moses (Deuteronomy 18:15) to reveal the law that governed the conduct of the Israelites. As God revealed this law to Moses, Moses wrote it down so that the Israelites could learn God’s will in that generation as well as in future generations (Deuteronomy 31:9).

2. Example – God revealed to Moses which animals were considered clean and unclean to eat (i.e. Leviticus 11:1-8).

#### D. Through prophets sent directly to particular people

1. God used prophets to take His message directly to specific people or groups of people at various times. Most of the prophets we read about in the Old Testament were instructed to take God’s message to the Israelite people. However, some were given the task of taking God’s message to other nations.

2. Example – God revealed His word to Micah so he would speak to the people of Israel and Judah during the days of the kings Jothan, Ahaz, and Hezekiah (Micah 1:1).

#### E. Through dreams and visions

1. God used visions and dreams to reveal His will in various circumstances. Then, He would often provide a prophet who could interpret the dream or vision for others.

2. Example – God gave King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon a dream concerning a great statue with each part of the statue being made of different material. Then, a stone broke off and crushed the statue (Daniel 2:31-35). The prophet Daniel then gave the interpretation of that dream, explaining there would be four kingdoms and that God would set up a kingdom that would endure forever (Daniel 2:36-44).

## 2. God Now Speaks Through Jesus

### A. Hebrews 1:2-4

1. Although God provided prophets during Old Testament times who worked to reveal God's will, we now have a much greater Prophet who speaks the words of God to us today. This is Jesus, who we must listen to today (Acts 3:22-23).

2. What's so special about God speaking to us through Jesus? Look at some of the things that are said about Him, just in Hebrews 1:2-4.

- Verse 2 – Jesus is the Son of God, who has been appointed heir of all things, and who is the Creator of the universe.
- Verse 3 – Jesus is the radiance of God's glory, the exact expression (representation, copy, reproduction) of God's nature, sustains all things by His powerful word, has sacrificed Himself to make purification for sins, and is now seated at God's right hand.
- Verse 4 – Jesus is superior to the angels and has a more excellent name than them (as He is the Son of God, verses 5-14).

3. We should appreciate our opportunity to learn the will of God as it has been revealed through Jesus, the Son of God!

### B. Jesus communicates the will of the Father

1. When Jesus lived on this earth, He respected the will of God (the Father) – as it had been revealed in the Scriptures.

- Consider the example of when Jesus was tempted (Matthew 4:1-11). However, Jesus recognized God's authority and chose to obey God by following what was written.

2. Throughout Jesus's life on earth, He sought to do and to teach the will of God (John 4:34; John 5:30; John 8:29).

3. When Jesus taught, His teachings were from the Father (John 7:16). Therefore, the Father had sent Jesus to this world with the authority to teach and reveal truth.

- For example, after Jesus taught the "Sermon on the Mount" the people were astonished at His teaching because He was teaching as one who had authority, not like their other teachers (Matthew 7:28-29).

4. Jesus taught people directly on this earth for around 3 ½ years. Then, He ascended back to the Father.

#### C. The Holy Spirit was sent in Jesus's name

1. Although Jesus would not remain on this earth, Jesus's words would continue to be communicated. For, Jesus promised the Father would send the Holy Spirit in His name (John 14:25-26; John 16:12-15).

- Notice the two things the Holy Spirit would do when He would be sent to the apostles. First, He would teach all truth, including things they had not yet been ready to receive when Jesus was still with them. Second, He would remind them of what Jesus had taught while He was on the earth.

2. God's will, therefore, was not fully revealed just in what Jesus said while He lived on this earth. Rather, Jesus would continue speaking through the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit would not speak by His own authority but would speak what Jesus revealed (John 16:13-15).

3. Further notice that all God's will would be revealed in this way (John 16:13). Nothing would be left out by time this revelation was complete!

#### D. The Holy Spirit gave people miraculous gifts

1. The promise Jesus had made concerning the Holy Spirit in John 14-16 was made specifically to His apostles. Then, prior to Jesus's ascension, He promised that they would be baptized with the Holy Spirit in a few days (Acts 1:4-5; Luke 24:44-49). After His ascension, they did receive this Holy Spirit baptism and began speaking God's words (Acts 2:1-4).

- The only other recorded instance of Holy Spirit baptism in the Bible occurred in Acts 10-11 regarding Cornelius and his household.

2. The apostles were also given the ability to give miraculous gifts of the Spirit to others by laying hands on them (including the gifts of prophecy and speaking in tongues). You can see this in Acts 8:17-21 and Acts 19:6.

- These miraculous gifts of the Holy Spirit (identified in 1 Corinthians 12:4-11) were used to teach Jesus's words throughout the world and to confirm that the message was in fact the true words of Jesus (Hebrews 2:1-4).

## E. The apostles and prophets were inspired to write God's words

1. Although the apostles and others who possessed the miraculous gifts of the Holy Spirit spoke God's words directly to people while they lived, the Holy Spirit also inspired some to write the words we now have in the pages of the Bible.

2. This is how the Scriptures can be rightly said to be inspired by God (breathed out by God, 2 Timothy 3:16-17).

- God's plan for saving mankind through Jesus and Jesus's new law and His kingdom was once a mystery. Although God had revealed parts of this mystery in Old Testament times to the prophets, the prophets did not fully understand what the prophecies meant (1 Peter 1:10-12). However, this great mystery has now been revealed and people can understand it by reading the writings of the apostles and prophets who were inspired by the Holy Spirit (Ephesians 3:3-6)!

3. Specifically consider what Paul said about His teachings and His writings.

- In 1 Corinthians 2:6-16, Paul demonstrated how people could only know what is in God's mind by the Spirit and that Paul had received the Spirit of God to learn these spiritual truths. And, in being given the Spirit of God, Paul could know the mind of Christ!
- In 1 Corinthians 14:37, Paul urged people to recognize that the words he wrote were the Lord's command!
- In 1 Thessalonians 2:13, Paul expressed his appreciation for the Thessalonian Christians because they received Paul's teachings not as a human message but for what it truly was – the word of God!

4. We must be confident, then, in knowing that the words we now read in the pages of the Bible are, in fact, the words of God! Specifically, the words of the New Testament reveal the mind of Jesus Christ!

## F. Miraculous gifts of the Spirit would cease when the perfect would come

1. All Jesus's apostles eventually died. The Bible nowhere promises that apostolic succession would continue today. Therefore, there is no person today who can accurately claim to be an apostle of Jesus Christ in the sense these men were apostles!

- One reason why this is significant to our study is that there is no person today who can lay hands on another and give the miraculous gifts of the Holy Spirit. This ability died with the last apostle.

2. Jesus promised that the miraculous gifts of the Holy Spirit would cease (1 Corinthians 13:8-13).

- Notice carefully that the miraculous gifts of the Holy Spirit (i.e. prophecies, tongues, knowledge) would come to an end. Someone who had such a gift could reveal part of God's truth by them (they are referred to as being partial).

3. These miraculous gifts would end when the perfect would come. Since the partial refers to the partial revelation of Jesus's words, the perfect must refer to the completed revelation of Jesus's words!

- With the completion of the New Testament Scriptures (that fully reveal the mind of Christ), the perfect has come – and the partial revelations through the miraculous gifts of the Spirit have now ceased!

### **3. The All-Sufficiency Of Scripture**

#### **A. The Scriptures are perfect**

1. Because the Holy Spirit revealed Jesus's words of truth to the apostles and prophets who wrote those words, the Scriptures are perfect (James 1:25).

2. The miraculous gifts of the Spirit were needed for the time while the New Testament was being written. However, once the Holy Spirit finished revealing the Scriptures to these, there would no longer be a need for any other revelation!

#### **B. The Scriptures are complete**

1. The God-inspired message contained in the New Testament reveals the faith of the gospel (Philippians 1:27). That is, it reveals what Jesus wants people to believe, teach, and practice. And, Jude says that the faith was delivered to the saints once for all (Jude 1:3).

2. Jesus's new law was not meant to be continually revealed piecemeal throughout the centuries. Rather, the faith has been



completely revealed. Now, by reading the Scriptures, we can know everything that is pleasing to God (2 Timothy 3:16-17; 2 Peter 1:3)!

#### C. The Scriptures do not change

1. The faith revealed in the pages of the New Testament does not need to be updated or revised. Rather, God's word that has been revealed is living and enduring (1 Peter 1:22-25). It is everything we need so as to be saved!

2. Because Jesus's words do not change and reveal complete truth, no one should add anything to or take anything away from His words (Revelation 22:18-19; Galatians 1:6-9)!

#### D. The Scriptures are the standard

1. Jesus has said plainly that His words are the truth that will set people free from sin (John 8:31-32). And, He has also warned that His words will be the criteria that will be used to judge us all on the Last Day (John 12:48; Revelation 20:12).

2. The consequences of rejecting the words Jesus has revealed in the New Testament could not be any more serious! Rejecting His words written in the pages of Scripture amounts to rejecting Jesus's authority. And, those who do not obey this gospel of Jesus Christ will be punished on the Judgment Day (2 Thessalonians 1:8-9).

### **Conclusion**

A. God has spoken in various ways in various times through prophets. However, He has spoken in these last days (this last age – the gospel/Christian age) through Jesus Christ, His Son!

B. The words Jesus has spoken through the Holy Spirit to the apostles and prophets are perfect and provide the standard for knowing God's will today. Now, you must determine to submit to Jesus's authority by obeying Him!

## **Study Questions**

How do you know what is pleasing to God and what Jesus approves? How is it that God communicates His will to us today?

### **1. God Has Spoken In Various Ways**

What does Hebrews 1:1 say about how God has communicated in the past?

How has God communicated through direct revelation to specific individuals?

How has God communicated through the Law of Moses?

How has God communicated through prophets sent directly to particular people?

How has God communicated through dreams and visions?

### **2. God Now Speaks Through Jesus**

What does Hebrews 1:2-4 say about how God communicates today?

Why does Jesus communicate the will of the Father?

How did the Holy Spirit communicate Jesus's words?

What did the Holy Spirit give people the ability to do? What were these gifts for?

How did Jesus's words get into written form?

How long would the miraculous gifts of the Spirit last?

### **3. The All-Sufficiency Of Scripture**

How do the Scriptures being perfect demonstrate their all-sufficiency?

How do the Scriptures being complete demonstrate their all-sufficiency?

How do the Scriptures being unchanging demonstrate their all-sufficiency?

How do the Scriptures being the standard for Judgment demonstrate their all-sufficiency?

