

The Power of God's Word

Hebrews 4:12-13

I. Introduction

- A. The power of a thing can sometimes be seen in its effect
 - 1. A 50-calibre bullet
 - 2. The atomic bomb
 - 3. The word of God
- B. Some have accused us of worshiping the Bible (bibliolatry) rather than God
 - 1. The Word itself makes little distinction between God and His word
 - 2. It is impossible to worship God without emphasizing His words
 - 3. Several times the Word or Scripture is spoken of as if it IS God
 - a) 2 Tim. 3.16-17 says the Scriptures are "God-breathed" making them the product of God alone!
 - b) Gal. 3.8 "The Scripture, foreseeing that God..."
 - c) Gal. 3.22 "But the Scripture shut up all things..."
 - d) Rom. 9.17 The Scripture spoke to Pharaoh, when we know it was God speaking
 - e) Therefore the two are inseparable
- C. It is important to recognize the power of God's spoken word
 - 1. In Creation
 - 2. In Transformation
 - 3. In Eternity

II. The Power of God's Word in the Creation

- A. So far, the most spectacular evidence of the power of God's word is the Creation
 - 1. Recent news story about Voyager 1 about to pierce the "Heliosphere" 11.1 billion miles out
 - 2. From deep ocean discoveries to interplanetary exploration, to Hubble's jaw-dropping images...we are learning more and more how fantastic this Creation is
 - 3. And it is ALL the effect of God speaking
 - 4. Genesis 1.1; Psalm 33.9
- B. Genesis 1
 - 1. Verses 1-2
 - a) From the beginning God has spoken, and His words have always produced results – Isaiah 55.8-11
 - b) The main character in Genesis 1 is the Word of God; 10x "God said"
 - c) The first two verses are a general statement of what God did
 - d) The rest of the chapter describes how He brought order and design to His universe
 - (1) What we see around us is the result of both initial creative power and intricate forming.
 - (2) In order to make this place suitable for man, the pinnacle of His creation

(3) In the Spiritual realm it is also God's word that brings order and value to God's creation

e) **The physical realm is a parallel of the spiritual realm**

2. Verses 3-5

a) God created light

(1) The creation of light paved the way for all life

(2) Without light life is impossible

(3) The physical is a parallel of the spiritual

(a) 2 Cor. 4.3-6

(b) Without the Light of Christ there is no Life of Christ John 1.1-14

b) He saw the light was good

(1) God makes distinctions

(2) 7 times in Genesis 1 God says the physical creation is "good"

(a) Not morally good

(b) But the word means "suited to its purpose" (like a "good lawnmower")

(c) This Creation is NOT an end in itself.

(d) It exists for God's good pleasure – Rev. 4.11 JKV

(i) Does God have a sense of humor?

(ii) Ever seen an aardvark?

(iii) Ever watched a bunch of kittens, or just one?

(iv) Ever played with a puppy?

(v) Ever watched a new calf explore the world around him?

(e) And to glorify His name – Rom. 1.20

(f) But ultimately for our glorification through Christ – Heb. 2.10; Romans 8.19 "A beautiful crucible"

(3) He separated light from darkness

(a) God's distinctions in the physical mirror those in the spiritual

(b) These distinctions in the physical creation are consistent throughout and cannot be altered

(c) We set our watches by these rules of God

(d) They are so inviolate that we call them "laws"

(4) Why is it that we recognize the objective, unalterable nature of God's words in the working of nature, but refuse to see the same is true in His words contained in the Scripture?

c) This reminds us of Hebrews 4.12-13 – God's word can distinguish what may seem indistinguishable (watermelon and the rind)

(1) 1 John 1.5 – We must always be ready to accept the divisions God's word provides (evil-good; right-wrong).

(2) It is as impossible to dissolve the distinction between right and wrong as it between light and darkness.

(3) Philippians 1.9-10

(a) How do we approve the things that are excellent?

(b) We must make distinctions.

(c) How do we do that; by the Word of God.

III. Creation is a Unique Work of God's Word:

- A. A study of the creation account causes us to pause at the Hebrew word "**bara**" – to create.
1. This word is unique in that its only subject in Scripture is God.
 2. Vines says: "...**bara**...is of profound theological significance, since it has only God as its subject. Only God can 'create' in the sense implied by **bara**. The verb expresses creation out of nothing."
 3. We may call ourselves creative, but we cannot do what this word describes. Only God can create out of nothing.
- B. In Genesis 1 we find **bara** only 3 times (not that the other Hebrew words do not signify the act of creation). But it does point out the absolute necessity of God's intervention in all three places:
1. **Gen. 1.1 – matter & energy**
 2. **Gen. 1.21 – life (breath of life)**
 3. **Gen. 1.27 – Man in the image of God**
- C. Evolutionary theory supposes spontaneous existence of matter & energy (which is scientifically impossible), but even if these are present, it takes another divine intervention to get life, and then another intervention (out of nothing) to create a morally responsible life in the image of God!
- D. Hebrews 11:3 – "By faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the Word of God, so that the things which are seen were not made of things which are visible."
1. How by faith?
 2. By the Word of God – Rom. 10.17
- E. Peter connects the creation to the power of God's word – 2 Peter 3.5-9
1. Peter says that those who live as if there is not judgment forget (willingly) some very important things:
 2. They forget that God is not limited by time. He is never late nor early.
 3. They forget the purpose of God is to save (longsuffering), so delay does not suggest He is not coming.
 4. They forget the power of God's word:
 - a) Which made the heavens and the earth in the first place
 - b) The earth has already been once destroyed by a flood by the word of God
 - c) The heavens and earth that now exist are being held together (preserved) by the same word.
 - d) When God is finished with this world He will destroy it with the power of His word.
 5. Those who refuse to obey Him now will be condemned by the word of the Lord
- F. Hebrews 1.10-12 – they will be folded up and discarded like an old worn-out garment (a paper plate is not put into a dishwasher)
- G. What a pity we invest so much time and effort into this world!

IV. Conclusion:

- A. God's power and wisdom in the physical creation and its governing laws parallels and intimates His power in the Spiritual
- B. We know there are consequences for violating the one –
- C. Why can we not see the same is true of the other?

(Most of this material is from <http://www.southsidechurchofchrist.com/sermons/the-power-of-gods-word-in-creation.html> with a few additions and changes)