

Tremble At His Word  
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## Tremble At His Word

I want to try to share something this morning that is difficult for me to describe. It has to do with the Word of God. It has to do with having a heart that trembles at His Word. You could say it has to do with the fear of the Lord. As far as I can see, the best way to define the fear of the Lord is "a heart that trembles at his Word." I want us to look at this together this morning.

John says "in the beginning was the Word". We all know that he is talking about Jesus. Why then, does he use the word "Word". Why doesn't he just say, "in the beginning was Jesus, and Jesus was with God, and Jesus was God". I mean, from a theological standpoint, if John was just trying to prove Christ's divinity, that would be even more clear. Well, I believe he refers to Christ as the Word of God for a very significant reason.

Before I continue, I'd like to suggest to all of you that when we read in our Bibles of the "Word of God", we need to stop thinking of Scripture. We need to stop thinking that "the Word" is the Bible. I know that nobody does that here in John chapter 1. But in just about every other place in the Bible where we come across the word "Word of God", it seems to me that we generally think that it is talking about Scripture. I know that we've perhaps been taught that way, but it's just not right. In fact, I went through the entire New Testament this week looking for an instance where the phrase "Word of God" referred to Scripture and I couldn't find one. The Scriptures are the **words** of God, and they always describe and give expression to God's word. But the two are not the same.

For example, the Hebrew writer says "the word of God is living and active and sharper than a two edged sword". And so many of us think he's talking about a book. We say "the Bible is like a two-edged sword". Paul, in Romans, says that faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God. And we think he's simply talking about reading the Bible. In Ephesians, Paul talks about "the sword of the Spirit which is the word of God", and again the church is picturing a book with pages.

So, before we get very far, I'd like to ask you just to let that idea go. Now listen, I believe in the infallibility and total inspiration of the entire written words of God. I believe that God has given us His literal words in the Bible. Those of you who know me know that that is not an issue. But there is something behind God's words, there is something deeper and more real than words...and that is God's Word.

And, even though I stand to be misunderstood here...I'd like you for you not to just assume that when the Bible says "Word of God" that this phrase is being used as a synonym for Jesus. Certainly Jesus IS the Word of God. But it's not just another title for Him. He's called the Word for a REASON. He's called the Word because of what He is, and what He does in your soul, and because of His specific role in man's

salvation and in God's revelation and glorification. I guess what I'm asking is that we put away all of our natural and religious assumptions and definitions this morning and let the Lord deal with our hearts. I want to look for a minute at WHY the words are the written communication of this Word. I want to look at WHY the Person of Christ is called the Word of God.

In the beginning was the Word. What was this Word? This Word is the definition and understanding of all that God knows to be real. You could call Him "the Defining Reality". You could say "in the beginning was the Defining Reality of all that God sees, and the Defining Reality was with God, and the Defining Reality was God".

What do I mean by "Defining Reality"? I mean that God's Word is His understanding of everything, His comprehension, His view. I mean that this Word gives expression to, gives representation to, everything that God is and knows and sees, and desires, and enjoys and loves. He is the radiance of His glory, and the exact representation of His nature. Everything that God is and knows and has, the Word defines and identifies and outlines and puts the boundaries on.

Let me back up and look at the shadow. Let's look at the shadow and then move towards the substance. What are your words? Your words are the communication and expression and representation of you. They are an attempt to take what is substance in your heart and mind, and bring it forth to where others can partake of it. That's what our words are...and they function in this way even though they have great limitation. Our words are the way that we take of what we are and what we know and communicate it, give it, show it, define it, reveal it, explain it, to somebody else that we are talking to. Now that's the shadow. Our words, the way words work to us...that is the shadow of what Word means to God. But in this shadow we can see something of why God chooses to use the word "Word".

His Word is not *words* that put ideas and descriptions and truths into your ears. Although, certainly that is what the Old Covenant was. That is how God communicated in those times and in that age. Rather than giving and revealing His actual Word, he communicated in words. Rather than showing you all things of Himself in one Word, he spoke to Israel of many things in many words that all testified to the One. Hebrews says, in time past he spoke to our fathers by the prophets in words, but now He speaks IN SON. Hebrews also says:

**Heb 12:18** For you have not come to the mountain that may be touched and that burned with fire, and to blackness and darkness and tempest, **19** and the sound of a trumpet and the **voice of words**,

We know that this was Sinai. We know that this was the shadow. The very next paragraph in Hebrews tells us not to refuse Him who now "speaks from heaven" by His Word. But the shadow was found in words. The Old Covenant was words describing things, a letter commanding things. The New Covenant is the very Spirit of the things described by words.

The Old Covenant was a covenant where God had not yet given His Word as the life of men. Man was living by bread alone. Israel lived by manna. But one day, in the fullness of time, when the Word would come...man would live by the Word that proceeded from the mouth of God. The Word Himself became the life of men.

So when you think of the Word of God, I'm hoping that you can see that this Word is the full expression of God Himself. It's all that God is. It is the thought of God, the wisdom of God, the Truth of God, the sight of God, the vision of God, the understanding of God, the deep things of God defined and encapsulated in one all-encompassing Word. And here is something amazing: that Word, that expression of God, actually took on flesh and bone and became a man.

So YES, that Word is Christ. But our small view of Christ doesn't define the Word. God's view of the Word is the defining of Christ. That's what I was trying to say before. Too often, we see the word "Word" used and we just say...oh yeah, that's Jesus. Yes it is. But your ideas about Jesus don't define the Word. Knowing God's Word, seeing God's Word, hearing God's Word, becomes your comprehension of Jesus.

Alright...so the thought and truth and wisdom and defining reality of God was found in the form of flesh. The Word of God became a Man. And the words of that Man came out from what He was, what He had seen, what He knew of God. The words and deeds of Christ were always, and in every way, the expression and communication of God to mankind.

**Joh 1:18** No one has seen God at any time. The only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, He has declared *Him*.

**Joh 8:38** I speak what I have seen with My Father, and you do what you have seen with your father."

**Joh 3:11** Most assuredly, I say to you, We speak what We know and testify what We have seen, and you do not receive Our witness. **12** If I have told you earthly things and you do not believe, how will you believe if I tell you heavenly things?

All that God is...came in the form of a man. As Paul says "in Christ was the fullness of the Godhead bodily". Everything of God's thought and view and reality, all that God had ever been in the eternal counsel of the Godhead, there it all was in the form of a man. There was the Word made flesh. And everything that Christ said was expressive of what was real in the bosom of His Father. "I speak to you of heavenly things."

And here's where I'm going. Though that Word was the complete expression of God... and though that Word dwelled in bodily form....still, nobody could hear THAT Word. Everybody heard His words. But to most of them He said, "**Joh 8:43** Why do you not understand My speech? Because you are not able to listen to My word." And "**Joh 8:37** "I know that you are Abraham's descendants, but you seek to kill Me, because My word has no place in you.

You see, it was, and still is, impossible to know God just by hearing his words. If you memorize all of His words you are bringing them into your thoughts, your understanding, your mind, your light, your view. Eye cannot see this Word. Ear cannot hear it. Nor will it ever enter into the natural heart of man. And even if you love His words, and study His Words, and teach His Words, knowing God is something different. Knowing God has to do with living by His Word, living by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God. Knowing God has to do with the indwelling and revealing of the eternal Word.

Alright, so what happens. The Word of God that became flesh is put to death, buried, and then resurrected. And now something unthinkable happens. Something that has never happened since the foundation of the earth. Part of God's creation, the human soul, actually receives into itself the very defining thought of God. Man, by new birth, becomes the habitation and glorification and expression of God's thought, mind, sight, understanding, truth, vision, comprehension, the Word of God.

Can you see what I'm saying? We are so used to hearing "Christ lives in me". Well, yes. He does. But who is this Christ? What is He? He is the living definition of all that God knows. He is the depths of God's understanding and wisdom. He is the personification of purpose and perspective and reality and truth. Outside of Him God has nothing. And through Him all that is God has been given to your soul.

I realize that all of this can just sound like fancy and dramatic words. I'm trying to trust the Lord more these days to reveal His Son more than I trust myself to describe it well. I'm hoping you can see what an awesome thing it is for the defining reality of God to become a human. And then, as if that weren't enough of an attempt to allow Himself to be known, God then puts the Defining Word into the souls of those who believe.

Why? Why did He do it? **So that you and I could actually now HEAR that Word.** And I don't mean hear "words". We have all heard words. We have all read true words. **God didn't put His Son in you so that you could hear better words. God put His Son in your soul so that you could now HEAR THE ONE DEFINING WORD BY WHICH GOD CAN BE KNOWN. You can now hear the Word that was from the beginning.**

Everything that was created was created by that Word. That's what Scripture says. But what does it mean? It means that everything that was made of natural material, natural substance, was framed by God in accordance with His Word. It was all a copy, a picture, a shadow, an illustration **of the Word which was from the beginning.** But now you don't need to try to know God by looking at shadows. You don't need to know God simply by reading words. Now you can sort-of skip back through all of natural history and time....all the way back to the beginning and know the Word that was in the beginning.

**Joh 1:1** In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. 2 He was in the beginning with God. 3 **All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made.**

All things were made through Him. But now we do not need to know Him through the things that were made. Now we don't search around and try to understand Him and serve Him in the shadows of things that were created to give expression to Him. That was the veil that was on the Old Covenant. The substance was veiled by the shadow. The glory was covered by a veil of types and shadows. But now we can actually go back to the beginning with Him. Do you see what I mean? We can go back to the beginning and know the Word that was with God and that was God....because THAT IS THE WORD THAT IS BEING REVEALED IN YOU.

God no longer desires to talk to you in words. He may do it if He has to. But He'd much rather bring you back to the beginning, bring you to the view that He's always had, and simply show you His Word. God desires to speak to us in Son, where we

hear and learn the one Defining Reality of all spiritual things – the Word that was with Him in the beginning. Hebrews 11:3 says,

**Heb 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.

Before there was anything visible, there was the invisible Word of God. Before there was anything tangible, there was the pattern, the divine thought, the purpose and understanding of God. All that was made, everything in the world, was framed by the Word of God. It was all made according to the pattern.

**Exo 25:40** And see to it that you make *them* according to the pattern which was shown you on the mountain.

But what I'm trying to communicate is that the Word that we now hear is the very view and understanding that God had in mind when things were made. Knowing the Word shows you God's view that was behind things like sunrises, seasons, sacrifices, and tabernacles. These things were created with something Else in view. Everything was framed, defined, and created by the Word who now lives in your soul.

And I said all of that to lead up to this. There is nothing more important, and I mean ABSOLUTELY NOTHING more important than **for us to be a people who "tremble at this Word."** I don't mean to be scared of Him. I mean to be scared of ourselves in the presence of Him. I mean to tremble with reverence and fear at the unthinkable gift that has been given to you, and the inescapable reality that unless you learn this Word, unless this Word defines all things and conforms you to Himself, then you are standing opposed to Him.

The carnal mind is, by nature, enmity with God. We are contrary and hostile to His truth simply by being born on the Adamic tree. And though he translates us out of the kingdom of darkness, makes us to dwell in the Son of His love, and deposits His Word in us...still our soul is polluted and stained by the earth. And so, as Paul says, He washes you with the water of the **Word**. Though you are born of His Spirit, still your soul is saturated and confused with the darkness and unbelief and self-obsession of the natural man. But, as the author of Hebrews says, "the Word of is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit"

I'm talking about trembling before that Word. The Word that explains and defines and shows all things that are God, and the Word that also explains, and defines, and shows all things that are dead, adamic, and hostile to God. I'm talking about bowing our hearts low, extremely low, before the Word that was with God and was God in the beginning. He has made all things new by the cross. Will you and I allow Him to make all things new in us? Or will you and I hold on to something, anything, that contradicts and defies His Word.

I am sobered by the words of God to Isaiah.

**Isa 66:1** Thus says the LORD: "Heaven *is* My throne, And earth *is* My footstool. Where *is* the house that you will build Me? And where *is* the place of My rest? **2** For all those *things* My hand has made, And all those *things* exist," Says the

LORD. **"But on this *one* will I look: On *him who is poor and of a contrite spirit, And who trembles at My word.***

To me, it is like God is saying to the people in covenant with Him, "I have created all things – the heavens and the earth. And yet there is nothing in heaven or earth that I desire to be my habitation. I have chosen another house, another dwelling, to be the place where I establish my throne, the place where I make myself known. And that place is in the soul of man where I am free to define all things. **That is where I will establish a new creation, where I am free to judge and re-create according to my image. In a soul that that is humble, and who quakes before the sword of objective spiritual truth, the sword of the Word of God.**

A person who trembles at his Word is a person who is not looking to be right, not looking to preserve an idea, hold on to a spiritual experience, maintain a certain doctrine, maintain a ministry. Holding on to anything at all means that you haven't seen clearly just what Word you are dealing with. It's not words here. You can argue with words. But there is no argument left in you when you see His Word.

A person who trembles at this Word is a person who always looks to be wrong in the presence of He who is right. It's never a question of "if" I am wrong. It is always a question of where and how and to what degree. This is a person who holds to nothing but what faith is presently seeing. A person who does not bring anything to the Lord from themselves to be validated. I'm talking about the fear of the Lord here. And the fear of the Lord is the beginning of understanding.

A heart that trembles at God's Word is very much like Rahab in the Old Testament. Remember the story of Rahab? Joshua sends out two spies to spy out the land that they were about to conquer. God had already pronounced judgment on all the land and on all its inhabitants. He had already declared it to be given over to the seed of Abraham. Well, Rahab was an inhabitant of Jericho – the first major city that Israel was to attack. Rahab was part of the land that was under judgment. And unlike everyone else in Jericho, **and everyone else in Canaan, Rahab trembled at the Word of God. Rahab feared the Lord, and AGREED with His judgment.** She agreed that all that she had, all that she knew, her home, her possessions, her city, and her people, were in the way of the judgment of God. And Rahab allowed the judgment of God to take it all, and **preserve her soul as part of Israel.** Rahab, if you remember, joined the ranks of Israel after all her things were destroyed.

But before any of that, listen to what she says to the spies that came from Joshua. Listen to how she feared the Word of the Lord, and agreed with whatever He needed to destroy.

**Jos 2:9** and [Rahab] said to the men: "I know that the LORD has given you the land, that the terror of you has fallen on us, and that all the inhabitants of the land are fainthearted because of you. 10 For we have heard how the LORD dried up the water of the Red Sea for you when you came out of Egypt, and what you did to the two kings of the Amorites who *were* on the other side of the Jordan, Sihon and Og, whom you utterly destroyed. 11 And as soon as we heard *these things*, our hearts melted; neither did there remain any more courage in anyone because of you, for the LORD your God, He *is* God in heaven above and on earth beneath.

And there was only one thing that she had to do in order to not be absolutely wiped out by Israel. Her city had no hope. Her people were condemned. But if she would just tie a scarlet cord in her window, she would be counted as already judged. Like the Israelites had done 40 years earlier, if she would just show the blood of the lamb, the judgment of God, to be on her door...then she would be counted as dead to Jericho, and alive to God as a member of Israel.

Well, that gets us into things that are too great for us right now. But I want you to see her heart in this. I want you to see how Rahab brought her heart low and into a deep and costly agreement with God. And agreement that says "God, your Word defines what lives and dies. Your Word puts away everything of the first, and establishes the second. Your Word kills all that was formerly alive, and raises up what was formerly dead. And as for me...I tremble at your Word."

Probably every Christian on the planet will say that they have a healthy fear of the Lord. I would have said the same thing for most of my life. But then I began to hear the Word of God, and to see the sword that He carries. And the view was devastating. I saw that I do not get to decide what Christianity is. I saw that I don't get to decide what ministry is. I don't get to decide what good is, what life is, what love is, what service is. And the reason I don't get to decide any of that is because all of my definitions have come by way of the Lie. And every word or idea or concept that has any spiritual relevance has to be defined by the Word that was with God in the beginning. The Word that was with God and was God in the beginning.

There is a lot that has been going on recently in our body. I suppose there is always a lot going on, and just sometimes its more visible than others. But it has occurred to me time and time again, more and more as this journey continues, that the only safe place is in a posture where our hearts tremble at His Word. Where we want absolutely nothing except to know His Word, and allow that Word to re-define everything we know, and everything we are.

Amen.