

November 11, 2018 -

Hebrews 4: 11-13

- "God's Word is Discerning"

## Introduction

When I was a teenager there was no such thing as an MRI machine that could look into your body and determine an illness or injury. During the 1970s a team led by John Mallard built the first full-body MRI scanner at the University of Aberdeen. On August 28, 1980 they used this machine to obtain the first clinically useful image of a patient's internal tissues which identified a primary tumor in the patient's chest, an abnormal liver, and secondary cancer in his bones. This machine was later used at St Bartholomew's Hospital, in London, from 1983 to 1993. Mallard and his team are credited for technological advances that led to the widespread introduction of Magnetic resonance imaging. Today we have MRI's and CAT scans that can look inside our bodies, but only God can see the thoughts and attitudes of our hearts (1 Sam. 16:7b). Medical science enables people to live longer but it still does not guarantee that we will live better. The heart is still deceitful and desperately wicked. - Jeremiah 17:9. Folks, regardless of technology advances the apostles did not expect the world to get better either morally or spiritually.

God has His "spiritual discerner"-the Bible-that enables us to look inside our own hearts to see ourselves morally and spiritually as we really are. There are four things we should know about this divine "examiner": its inspiration, its motivation, its penetration and its revelation.

## I. Its Inspiration (4:11-12a)

1. Once God's Word is believed and understood, it should be obeyed. **Let us labour therefore to enter into that rest, lest any man fall after the same example of unbelief** (4:11). The **rest** is there, but God does not force it upon us. We must enter that rest. Clearly, the rest is entered by faith; but it takes diligent faith. This shows us that faith is not passive; it takes diligence to trust in, rely on, and cling to the Lord Jesus and His work for us. God's Word is awesome...

Hebrews 4:12 begins: For the word of God. ... What is the word of God? It is the Bible. The Bible uses the phrase *saith the LORD* more than 850 times. The entire Bible is divinely inspired. It is not merely the ingenious thoughts of human writers. The Bible is the Word of God in written form. 2 Peter 1:21 explain this fact: For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake [as they were] moved by the Holy Ghost.

2. The biblical writers were moved by the Holy Ghost, which is what we call "divine inspiration." God used human authors to write down His words. God not only inspired the writers to record His words, but throughout history He has kept His words as He originally inspired them.

Before the discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls in 1947, the oldest Hebrew manuscripts dated about AD 900, about 1118 years ago. The Dead Sea Scrolls dated to about 150 BC. and are in startling agreement with the Masoretic text. But now archaeologists have discovered a pair of tiny silver scrolls that date back to about 600 BC! That is 2600 years ago and 850 years from Moses.

3. In II Timothy 3:16, we learn, "All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness. What the Greek form actually says is that "all scripture is God-breathed," breathed out. "Theos-pneustos"

The Scripture is quite clear that those who wrote the Scriptures did not fully understand what they wrote. First **Peter 1:10-12** relates this truth to us.

4. The Bible makes some startling claims for itself that set it apart from every other book:

1. It is miraculous in its origin -- coming to us by divine inspiration.
2. It is miraculous in its durability -- outlasting the opposition of its critics and surviving the attempts of its enemies to exterminate it. (Josh McDowell)
3. It is miraculous in its results -- transforming the lives of those who read and believe it.
4. It is miraculous in its harmony -- agreeing in all its parts, even though written over a period of 1600 years by about 40 different authors.
5. It is miraculous in its message -- telling of many occasions when God supernaturally intervened in the affairs of men to accomplish his redemptive purposes.
6. It is miraculous in its preservation -- maintaining its accuracy and reliability down through the centuries. The Bible is the infallible Word and because of its inspiration it provides us...

## II. Its Motivation (4:12b)

1. For the word of God is quick, and powerful ... (4:12b). The Greek word translated quick (zao, zah'-oh) means living water, having vital power, exerting the same upon the soul. It means life. The Word of God is not only alive; it is life-giving. We receive spiritual life from reading or hearing and then in faith responding to the Word of God when we accept Jesus as Savior.

2. The word translated powerful (en-er-gā's / en-er-gace') it is the word from which we get our word "energize." When we read the Word of God, it energizes us to live for Him. When we lose our spiritual energy and power, we need to check if we have disconnected from the Word of God. What does God say about the word that comes out of His mouth in Isaiah 55:11.

So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper [in the thing] whereto I sent it.

### Application:

You might say, "Pastor' I have my Bible right here in my hand. I read it every morning and seldom am I absent from Bible study or worship. Yet, I still feel spiritually drained and run down." If you have lost your spiritual power and zeal, your spiritual life has a bad connection. Have you ever gone out to start your car and the engine just did not kick over? Sometime it is as simple as a corroded battery cable. ... The power is there, it is packed with all the juice you need but the connection is degraded. When that happens, the power-or energy-can't get through. Some believers have spiritual battery cables that are corroded because of sin, indifference, or just being too busy, frustrated and depressed.

Therefore, the power of God's Word cannot get through the corrosion of life. The Word of God cannot energize you without a clean connection. 2 Corinthians 7:1 tells us how you can be sure you are clean and have an uncorrupted connection! let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God. We have looked at the inspiration and motivation of God's Word. Now, let's consider...

### III. Its Penetration (4:12c)

1. God's Word is also sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit ... (4:12c). The two-edged sword was the most powerful weapon in New Testament times known as the Roman sword. The soldier carried two swords; one was a long sword used to thrust at the enemy and the second was the one in his belt and it was a two edged sword. The Romans used it to conquer the world. The Bible cuts like a razor-sharp Roman sword. *piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow,*

2. Like God, we are a trichotomy Genesis 1:26 tells us God made man in His own image. Just as God is a trinity, He created us a trichotomy. Paul confirms this in 1 Thessalonians 5:23, **And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and [I pray God] your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.** We are a trichotomy in that we have **physical life**-a body (SOMA, so'-mah in Greek). A tree or a turnip also has physical life, but humans are far more than any tree or turnip.

3. Humans also have **psychological life**. The Greek word translated **soul** (PSYCHE, sue-kay') is the word from which we get our English words "psyche" and "psychology." The psyche refers to the mind, which includes our emotions, will, and intellect. A dog and a donkey have physical life and psychological life because they have a body, emotions, will, and intellect. However, you and I are also much more than any dog or donkey.

4. We are more; not only do we have physical and psychological life; we also have **spiritual life-a spirit**. The soul and spirit cannot be separated, but they can be differentiated. Our spirits make us aware of God and want to know Him. Proverbs 20:27 expresses this fact... **The spirit of man [is] the candle of the LORD, searching all the inward parts of the belly.**

The **penetration** of the Word of God in the dividing asunder of soul and spirit refers to our conversion experience. Before we were saved, our spirits were dead and entombed in our souls (Eph. 2:5). As a result, we had no desire to live for God. A natural (non-spiritual) person can't understand the truth of what God's Spirit teaches through the Bible (1 Cor. 2:14a). I Corinthians 2:14, "But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know [them], because they are spiritually discerned."

5. When God's Spirit gives life to our spirits, our spirits begin to rule. A spiritual takeover of the soul and body is now possible. As we read or hear the Bible, God's Spirit enables our spirits

to understand it. This changes the way we think in our minds. We've considered the inspiration, motivation, and penetration of God's Word. Let's finally examine ...

#### IV Its Revelation (4:12d -13)

1. God's Word judges the thoughts and intents of the heart (4:12d). It reveals our thoughts and attitudes for what they really are. We really don't know ourselves, so we must let the Bible reveal to us what we are really like. God declares fact this in Jeremiah 17:9.

We don't see ourselves as we really are, but God's Word is liken to a mirror. The Bible causes us to realize nothing is hidden from God, but everything in our lives is naked and opened before the eyes of God, before whom we must give account of our lives (4:13).

God's Word causes us to see ourselves as we really are. This is so we will take advantage of the promises like in Proverbs 28:13 He that covereth his sins shall not prosper: but whoso confesseth and forsaketh [them] shall have mercy. --- I John 1:9

#### Conclusion:

We need to be more interested in hearing what God has to say to us than telling Him what we think! Simply receiving the word of God is not enough...we must apply what we have heard. We must listen with a submissive heart, casting off all sin and humbling our-self in obedience to our heavenly father." God wants to change you but he won't force His will on you, He wants you to want Him and receive His will because it is good for you. God loves you and he desires your submission because you love and trust Him. You need to apply His Word today to your life and trust Him for a better tomorrow.