

YOU CAN'T FOOL GOD (Hebrews 4:12-13)

1. The nature of God's word (Hebrews 4:12).

- a. Have you ever read a verse and wondered why it is where it is?
 - i. Just reading through this passage, I wondered why this particular verse is here.
 - ii. Because of this, I have often used this verse to show the power of God's written word.
 - (1) It does do that, no doubt.
 - (2) However, in the context of this passage, that is not what is under consideration, because the word of God here was not written but spoken, when speaking about the rest.
- b. So, all the times I have used this verse, I have used it correctly but not in its proper context.
- c. This verse, in this context, while proclaiming the power of God's word, is pointing to what He told the Israelites long ago.
 - i. God told those Israelites that, because of their unbelief, they were not going to enter into God's land of rest.
 - ii. He just warned his readers, in verse 11, that they better take care to enter the land of rest and not fall like those Israelites of old had done.
- d. This word starts with "for", which can be translated "because".
 - i. Because of the fact that God means what He says, don't think you can fool God.
 - ii. God's word is a sword that penetrates deep into who and what we are spiritually and reveals all things about us.
- e. Because of its power, the writer was inspired to tell us the nature of God's word.
- f. It is quick or alive.
 - i. It is such because it is from the living God.
 - ii. It accomplishes that for which God sent it out (Isaiah 55:11).
 - iii. It is active at all times on our hearts when it is taken in.
 - iv. It is a God-breathed force (2 Timothy 3:16-17) that can't be destroyed (Mark 13:31).
- g. It is powerful.
 - i. The Greek word here translated powerful is the word from which we get the English word "energy".
 - ii. It literally means engaged in work, capable of doing.
 - iii. It was a medical term referring to medical treatment and the influence of medicine.
 - iv. Think of the power God's word has to change lives.
 - v. It is a transforming power, which is seeking to be unleashed in our lives.
- h. It is sharper than any dagger on the face of the earth.
 - i. The word "sword" is literally dagger, being the Greek word for the small dagger that is highly accurate in its cutting and not used to hack like the larger sword of the Roman soldier.
 - ii. God's word is capable of piercing into our inner being.
 - iii. It reveals who we really are and there is no way to fool God because of its power.

i. For us, God's word tells us how to live and why we need to live that way.

2. What God's word notices (Hebrews 4:12).

a. Oftentimes, I believe, though we won't verbalize it, Christians think they can fool God.

i. There is no doubt we believe we can fool the people around us.

ii. It happens all the time.

iii. We do fool those around us if we so desire.

b. But, we think we can get away with claiming to be something we are not.

i. It's almost as if we believe that if we can convince ourselves we are okay in what we are doing, it will be okay.

ii. We can sin that way and it is justified in our minds.

c. One day, God's word is going to be opened at our judgment.

i. The word translated "discerner" in this verse is used only here in the New Testament.

ii. It literally means "one whose business and special gift is to judge".

d. We do know that the Bible, God's revealed, inspired word, is going to be opened at the judgment day (Revelation 20:12).

e. It is God's word that is going to judge us in the end (John 12:48).

f. Friends, it notices all.

i. Every action we undertake is known by it.

ii. But in this verse, it lets us know that it is going to judge even our thoughts and our intents.

iii. Why we did what we did is open to the light of God's word.

g. Think of the joints, that connect bones together.

i. Where everything meets and works is the idea there.

ii. God's word gets into where everything in our hearts is working and shows why we do what we do.

h. Think of the marrow, on the inside of the bone.

i. It is a picture of the intent of our action.

ii. It deals with what motivates us and causes us to take the actions we take.

i. God's word notices all.

i. When we stand before the Lord in judgment, think of what is going to be judged.

ii. Our deeds (2 Corinthians 5:10).

iii. Our words (Matthew 12:26).

iv. This verse before us tells us our thoughts and intents are going to be laid out as evidence in judgment.

j. Daniel Webster, the great statesman, once said, "My greatest thought is my accountability to God".

k. We need to be very aware of the fact that we are all going to stand before the Lord in judgment and we will not be able to fool God.

3. Man's nakedness before God (Hebrews 4:13).

a. This verse is really simple isn't it?

b. There is no creature who is not known to God and all is laid bare to God.

c. There is an interesting picture here though, of which we need to be aware.

i. As we will notice in the next sermon from Hebrews, Jesus is called a

High Priest.

ii. The word “opened” is defined as “ to bend back the neck of a victim to be slain, to lay bare or expose by bending back”.

d. What is pictured here is a sacrifice.

i. Think of what happened when an offering was made under the Old Testament law.

(1) It was killed.

(2) It was flayed, so it was naked.

(3) It was cut open so that all the insides could be seen.

(4) It was inspected by the priest, to make sure all of it was sound and there was no disease in it.

(5) It was divided into two equal parts by being split open from the exposed throat all the way to the hindquarters.

ii. That whole animal was laid bare before all that saw it and it was known whether or not it was fit to offer to God.

e. Brethren, you and I are to offer ourselves to God as living sacrifices (Romans 12:1).

f. God’s word opens us up for Him to see whether or not we are fit to offer to God.

g. We are completely open to Him and we can’t fool Him.