

Lesson 1 Reading

To edify a person spiritually, we must help him to know the Bible. In the past two thousand years, Christians all acknowledge that no one can truly know the Lord without knowing the Bible.

The spiritual inheritances God has given us are the Spirit which cannot be seen and the Bible which can be seen. Inside of us is the Spirit, and outside of us is the Bible. A proper Christian must be fully balanced in both respects—the Bible without and the Spirit within. Any bias towards one side will result in serious problems. Among Christians throughout the ages, some have leaned toward the Spirit within which has resulted in great errors. Still more lean toward the Bible without. Seemingly they have not erred as much, yet among them there is a very serious condition of death. In other words, if there were only the Spirit within and not the Bible without, man would easily commit errors. Conversely, if there were only the Bible without while lacking the Spirit within, man would become extremely dead, altogether lifeless, and without any vitality.

Christians can be likened to a train. There needs to be the fuel inside as its energizing power. But a train needs to have tracks outside as well. If there is fuel within but no tracks without, the train would not be able to run. Even if it runs, problems will arise. However, if there are only the tracks without, but not the fuel within, the train may be on the right track, but it cannot move. Therefore, for a train to run, and to do so smoothly, there must be the coordination of two aspects. Outwardly, there must be the regulation of the tracks; inwardly, there must be the energizing of the fuel. Therefore, we must put equal emphasis on the Spirit and the Bible; we must not neglect either matter.

Similarly, in knowing the Bible, there are also two sides. There is the need for the mind, and there is the need for the spirit. No one can know the Bible properly by neglecting either aspect of this. To know the Bible, one must be trained in the mind; he must also be exercised in the spirit. Therefore, if we really want to know the Bible, we must be balanced. We must understand properly the letter of the Bible and must properly use our spirit to sense the spiritual meaning in the Bible. To train the mind is for the purpose of understanding the Bible. To exercise the spirit is for the purpose of touching and contacting the Bible. With the matter of electricity, to understand it is one thing, and to contact it is quite another! Our relationship with the Bible is the same.

The truth must be grasped by the mind first before it will reach the spirit and touch the person. If we do not understand the words in the Bible, even if we pray for three

hours with much inspiration, it will still be impossible for us to understand or be touched when we read the Bible, because its words cannot get through our mind.

The Bible is the embodiment of the Spirit. God is Spirit. The Spirit, however, is very abstract. It is hard for man to touch Him or to understand Him. But the Lord Jesus said that the words He speaks *are* spirit. This shows us that God's word is the embodiment of God's Spirit. This is like a radio receiver capturing the radio waves in the air; the radio receiver becomes the embodiment of the radio waves. When the radio waves are in the air, we neither hear, touch, nor understand them. As soon as they are captured by the receiver, the radio waves become manifested before us. What was abstract becomes real. We can feel it, hear it, and understand it.

Almost every time we are moved by the Holy Spirit, it is through God's word. Of course, we admit that many times we can have the word without the Spirit. This is like having a radio receiver without the radio waves. Surely, this is vain. We admit that many people read God's Word in vain. But there are also many times when we just open up the Lord's Word a little and the Holy Spirit comes. Under normal circumstances, one cannot separate God the Spirit from the Bible, since the Bible is the embodiment and the expression of God the Spirit. The Bible is the means of God the Spirit. Whatever God does through us and whatever God wants us to do are done through His word.¹

Discussion Questions:

1. What point stuck out to you the most from the lesson overview?
2. Explain why we need both the Spirit and the Bible to be balanced in our Christian life. Which one do you feel like you default to more? How would you correct an improper balance that you see in yourself?
3. Spiritually speaking, do you feel like you have "touched electricity" before?
4. Understanding the Bible's origin means understanding that every word in the Bible is God's word and that obeying the Bible is obeying God. Do you think that our culture disagrees with certain things the Bible says? How do you respond to that?

¹ Witness Lee, *Lesson Book, Level 6: The Bible—The Word of God*, pp. 10-13, 17-18