

## “The Living/Piercing Word”

### The Living Word (His Person)

1. As Heb. 4:12 conveys, the Word is living and powerful and we know that the Word became flesh. Consider several historic observations:
2. Historian Philip Schaff described the uniqueness of Scripture and Jesus: “This Jesus of Nazareth, without money and arms, conquered more millions than Alexander, Caesar, Mohammed, and Napoleon; without science and learning, He shed more light on things human and divine than all philosophers and scholars combined; without the eloquence of schools, He spoke such words of life as were never spoken before or since, and produced effects which lie beyond the reach of orator or poet; without writing a single line, He set more pens in motion, and furnished themes for more sermons, orations, discussions, learned volumes, works of art, and songs of praise than the whole army of great men of ancient and modern times.”
3. Historian James Stewart: He was the meekest and lowliest of all the sons of men, yet he spoke of coming on the clouds of heaven with the glory of God. He was so austere that evil spirits and demons cried out in terror at his coming, yet he was so genial and winsome and approachable that the children loved to play with him, and the little ones nestled in his arms. His presence at the innocent gaiety of a village wedding was like the presence of sunshine. No one was half so compassionate to sinners, yet no one ever spoke such red hot scorching words about sin. A bruised reed he would not break, his whole life was love, yet on one occasion he demanded of the Pharisees how they ever expected to escape the damnation of hell. He was a dreamer of dreams and a seer of visions, yet for sheer stark realism He has all of our stark realists soundly beaten. He was a servant of all, washing the disciple’s feet, yet masterfully He strode into the temple, and the hucksters and moneychangers fell over one another to get away from the mad rush and the fire they saw blazing in His eyes. He saved others, yet at the last Himself He did not save. There is nothing in history like the union of contrasts which confronts us in the gospels. The mystery of Jesus is the mystery of divine personality
4. Napoleon Bonaparte: I know men; and I tell you that Jesus Christ is not a man. Superficial minds see a resemblance between Christ and the founders of empires and the gods of other religions. That resemblance does not exist. There is between Christianity and whatever other religions the distance of infinity ... Everything in Christ astonishes me. His spirit overawes me, and His will confounds me. Between Him and whoever else in the world, there is no possible term of comparison. He is truly a being by Himself. His ideas and sentiments, the truth which He announces, His manner of convincing, are not explained either by human organization or by the nature of things ... The nearer I approach, the more carefully I examine, everything is above me – everything remains grand, of a grandeur which overpowers. His religion is a revelation from intelligence which certainly is not that of man ... One can absolutely find nowhere, but in Him alone, the imitation of the example of His life ... I search in vain in history to find the similar to Jesus Christ, or anything which can approach the gospel. Neither history, nor humanity, nor the ages, nor nature, offer me anything with which I am able to compare it or to explain it. Here everything is extraordinary.
5. “That’s My King” Transcript The late Dr. S.M. Lockridge, a preacher from San Diego, California proclaimed the greatness of our God and King in this sermon in Detroit in 1976.
  - a. “My King was born King. The Bible says He's a Seven Way King. He's the King of the Jews - that's an Ethnic King. He's the King of Israel - that's a National King. He's the King of righteousness. He's the King of the ages. He's the King of Heaven. He's the King of glory. He's the King of kings and He is the Lord of lords. Now that's my King.

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- b. Well, I wonder if you know Him. David said the Heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament shows His handiwork.
- c. My King is the only one of whom there are no means of measure that can define His limitless love. No far seeing telescope can bring into visibility the coastline of the shore of His supplies. No barriers can hinder Him from pouring out His blessing. He's enduringly strong. He's entirely sincere. He's eternally steadfast. He's immortally graceful. He's imperially powerful. He's impartially merciful. That's my King. (Do you know Him?)
- d. He's God's Son. He's the sinner's savior. He's the centerpiece of civilization. He stands alone in Himself. He's honest. He's unique. He's unparalleled. He's unprecedented. He's supreme. He's pre-eminent. He's the grandest idea in literature. He's the highest personality in philosophy. He's the supreme problem in higher criticism. He's the fundamental doctrine of historic theology. He's the carnal necessity of spiritual religion. That's my King.
- e. He's the miracle of the age. He's the superlative of everything good that you choose to call Him. He's the only one able to supply all our needs simultaneously. He supplies strength for the weak. He's available for the tempted and the tried. He sympathizes and He saves. He's the Almighty God who guides and keeps all his people. He heals the sick. He cleanses the lepers. He forgives sinners. He discharged debtors. He delivers the captives. He defends the feeble. He blesses the young. He serves the unfortunate. He regards the aged. He rewards the diligent and He beautifies the meek. That's my King.
- f. Do you know Him? Well, my King is a King of knowledge. He's the wellspring of wisdom. He's the doorway of deliverance. He's the pathway of peace. He's the roadway of righteousness. He's the highway of holiness. He's the gateway of glory. He's the master of the mighty. He's the captain of the conquerors. He's the head of the heroes. He's the leader of the legislatures. He's the overseer of the overcomers. He's the governor of governors. He's the prince of princes. He's the King of kings and He's the Lord of lords. That's my King.
- g. His office is manifold. His promise is sure. His light is matchless. His goodness is limitless. His mercy is everlasting. His love never changes. His Word is enough. His grace is sufficient. His reign is righteous. His yoke is easy and His burden is light. I wish I could describe Him to you . . .but He's indescribable. He's indescribable. That's my King.
- h. He's incomprehensible. He's invincible. He's irresistible. I'm coming to tell you this, that the heavens of heavens can't contain Him, let alone some man explain Him. You can't get Him out of your mind. You can't get Him off of your hands. You can't outlive Him and you can't live without Him. The Pharisees couldn't stand Him, but they found out they couldn't stop Him. Pilate couldn't find any fault in Him. The witnesses couldn't get their testimonies to agree about Him. Herod couldn't kill Him. Death couldn't handle Him and the grave couldn't hold Him. That's my King.
- i. He always has been and He always will be. I'm talking about the fact that He had no predecessor and He'll have no successor. There's nobody before Him and there'll be nobody after Him. You can't impeach Him and He's not going to resign. That's my King! That's my King!
- j. Thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory. Well, all the power belongs to my King. We're around here talking about black power and white power and green power,

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but in the end all that matters is God's power. Thine is the power. Yeah. And the glory. We try to get prestige and honor and glory for ourselves, but the glory is all His. Yes. Thine is the Kingdom and the power and glory, forever and ever and ever and ever. How long is that? And ever and ever and ever and ever. And when you get through with all of the 'ever's, then . . . Amen.”

The Piercing Word (Scripture)

6. And now, a word about the written transformative Word. Read Metaxas’ “The World’s Scariest Book.”

Quick! What do Joseph Stalin, Kim-Jong Un and American library-goers all have in common? (Hint: It has nothing to do with their hair.) Did you guess? It’s that they all find the Bible more threatening than most other books. Surprised? Don’t be.

Every single year the [Bible is the world’s best-selling book](#). In fact, it’s the number one best-selling book in history. But recently it made another, less-coveted list: the [American Library Association’s “top 10 most-challenged books of 2015.”](#) This means the Bible is among the most frequently requested to be removed from public libraries.

But what’s so threatening about it? Why could owning one in Stalin’s Russia get you sent to the Gulag, and why is owning one today in North Korea punishable by death? What makes it scarier to some people than anything by Stephen King?

Actually, quite a bit. Words and ideas have power, and the words and ideas in the Bible have so much power that a rather recent History Channel documentary titled *101 Objects that Changed the World* said the single thing that changed the world more than anything else was the Bible.

But what ideas in it are so dangerous? We could start with the radical notion that all human beings are created by God in His image, and are equal in His eyes. This means every human being should be accorded equal dignity and respect. If the wrong people read that, trouble will be sure to follow. And some real troublemakers have read it.

One of them was George Whitefield, who discovered the Bible as a teenager and began preaching the ideas in it all across England. Then he crossed the Atlantic and preached it up and down the thirteen colonies until [80 percent of Americans had heard him in person](#). They came to see that all authority comes from God, not from any king, and saw it was their right and duty to resist being governed by a tyrant, which led to something we call the American Revolution.

Another historical troublemaker was the British Parliamentarian William Wilberforce. When he read the Bible, he saw that the African slave trade — which was a great boon to the British economy — was nonetheless evil. He spent decades years trying to stop it. Slave traders threatened to have him killed, but in [1807, he won](#) his battle and the slave trade was abolished throughout the British Empire. [In 1833, slavery itself was abolished too.](#)

In the 20th century, an Indian lawyer named Mohandas Gandhi [picked up some ideas from the Bible](#) about non-violent resistance that influenced his views as he led the Indian people to independence. And who could deny the Bible’s impact on the Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr., who said the Bible led him to choose love and peaceful protest over hatred and violence? He cited the Sermon on the Mount as his inspiration for the Civil Rights movement, and his concept of the "[creative suffering](#)," endured by activists who withstood persecution and police brutality, came from his knowledge of Jesus’ trials and tribulations.

In fact, the climax of King’s most famous words mirror the promises of the Old Testament prophet Isaiah: “I have a dream that one day every valley shall be exalted, and every hill and mountain shall be made low, the rough places will be made plain, and the crooked places will be made straight...” The

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racists of that day didn't know what hit them, but again the ideas in the Bible brought dignity and justice to a downtrodden people. They don't call it “Good News” for nothing.

And here's more good news: in the fall of 2017 a museum dedicated to a [scholarly and engaging presentation of the world's most influential book](#) will open two blocks from the National Mall in Washington. Putting so much truth that close to power will scare some folks, but the rest of us should be thrilled.

In the meantime — unless you're scared — you might put the Bible on another list: your personal reading list. Find out why it scares the pantaloons off tyrants and dictators but has inspired others to change the world. It's truly fascinating. If you're not a dictator or tyrant, you've really got nothing to fear. But if you are, go ahead and be afraid. Be very, very afraid.

7. Of course it is the Spirit and the Word who point to Jesus who saved me and is continuing to sanctify me till glory. You should have seen me before. I was one way >< and now I am completely different <>< And what happened in between was the Word – the living, eternal, almighty, righteous, loving, transformative Word!
8. *Revelation* and, consequently, the canon of Scripture appropriately ends with a word about the Word; affirming its authority and necessity for salvation (Rev. 22:18-21). In fact, it even includes an invitation to come to Christ – the living Water and Word (Rev. 22:17). How one views the Word of God reveals his relationship to God. Many do not embrace truth and thus they do not embrace God's Word because it reveals the hard truths of life. Mark Twain said, “Most people are bothered by the passages of Scripture they do not understand, but the passages that bother me are those I do understand.”
9. The written Word of God is the record of redemptive history and in it lies the truth about God's holiness, man's depravity, and God's sacrificial provision for man's everlasting redemption through Christ (cf. Rom. 6:20-23). Jn. 15:15!

PC: A large portion of today's sermon will consist of quotations/sermons from others who have acknowledged the utter uniqueness of Jesus and the unparalleled impact He has had on history. So too with the Scriptures, which all point to the person and work of Messiah, and how we can have a relationship with Him forevermore. I want to share several of such insightful observances with you and I've included more in the available documents. However, we will read the Word also. We can't just read about the living transformative Word – We must actually get into it so that it can get into us.