

The Sword of the Spirit

Part 1

Ephesians 6:17

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...and take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.

- **Notice that word “take” – it means to receive something from someone else.**
- **Two precious things that God gives us is our salvation and His Word.**

The Bible:

- Instructs our minds
- Leads us to God
- Serves as a weapon in spiritual warfare

2 Timothy 3:15-17

“...how from childhood you have been acquainted with the sacred writings, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work.”

1. The Written Word of God

- **66 Books: 39 Old Testament and 27 New Testament**
- **“Then he said to them, “These are my words that I spoke to you while I was still with you, that everything written about me in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms must be fulfilled.” (Luke 24:44)**
- **The Jewish Old Testament had three parts: The Law of Moses, the Prophets, and the Writings. Council of Jamnia at the end of the First Century established the Old Testament or the Jewish Bible.**

The New Testament

- **The Spirit led the churches to a common agreement to what was the inspired canon of Scripture.**
- **“One thing must be emphatically stated. The New Testament books did not become authoritative for the Church because they were formally included in a canonical list; on the contrary, the Church included them in her canon because she had already regarded them as divinely inspired, recognizing their innate worth and generally apostolic authority, direct or indirect.” (F.F. Bruce)**

Are they reliable?

- **“The evidence for our New Testament writings is ever so much greater than the evidence for many writings of classical authors, the authenticity of which no-one dreams of questioning. And if the New Testament were a collection of secular writings, their authenticity would generally be regarded as beyond all doubt. It is a curious fact that historians have often been much readier to trust the New Testament than have many theologians.” (F.F. Bruce)**
- **Christians are concerned with the reliability of the Scriptures, because we have placed our confidence in them.**

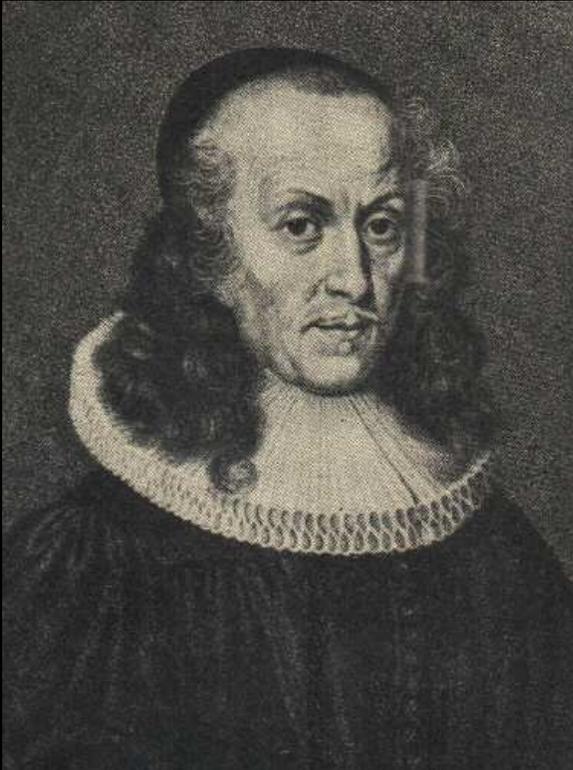
How are they to be interpreted?

- Equally inspired – plenary inspiration
- Infallible in the original “autograph versions”
- Progressive Revelation – gradually reveals the mind of God
- Christ-centered Unity
- Grammatical-historical Method of Interpretation – they are understood in light of the style of writing (poetry, for example), and in light of their historical and cultural context.
- Scriptures are to be understood in light of where they stand in salvation history.

2. The word that is spoken by God's Spirit

- *Rhema* means a word that is spoken by another. The Spirit speaks to our hearts to know and understand His message.
- “And when He comes, He will convict the world in regard to sin and righteousness and judgment” (John 16:8).
- He guides the believing community into all truth (John 16:14).

Philipp Spener



- Born in Alsace in 1635, Educated in Colmar and Strasbourg.
- 1675 *Pia desideria*, for reforming the Lutheran church. His ideas became known as Pietism.
- He emphasized the devotional reading of the Bible, small groups, preaching that developed faith in believers, and personal holiness.
- *Heartfelt Faith and a converted church membership*
- First Great Awakening in America: 1730-50

God's Spirit will speak to us if we

- Give Him the Opportunity
- Read the Word in our personal lives
- Study the Word in our Small Groups
- Read the Word in our Worship

3. The Word of God that we speak

- **The Gladius: the short-easy-to-carry Roman sword, double-sided, pointed, easy to use, for close combat.**
- **The Word of God:**
 - Is easy to carry
 - Cuts both ways
 - Pointed
 - Easy to use
 - Meant for close combat with the enemy



Practical suggestions on using the Bible

- **Read it daily**
- **Combine study and meditation**
- **Start with John's gospel and 1 John**
- **Proverbs and Psalms**
- **Memorize short verses of scripture**
- **Meditate on them – say them back to God in prayer**

Practical suggestions on using the Bible

- **The Word of God tears down strongholds: “For though we live in the flesh, we do not wage war according to the flesh. The weapons of our warfare are not the weapons of the world. Instead, they have divine power to demolish strongholds. We tear down arguments, and every presumption set up against the knowledge of God; and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ” (2 Cor. 10:3-5).**

What do you think about?

- Doubts?
- Judging others?
- Self-defeating?
- Fearful?
- Angry?
- Everyday we must continue to grow.

What do you think about?

We are never "good enough" for the challenges we have not yet faced, and all of the challenges of the future we have not yet faced.