

## The Way of Wisdom

KSBC Oct. 25, 2009

Our Crisis of Confidence

2Peter 1:12-21

**Intro** The way of wisdom is built on receiving and doing God's words. More important than our daily intake of food. More valuable than finding hidden treasure. More reliable than your experience and education. We conclude our study of the Proverbs this morning by announcing and acknowledging again that God has spoken – we only become wise as we listen to him with relentless attention and submission. Our marriages, speech, parenting, work, money and joy are all hard wired directly into the source of who we choose to listen to and trust. Your Bible is your way to know God and enjoy him forever.

Agur's story recorded in Proverbs 30 is one of a person who comes to know and love God by turning from his despair of not knowing to a submissive trust in God's revealed words.

### Review Proverbs 30:1-9

The pathway to confidence includes:

1. The despair of not knowing – a pressing awareness of your ignorance. 1-4
2. The source of knowing – a stated acknowledgement that God speaks. 5-6
3. The certainty of knowing – a productive trust in and love for God. 7-9

Do you find confidence in God's Word? Is the pivotal time of your life when you went from despair to trust in God explained in terms of connecting with the Bible? Your belief about the trustworthiness, authority or reliability of the Bible is measured this morning not by what you say you believe, but like Agur (v.5), are you currently finding safety, refuge, direction, strength and sustaining joy in your Bible.

A parallel text in the scriptures that continues the message or lesson of Agur is Peter's use of God's words in his teaching ministry to the readers of his second letter. Look at 2Peter 1 with me as we again focus our hearts and minds on our response to the trustworthiness of God's words.

### Read 2Peter 1:12-21

Regarding these basic Christian truths . . .

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| It is right to refresh your memory.          | 12-15 |
| It is right to challenge your attentiveness. | 16-18 |
| It is right to insist on your obedience.     | 19-21 |

Peter clearly calls his readers to act with energy and passion – to change behavior and thinking, simply because God said to do so in his written Word. Note the contrasting truths, the Bible never had its source or origin in man, but the written words are of and from God through human authors. Let's ask God to strengthen our resolve to seek, listen and apply his word as we trace the words of God from his mouth to our Bibles.

Let's look more closely at the origins and processes that lead us to listen to the Word of God as if it were God himself speaking to us. **How do God's words travel from his mouth to our ears, hearts and minds?**

Five components or truths to build confidence in our Bibles . . . (assembly line illus)

**1. Revelation** God speaks to reveal himself to us.

Note the references in 2Peter 1 to the truth that God speaks – 14; 17,18; 19; 21. Note Agur’s reference of ‘every word of God’ 30:5

God gives us information about himself that we could not otherwise know with the intent of bringing us to know him as our own God and Savior. Revelation is a gift from God which serves as the means to the end of knowing him. He wants people as his friends, a restored relationship.

Creation                                      Spoken/written message                                      Jesus Christ

God’s self disclosure is propositional in substance and verbal in form.

Cmp. Hebrews 1:1-4

**2. Inspiration** God speaks his words in written form.

Note Peter’s references to the word of the prophets, prophecy of scripture, prophecy. Scripture is the term that refers to the writings of the Old Testament.

The Scripture is breathed out by God. The words of scripture are the words of God through the human agents that wrote the words down.

2Tim. 3:16              The God breathed character of the scriptures

2Peter 1:21              The method – authors carried along by the Holy Spirit.      Acts 27:15,17

God’s Word written . . . Psa. 33:6 . . . a product of God’s creative command.

Inerrant                                      Verbal-plenary                                      Infallible

**3. Transmission** God preserves his words through time and cultures.

Note that both Peter and Agur refer to written copies of God’s word as authoritative and reliable. There are no original writings in existence today. The original human authors were carried along by the spirit in such a way that the very words of God were recorded, but what about copies of what the authors wrote?

Transmission spans the history of the Bible. The copies of the original autographs, discovery of the copies, collating, constructing and finally publishing the printed Greek New and Hebrew Old Testaments.

Manuscripts are hand written copies. Only way of publishing until the 15<sup>th</sup> century. Fragments are pieces of manuscripts. 1000’s of manuscripts/parts – some within a decade or two of original.

Illustration of destruction of US Constitution or Sunday bulletin.

2Peter 1:21; 2Tim.3:16; Agur . . . all testify that copies of the original are God's Word.

#### **4. Translation**            God provides his words in modern languages.

Note that both Peter and Paul (2Tim.3:16) were pointing with authority to God's words translated into the language of the readers.

Translation is an act of communication by which the meaning of the original texts of scripture in the source language is reproduced in another language in such a way that the reader can accurately and reliably understand the original message.

Accurate communication of divine revelation into the reader's language.

Unhelpful terms . . .    word for word                    dynamic equivalence

Illus.    Jn 3:16 word for word                    theopneustos – 1 Greek word/3 English

          'gird up the loins of your mind'                    'click it or ticket'

Key terms . . . source/receptor                    formal/functional

A high view of God's words as revelation with intent drives us to accurate translations and humble, dependent study.

#### **5. Interpretation**            God intends for his words to be understood.

Note Peter's point is that God's words shine a light in dark places – they have meaning and can establish or change a person's life.

Agur understood the meaning of God's words in his language in such a way that he was motivated to not dishonor God in specific ways.

What does the text of God's words mean to the original readers?

Neh. 8:8            making it clear and giving the meaning

Acts 17:11        examined scriptures daily to see if what they were being taught was true

Unhelpful . . . 'what does this mean to you?'

Interpretation is by far the greatest level for entrance of pollution in the assembly line from God's mouth to your heart/mind.

## **Take Aways**

1. Repent of wrong thinking and affirm the trustworthiness and reliability of your Bible.
2. Commit to greater attentiveness and application of your Bible in your life.
3. Pray for and support sound Bible translation ministries.
4. Turn from the despair of your small perspective to a humble submission to God's words.

## **Study Questions**

1. What concerns, questions or observations do you have from this study?
2. Read the Prov. 30:1-9 and 2Peter 1:12-21 passages. Note the references to God's Word.
3. Share a recent (hopefully) experience from your life where you turned to God's Word and found hope and help.
4. What are the contributing factors to your occasional lack of confidence in your Bible? Why do you hear reminders, know the truth is being told, receive challenges to pay attention (2Peter1:12-21) and still not hear and respond to the voice of God?
5. What is Peter referring to by his reference in 1:16 to following 'cleverly invented stories?' Many people think the Bible is a 'cleverly invented story', how do you know it is not?
6. Review the 5 stages or components of how God's words get from his mouth to our hearts. Summarize each truth/level in terms of the trustworthiness of your Bible. What is God's specific role at each level? What is man's role at each level?
7. What is the purpose of your Bible? What is the nature of your Bible that guarantees the purpose can be accomplished?
8. What is the objective of the translator? Why does a strong view of revelation demand a commitment to accurate translation? Explain the meaning of the terms dynamic equivalence; source/receptor; formal/functional.
9. What is the goal of the interpreter? What is the difference between what the text means and what it means to me? What are some guidelines to follow when studying God's Word?
10. What do you want to do, use or remember from this study this week?