

"Biblical Worship, Part 5"  
(Exodus 20:4-6)

Introduction: In Deuteronomy 32:45-47, we read, "WHEN MOSES HAD FINISHED SPEAKING ALL THESE WORDS TO ALL ISRAEL, HE SAID TO THEM, 'TAKE TO YOUR HEART ALL THE WORDS WITH WHICH I AM WARNING YOU TODAY, WHICH YOU SHALL COMMAND YOUR SONS TO OBSERVE CAREFULLY, EVEN ALL THE WORDS OF THIS LAW. *FOR IT IS NOT AN IDLE WORD FOR YOU; INDEED IT IS YOUR LIFE.*" The Word of God is not something which is unimportant to you; it is not something that you can afford to be ignorant of; *it is your life!* Paul wrote to Timothy, "UNTIL I COME, GIVE ATTENTION TO THE PUBLIC READING OF SCRIPTURE, TO EXHORTATION AND TEACHING. DO NOT NEGLECT THE SPIRITUAL GIFT WITHIN YOU, WHICH WAS BESTOWED UPON YOU THROUGH PROPHETIC UTTERANCE WITH THE LAYING ON OF HANDS BY THE PRESBYTERY. TAKE PAINS IN THESE THINGS; BE ABSORBED IN THEM, SO THAT YOUR PROGRESS MAY BE EVIDENT TO ALL. PAY CLOSE ATTENTION TO YOURSELF AND TO YOUR TEACHING; PERSEVERE IN THESE THINGS; *FOR AS YOU DO THIS YOU WILL INSURE SALVATION BOTH FOR YOURSELF AND FOR THOSE WHO HEAR YOU*" (1 Tim. 4:13-16). God wants your life to be saturated by His Word, therefore, He has ordained the private and public reading of the Word, and the public preaching of it. He wants you to hear it, give heed to it, remember it, and most importantly, He want you to do it.

Last week we were exhorted by the Scriptures to the importance of the public preaching of the Word, and its conscionable hearing. Because this is such an important matter for us as Christians, I want to further focus this evening on what we may do to hear the Word as we should. Think of this as a continued application of last week's sermon.

- I. *By Way of Quick Review We Saw Last Week that There Were Certain Conditions which You Must Meet Before You May Receive the Word with Profit to Your Souls.*
  - A. *You must receive the Word with faith. "FOR INDEED WE HAVE HAD GOOD NEWS PREACHED TO US, JUST AS THEY ALSO; BUT THE WORD THEY HEARD DID NOT PROFIT THEM, BECAUSE IT WAS NOT UNITED BY FAITH IN THOSE WHO HEARD" (Heb. 4:2).*
  - B. *You must receive it with godly fear. "BUT TO THIS ONE I WILL LOOK, TO HIM WHO IS HUMBLE AND CONTRITE OF SPIRIT, AND WHO TREMBLES AT MY WORD" (Isa. 66:2).*
  - C. *And you must hear with a willingness to do what it says. "BUT PROVE YOURSELVES DOERS OF THE WORD, AND NOT MERELY HEARERS WHO DELUDE THEMSELVES" (James 1:22).*
  
- II. *This Week I Would Like to Read for You a Lengthy, But Very Precious List of Directions, Which Should Prove to Be a Rebuke Both to You and To Me, on How We Might Best Profit from the Public Preaching of the Word of God.*
  - A. *The list comes from the very popular work of Richard Baxter, called The Christian Directory. Baxter was one of the top four Puritan leaders of the 16th century in England, and by far the best of the practical writers.*
  - B. *His book is full of godly, practical, Scriptural advise for godly living, and for the most part is easily readable. [Read the photo copies].*

2. These following directions are given by Richard Baxter, in his **Christian Directory**, on how you might best profit from the Word which is preached. (Read the attached pages).
- a. First, "Directions for the understanding the Word which you hear."
- (i) "Read and meditate on the holy Scripture much in private, and then you will be the better able to understand what is preached on it in public, and try the doctrine, whether it be of God. Whereas if you are unacquainted with the Scriptures, all that is treated of or alleged from them, will be so strange to you, that you will be but little edified by it, Psal. i. 2; cxix; Deut. vi. 11, 12."
  - (ii) Live under the clearest, distinct, convincing teaching that possibly you can procure. There is an unspeakable difference as to the edification of hearers between a judicious, clear, distinct, and skilful preacher, and one that is ignorant, confused, general, dry, and only scrapeth together a cento or mingle-mangle of some undigested sayings to fill up the hour with. If in philosophy, physics, grammar, law, and every art and science, there be so great a difference between one teacher and another, it must needs be so in divinity also. Ignorant teachers, that understand not what they say themselves, are unlike to make you men of understanding; as erroneous teachers are unlike to make you orthodox and sound."
  - (iii) "Come not to hear with a careless heart, as if you were to hear a matter that little concerned you, but come with a sense of the unspeakable weight, necessity, and consequence of the holy word which you are to hear: and when you understand how much you are concerned in it, and truly love it, as the word of like, it will greatly help your understanding of every particular truth. That which a man loveth not, and perceiveth no necessity of, he will hear with do little regard and heed, that it will make no considerable impression on his mind. But a good understanding of the excellency and necessity, exciting love and serious attention, would make the particulars easy to be understood; when else you will be like a stopped or narrow-mouthed bottle, that keepeth out that which you desire to put in. I know that understanding must go before affections; but yet the understanding of the concernments and worth of your own souls, must first procure such a serious care of your salvation, and a general regard to the word of God, as it is needful to your further understanding of the particular instructions, which you shall after hear.