

The Word: The Foundation (Basis) of Revival¹



SABBATH—JULY 13

READ FOR THIS WEEK'S LESSON: Psalm 119:50, 74; Psalm 116; Hebrews 4:12; Hebrews 11:3; John 5:39; Hebrews 4:1, 2; Acts 20:27–32.

MEMORY VERSE: “Stand up for me and set me free. Keep me alive as you have promised” (Psalm 119:154, NlrV).

SERIOUS BIBLE STUDY LED TO PAST REVIVAL MOVEMENTS. We believe that revival will happen again in the same way in the last days. The Holy Spirit will touch upon the hearts of faithful Seventh-day Adventist Christians who have discovered Bible truth. And they will be determined to preach this truth to the world.

These Christians have found grace,² strength, and hope in His Word (the Bible). They have come to understand the love and beauty of Christ in His Word. So God will honor their faithful work by pouring out His Holy Spirit. And the whole world will be lit up with the glory of the three angels' messages.³ The Holy Spirit will be poured out without limit. And the gospel will be carried all over the world. Then Jesus Christ will return (Matthew 24:14).

In this week's lesson, we will learn how the Bible can spark revival. We will learn how God's Word can make a life-changing difference in us if we surrender ourselves in faith and obey its truths and principles (important rules).

1. revival—renewed interest in God and the desire to improve one's spiritual life.

2. grace—God's gift of mercy and forgiveness that He freely gives us to take away our sins.

3. three angels' messages—God's end-time truth (read Revelation 14:6–12) for His church to give to the world in the last days.

SUNDAY—JULY 14**REVIVED (INSPIRED TO BE CHANGED) THROUGH THE WORD
(Psalm 119:25)**

Look up each of the verses below. On the first line write the plea (earnest request). On the second line write the cause or the reason that led David to make the plea.

Psalm 119:25

(Plea) _____

(Cause) _____

Psalm 119:107

(Plea) _____

(Cause) _____

Psalm 119:153, 154

(Plea) _____

(Cause) _____

In the Psalms, David talks about the blessings of God's Word in his own spiritual life. Read Psalm 119:50, 74, 116, 130, 160, 169, 170. Then choose a word from each verse that best explains the blessings that the psalmist discovered in God's Word.

David finds courage and strength in God's Word. He discovers hope and wisdom in God's Word. It brings light to David's darkened mind (Psalm 119:130). It feeds his starving heart

and satisfies his thirsty soul (Psalm 119:81). When Saul plans to kill him, David holds on to God's promise of rescuing him (Psalm 34:4). Filled with guilt after his sin with Bathsheba, David holds on to God's promise of forgiving him (Psalm 32:1, 2). Puzzled about the future, David holds on to God's promise to lead him (Psalm 32:8). And, David joyfully says, "For Your word has given me life" (Psalm 119:50, NKJV). David shows us here that the foundation (beginning) of revival is all about finding new life in God's Word.

How can you learn to receive hope, strength, promise, and light from the Word of God? How can you have a deeper experience with the Lord as you learn more about Him in the Bible?



Revival is all about finding new life in God's Word.

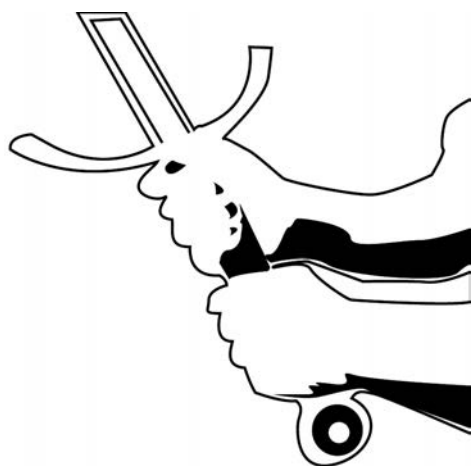
MONDAY—JULY 15**THE WORD'S CREATIVE POWER
(Hebrews 4:12)**

Read Hebrews 4:12. The verse says that God's Word is "living and powerful, and sharper than any

two-edged sword” (NKJV) going deep inside us. How is God’s Word alive? What does that mean?

In what way is God’s Word different than the wise advice of any human teacher, pastor, or counselor? What do the following verses say about the power of God’s Word? Read Psalm 33:6, 9; Hebrews 11:3; 2 Timothy 3:16, 17.

There is value in wise human advice. We have all been helped by the advice of others. The problem is that human counsel (advice) is not powerful enough to make the kind of change in the way that God’s Word can. God’s Word is a living and powerful bringer of change. The same power that was in God’s spoken word at Creation is in the Written Word (the Bible) of God. When we accept God’s commands and promises by faith, we receive the power of the Holy Spirit to do what Christ commands.



God’s Word is sharper than any two-edged sword.

“The creative energy that called the worlds into life is in the Word of God. This Word gives power. It creates life. Every command is a promise that a person accepts and receives into his or her soul. It brings with it the life of God. It changes the nature [who someone is], and re-creates the soul in the image of God.”—Adapted from Ellen G. White, *Education*, page 126.

A light reading of God’s Word does not always lead to spiritual revival. Studying the Bible so that we can prove our own position or point out someone’s mistakes does very little good for our own spiritual lives. Change happens when we prayerfully read God’s Word and ask the Holy Spirit to give us the power to be more like Jesus. Real change happens when we ask God to re-create us in His image. Change happens when Jesus’ teachings in the Bible become part of our lives. And change happens when we live “ ‘on every word that comes from the mouth of God’ ” (Matthew 4:4, NIV).



The creative energy that called the worlds into life is in the Word of God.

How has the power of God's Word changed your life? In which areas of your life do you need to see more of that change?

TUESDAY—JULY 16

JESUS AND THE WORD (John 5:39)

How are the Word of God and the Spirit of God the same in what they do? Read John 5:39; 16:14, 15.

The Word of God gives witness to Jesus. The Holy Spirit also gives witness to Jesus. The Spirit leads us to a deeper experience with Jesus through His Word. The purpose of the Holy Spirit in revival is not to show Himself through wonderful signs. His purpose is to glorify (give praise to) Jesus through His Word. Receiving the Holy Spirit is not about our power to do great miracles. It is about God's power to change our lives. That is why we need to have revival and reformation.⁴

The Word of God gives the foundation (basis) for all true revival. Our experience flows out of an understanding of God's Word. Our praise and worship come from minds filled with the Word. A changed life is the greatest testimony of true revival.

Positive feelings of praise may come with revival. But they are never the basis (reason) for revival. Any "revival" that comes only from feelings or experience will never be deep

enough. It may even deceive (trick) people. It fools people into thinking that they are more spiritual and godly than they really are. When revival is rooted (grounded) in the Word of God, it is an experience that lasts. It is an experience that makes a difference in our lives and in the lives of the people around us.

Remember the story about Jesus walking with the two disciples (followers) on the Emmaus road (Luke 24:13–35)? It shows how the Bible has a part in starting true revival. These followers of Christ are filled with confusion. So, slowly but clearly, "Jesus explained to them what was said about himself in all the Scriptures [Bible]" (Luke 24:27, NIV). He reminds them of the Old Testament prophecies (messages from God) about the Messiah. Jesus could have done a miracle to prove Himself. Or He could have showed the scars on His hands. He does not. Instead, He gives them a Bible study.

Look at how the disciples acted when they wondered about what happened that day. "They said to each other, 'He talked with us on the road. He opened the Scriptures [Bible] to us. Weren't [were not] our hearts burning inside us during that time?' " (Luke 24:32, NIV).

What an example of true revival!

Why can we not trust our feelings? How can our feelings deceive us? What part do feelings have in our walk with the Lord? What part do they not have?

4. reformation—a change for the better in beliefs, practices, lifestyle, habits, and actions.



Revival must be rooted in the Bible to make a difference in our lives.

WEDNESDAY—JULY 17

REVIVAL, FAITH, AND THE WORD (Luke 18:8)

Speaking of the time just before His return, Jesus said, “ ‘But when the Son of Man comes, will he find people on earth who have faith?’ ” (Luke 18:8, NIV). Clearly, not many people will have faith in the last days.

How might we explain Bible faith? Is faith believing that God will give us anything we want? Does faith depend on our desires? Is faith about asking God for what we want and believing we will receive it if we believe hard enough?

We should know the answers to those questions, right?

True faith is always focused on (never forgets) God’s will. It is not based on our wishes. It means trust-

ing in God. It means believing in His promises. It means acting on His Word. Our faith grows as we listen to God’s Word and put it into practice (follow it) (Romans 10:17; James 2:17, 18). Opening our minds to the teachings of God’s Word builds faith. And faith is doing what God says—even if we do not like it. This prepares us to receive the fullness of the Spirit’s power.

According to Hebrews 4:1, 2, why do some people fail to profit (gain something) from reading the Bible?

Our spiritual experience is revived (renewed) when we accept and claim (take) God’s Word by faith. There is little profit from reading the Bible in a hurry or reading it because we feel we have to. We are changed as we think deeply about what we read. We are changed when we let the teachings of the Bible influence our thoughts and our lives.

Compare⁵ the faith of the Roman centurion (commander) with the faith of the paralytic⁶ at Bethesda, and the faith of the disciples on the stormy Sea of Galilee (Matthew 8:8–10; John 5:6–9; Matthew 14:29–33). What can we learn from each story?

God has given each one of us a certain amount of faith. It is one of heaven’s gifts (Romans 12:3). But

5. compare—to show how two or more things are the same or different.

6. paralytic—someone who cannot move his or her body.

that faith does not grow just by reading or listening to God's Word. It comes as we claim His promises as our own. It comes when we believe that the Bible has meaning for each of us as a person. We are to make use of the faith that He has already put in our hearts. Then that faith can only grow.

THURSDAY—JULY 18

THE WORD: REVIVAL'S GUARDIAN AND SAFEGUARD (PROTECTION) (Acts 20:27–32)

The Holy Spirit powerfully moved through the teaching and preaching of the apostle Paul. Paul was the one who established the Christian church in Ephesus. Ephesus was a city of about two hundred fifty thousand people. It was considered the marketplace of Asia. As ships brought their things from everywhere in Asia, people flocked to Ephesus to buy fine silk, rare jewels, flavorful spices, hand-woven carpets, expensive paintings and statues, and fancy foods. Ephesus was also the center for the worship of the goddess Diana. It was the future home of the famed Celsus Library, with its 12,000 books. The city had a huge and wonderful theater that had seats for 15,000 people. The theater was used for concerts and plays. However, sexual immorality (wicked behavior) was very common. So, Ephesus was not a good place for

Christianity to begin, grow, and succeed.

Read Acts 20:27–32. What was Paul's concern for the believers at Ephesus? What was his advice to the church members in Ephesus? What did Paul expect the Bible would do for the church members?

Read 1 Peter 1:22, 23; James 1:21, 22; and 1 John 2:14. Tell why the teachings of Peter, James, and John show how important the Bible is for each Christian. Study the disciples' teaching about the influence of the Bible on our spiritual lives. How do all of the above verses show the importance of the Bible to Christians in spiritual revival?

FRIDAY—JULY 19

ADDITIONAL STUDY: “ ‘Follow what the Lord taught you and said to you through me. People who don't [do not] speak in keeping with those words won't [will not] have any hope in the morning.’ ” Isaiah 8:20, NIV. The people of God are instructed to study the Bible to protect themselves against false teachers and spirits of darkness. Satan uses every possible trick to prevent men from getting to know the Bible well. This is because the Bible tells of Satan's tricks. So, at every revival of God's work, Satan is hard at work. Satan is now working his hardest to prepare for a final struggle against

Christ and His followers. The last great trick will soon be shown to us. The antichrist will do his “wonderful” works in our sight. These false works will look so true that it will be impossible to tell the difference between them except by the Holy Bible. Every sermon and every miracle must be tested by their testimony.

“Those who try to obey all the commandments of God will find enemies. They can stand only in God. In order to go through [survive] the time of trouble, they must understand the will of God as shown in His word. They can honor God only as they have the right understanding of His character [who God is], government, and purposes, and obey His will. Only those who have filled their minds with the truths of the Bible will stand through the last great war between Christ and Satan.”—Adapted from Ellen G. White, *The Great Controversy [War]*, pages 593, 594.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

① Read carefully the Ellen G. White statement in Friday’s Additional Study. What does she say about how important the Word of God is during the last days? Think deeply about what she means when she writes: “These false works will look so true that it will be impossible to tell the difference between them except by the Holy Bible.” What does this tell us about how we must try not to judge truth based only on personal experiences or feelings?

② James 1:22 tells us to be “doers of the word.” What does that mean? Why is that so important for us if we are to have any kind of true spiritual revival in our lives? Why is reading about faith and teaching about faith and talking about faith so much easier than living it? Think through your week: how much of a “doer of the word” were you?