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Hebrews 4:12- “For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.”

Sermon Title: “This Book”

We are living in a time when it seems as if the respect that people once had for the Word of God is at an all-time low. And all of a sudden, especially in the moral climate in which we are now living, the unacceptable has become acceptable, and everything that was once wrong is now right, and it looks like the world has declared that just about everything that God once said, He really *didn't* say. It's a dangerous time that we're in right now, a time when people will believe a lie much more readily than they will the truth, and we're finding ourselves smack-dab in the middle of that time that Paul spoke of, when false doctrine, even in the church, would be all the rage. Therefore, we Christians need to be *especially* careful not to do or say anything to compromise or to undermine or to cast doubt on the authority of the Bible. I know that God's word is infallible, and that it stands on its

own, and God doesn't need our help, but it's our *job* to guard the things of God, and that's what Paul was talking about when he said that we are to *earnestly contend* for the faith, meaning to stand up for it, to defend it, even if it costs us our freedom, and even our lives.

Even in the church, there seems to be a movement afoot that is based on the erroneous idea that somehow we can have a relationship with God apart from the Bible. That somehow we can shout our way in, and sing our way in, but we don't need to sit down and study God's word. Oh, we're excited as long as the music is playing, but when the word comes forth, we go to sleep. But I submit to you on today that it is absolutely impossible to acknowledge the Lordship of Jesus Christ, and yet undermine the Headship of Christ by denying the authority of the Bible. Even so, many of us have ascribed to the dangerous notion that it is possible to be led by the Spirit of God, while ignoring the necessity of the learning, repetition and application of Scripture. And it's not about quoting it to impress people. It's about learning it so that we can live. You know, when I first started out in church, they would make you sit down, and learn some Word before you were allowed to do *anything* in the church. They believed that it did not matter how anointed you were, if you were going to be a preacher or teacher, you needed to "study to show yourself approved," you needed to learn how to correctly interpret scripture, you needed to be able to "rightly divide the Word of truth" so that you would be able to feed God's sheep. They understood that if deacons could collect and count money, then they ought to be able to give a class on what the Bible says about giving. They knew that Christians who could not explain to unbelievers the "reason for the hope that lieth within them" are easy prey for the devil. Those older believers knew that if the drunk was going to stop drinking, it was going to take the Word of God. They realized that if the fornicator was going to stop sleeping

around, then it was up to them to allow God to use them to get him saved, put a study Bible in his hands, and maybe a Strong's concordance or a Bible dictionary, and sit him down and teach him how to focus on finding out what the Book says about being filled with the Holy Ghost, instead of running the streets looking for somebody's daughter to mess with.

But now we've got this *new* thing, where folks say, "chile, just be led by the Spirit," but in many cases, that's just another way of saying, "I'm lazy, I don't study, and I don't have the slightest idea what I'm talking about." How can you be led by a Spirit that you don't know? And how do you know what spirit is leading you? And no, the Bible does *not* say 'try the spirit by the spirit,' but rather 1 John 4:1 tells us to "*test* the spirits, whether they are of God." And how do we test a spirit? By the Word, of course. But somebody has to stop the music and *teach* us those things. "How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? And how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher?" "Faith cometh by hearing," the Book says, "and hearing by the Word of God."

And before the devil gets started, I'm not talking about trusting only in the Book for salvation, like the Pharisees did. I'm talking about the fact that it is impossible to have God without His Word...

And His word will *never* fail. Jesus tells a parable to His disciples in Matthew the seventh chapter, verses 24-29 about how those who hear His sayings and do them are like unto a wise man, who has built his house upon a rock. This parable reveals two principles to us regarding the church: One, that the criteria for a church being a church is the hearing and doing of God's Word. And two, that any group of individuals

who does so in faith and with the right heart automatically becomes a church. Conversely, any group of individuals that fails to hear and do Christ's words is *not* a church. Oh, it might do churchy things, and it might sing churchy songs. It might put a churchy sign out front, and a cross on its steeple, but it is *not* a church, because God's church is based on God's Word, and God's Word is Jesus Christ. And Jesus Christ is the Head of the Church!

Jesus is the *living* Word, and the Bible is the *written* Word, and the Holy Ghost is the *Spirit* Word, and they all say the exact same thing! The Book says that "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word *was* God!" "And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us." That means that when the Word came down here, the Word got hungry, and the Word got tired! The Word got hurt, and the Word got rejected! It was the Word that died on an old rugged Cross for the remission of our sins. It was the Word that got up on the third day with all power in His hand! And when the Word died, and when the Word was buried, and when the Word rose again, the Word validated Himself as the Head of the Church! And that why we can not, we *must* not deny the Word! That's why we cannot be so quick to throw away the Scriptures! Because *Jesus* is the Word, and without Jesus, we don't *have* a church! Everything that we say and do *must* be built on Christ. "For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ." And if we build on any other foundation, then what we've built is destined to fail, because it's *our* idea and not God's idea "Except the LORD build the house, they labour in vain that build it." What are you saying, Brother Preacher? What I'm saying is that Without Jesus, all of our shouting, all of our preaching, all of our teaching is just dead works, for "He who hath the Son hath life, and he who hath not the Son hath not life..." We might have excitement, but we won't have life! We might have good

music, but we won't have life! We might have good preaching, but we won't have life! But it does not matter...how much we deny the Word, because the Word will never fail! Somebody point to your Bible and say, "This Book Will Never Fail!"

These three passages that are laid before us give us three reasons why God's Word will never fail.

First of all, Psalm 119:89 indicates that God's Word is eternal. "For ever, O LORD, thy word is settled in heaven." The Word was here before *we* were here, and it will be here long after we're gone. As a matter of fact, it was by His Word that God created everything that exists, and according to Hebrews 1:3, it is His Word that holds all things together. See, we have this tendency to live our lives as if we think that this world is going to always be here. But I submit to you on today that everything is going down except the Word of God. Everything that we see has got 'temporary' written all over it. "The grass withereth, the flower fadeth: but the word of our God shall stand for ever." If we would understand that God's Word is eternal, then maybe we'd have a little more respect for what the Bible says. Maybe then we'd understand that it's not enough to rescue a man from his outward sins, yet leave him unchanged on the inside. Some of us think that it's enough that we've stopped drinking, quit smoking, that we no longer do drugs, or fornicate. We don't think about the fact that we have an eternal soul and that that soul is in danger of eternal damnation, and we need an eternal Word in order to lead us to the only One who is able to save it. Jesus...is our eternal Savior! And in Him...and Him alone...we have eternal life! "Lo, I come," He says... "in the volume...of the eternal Book...it is written of me!" I tell you, God's Word is *eternal*. It has been, and it always will be. It's been talked about. It's been lied on. It's been criticized. It's been ostracized. It's been laughed at. It's been disrespected, it's been banned, and it's

been burned. But I heard Jesus say, that “man shall not live...by bread alone...but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God. “Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away.” God’s Word...will never fail. This Book...will never fail.

Our second passage, 2 Timothy 3:16- “All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness:” This lets us know that God’s Word produces righteousness. It wasn’t conceived by flawed humans, but it was written by God Himself, therefore it *is* righteous. And when it is applied to the life of the one who trusts in it, it produces right behavior. But not only that, it changes the heart. “The entrance of thy words,” David says, “giveth light. It giveth understanding to the simple.” It’ll make us right, first of all by showing us what righteousness truly is, because some of us have our own ideas about that. Some of us think that we already have it, because we don’t drink, we don’t smoke, we’ve never killed anybody. We don’t cuss, and we don’t chew, nor hang out with them that do. So we think that that makes us righteous. But listen to what Romans 10:3 says to us about man’s righteousness: “For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God.” The Word will let you know that truly there is none good but God. For the Book tells us that “all our righteousness is as filthy rags.” Therefore when we finally come to the end of ourselves, and put our faith in the name of Jesus, and put our trust in the blood of Jesus, God imputes to us a righteousness that is not our own. Then, out of love and gratitude for what He has done for us, we sit down at His feet as little children and we “learn of Him.” We allow Him to reprove us. We allow Him to correct us. We receive His doctrine. We fall in love...with His word. And when anybody asks us, “how we know...that the Bible is the

Word of God, we tell them, I just know...that I know...that I know! And that's why I say, we've got to respect the Book! Reverence the Book! Get a relationship with the Book and you'll get a relationship with God! Let it be your guide! It'll be a lamp...unto your feet! It'll be a light...unto your path! David said, "How sweet are thy words unto my taste! yea, sweeter than honey to my mouth!" and Jeremiah said "thy words were found, and I did eat them..." and they were "unto me the joy, and the rejoicing of mine heart!" Oh, Lord! How I love thy Law! The Word...is good to me! The Word...will keep you. Folks may be dying all around you. But I declare unto you...that "a thousand shall fall...at thy side...yea ten thousand at thy right hand," but because you've got the Word, "it shall not come nigh thee." Because the Word...will never fail. This Book...will never fail.

And I'm just about done. Our last passage tells us what could be the most important aspect of the Word, and that is that it is *powerful*. Hebrews 4:12-"For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart." The Word is not a dead book, as some of us like to think. It's *alive*. It's active. It pierces men's hearts, it reveals their true intentions. It slices humanity right down the middle. "For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God." The Word will let you know what side you're *really* on. Not only that, but when God sends His Word, it'll get the job done. "So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it." And for all you spiritual warriors out there, the Word is your primary implement of warfare. Ephesians 6:17 tells us that it is the Sword of the Spirit, and that means that it is the

most potent weapon that man has ever known. Having once been in the military, I know for a fact that we've got some bad stuff. But I've never seen a machine gun that can stop a devil in his tracks. I've never seen a tank that could make a grown man cry like a baby, confess his sins, and call on the Name of the Lord. I've never seen a missile...that could take a drunk, a crackhead, a dope dealer, and turn him into a mighty man of God! And when you fight the devil, you gotta fight him...the Bible way! When Jesus faced satan in the wilderness, every time the devil attacked Him, Jesus answered him with "IT IS WRITTEN!!" And that's why we keep losing. That's why we stay defeated. That's why the devil is running up the front of us and down the back of us. 'Cause we don't know what's written! Saying "I aint gonna do it no more" will NOT stop the devil! Some of us think that we're pretty darn smart. But humanism will NOT stop the devil! Psychology will NOT stop the devil! Why take twelve steps when you only need one? Step back...and put the Word out front! Step back...behind the Cross! Step back...and get behind Jesus and declare to the devil...that IT IS WRITTEN!

The Word...will never fail...This Book...will never fail...

Conclusion: The church must return to the place where we understand that we cannot have God apart from His Word. The Bible is not a dead, outdated Book, as the enemy would have us believe. It is eternal, it is righteous, and it is powerful. We must be ever careful not to cast doubt on the authority, the authenticity of this Book. This Book will never fail. For this Book is the eternal, righteous, and all-powerful Word of God. This Book Will Never Fail. For This Book is Jesus Christ.