

“WOULD YOU BELIEVE”

“God’s Word is Active and Alive in Me.”

The aging missionary lady takes a \$10 bill from her purse, writes on an envelope “Don’t despair” and hands it to a shabby stranger on the street. The next day that man hands her \$60 in cash. “No,” she says, “that ten was for you.” “Lady,” he smiles, “your horse won. *Don’t Despair* paid 5 to 1!”

I’m paying a reduced membership fee at my health club. I can’t use its facilities now, but I can resume without another big start-up fee. Some people are card-carrying members of God’s family, but they deny Him access to their life. Yet God *remains active* in the believer!

Paul interjects, “*God* is working in you to *will* and to *act* according to his good purpose” (Philippians 2:13). Paul’s Greek word for “working” is our word for “energy” which is the power of the Holy Spirit, shaping the believer into becoming more like Christ which, by the way, is “His good purpose.”

In creation, in the Bible and in His Son, God reveals Himself to us. “What we think about God is the single most important thing in our spiritual journey,” says Graham Cooke in *The Nature of God*.

We’re concluding this series inspired by Beth Moore in *Believing God*, in which she challenges us to adopt this “pledge of faith:”

1. God is who He says He is.
2. I am who God says I am.
3. God will do what He says He will do.
4. With God I can deal with anything.
5. God’s Word is active and alive in me.

God the Father is Who He Says He is.

God revealed His majesty as recorded for us by the prophet Isaiah. **Let’s read Isaiah 40:21-31 (p. 539, NIV).**

God the Father is omniscient, omnipotent and omnipresent, eternal, unchanging. Cooke explains, “He knows *everything* about us ... seen the *worst* of us. ... loves being compassionate ... merciful, forgiving.”

DISCUSS: How has your view of God changed during your lifetime?

God the Son is Who He Says He is.

Jesus has some penetrating questions for His disciples *and* for us. Let’s read Matthew 16:13-17 (p. 730).

DISCUSS: How would your family and friends answer those questions?

God the Holy Spirit is Who He Says He is.

The Holy Spirit takes all that we lack in our *weakness*, adds all that Christ is, and activates Jesus’ *power* and *presence* in us. (Galatians 5:22-23). Let’s read Acts 1:1-11 (p. 810); Romans 8:1-27 (p. 841).

DISCUSS: Describe how you sense being connected with the Holy Spirit.

I am who God says I am.

Beth Moore insists, “I cannot know the truth about myself until I know the truth of God’s Word.” Let’s read 2 Corinthians 5:16-21 (p. 860); Ephesians 1:1-2, 2:1-22 (p. 869); Philippians 3:20-21 (p. 874).

DISCUSS: Why is it difficult to think of yourself as God does?

God Will Do What He Says He Will Do.

Cooke explains, “God will not reject (believers), even if we’re not perfect. ... He just doesn’t know how to be otherwise. ... we can be confident of who He is for us.” Let’s read Luke 24:13-27 (p. 787).

DISCUSS: Describe how someone in your life loves you like this.

With God, I Can Deal With Anything.

When you’re squeezed hard, what’s in you comes out. What gives you confidence to face life? Let’s read Philippians 4:4-13 (p. 874).

DISCUSS: How has God proven to you that He is your Strength?

Eternal Batteries Included

Paul, God's apostle for today, writes, "Constantly keep in mind Jesus Christ risen from the dead ... according to (the Gospel) I preach" (2 Timothy 2:7-8). Let's read Galatians 1:1-24 (p. 865).

Jesus' Gospel, given to Paul by the risen Christ, offers never-ending life, *never* to be *taken from* or renounced *by you* (Romans 11:29). **God has forgiven ALL your sins – past, present and future.** A moral, religious life, penance, indulgences -- NO merit badges can save us (Galatians 5:1). ONLY FAITH (Romans 3:21-26)! We've been FREED from legalism by the Gospel given to Paul (2 Timothy 1:8-11).

We cannot clean up our old sinful nature enough to satisfy God. So Jesus took our sins on Him and gives us an all-new heart in whom He resides by the power of His Holy Spirit (2 Corinthians 5:17)!

Paul urges us to soak in the words of Christ, teaching it, mentoring with it, singing it (Colossians 3:16). Is God's Word active and alive in you? The written Word, yes. But also Jesus, the Living Word (John 1:1). Today, by faith, for the asking, you can enjoy *ALL* the privileges of membership in God's family!

His Deal

www.HisDeal.org

george@HisDeal.org

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