
Worship in Spirit and Truth:**“Giving Ourselves to the Ministry of the Word”**Psalm 19: 7-14; Luke 24: 25-27, 31-32; 1 Corinthians 2: 1-5, 2 Timothy 4: 1-4

Thoughts to Shape and Spark Discussion:

“Christians feed on Scripture. Holy Scripture nurtures the holy community as food nurtures the human body. Christians don’t simply learn or study or use Scripture; we assimilate it, take it into our lives in such a way that it gets metabolized into acts of love, cups of cold water, missions into all the world, healing and evangelism and justice in Jesus’ name, hands raised in adoration of the Father, feet washed in company with the Son.” – Eugene Peterson, *Eat This Book*, 18.

“God speaks to us: not only to move us to do what he wants, but to enable us to know him so that we may love him. Therefore, God sends his word to us in the character of both information and invitation. It comes to woo us as well as to instruct us; it not merely puts us in the picture of what God has done and is doing but also calls us into personal communion with the loving Lord himself.” – J.I. Packer, *Knowing God*, 110.

“How dare we speak, if God has not spoken? By ourselves we have nothing to say. To address a congregation without any assurance that we are bearers of a divine message would be the height of arrogance and folly. It is when we are convinced that God is light (and so wanting to be known), that God has acted (and thus made himself known), and that God has spoken (and thus explained his actions), that we must speak and cannot remain silent. As Amos expressed it, ‘The lion has roared; who will not fear? The Lord God has spoken; who can but prophesy?’ (3:8) . . . God has spoken. If we are not sure of this, it would be better to keep our mouth shut. Once we are persuaded that God has spoken, however, then we too must speak. A compulsion rests upon us. Nothing and nobody will be able to silence us.” - John Stott, *Between Two Worlds*, 96.

Themes and Questions to Guide Reflection and Response:

- After reading through the passages together, ask your group what makes an impression upon them from the passages and why it strikes them.
- What has been your experience with preaching and sermons? How has it changed over the years for you?
- What do you make of Eugene Peterson’s assertion above? Is Scripture/the Ministry of the Word more an object of study or nourishing food for you?
- How does J.I. Packer’s description of Scripture both wooing and instructing us encourage you?
- When are you most at liberty to receive and “feast” on the Ministry of the Word? What stands in the way?
- The sermon discussed preparing to hear the Ministry of the Word. Is this practical? What helps you get ready to receive the Word?
- What other avenues for the Word resonate with you besides the preached word in the gathered worship service?