GROVE BIBLE

TRANSFORMATIVE POWER OF SCRIPTURE

BIBLIOLOGY PAPER





Transformative Power of Scripture

The Scriptures are powerful to transform, another way to say this is that... God's Word is efficacious. The efficacy of Scripture highlights that God's living Word always accomplishes what God intends it to (Heb 4:12). The Prophet Isaiah said "so shall my word be that goes out from my mouth; it shall not return to me empty, but it shall accomplish that which I purpose" (Isaiah 55:11 ESV).

The Efficacy of Scripture

The many metaphors for the effective power of God's Word abound. Scripture is likened to a sword (Heb 4:12) a hammer (Jer 23:29), rain (Isa 55:10), seed (Mark 4:14), bread (Matt 4:4), and life giving streams (Ps 1:2,3). Scripture brings about faith, "faith comes from hearing, and hearing through the Word of Christ" (Romans 10:17 ESV). The Word is the means by which God brings eternal life (1 Pet 1:23). It nourishes like milk (1 Pet 2:2). It exposes and convicts (Heb 4:12), sanctifies (John 17:17), and brings freedom (John 8:31,32). God's precepts revive and refresh (Ps 19:7,8), they satisfy the deepest cravings of the soul (Ps 119:103), and bring understanding and light (Ps 119:104,105). These passages directly or indirectly emphasize the transformative power of God's Truth.

The Bible is so effective it need not be defended; merely unleashed, "The Word of God is like a lion. You don't have to defend a lion. All you have to do is let the lion loose, and the lion will defend itself" (C.H. Spurgeon). Like a lion with rippling muscles and sharp fangs powerfully subdues its prey, so too, the Word of God conquers the sinful flesh and the devil. The Bible is not impotent, but perfectly potent. When God spoke, creation lept into existence (Gen 1:1,3). When God speaks by way of the Scriptures, His glory, in Christ, gleams bright In the hearts of His people (2 Cor 4:6). John Piper states, "The Word of God is creative. It is a hammer that crushes the hardness of our insubordination. It is medicine that heals the broken-hearted. And it is light that gives us guidance and hope on our way". The Scriptures bring life, sanctification and renewal of the mind (John 17:17, Rom 12:2). The Bible is effective and always accomplishes what God purposes it to.



Transformative Power of Scripture

Efficacy does not mean that Scripture is a magic incantation that works apart from the power of The Spirit. The Holy Spirit, who breathed out the truth of God's Word is the same Spirit who illuminates it in the minds and hearts of believers. He is the Spirit of truth (John 16:13). Clement of Rome (30-100) described, “the Sacred Scriptures” as “the true utterance of the Holy Spirit”. This does not mean, however, that everyone who physically hears the Word of God will be salvifically transformed. Only The Spirit of God can grant a saving understanding of the Truth (1 Cor 2:14). Does it then follow that Scripture is ineffective toward unbelievers? By no means; soberingly the Scriptures do accomplish what God intends when they collide with the rebellious heart of the sinfully blind. Sadly, in these cases, Scripture further hardens the calloused hearts of the sinner and heaps greater judgment on their souls as they refuse to hear God's truth, being blinded by the enemy (2 Cor 4:4, Rom 3:11). Scripture is, nonetheless, undauntingly accomplishing God's sovereign ends. Matthew Henry said of God's Word, "..if it do not convince the conscience and soften the heart, it will sear the conscience and harden the heart; if it do not ripen for heaven, it will ripen for hell." God's Word is effective and will never return void.