



ISSUE

22.49

December 20, 2020

Faithful Sayings

BULLETIN OF
THE OL-
SEN PARK
CHURCH OF
CHRIST

Services

Sunday: 9:00 AM

10:00 AM

11:00 AM

Wednesday: 7:00 PM

Elders:

Pat Ledbetter

Brady McAlister

Jeff Nunn

Deacons:

Ryan Ferguson

Ben Hight

Blake McAlister

Walker McNear

Sam Nunn

Lance Purcell

Justin Smiley

Kevin Wise

Trevor Yontz

Evangelist:

Kyle Pope

“The Word of His Power”

By Harry Pickup, Jr.

Pressing persecutions caused the hearts of many Christians in early New Testament days to become faint. Knees shook and steps faltered. Gloom and discouragement were constant companions to many. Lack of faith led many Jews to forsake Christianity for Judaism. To prevent this and to encourage faithfulness on the part of those who were still making some effort in fighting the good fight of faith the book of Hebrews was written. Its theme is the superiority of Christianity. The proof of this premise is the superiority of Jesus Christ.

Scarcely any statement in the New Testament affirms with greater clarity and force the rank and dignity of Christ than the statement from Hebrews, He **“upholdeth all things by the word of His power”** (Heb. 1:3). This thought startles the mind and captivates the imagination; and it should humble any thinking man. The Christian is thrilled by it; the sinner becomes a cringing coward as he contemplates its apparent implications.

The words of many men are to some degrees powerful. The small worlds of individuals tremble and shake, or, are fixed and made stable by the words of men. But He who rules in the hearts of redeemed men is the sustainer, the upholder of all the universe, **“by the word of His power.”** By this same word the heavens were created (Ps. 33:6-9).

God is the creator of the realm of redemption, **“having made known to us the mystery of His will, according to his good pleasure**

which he purposed in Him" (Eph. 1:9). As He "spoke" the worlds into being so by the word of His power He has provided for the salvation of men. And the realm of redemption is "**upheld by the word of His power.**" The redeemed one has the song of victory in his heart and the refrain of triumph upon his lips. As he knows that God "**has worked all things together for good**" (Rom. 8:28) for his salvation, so he confidently believes "**we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us**" (Rom. 9:37). As long as we conform to the "**word of His power**" we can march confidently toward a fearless eternity earnestly "singing redemption's sweet song" believing that nothing can separate us from the love of God (cf. Rom. 8:35-39).

The apostle Paul informed the Corinthians that the "**earthen vessels**" (2 Cor. 4:7) in whom God has placed the "**word of reconciliation**" were workers together with God (2 Cor. 6:1). And that in every duty in which God employed them they sought to commend themselves in keeping with Him whom they were serving. "**But in everything commending ourselves as ministers of God . . . in the word of truth, in the power of God**" (2 Cor. 6:4-7). God's words are truth and power because they are His words.

The words of men lack power because they are not true. One may not speak the truth for at least two reasons: (1) he may be ignorant of it—man can never discover any spiritual truth; (2) some human frailty may prohibit his speaking it. Men often speak things which are true but are not in alignment with their character—what one truly is. This is not so with God. What He says, He is. Then, often when men do speak the truth, they lack the inherent power to produce the consequences of it. God has the strength, power and might to declare, to order, and to uphold truth. When men "**walk in the light**" (i.e. in the truth, 1 John 1:9), they are in fellowship with God and by the upholding power of His word may overcome evil and "do good." For these reasons it is of utmost necessity that everything we are be in conformity with the word of His power.

In writing the book of Hebrews to bulwark and restore the faith of the discouraged Jews who were Christians the writer at the very outset reminds them of the high rank of Jesus, the Son of God. Among other things, he affirms that Christ "**upholds all**



Olsen Park Church of Christ

things by the word of His power.” The word **“upholds”** is in the present tense which suggests that this *upholding* is a continuous act and is in progress at the present time. Why is His word so powerful? It is powerful because it is the word of God. There is no greater reason than this. His word is true and powerful because it is the true expression of His person. Christ characterizes Himself as the true witness of God (John 8:14-16). God’s words are powerful, and they are truth. Not simply true but truth itself. Christ affirmed this to His apostles in John 17:17: **“Thy word (God’s word) is truth.”** As Christ had revealed the Father (John 1:18), by speaking His words (John 12:48), so He was sending His apostles to speak that truth and in them God put the word of reconciliation (2 Cor. 5:19).

In matters of redemption there is need for divine certainty. It is impossible for humanity to produce this certainty. Only God’s word can make positive and sure. Therefore, the necessity of revelation. Inherent authority acting inconsistent with veracity is injustice in the extreme. The human dictator commands his subjects without regard for right and truth. He simply imposes his wishes upon others. The result is human suffering. But God does not so act. As imperial authority God commands men consistent with Truth and Right. The result is human redemption. In the realm of nature, order is produced by the power of God’s word and many enjoy the fruits of the same through their orderliness—conforming to natural order. There is order in nature and redemption to the same degree as there is *order* with God. When man acts consistently with divine arrangements, orderliness is the result. It was a joy for Paul to behold the *order* of the Colossian saints. (Col. 2:5). In both realms—nature and redemption—order is created and preserved by the inherent power of God’s word.

Every subjective principle (conscience, feeling, preference, opinion, “what was good enough for my parents is good enough for me”) of religious authority is the substi-

tution of human authority for divine authority. And because it is human it is powerless and insipid. Faith in God’s word is that which substantiates reason in religious affairs (cf. 1 Peter 3:15; Hebrews 11:1). Opinion interdicts reason in religious affairs.

There is no dilution of authority of the **“word of his power”** because it is brought into the world in **“earthen vessels.”** Contrariwise, this but demonstrates the great power of God’s word. **“But we have this treasure in earthen vessels that the exceeding greatness of the power may be of God and not from ourselves”** (2 Cor. 4:7). The commands of the apostles were powerful and were to be obeyed. The commands which the apostles gave were powerful and were to be obeyed because they were the words of God. The gospel purely preached today is of the same powerful essence. The word of God loses no power through age or use.

The word of God’s power is direct and personal. In the chain of authority there is no human link between man and the word of truth. Christ



revealed God's word (John 12:48). The Holy Spirit revealed Christ's message (John 16:13). And inspired men revealed the Holy Spirit's message (1 Peter 1:12). This principle prohibits a single man standing between man and truth. This principle also prohibits the church standing between man and truth for the church is but the sum total of saved men.

Spiritual truth moves toward man and not man

toward the truth. The purpose of the revelation of spiritual truth is to reveal the full and complete will of God for man's salvation. Truth is the substance of the revelation. The authority for it is that it is God's will. The purpose for its revelation is the salvation of men.

When we come under the "**word of his power**" we are saved. When we keep in mind "**the words of the holy prophets and commandment of the Lord**" (2 Peter 3:2), we are stirred up and are able to meet the false teachers who "**willfully forget**" what was done, and will be done, by the power of God's word—creation, destruction by water and punishment in Hell (see 2 Peter 3).

The important obligation of every man is to make sure that he comes within the benevolent province of the power of God's word. One does this by deliberate and wholehearted conformity to the commandments of God's truth.

The Preceptor 9.3 (Jan. 1960):7-9



Faithful Sayings Issue 22.49 December 20, 2020

4700 Andrews Ave.
Amarillo TX 79106
806-352-2809
www.olsenpark.com

Welcome Visitors

We are so glad that you joined us today.
Please come again.