

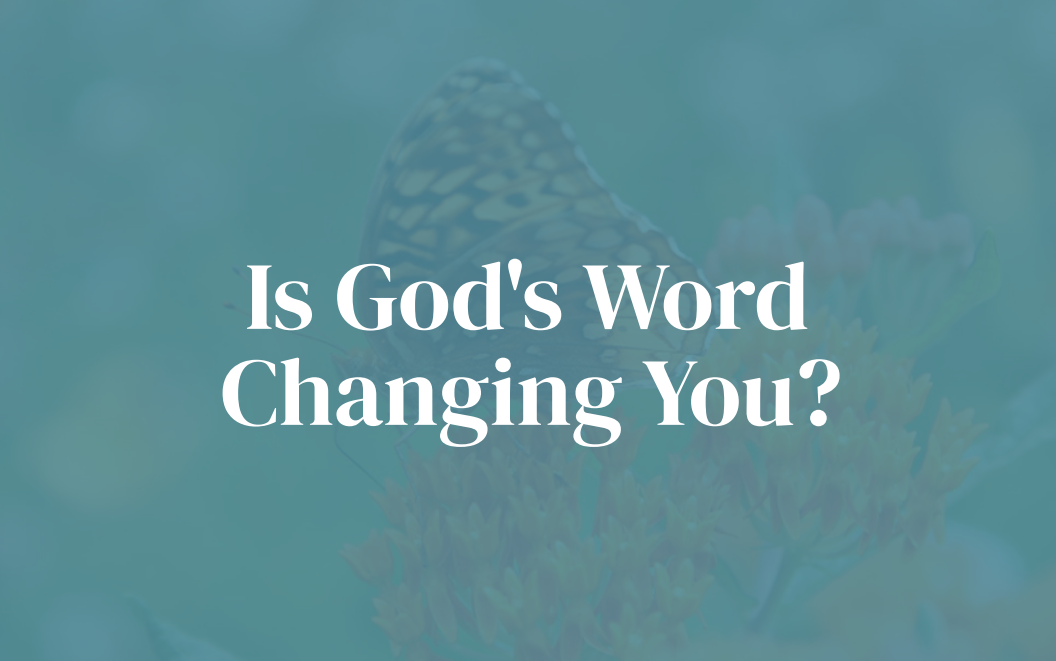


REAL LIFE

with Jack Hibbs

GOD'S WORD SHOULD BE CHANGING YOU





Is God's Word Changing You?

There's a difference between owning a Bible and building your life upon it. You can carry one to church, underline passages, take notes during a sermon, and agree with everything the pastor says. But the real question is whether the Word of God is shaping the way you live.

At the end of the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus described two men who built two houses. Both heard His words, but only one acted upon them. Jesus said, "Whoever hears these sayings of Mine, and does them" is like "a wise man who built his house on the rock" (Matthew 7:24).

God wants your faith to have a foundation that won't move when the rain falls, the winds blow, and the floods rise. That foundation is Jesus Christ, and we build upon Him by hearing, studying, believing, and obeying His Word.

You Need More Than a Sunday Sermon

I'm grateful whenever someone goes to church and listens to the Bible being taught. God has appointed pastors and teachers to feed His people and help them understand His Word. But you cannot let someone else do all your studying for you. A Sunday sermon was never intended to replace your personal time in Scripture. You need to open the Bible for yourself, examine what God has said, compare Scripture with Scripture, and allow the Holy Spirit to speak to your heart.

Some people know what their favorite teacher says but don't know what the Bible says. They can repeat opinions or explain the latest politics, but they cannot recognize whether those ideas agree with God's Word. Jesus warned that false teachers would come, and the only way to recognize what is false is to know what is true.

Paul told Timothy to "be diligent to present yourself approved to God," as a worker who rightly divides "the word of truth" (2 Timothy 2:15). Studying the Bible takes time, patience, and a willingness to dig beneath the surface, but you will never regret the time you spend learning God's Word.

Develop an Appetite for Scripture

First Peter 2:2 tells us, “As newborn babes, desire the pure milk of the word, that you may grow thereby.”

A newborn baby doesn’t need to be persuaded to eat. Hunger is built into him, and he cries out for milk because he needs it. Christians should have that same desire for Scripture. There should be something within us that says, “I need the Word of God. I need to hear from the Lord and know what He has said.”

That hunger is one of the marks of spiritual life. When you’ve tasted that the Lord is gracious, you want to know Him more. You understand that the Bible isn’t merely a religious book filled with facts and commands. It reveals the character, promises, and will of God.

Perhaps you don’t feel hungry for Scripture right now. Ask God to awaken your appetite. Spiritually, poor eating habits can dull our hunger for good food. If your mind is constantly filled with entertainment, social media, news, arguments, and distractions, you may have little appetite left for the Bible.

Begin where you are. Turn off some of the noise, set aside a regular time, and open the Gospel of John, a psalm, a proverb, or one of Paul’s letters. Read slowly and ask the Lord to help you understand. Appetite often increases as you eat. The more you receive the Word, the more you recognize how much you need it.

The Word Helps You Grow

God never intended for you to remain spiritually immature. Salvation is the beginning of your life with Christ, not the end of your growth. A new believer may not know much Scripture, but over time there should be evidence of change. You should be learning to trust God, recognize sin, forgive others, pray, serve, and make decisions according to biblical truth.

Spiritual growth isn't produced by willpower alone. God uses His Word, applied by His Spirit, to change us from within. Scripture corrects our thinking, exposes our motives, confronts our sin, strengthens our faith, and teaches us how to live.

Hebrews 4:12 says that "the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword." The Bible is not dead ink on an old page. You can read a passage you've seen dozens of times, and suddenly the Holy Spirit applies it directly to your life. God's Word reaches into places no human counselor, friend, or teacher can reach and shows you what is really happening in your heart.

Let the Bible Read You

James compares the Word of God to a mirror. A person who hears but does not obey is like someone who looks at his face in a mirror, walks away, and immediately

forgets what he saw (James 1:23-24).

You look in a mirror because you want an accurate picture of yourself. It may reveal something that needs attention, but it would make no sense to see the problem and do nothing about it. That is what happens when we read Scripture without responding.

The Bible may reveal bitterness, pride, compromise, or dishonesty. God doesn't expose those things to condemn you. He reveals them so that you can confess them, receive His forgiveness, and allow Him to change you.

The temptation is to read the Bible for someone else. You see a verse and think your spouse, coworker, or friend really needs it. Maybe they do, but God put the Bible in front of you. Before applying it to anyone else, ask, "Lord, what are You showing me? What needs to change in me?"

Hearing Is Not the Same as Doing

James gives us a direct command: "Be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves" (James 1:22). It's possible to hear the Bible so often that you confuse familiarity with obedience. You may know a verse, agree with it, and even have it memorized, but are you doing what it says?

You can know that the Bible commands forgiveness and still hold a grudge. You can know that Scripture tells you

not to worry and still refuse to surrender your fears to God. You can know that believers are called to share the Gospel and never tell anyone about Jesus.

Knowledge is essential, but knowledge alone is not the goal. The Word must move from your head into your life. Jesus asked, "Why do you call Me 'Lord, Lord,' and not do the things which I say?" (Luke 6:46). The title "Lord" means that Jesus has authority. We cannot honestly call Him Lord while continually telling Him no. The proper response of a Christian is, "Yes, Lord."

That doesn't mean obedience will always be easy. Some commands confront our pride or require humility, patience, courage, and sacrifice. But God never calls you to obey without also giving you the grace and strength you need. The Holy Spirit lives within you, enabling you to do what God has called you to do.

Build Before the Storm Comes

Laying our foundation on the rock means we have to dig deep beneath the sand on top. Digging a deep foundation takes longer than building on the surface. One builder may already be putting up walls while the other is still testing the ground. But when the storm comes, it reveals what appearances could not.

Trials expose your foundation. It's easy to say God is faithful when everything is going well. It's another thing

to stand upon His promises when a doctor gives you bad news, someone you trusted walks away, your finances collapse, or the future becomes uncertain.

You don't wait until the storm arrives to begin laying the foundation. You study God's character, learn His promises, practice obedience, and hide His Word in your heart now. Then, when the winds begin to blow, you have something solid beneath you.

You may feel weak, tired, or wounded, but the house stands because its strength doesn't come from the house. It comes from the foundation. God has given you His Word and His Holy Spirit. You have what you need to endure.

Let Scripture Have the Final Word

Every person builds life upon something. Some build on feelings, personal experience, popular opinion, tradition, politics, financial security, or the approval of others. But those foundations shift. Feelings change, cultures change, leaders change, and human theories change.

God's Word does not change. Isaiah 40:8 says, "The grass withers, the flower fades, but the word of our God stands forever." The Bible must have the final word in your life. When your feelings disagree with Scripture, Scripture is right. When the culture contradicts God, God is right. When your desires pull you away from obedience,

the Word must govern your decision.

Scripture will challenge all of us. There are promises we gladly receive and commands we would rather avoid, but we don't have the authority to edit God. We come to the Bible humbly and say, "Lord, You are right. Teach me, correct me, and change my mind where it needs to change."

Continue in the Word

James speaks of the person who looks into "the perfect law of liberty" and continues in it (James 1:25). Don't merely visit Scripture occasionally. Make Bible study a regular part of your life. Read on good days and difficult days, when you feel spiritually hungry and when you don't. Take notes, write down questions, memorize verses, and ask how each passage should shape your life.

You don't need to master the whole Bible in a week. Just keep coming back. There will always be more to discover because you are learning about an infinite God. The Bible is simple enough for a child to receive and deep enough for a lifetime of study.

Bible study is not merely about gathering information. Its purpose is to know God. From Genesis to Revelation, Scripture tells the story of redemption centered upon Jesus Christ. As you study, you discover that God is holy and merciful, righteous and gracious, powerful and near. You learn that His promises can be trusted and His

commands are given for your good.

So read your Bible. Study it, believe it, memorize it, and obey it. Build your marriage, family, decisions, relationships, and future upon it. The storms will come, but the life built upon Jesus Christ and His Word will stand.



Let's Pray

Father, thank You for giving us Your Word. Forgive us for the times we've neglected it, heard it without obeying it, or allowed other voices to become more influential than Yours. Give us a genuine hunger for Scripture. Help us approach the Bible with humility, faith, and a willingness to obey. Teach us through Your Holy Spirit, correct our thinking, expose what needs to change, and strengthen us to live according to what You have said.

Help us build every part of our lives upon Jesus Christ. When storms come, remind us of Your promises and keep our feet firmly planted on the truth. May Your Word shape our thoughts, guide our choices, and make us more like Jesus. In His name we pray. Amen.



ABOUT JACK HIBBS

Jack Hibbs is the senior pastor of Calvary Chapel Chino Hills in Southern California and the founder of Real Life ministry. Known for his passionate and straightforward teaching of God's Word, Pastor Jack challenges believers to live out their faith with courage and conviction, especially in a culture that desperately needs truth. His messages are heard around the world through radio, television, and digital platforms such as the Real Life Network, where he encourages people to know God personally and stand firm on biblical truth.



ABOUT REAL LIFE

Real Life with Jack Hibbs is a Bible teaching ministry that exists to bring the hope of Jesus Christ to a world in need of truth. Through sermons, devotionals, the Real Life Network, and a growing library of resources, Real Life equips believers to grow in their faith and live it out boldly in their homes, communities, and culture. To learn more or access additional teaching, visit JackHibbs.com.



In addition, you can also find biblical worldview content, such as films, sermons, news, podcasts, and children's programming for free on the Real Life Network at reallifenetwork.com.