

Be a Berean!

The Bereans...received the message with great eagerness and examined the Scriptures every day (Acts 17:11).

We know Jesus through the Bible, or we know him not at all. That is the urgent premise behind LAC's efforts to encourage personal Bible reading and systematic Bible study. We fervently hope that you will--

1. "Stand in the Rain" with us every day as we read through the Bible in three short years. Just go to **lockportalliance.org** and click on the man in the rain.

2. Attend one of these Bible-based classes this week--

"Stand in the Rain Whole-Bible Class"--Sunday at 9:45

"Out of the Salt Shaker and Into the World"--Sunday at 9:45

"Everyday Wisdom for the Average Joe"--Sunday at 9:45

(Contact Franklyn Pfeil--pfeilmail@yahoo.com--with questions or comments.)



"bound by nothing"

Your Bible, especially the four gospels, comes equipped with supplementary materials to aid your understanding! They are called *parallel passages*, because they describe an event from another vantage point--as if it were observed from the other side of the tracks.

In Matthew 8:14-17, the parallel description of Luke 4:38-41, Jesus *cast out the spirits **with a word** and healed all who were sick.*

With a word. Martin Luther (in his hymn, "A Mighty Fortress is Our God") put it like this:

And though this world, with devils filled,
should threaten to undo us,
we will not fear, for God hath willed
his truth to triumph through us.
The Prince of Darkness grim,
we tremble not for him;

his rage we can endure,
for lo, his doom is sure;
one little word shall fell him.

But many aren't aware of the power of God's Word. Jesus said so:
"Your problem is that you don't know the Scriptures, and you don't know the power of God." (1)

Well then, let's take a brief review of the power of God's word:

God spoke the cosmos into existence (2). And he maintains the cosmos in the same way:
He upholds the universe by the word of his power. (3)

The faith that activates salvation is but an after-effect of his word:
So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God. (4)

Indeed, the Savior himself is the *Logos*, the Word:
**In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God...
And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us.** (5)

But what does the word of God mean for us today, as we stand, inherently powerless, to face the dragons we must face? It means different things to each of us, as Jesus said: those who weakly know the scriptures know a God who lacks power; while others, established in scripture, know an all-powerful God.

But no matter who you are, if you are considering these thoughts, then you are wrestling with the Word of God and, like Jacob, you're not going to let go until you get a blessing. (6)

So here's the blessing I can convey. It's something we know, but we forget to remember:

It's not a paper Bible that we bring to the battle; it's not like we're going to "throw the book" at evil or at our problems! No, but we're bringing Jesus, the embodied Word, *alive and active.* (7)

We're told to arm ourselves with *the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God* (8). That doesn't mean we bring words on paper, or even words we've committed to our memories, or written on our hearts. **We do not arm ourselves with concepts.**

We're bringing no papier-mâché sword. We're bringing no paper tiger to this fight.

We're not showing up with a word bound in leather. We're showing up with the Lion of Judah--unleashed, undefeated, unconquerable, and bound by nothing.

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(1) Matthew 22:29; cf. 1 Corinthians 1:24; (2) Genesis 1; (3) Hebrews 1:3; (4) Romans 10:17; (5) John 1:1, 14; (6) Genesis 32:26; (7) Hebrews 4:12; (8) Ephesians 6:17