



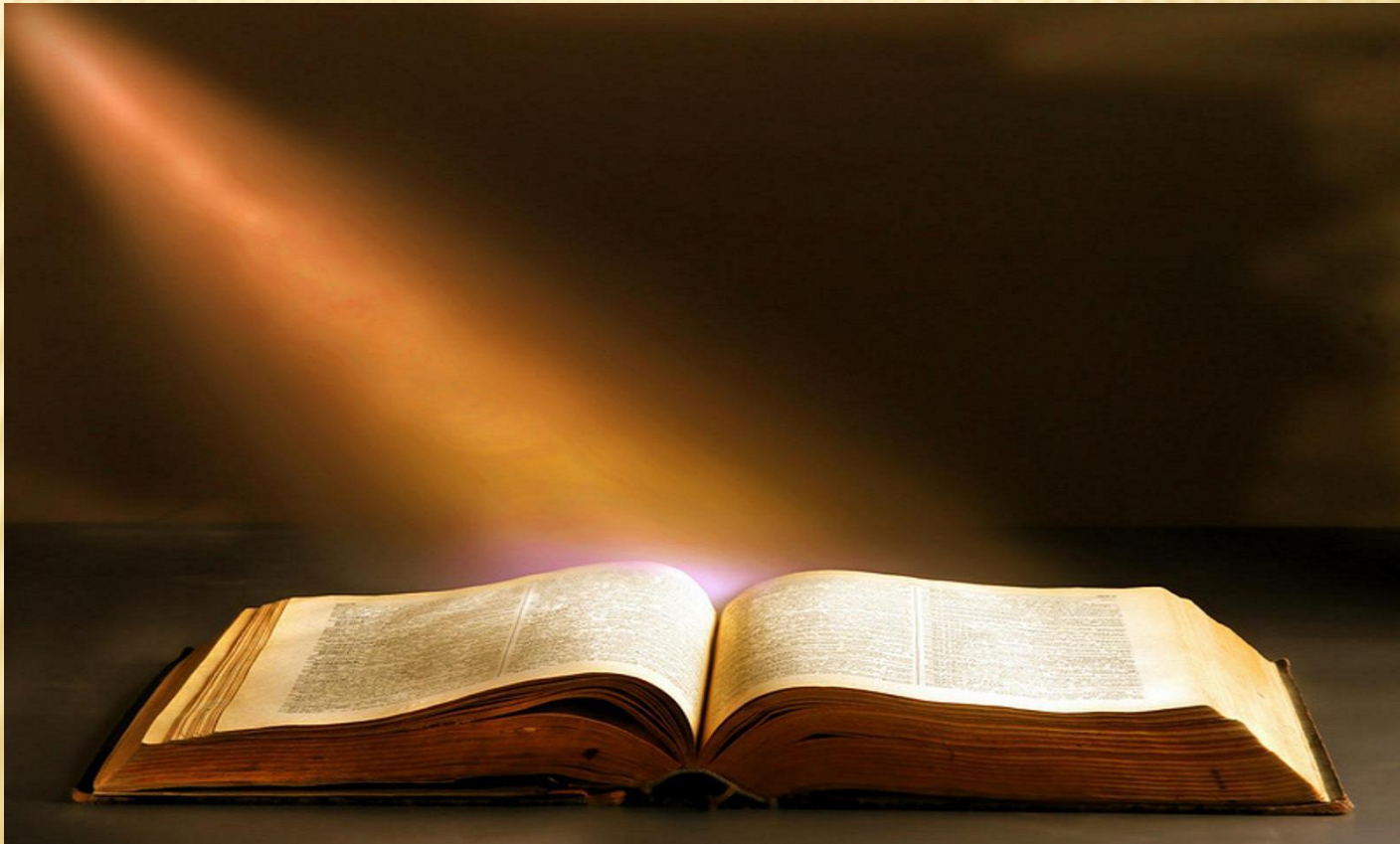
CHURCH

THE WORSHIPPING COMMUNITY

CATECHETICAL TEXTBOOK SERIES OF THE SYRO - MALABAR CHURCH

LESSON 8

THE SACRAMENTS AND CHRISTIAN LIFE





Once, Jesus' mother and his brothers came to him, but they could not reach him because of the crowd. And he was told, “Your mother and your brothers are standing outside, wanting to see you.” But he said to them “My mother and my brothers are those who hear the word of God and do it” (Lk 8:19-21).

The word of God is the foundation of Christian life. If we want to maintain personal relationship with Jesus, and share the salvation offered, we must receive him in our life. To receive him we must practice what he taught.



THE IMPORTANCE OF THE WORD OF GOD

The Word of God is the source of the revelation of God which in turn is the basis of our life of faith. Man is created to partake in the divine life and derive heavenly bliss. This is realized through knowing and loving Him. But man, with his limited brain and capacity is unable to understand completely the divine mysteries! Hence, God, who is eternal love, decided to reveal them to him. This revelation has been completed through Jesus. The Bible pictures clearly the history of this revelation. **God speaks to man through the Bible. The Bible unravels the eternal truths such as who God is, how He interacts with us for our redemption and how we can reach God.** The Second Vatican Council teaches about the importance of the Bible:

“The Church venerates the Holy Bible just as the sacred body of Christ is venerated... because it is through the Holy Bible, the heavenly father looks at His children with immense love and converses with them. The power and might of the word of God are very great. It provides the Church with support and vigour; it supplies the necessary faith to her children and food for their souls (Divine Revelation - 21)

ACTIVITY -1

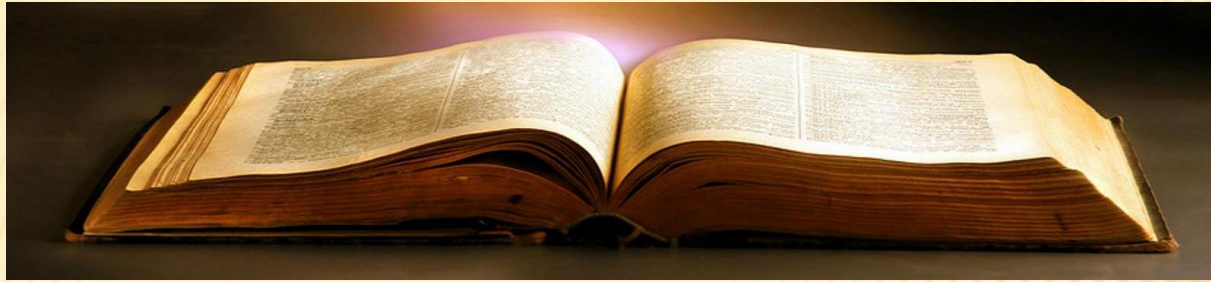
Read the following passages and write a paragraph on the word of God.

Ref. Jn. 5: 2-24;
8: 31; 14: 23;
15: 3; 17: 17;
Mk.16: 15-16



It is through the word of God the principles of faith such as the mystery of the Holy Trinity, the core of our faith, the messianic mystery, sacraments, life of resurrection and the like are revealed. These are the mysteries we celebrate in the holy Qurbana.

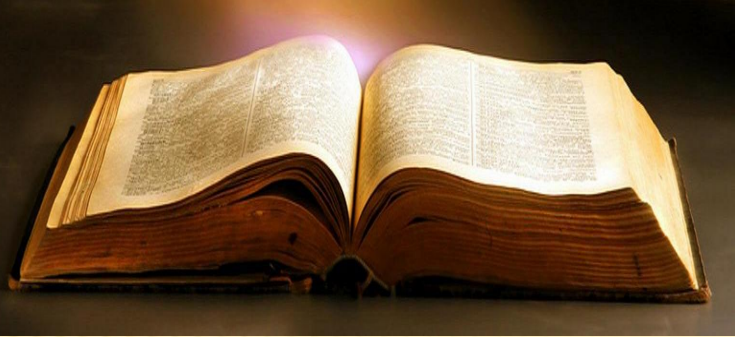
THE WORD OF GOD IN CHRISTIAN LIFE



The word of God has an important place in our Christian life; it remains the foundation of our life. As St. Peter teaches: “We have been born anew, not of perishable but of imperishable seed, through the living and enduring word of God (1 Peter 1:23). Those, who listen to the Word of God and live accordingly, will be saved. Jesus said: **“Very truly I tell you, whoever keeps my Word will never see death”** (Jn. 8:51). The word of God are spirit and life (Jn. 6:63). Those who pay heed to the word of God with faith, love, and prayer will have divine life.



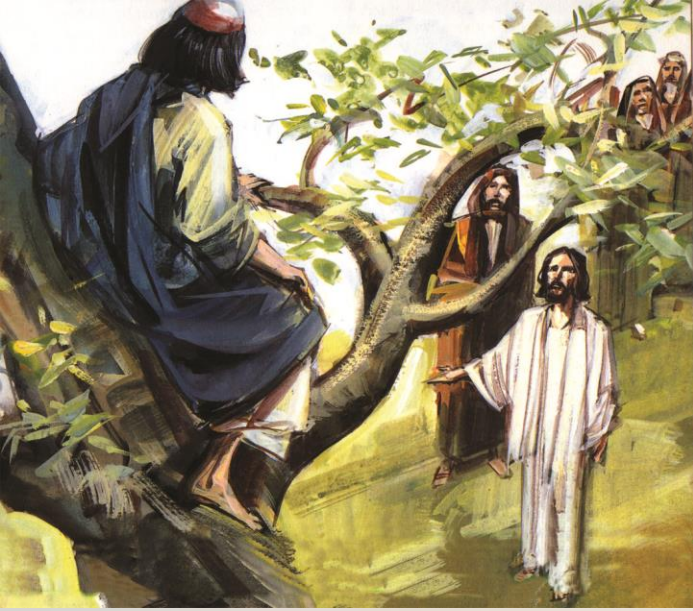
Every one, who hears the word of God and acts on them, will be like a wise man who built his house on a rock (Mt. 7:24). He can overcome any dilemma with valour. That the Lord is the strength, light and fortress will deepen in him (Ps.31:2-3). In adverse circumstances, the word of God would impart strength and inspiration. As it is said in the book of Maccabees: "...we have as encouragement the Holy Books that are in our hands (1 Macc. 12:9).



THE WORD OF GOD AND DISCIPLESHIP

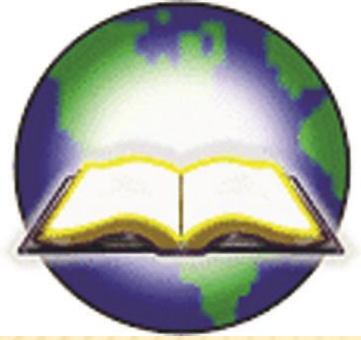
“If you continue in my word, you are truly my disciples” (Jn. 8:31). To become the true disciples of Jesus we must be rooted in the word of God. Jesus wished that his disciples should be filled with the Word. Often he exhorts his disciples to listen to his words. A true disciple fulfills the wish of his master; the disciple of Jesus should know his wish. God reveals His wish through the sacred word; the word of God is the wish of God about man.

The discipleship of Jesus is a sharing of his individuality. A life according to his teachings is real discipleship. We must realize this discipleship through our ordinary life and activities. Jesus said: “Not everyone who says to me, Lord, Lord, will enter the kingdom of heaven” (Mt. 7: 21).

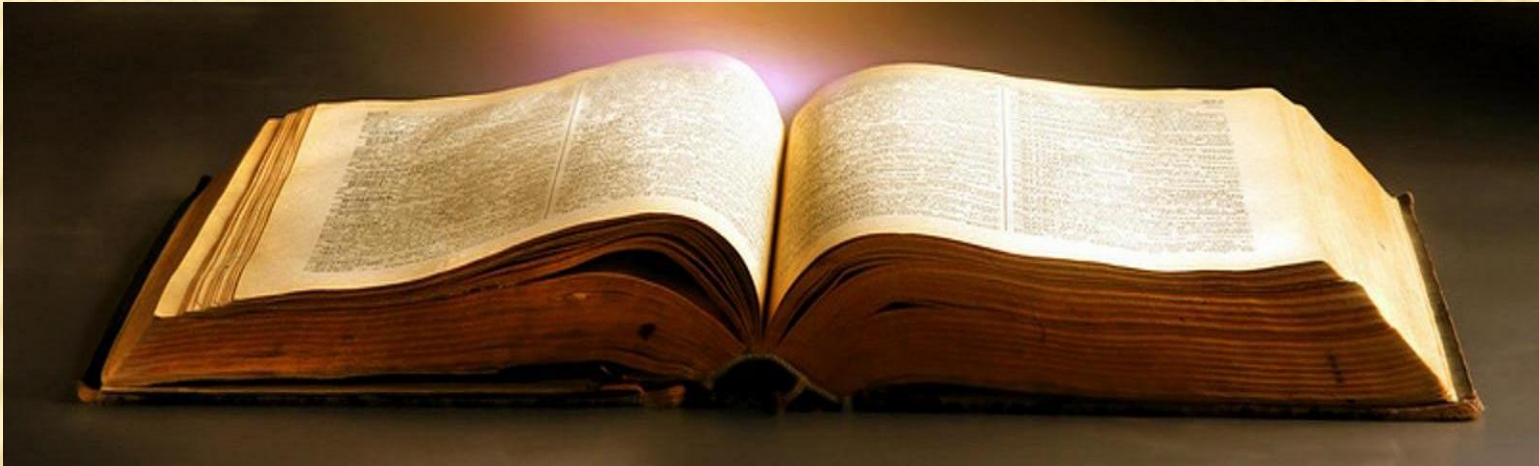


THE WORD OF GOD LEADS TO CONVERSION

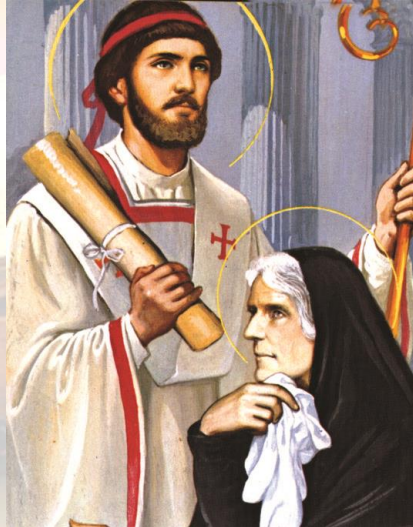
We come across many individuals converted with the word of God. Zacchaeus who met Jesus and heard his words received Jesus not only in his house but in his heart as well. His contact with Jesus transformed him to a new person. He paid back four-fold of what he defrauded others of their possessions; and half of his wealth was given to the poor. Thus he gave proof for the renewal of his life (Lk. 19:1-10). Having met God, the Word, the Samaritan woman could enter into a new life. She became a missionary who led a whole town to Jesus (Jn. 4:1-42).



THE WORD OF GOD DISPELS DARKNESS



The word was the light of mankind. That light shines in darkness; darkness could not overcome it (Jn. 1:4-5). First of all, God, with His Word, dispelled darkness. The first thing He created was light. "Let there be light", He said, and darkness was replaced by light in the world. (Gen. 1:3)



God's word is a lamp to our feet and a light to our path (Ps. 19:105). **“I am the way, the truth and the life”** (Jn 14:6). The Word of God helps us walk through the path of Jesus. When we go through the wrong path, He guides us through the correct path. **“The night is far gone, the day is near. Let us, then, lay aside the works of darkness and put on the armour of light. Let us live honourable as in the day, not in revelling and drunkenness, not in debauchery and licentiousness, not in quarrelling and jealousy. Instead, put on the Lord Jesus Christ”** (Rom.13:12-13). This word of God, converted St. Augustine who had a thirty year long wayward life.



It was the Word of God that helped St. Francis Xavier, a teacher in the University of Paris, to renounce the momentary pleasures of the world and become a priest and then a saint. “...**what will it profit them if they gain the whole world but forfeit their life**” (Mt. 16:26) Francis who heard this word of God saved himself besides having saved the souls of many and became a missionary. Similarly, all the saints attained holiness when they walked through the path of the Word.



THE WORD OF GOD GIVES LIFE



The word of God gives life. With the power of the Word Lazar regained life after four days of his death (Jn 11:44) Jairus' daughter, who was dead, returned to life when the word of God entered her. She walked about as though she was awake from sleep (Mk. 5:41-42). The dead son of a widow, carried in a bier, revived to life with the power of the word of God (Lk. 7:14-15).

" **Whoever has the Son has life; whoever does not have the Son of God does not have life.**" (1 Jn. 5:12). Even now-a-days, the word of God is giver of life. **The benumbed mind is revived with it** (Ezek. 36, 37; Heb. 4). It provides hope for the hopeless, power to the powerless, health to the sick, destroys bondage to sin and guides, through the correct path, those who lost their way.

THE WORD OF GOD IS REDEMPITIVE



St. Paul qualifies the word of God as the word of truth with the good news of salvation (Eph. 1:13). He tells the Corinthians that the Gospel provides salvation (1 Cor. 15:1-2). Jesus assures salvation for those who believe the word of God and receive baptism (Mk. 16:15-16). “God decided, through the foolishness of the proclamation of the word, to save those who believe” (1 Cor. 1:21). The word of God is divine strength for the believers. “...Welcome with meekness the implanted word that has power to save your souls” (Jas 1:21).

THE WORD OF GOD LIBERATES AND SANCTIFIES



Jesus said, “if you continue in my Word, you are truly my disciples and you will know the truth and the truth will make you free” (Jn 8:31). This freedom leads us to holiness. Jesus prayed for us before he left here for the abode of his father, “Sanctify them in the truth. Your Word is truth” (Jn. 17:17). The Word of God is fire (Jer. 23:29). The fire purifies gold; the more gold is melted in fire, the purer it becomes. Similarly we become sanctified when the word of God dwells within us. Jesus himself said, “You have already been cleansed by the word that I have spoken to you” (Jn 15:3).

THE WORD OF GOD GRANTS ETERNAL LIFE

The word of God conducts us to eternal life. Jesus said, “**Very truly I tell you anyone who hears my word and believes Him who sent me has eternal life.**” (Jn. 5:24). The words of Jesus are spirit and life (Jn. 6:63). Those who read the word of God daily and live accordingly shall dwell upon divine life. Those who listen to and learn the word of God are on the path to eternal life. They will enjoy heavenly bliss and realize the promises given by Jesus.

CERTAIN REQUISITES FOR EXPERIENCING THE POWER OF THE WORD OF GOD

Read the word prayerfully; understand the personal message given through the verse by Jesus, be ready to correct the mistakes and rectify our mistakes revealed through the word of God. Accept the interpretations of the word of God given by the Church without trying to have our interpretations. Read the word with a thirst to understand God's plans.



**LET US
READ AND MEDITATE
THE WORD OF GOD**

(Jn. 6 : 60 - 69).



A VERSE TO REMEMBER

“The words I told you are spirit and life.”
(Jn 6:63).

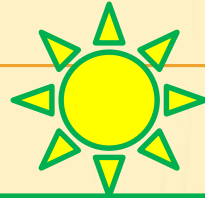
LET US PRAY

O! Jesus, who said, “My words are spirit and life”, bless me to lead a life based on the word of God.



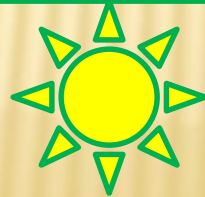
MY RESOLUTION

I will read the word of God daily and imbibe the message therein and live it.



TEACHINGS OF THE FATHERS OF THE CHURCH

Listening to the word of God should become a sort of meeting with the life-giving verses in the Holy Scripture, that question, lead and shape our life. (Pope John Paul II).



QUESTIONS

1. Explain the importance of the word of God in the Christian life.
2. What is the relation between the word of God and discipleship?
3. Write short note: The word of God: source of life.
4. What are the special qualities of the word of God?
5. What are the requisites for the word of God to influence our life?



Thank you