

Two little words, two big meanings

By Michael Downing

Let's take a look at two little words in the Bible, two small words that have tremendous meaning and impact. Both these words each only have two letters and both are used numerous times in God's word. The two words I'm addressing are the word "of" and also the word "if." Let's look at a few scriptures where these words are used and the impact each have in the sentences they are used in.

Let's first start with the word "of" which means, is defined as: belongs to or is part of something or someone. It denotes ownership. Let's now look at a couple of scriptures where the word "of" is used, this is from the NKJV. Romans 5:5 "Now hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out in our hearts by the Holy Spirit who was given to us." True Christians, those with God's Holy Spirit leading them and within them have been given God's love, the love of God. This love is much higher than human love, it is a love that is not selfish, but has concern and care for the well-being of others. God the Father and Jesus Christ showed this Godly love when God the Father gave us Jesus Christ and Jesus Christ gave Himself on the cross for all who come to Him. This was an act of selfless love. Jesus Christ gave up His glory with the Father, He came to this earth in the weak flesh and suffered tremendously by being ridiculed, beaten, scourged, and crucified for each of us, He gave Himself. Godly love is giving, the giving of the self. The Bible defines this love as follows: Love suffers long and is kind, does not envy, does not parade itself, is not puffed up, does not behave rudely, does not seek its own, is not provoked, thinks no evil, does not rejoice in iniquity, but rejoices in truth, bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things, love never fails. Does this Bible description of love have any "self" in it, there is no selfishness at all in this. This is true love, the love of God, this is God's love, for the word "of" denotes ownership. It's God's own love and comes from Him and is given to us by Almighty God Himself!

CHURCH OF GOD IDENTIFIED

Now, let's go on to another verse using the word "of", it's in 1 Corinthians 15:9, this is the apostle Paul speaking: "For I am the least of the apostles, who am not worthy to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God." This is just one verse in the Bible where God identifies His church as the church of God. There are many more references to this. Again, "of" means belongs to or is part of something or someone, it's ownership. It's the church, which means called out ones, it's the called out ones of God. It's God's, not the worldly churches with all kinds of different names made up by human reasoning and ideas. It's not the world's church, the true church doesn't belong to the world, it belongs to the Almighty, All-perfect, Creator God. These churches are churches of men, led by men, not led by Jesus Christ, the Head of His church.

CHURCH ERAS ARE ADDRESSED "IN" OR "OF"

Now, for an interesting side note on more of this, in the book of Revelation chapters 2 and 3, God lists His church eras throughout history. Five of these churches God addresses as follows: And to the angel of the church in Smyrna, in Pergamos, in Thyatira, in Saudis, in Philadelphia. Notice these were churches that were in these areas, but the other two are addressed as follows: To the angel of the church of

Ephesus, and also, read how this is worded by Almighty God, “And to the angel of the church of the Laodiceans.” God writes, the church of Ephesus, because it was located there like the other six. But again, look how Laodicea is addressed, it doesn’t read in Laodicea or even of Laodicea, the place where it was located, it reads of the Laodiceans, the people, not Laodicea the place. Remember the word “of” denotes ownership, who or what it belongs to. Jesus Christ is on the outside of this church, He’s not ruling it, the people are, so says the word of God, the Holy Bible! Laodicea means, in two parts, the first part means “the people”, and the second part means “to decide, make a decision.” This describes the overall condition of the Laodicean church today, they are deciding right from wrong, apart from God and His authority over them and the truth revealed in the Bible. I find this very interesting how Almighty God addresses the church today.

THE LITTLE WORD “IF”

Let’s now look at the little word “if” in according to the Bible. This word “if” is defined as: as long as, in the event that, on condition that. It’s conditional, it has to do with doing something in order to receive something. Almighty God told ancient Israel in Exodus 19:5-6, “Now therefore, if you will indeed obey My voice and keep My covenant, then you shall be a special treasure to Me above all people...And you shall be to Me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation...” As we see in these verses, this is on a condition, the promise of being a special people, a holy nation, and a kingdom of priests is conditional, for God states “if” or “as long as” or “in the event that” you obey My voice. If they obeyed, then God would bless them, then they would receive what God promised. Salvation is the same, it’s conditional upon one’s repentance and belief in Jesus Christ. God has conditions, one must turn and surrender to Almighty God and obey Him. If we confess our sins, acknowledge them, and turn from them, then God is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness (1 John 1:9). God will only apply the precious blood of Jesus Christ to the one who has turned to Him, has repented of sin, has believed and has surrendered to their Creator. That small “if” word is huge and has much to do with salvation and one receiving eternal life in the Kingdom of God.

OBEDIENCE A CHOICE

One must choose to obey God (Deut. 30:15-16, 19). To come to understand, through God’s Holy Spirit, the right from the wrong and choose the right over the wrong by free choice. God instituted that we must choose, Almighty God is reproducing Himself, He is creating and developing His very character, that perfect, holy, righteous character, in each individual that chooses and allows Him to do so. God is not creating robots, but individual character.

We have seen in this article the significance of these two very small words “of” and “it”, they are small words but with massive meaning and with upmost importance. The Holy Bible is filled with examples that apply to these small words that we can learn from and apply into our very lives so we can fulfill God’s will and purpose in our lives. □