The World's Bible

By J. Harold Smith (1910 – 2001)

The Christian is the "World's Bible," and the only one it reads. Our lives are open to the world. Where one person reads the Bible, one hundred people read our lives. The men of the world can answer cold, heartless theology. They can deny the logic of the truth, but there is no reply to a godly life, "a living epistle."

Paul writes in Second Corinthians 3:2, *"Ye are our epistle written in our hearts, known and read of all men."* In the next verse he writes, *"Forasmuch as ye are manifestly declared to be the epistle of Christ..."* (v. 3).

An "epistle" means a letter and the idea of the apostle is that each Christian is in his new life, a fresh revelation of the truth and the power of the Gospel – a letter sent into the world to testify for Christ.

The strongest argument for the truth of Christianity is the Spirit-filled life. The best way to bring men to a belief in miracles is to exhibit the miracle of regeneration and its power in our lives. The best proof of Christ's resurrection is a Christian living the risen life.

Living the Christ-Life

The love that shines forth from the regenerate life is seen. This epistle is known and read of all men. It is a visible power, that is, visible in the results which it has produced in this sinful world.

The love of God shed abroad in the heart by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us, has written all the bright pages of history in the past. Embodied in the life of the Christian, it cannot be hid. It was the loving Christ that constrained the Apostle Paul to such a life of dedication, sacrifice and suffering, as the hostility of infidelity has never been able to answer.

What Kind of "Bible" Does the World Read in Us?

The "living epistle" requires no translation to be understood in every country and clime. A humble, holy, gentle, Christ-life preaches to the common ear the world over. The most eloquent and elaborate discourse on salvation, sanctification, separation and service is tame and ineffective in comparison with the eloquence of a humble and holy walk with God. What is any description of Christianity on paper as compared to the living epistle which all can read?

The light of an unselfish Christian life cannot be hid. It needs no billboard announcement. We learn from Acts 4:13 that long before Peter and John wrote their apostolic letters, the Jewish rulers *"took knowledge of them, that they had been with Jesus."* They could not shut their eyes to the fact. They were the epistles of Christ which the scribes and the Pharisees were

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compelled to read. The enemies of the Gospel were in distress, for they had nothing by which they could answer to the apostles.

If we were as faithful as those apostles were, all who meet us in social, political or business relations would be compelled to see in us something of the trust and power of the Gospel. Not in tables of stone, but in the fleshly tables of the heart.

What sort of a Bible do you dear friends see in me? Do you see a dirty Bible? Do you see a Bible full of errors and lies? Do you see a hypocritical Bible?

Do you see in my life, hear in my life and behold with my life, the truth of God's Holy Word? Am I living out as a living epistle what God has written and revealed to us in His Book – the Holy Bible?

God help us all in these dark days, and I truly believe last days, to be true epistles, read of all men. May what the sinner sees in us not be a stumbling block over which he will stumble into hell. God help us all to be epistles that will point all men to Christ!

– Condensed.

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