

Study and Discussion Notes for Hebrews 4 (Part 2) :12-13 • The Character and Power of the Word

- **Something to ponder:** As we get into this section of the book of Hebrews, we see that the Author of this letter has been reminding his readers how **unbelief** had hindered the Jews throughout their history and has kept them from entering God's rest. It is with the backdrop of that theme that he advances these statements about the Word.
- Remember as you study these verses the Author is addressing Christian Jews who are being tempted to return to the Law of Moses because of the intense persecution they are receiving at the hands of their fellow Jews.
- What is the **FIRST** characteristic of the Word listed in **verse 12**?
- What is required on our part that allows the life of the Word to take hold of our hearts?
- **Something to ponder:** Since the Word is alive it can never go out of date or become irrelevant. Take a moment to praise God that His Word is alive.
- Can you think of any other effects that stem from the Word being alive?
- What is the **SECOND** characteristic mentioned about the Word of God in **verse 12**?
- **Something to ponder:** The Greek word for "active" in the ESV is where we get our English word **ENERGY**.
- How can the activity and energy of the Word be seen in the way it affects people's lives?
- What transformations have you seen in your own life as a result of consuming the Word?
- The **THIRD** statement made about the Word says what?
- We are told that the Word cuts and separates. Consider how it separates the following:
 - Truth from **LIES**
 - Light from **DARK**
 - Right from **WRONG**
 - Good from **BAD**
- One rather challenging statement is that the Word is able to separate even to the "**...the division of soul and of spirit...**" Define your soul and your spirit.
- Why is the division of soul and spirit important?
- Finally, the **FOURTH** statement made about the Word is what?
- How does the Word discern the thoughts and attitudes of our hearts?
- Instead of "**discerning**" the NIV uses the word "**judging**." How has the word judged you before?
- What is the final statement made about the Word in **verse 13**?

- Knowing, as we do, that Word exposes us to God who sees the inner thoughts and intentions of our hearts, what comfort do we have that we are not condemned and rejected by God?
- What role does the cross of Christ play in that comfort for you?