

Bible Reading & Memorization

Bible Reading

- Mt 4:4 (Jesus speaking), “Man does not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.”
 - What part of man does the word of God nurture?
 - Figuratively: the Bible is spiritual food
- Jn 14:10 (Jesus speaking), “The words I say to you are not just my own.”
 - If Jesus’ words were not just his own, whose words were they?
- Jn 14:24 (Jesus speaking), “These words you hear are not my own; they belong to the Father who sent me.”
- Jn 6:63 (Jesus speaking), “The words I have spoken to you are spirit and they are life.”
 - Does this apply to everything in the Bible? Explain.
 - What does this verse say about the Bible?
 - What does this mean?
- Jn 16:13, “But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all truth.”
 - If you read Bible only to understand it intellectually, what part of you is getting stronger?
- Recap
 - Bible is word of God
 - Bible is spirit & life; i.e., it’s spiritual in nature & produces spiritual life
 - One of Holy Spirit’s roles is giving us insight to what the Bible means
- Steps to Bible interpretation & understanding
 - What does it say? (Literal reading of the verse)
 - What does it mean? (Relies on revelation from Holy Spirit during meditation, can also include insight from study resources)
 - How does it apply to me? (What is God asking of me in this verse?)
 - How will I respond? (Practical application, what I will do differently)
- Example: Jn 3:16
 - What does it say?
 - “For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.”
 - What does it mean?

- note: Bible describes principle of 2 or 3 witnesses necessary for proof or evidence
- How does it apply to me? What is God asking of me?
- How will I respond?
- *You* put God's Word in your spirit
- The absolute best way to benefit from the Bible is to engage in a Bible reading plan
 - Essential to your spiritual health
 - Need a reading plan? Go to the church website & click on "media"
- Heb 4:12, "For the word of God is living and active."
 - What does this say about the Bible?
 - What does that mean?
 - In what way is the Bible "living"?
 - What does mean, the Bible is "active"?
 - What kind of results can we expect from effective Bible reading?
 - How does this apply to you?
 - How will you respond?
- We learn primarily by first-hand experience
 - Holy Spirit is your personal tutor, leads you personally into all truth, shows how it applies to you
 - He inspired the scriptures — they're God-breathed — so he's very familiar with them
 - He knows God's mind, so he understands the intent of the scriptures
 - He wrote the book & knows what every word & phrase means
- Important reasons to be familiar with scripture
 - Bible is the absolute, objective standard for our life
 - We use Bible to judge our thoughts so we can reject those thoughts that don't conform to scripture
 - Greek word translated "repent" in New Testament literally means to change the way you think, transform your mind
 - We need to read the Bible ourselves, let Holy Spirit reveal its truths to us, & conform our thinking to what it says
 - We use Bible to judge what we think God says to us
 - He'll never violate or contradict his word, the Bible

- If you're wanting to hear God speak, are you reading his word?
- The primary way God intends to communicate with us is through the Bible
- We use Bible to judge word of prophecy, advice, word of knowledge or wisdom others give us
 - Remember principle of 2 or 3 witnesses
- Progressive revelation
 - God gives us what we need for the *next step*, or for next spiritual growth spurt
 - We should experience continual growth & maturing
 - Bible is the basis or foundation for it all
- Your Bible reading plan
 - Each of us needs to engage in some level of regular Bible reading
 - We need a balanced diet of scripture, so it's important to read the entire Bible
 - Cornerstone's web site, click "media" for a choice of Bible reading plans
- Christianity is primarily a relationship, not just a lifestyle, definitely not a list of rules
 - Communication is essential to any relationship
 - Bible is essential communication from God to you

Memorizing Scripture

- If you can memorize verses or chapters verbatim, go for it!
- If you have difficulty memorizing, focus on a few significant verses
- This week's "News & Devotional from Cornerstone" included the following verses:
 - Ps 119:11
 - Ro 5:8
 - Ps 100:4
 - Mt 6:33
- Why should we memorize scripture?
 - **Reading** scripture daily is vitally important because it helps change the way you think
 - **Memorizing** scripture turbo-charges that process
 - Memorizing scripture causes you to meditate on it, which allows Holy Spirit to lead you into the truth it contains & push that spiritual nourishment into your spirit

Small Group Response

- Review: Questions for Bible interpretation & understanding
 - What does it say? (Literal reading of the verse)
 - What does it mean? (Relies on revelation from Holy Spirit during meditation, can also include insight from study resources)
 - How does it apply to me? (What is God asking of me in this verse?)
 - How will I respond? (Practical application, what I will do differently)
- Apply these questions to the following verses:
 - Ps 138:2, “. . . you have exalted above all things your name and your word.”
 - 2 Tim 3:16, “All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness.”
- Close with prayer; commit to starting a Bible reading plan

Personal Response (at home)

- Topic: Some benefits of valuing God’s word
- Apply the questions for Bible interpretation & understanding to the following verses:
 - Josh 1:8
 - Ps 1:2-3
 - Ps 119:9
 - Ps 119:11
 - Jn 8:31-32
 - Jn 15:7