

**Spiritual Disciplines: Bible Study #2**

Lesson 13: Wednesday, December 8, 2021

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**TEACHING NOTES**

**INTRO:**

***The spiritual disciplines are practices we find in Holy Scripture that honor God in our doing and promote spiritual growth in the gospel of Jesus Christ among believers.***

***They are practices or habits that Christians prioritize because it aids us to cling more to Christ and grow in Christlikeness.***

**1 Timothy 4:7** …discipline yourself for the purpose of godliness; (NASB)

**Disciplines are practices**. Spiritual disciplines are things you do.

**Review week #1**

Last week we started by looking at what is the bible and WHY it is so essential for our lives.

Tonight, I want to really focus on and answer “How do we practice the discipline of Bible Study?”.

Lot’s to cover so let’s get right into it.

There is a big difference between “bible reading” and “bible study”.

The biggest between these two is “Time”.

There is a way that many Christians are practiced to get time with God’s word but it is very shallow and it is more of a practice of simply reading it and being done.

But see with me upfront, just reading it is not Studying it!.

So while it is great to listen to scripture on your drive or to read it on your lunch break or to start your day by reading God’s word before getting ready for work. Reading alone is not studying God’s word and if all you do is just read it you will very much lack the depth and width God intends for it to have in your life!!!

The Spiritual Discipline of Bible Study is a regular time to commit to really focus on digging into God’s word. It is not running through the fast food drive through, it is a prioritize time to sit at the table and eat a full meal.

I want to spend the majority of our time tonight really talking about the framework of quality bible study and how to do it well so that you can really grow into a new discipline that really changes your life and grows your faith as God intends it to.

But let’s first turn to **Psalm chapter 1** and see what God’s word presses upon us when it comes to quality time with God’s word vs all the other things constantly calling for our attention.

**Psalm 1:1-3** Blessed is the man who walks not in the counsel of the wicked, nor stands in the way of sinners, nor sits in the seat of scoffers; but his delight is in the law of the Lord, and on his law he meditates day and night. He is like a tree planted by streams of water that yields its fruit in its season, and its leaf does not wither. In all that he does, he prospers.

The mature man or woman of God longs to get their roots deep into God’s word and commands.

The faithful believer putts God’s word deep into the soil of our heart so that our roots are strong and grounded, and secure in the truth of God so when the wind blows, and the storms rage, we remain steadfast and faithful!

It is a destructive reality when, instead, we spend our time influenced by the thoughts, ideals and ways of the world. Look at Psalm 1:1-2 again with me.

**Psalm 1:1** Blessed is the man who walks not in the counsel of the wicked, nor stands in the way of sinners, nor sits in the seat of scoffers

The problem for most of us is that we spend most of our time doing the exact opposite of this teaching. Instead of avoiding the counsel of the wicked, the way of sinners, the seat of scoffers, we spend more time with them than in God’s word, mainly, by the secular people we are around all day at work or school and or by the media we consume through its various forms.

Just think about the hours of TV, Internet, Social Media, and Movies/Music you consume in comparison to God’s holy word.

It is no wonder why so many Christians are spiritually malnourished and feel so distant from God.

It’s because all too often we essential close the door on Him and the word He have blessed us with and we walk, stand, and sit with voices of the world instead!

If you are going to build your lives on this…. HOLD BIBLE:

You must have less of a grip on all the other things that your current schedule is all too full of.

The Psalmist is saying that there is an influence all around you that you are likely soaking up if you are not careful and purposeful to navigate it, engage it properly and at many times avoid it all together. Look at v4-6 with me as see quickly what this produces..

**Psalms 1:4-6** The wicked are not so ( He is saying they are not fruitful and enduring- we’ll come back to this), but are like chaff that the wind drives away. **5** Therefore the wicked will not stand in the judgment, nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous; **6**b… but the way of the wicked will perish.

**-Those who delight in counsel and way of the wicked instead of God’s word are all too often:**

**Like scattered chaff and guilty of living in sin.**

The point is, without a strong foundation and steady diet of the word you are like chaff so easily tossed to and fro. No wonder you are always stressed and or constantly tripping in sinful and or selfish ways. Your roots are too shallow in God’s good truths!!

What you have to see is this lifestyle, this way of life, doesn’t allow you to get your roots deep into life giving soil of God’s good truths. Instead, any of these things you are leaning on to find your identity or joy can be lost, taken away, or they can even abandon you. Again, no wonder why you are all too often undone or struggling in your sin!!!

If this is you, if you have been coming to church and trying to grow in God but you still go back to your week and dive headlong into the ways and ideas of the world, see that …

You are basing your life on the world not on God.

You are feasting on the world not on God.

You are being trained by the world not by Gods word.

You are influenced by the World and not God.

You look like the world and not God.

**If this is you: REPENT! Which means, Turn your coarse, your practice in light of the Gospel!**

**- Turn from these ways and practices..**

Now, Hear me clearly before I move on, I am not saying, that there is no room for TV, social media, games, or music but, Church, we need a diet of much less of these things and far more of God’s word if we are ever going to truly grow and be quipped to fight sin. God did not save us to sit around and wait for Him. He saved us to grow in Him and go out, prepared to fight sin and hell with the gospel of Jesus Christ and by teaching others what we have been taught. Hear His words, this orders, His commission for us fresh tonight!

**Matthew 28:18-20** Jesus came and said to them, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. 19 Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, 20 teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.”

We cannot witness, equip, train and or teach all that Go has commanded us if we are spending our days with the world and not with the Lord in His word!!!

**Psalm 1:1-2** Blessed is the man who walks not in the counsel of the wicked, nor stands in the way of sinners, nor sits in the seat of scoffers; **2** but his delight is in the law of the LORD, and on his law he meditates day and night.

If you are going to build your lives on this…. HOLD BIBLE:

You must have less of a grip on all the other things that your hands and life and schedule are full of.

Blessed is the man…. who’s his delight is in the law of the LORD, and on his law he meditates day and night. **What is he like?**

**Psalm 1:3** He is like a tree planted by streams of water that yields its fruit in its season, and its leaf does not wither. In all that he does, he prospers.

Church, this is the good stuff we need. This is what our life in Christ is to look like growingly all the time.

And so, **what are we to do?**

We are to, Delight in God’s word!!!

That means, it is your delight.. that means it gets priority time every day.

It means, You make room to give it priority in your days.

You don’t just try to squeeze it in, you hunger after God and want to hear from him.

It is the thing you must do that is most important. \* It is the most important thing my wife does

**Is it the most important thing you do and so it is the most protected and prioritized time of your day?**

Christian, do you long for it. Do you see how utterly desperate you are for regular time in God’s word?

One of the testimonies I read in a book years ago that still resonates with me today:

“The testimony is of a man in Kansas City who was severely injured in an explosion. His face was badly disfigured, and he lost his eyesight as well as both hands. He had just become a Christian when the accident happened, and one of his greatest disappointments was that he could no longer read the Bible. Then he heard about a lady in England who read Braille with her lips. Hoping to do the same, he sent for some books of the Bible in Braille. But he discovered that the nerve endings in his lips had been too badly damaged to distinguish the characters. One day, as he brought one of the Braille pages to his lips, his tongue happened to touch a few of the raised characters and he could feel them. Like a flash he thought, ‘I can read the Bible using my tongue.’ At the time Robert Sumner wrote his book, the man had read through the entire Bible four times. If he can do that, can you discipline yourself to read the Bible?” Spiritual Disciplines for the Christian Life by Donald Whitney, page 35

I needed this testimony when I was younger as it helped show me what a fervor for God’s word really looked like. As I get older, I continue to need my brothers and sisters to reorient me to the delight that God’s word is by sharing with me what they are reading, learning, meditating on. I pray you do too.

The Psalmist also says we are to meditate on it day and night!!

**To meditate on God’s word day and night is to get your roots deep into His truth and to stay there. It’s Putting God’s word Deep into the soil of your heart, so that your Roots are deep. So that they are Grounded and secure in the Truth of GOD.**

**So that when the wind blows.. and the storms rage.. and they will.. you remain steadfast!**

Oh.. how I pray Disciples Church is a people who Delight in God’s word….

**We elders can’t take us where we need to go as a church if we refuse to delight in and meditate on God’s word but instead we are focused on and busy with all the other things.**

I asked you last week and so I will ask you again:

**Do you want God’s word to transform you and to conform you into his likeness?**

We are at war with our sin and selfishness and self-reign.

We must realize just how desperate we are for the authority of God’s word to correct our futile view of God, of our self, of this world, and everything else!!

We are Desperate for His Word to lead us with authority and to be our true foundation.

This is not small… **we have no agenda here at DC but to delight in and obey the life Changing AUTHORITY of God’s Holy Word**.

**How do we study God’s word?**

**1. Make it a priority in your daily schedule.**

Questions that need an answer:

* **When?** What part of my day will I schedule for the reading of God's word? What can I change to not just make it fit, but to make it a priority?
* **Where?** At home or work will I read and begin my meditations and prayers? Where can I make some quiet and solitude a reality? \*Jesus modeled this.. *Be still and know that He is God!*
* **Who?** Who knows your plan so they can hold you accountable? How can you share with them what you’re learning?

**2. Invest in tools that will help you study.**

* Get a good Bible—an easy-to-read Bible that you will use.
* Pick a translation that is accurate (the ESV is my favorite because it is a word for word translation that is easy to read),
* Get a practical size (not too big or small—one that you will actually use and enjoy), and one you can make your own (highlighter and pen to write in makes it your own).
* Use other resources. Invest in books that help you learn about Bible study and/or give you a good overview of the Bible.
  + -***30 days to understanding the Bible by Max Anders***  in is an overview of the Bible.
  + -***Woman of the word by Jen Wilken***
  + ***Taking God at His word by Kevin DeYoung***
  + -A study Bible or a good commentary (***The Reformation Study Bible***)
* Get a Journal and some pens/highlighters

**3. Use a helpful Bible study outline to navigate your Bible study time.**

\*\*\*I have given you one tonight as a hand out.. Let’s take some time to talk through it.

(Hand out- **Personal Bible Study Guide**)

* Walk through it

A few additional tips for your personal bible study time..

- When picking where to read, Don’t just “start at the beginning” or do the “open it randomly” routine. Start with a New Testament book and study no more than a chapter a day. This is so you go deep instead of just reading it like a novel.

- Consider a reading plan that can help you stay on track. \*Ours

- Seek accountability with others for your reading. – One of the best ways to do this is to create a habit with others whereby you share what you are studying and how God is growing you as a result.

Closing thoughts:

God’s word is the appointed instrument of God by which He sustains and grows the faith and fruit of His children. Giving prime time to it each day to meditate on these words is the path of joy. This is the fight for delight. I pray you will practice this discipline with faithful vigor.