

The Godly Man as a Disciple *The Importance Of God's Word*

One of Christianity's most beloved hymns is "Trust and Obey". This hymn reminds us there is no other way to be happy in Jesus, but to trust and obey. But so often we forget the only way we learn to trust and obey is "when we walk with the Lord in the light of His Word." Another song we sing is "Standing on the Promises of Christ my King" - but how many promises do you know to stand on? And are you well enough acquainted with the One who made these promises to believe them and rest on them? The only way we can know and claim His promises, and trust and obey Him, is to know His Word! People marveled at the maturity and understanding of a young girl who had only been a Christian for two weeks. But in that two weeks she had read the New Testament through two times!

Teacher, today you have the privilege of being God's instrument to impart to your class the tremendous importance and absolute necessity of learning to know the Word of God by every means possible, and of the blessings that come to a life saturated with the Word. The words of "Break Thou the Bread of Life" would make a good prayer for starting today's class.

Break Thou The Bread Of Life

Break Thou the bread of life, Dear Lord, to me,
As Thou didst break the loaves beside the sea;
Beyond the sacred page I seek Thee, Lord,
My spirit pants for Thee, O living Word.

Bless Thou the truth, dear Lord, to me, to me,
As Thou didst bless the bread by Galilee;
Then shall all bondage cease, all fetters fall;
And I shall find my peace, my All in all.

Thou art the bread of life, O Lord, to me,
Thy holy Word the truth that saveth me;
Give me to eat and live with Thee above;
Teach me to love Thy truth, for Thou art love.

O send Thy Spirit, Lord, now unto me,
That He may touch my eyes, and make me see;
Show me the truth concealed within Thy Word,
And in Thy Book revealed I see the Lord.

A. Object Of The Lesson

1. To motivate Christians with the necessity of feeding on God's Word.
2. To acquaint them with the 5 ways of learning God's Word.
3. To get them to commit themselves to take in God's Word by all of these five methods.

This lesson covers the five ways of taking in God's Word. In the Godly Man study, The Hand Illustration is given. Probably many of your class members have never seen this Hand Illustration. So we suggest you begin the class by giving them a visual demonstration of how one gets a better grasp on the Word of God as each of these fingers is added.

For instance: You might take your Bible and try to hold it between your small finger (which is the hearing finger on the HAND illustration) and the palm of your hand. Point out when one only hears the Word of God, there is no way to really get a grasp on it.

Then if you add reading to this, you have a two-finger grasp - but still it is easily pulled out of your hand.

If you add study to this (so you have hearing, reading, studying) - you now have a three finger grasp ... and yet the Word of God can still be taken from your hand, or from your grasp.

But now add the fourth finger - memorizing. If you are hearing it, reading it, studying it, and memorizing it, you now have a pretty good grasp on the Word of God. (Hold it between all four fingers now and the palm of the hand.) It is very difficult to pull it away.

When meditation (the thumb) is added to the four fingers, you have a good grip on the Word of God. The thumb is our “grasper” - and using it in combination with any finger increases our ability to grasp something. For instance, if you meditate on what you hear, your grasp of what you heard will increase. Likewise, if you read the Bible and meditate on it, study it and meditate on it, memorize it and meditate on it, then you will have the kind of a “grip” or “grasp” on the Word of God which cannot be taken away from you. You know how difficult it is to grasp anything without using our thumbs ... and so it is in the spiritual life. Without meditating on the Word of God as we hear it, read it, study it, and memorize it, it is very difficult to grasp and retain it.

B. Discussion Questions

1. What is the objective of taking in the Word of God? (See # 1 under Discussion Questions, Chapter 4, for help with this.)
2. Why do you believe all five avenues of taking in God's Word are important for Christian Growth?

Jim Downing of the Navigators says: “We need to feed (hear and read) on the Word of God to be happy Christians. We need to study the Word of God to be intelligent Christians. We need to meditate on the Word of God to be spiritual Christians. We need to memorize the Word of God to be skillful Christians.

As you lead your class in a more detailed study of each finger of the HAND, we suggest that you begin with meditation, since that is so essential to the other ways of intake.

Meditate:

1. Define meditation - (“Spiritual digestion”, to ruminate, cogitate, “Chew” it over and over, to give close thought to. It carries with it the thought of acting upon the truth meditated upon. To consider in the mind as something to be done.)
2. How do you feel meditation relates to each of the four methods of intake? (We must meditate regardless of how we take it in if it is to be profitable to us.
3. What do you think should be our motive for meditation? (To get to know the Lord better through His Word. To know what and how to obey Him, etc.).

4. What does God promise the one who meditates on His Word? (Joshua 1:8; Psalm 1:2,3)
5. What should be the object of our meditation? (Psalm 1:2-3; Joshua 1:8; Psalm 119:15,59,60,97; Psalm 63:6; 77:12; 104:34; Philippians 4:8)
6. Have any of you used anything that would be of practical help to the rest of us in learning to meditate better?

Here is a quote from R. D. Foster's Challenge: "Your dominant thought determines your present action. You become like unto that which you think upon ... a man is transformed by the renewing of his mind (Romans 12:2). Beware of getting alone with your thoughts ... get alone with God's thoughts. Meditation is thinking aloud in the Presence of the Almighty. Beware of meditating on a problem. Meditate on the Word and Person of God and there you will find the answers to your problems. Beware of the danger of generalizations in reflections . . . better known as daydreaming. Get specific. Get alone and quiet with Him ... there to hear His voice, see His face and feel the touch of His hand upon the reins of your heart. Solitude produces a quality of life that must be standard equipment for any of the Master's men."

Memorize:

1. What effect do you think memorizing Scripture would have on one's mind, or on controlling one's thoughts? (Much ... as Dr. Ernest White says: "Our characters are built on our unconscious ... All that enters the conscious enters the unconscious!" All that we feed into our conscious minds is stored in our unconscious minds . . . Therefore, if we keep feeding into our conscious minds the Word of God and storing it there through Scripture memory, then the thoughts that come to the surface of our conscious thinking from the unconscious or subconscious part of our brain will be affected by the Word of God.") We all have problems with the mind. There are three ways of dealing with these bad thoughts:

- 1) Expression - do whatever comes to your mind. (This only multiplies and compounds the problem.)
- 2) Repress it - ignore it. Pretend it's not there. (This doesn't work)
- 3) Substitution. (This is the only way - Philippians 4:8)

2. What do you feel are the most helpful benefits of Scripture Memory? (There are many; here are just a few:

- 1) For protection, and victory over sin and Satan ... in our life, in our minds, in our ministry Psalm 17:4, 37:31, 119:9-11, 133; Matthew 4:4-7,10.
- 2) For rapid growth & strength - I Peter 2:2-3; Acts 20:32; Proverbs 3:1-8, 4:20-22.
- 3) For witnessing - I Peter 3:15; Proverbs 22:17-19; Psalm 119:27.
- 4) For clear guidance Proverbs 6:20-22.
- 5) For answers to prayer - John 15:7.
- 6) Gives us the ability to do offensive and defensive battle with the Sword of the Spirit - Ephesians 6:17.
- 7) Makes it possible for God to speak to us through His Word, anytime, anywhere, without having a Bible.
- 8) It is an aid to meditation - Deuteronomy 6:6; Joshua 1:8; Psalm 1:2,3.

3. What do you feel are the greatest hindrances to scripture memory? (laziness, lack of conviction that it is essential, lack of encouragement to do it and be faithful, lack of a workable plan)

Study:

1. What do you think makes the difference between just simply reading and studying? (studying implies using pencil and paper, writing down thoughts and organizing them, cross-referencing to find the total teaching of the Bible on what you are studying, and interpreting what it says. In reading one finds whatever lies on the surface. In studying one digs beneath the surface and finds treasures).

2. What do the following Scriptures indicate as to how we are to study? Acts 17:11, Ezra 7:10 (with a prepared heart); Psalm 119:18, James 1:5 (Prayerfully); Psalm 119:15-16, 33 (With a desire to obey what we learn).

3. According to these scriptures, why are we to study the Bible?

- II Timothy 2:15? (To present ourselves as approved, unashamed workmen)
- Ezra 7:10? (In order to do it and teach it.)
- Acts 17:11? (with an open mind ready to search all the scriptures to find the truth.)

4. How do you feel being a part of a Bible Study group fits in with God's desire for us to study? (Most of us simply wouldn't do it on our own.)

Read:

1. How often does God want us to read His Word? (Daily - Deuteronomy 17:19) Why? (To remind us to fear (reverence) God, to know and do His statutes, to look at the Lord and be changed into His likeness - II Corinthians 3:18)

2. Do you have trouble with your thoughts wandering when you read? Or do you have the feeling you are not grasping it or not getting anything out of your reading of the Scripture? What suggestions can we share with one another today that might help in overcoming these problems:

Here is a good set of questions to ask yourself after you have read the Word:

- What have I read about the Lord today?
- What have I read about myself today?
- Is there a prayer I have read that I may use for myself?
- Which verse shall I choose to think about today?
- Is there an example to follow?
- Is there a command to obey?
- Is there an error to avoid?
- Is there a promise to claim?
- Is there any new thought about God Himself?

Another idea is to use the acronym - "Spiritual **SPECS**": **S**-Sins to forsake; **P**-Promises to claim; **E**-Examples to follow; **C**-Commands to obey; **S**-Stumbling blocks to avoid.

Hear:

If you have time, teacher, you might wish to use these Scriptures to show how we can hear more profitably. Someone has called them “Hearing Aids”.

Habakkuk 2:20 - hear the Word reverently

Psalm 62:5 - expectantly

I Samuel 3:10 - prayerfully

Acts 15:12 - attentively

Nehemiah 8:8 - understandingly

Acts 17:11 - discerningly

Matthew 7:24 - 27 - obediently

1. What steps can we take to apply the Word we hear spoken? (Prayerfully ask the Lord to speak to me about one point He wants me to apply from this message.)

(Incidentally teacher, you might want to remind your class of the value of listening to recorded messages as they drive or do menial tasks)

2. Since we retain less from hearing than any other method of intake, how can we increase our retention when listening? (Take notes and review)

C. Suggestions For Conclusion

1. Ask the men to share their applications. (The answers to questions 5 & 6 - *Importance Of God's Word*). As each one shares, ask each person to write down the application of the one on his right. When all have shared, ask each one to pray for the person on his right regarding his application of this lesson.

D. Additional Scriptures

Romans 12:2; Psalm 119:96,97; Hebrews 4:12; II Corinthians 10:4,5; Matthew 4:4-11; Psalm 119:105; Colossians 3:23.

E. Possible Projects

1. Keep a record of how much time you spend in a week taking in the Word by each of the five methods.
2. Do a study on meditation from the scriptures by looking up all the verses you can find using the word meditate or meditation.

F. Extra Helps

Audio 2015 & 1129 - “Importance of the Word”

Audio 754 - “Application of the Word”

Audio 1167 - “Scripture Saturation”

Woman to Woman by *Eugenia Price (Chapter 4)*

Godly Self - Control by *A. T. Pierson*