



Growing in Godliness: Spiritual Disciplines

1 Timothy 4:7, "Discipline yourself for the purpose of godliness"

Lesson 2: The Discipline of Bible Intake

Review last week

1. Remember the goal: _____
2. Remember how change occurs: _____
3. Remember God's promises: Psalm 19:7-11

Introduction

The importance of our devotional life

- **Derek J. Prime**, "The preeminent purpose of our devotional life is to keep ourselves in step with God, to check, as every new day opens and closes, that we are in harmony with Him. In our devotional life we share our life with God as a man does with his closest friend."
(On Being a Pastor)

The importance of Bible intake

- **Don Whitney**, "No Spiritual Discipline is more important than the intake of God's Word. Nothing can substitute for it. There simply is no healthy Christian life apart from a diet of milk and meat of Scripture." *(The Spiritual Disciplines of the Christian Life)*

The discipline of the mind

The discipline of Bible intake is a discipline of the mind, which requires both rejection and acceptance: the rejection of all that is evil and acceptance of all that is good.

Phil 4:8, Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence, if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things.

Kent Hughes, “If we are to have Christian minds, there are things we must put out of our minds – and this extends beyond TV, to what we read, listen to, and laugh at.” (*Disciplines of a Godly Man*)

Hearing God’s Word

- **Luke 11:28**, *But he said, “Blessed rather are those who hear the word of God and keep it!”*
- **Rom 10:17**, *So faith comes from hearing, and hearing through the word of Christ.*
- **1 Tim 4:13**, *Until I come, devote yourself to the public reading of Scripture, to exhortation, to teaching.*

Reading God's Word

Why should I read my Bible?

1. Provides us joy

John 17:13, But now I am coming to you, and these things I speak in the world, that they may have my joy fulfilled in themselves.

2. Creates in us godliness

John 17:17, Sanctify them in the truth; your word is truth.

2 Cor 3:18, And we all, with unveiled face, beholding the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from one degree of glory to another. For this comes from the Lord who is the Spirit.

3. Increases our faith

John 17:20, I do not ask for these only, but also for those who will believe in me through their word.

4. Prepares us for service

2 Tim 3:16-17, "All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work.

Are devotionals a substitute for reading my Bible?

What if I find reading my Bible boring?

1. Beware of erring love (Matt 13:22)
2. Pray for illumination (Eph 1:15-22)
3. Review your method
4. Persist (Phil 3:13-14)

How often should I read my Bible?

John Blanchard, “Surely we only have to be realistic and honest with ourselves to know how regularly we need to turn to the Bible. How often do we face problems, temptation and pressure? Every day! Then how often do we need instruction, guidance and greater encouragement? Every day! To catch all these felt needs up into an even greater issue, how often do we need to see God’s face, hear his voice, feel his touch, know his power? The answer to all these questions is the same: every day! As the American evangelist D. L. Moody put it, ‘A man can no more take in a supply of grace for the future than he can eat enough for the next six months, or take sufficient air into his lungs at one time to sustain life for a week. We must draw upon God’s boundless store of grace from day to day as we need it.’”

How should I read my Bible?

George Muller, “Now what is food for the inner man? Not prayer, but the Word of God; and here again, not the simple reading of the Word of God, so that it only passes through our minds, just as water passes through a pipe, but considering what we read, pondering it over and applying it to our hearts.”

We will look at this next week ...