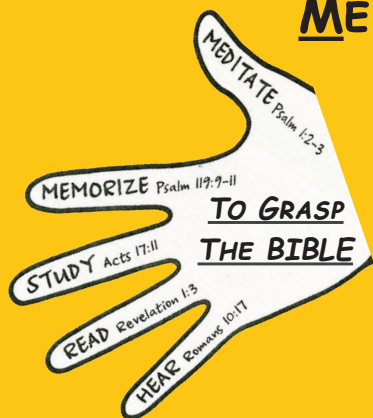


BIBLICAL "M&M's"

MEDITATE



"This book of the law shall not depart from your mouth, (phrase 1: bite) but you shall meditate on it day and night" (phrase 2: bite) (Joshua 1:8).

Moo, Meditate. Moo, Memorize.

Biblical meditation is based on a cow chewing it's "cud": (phrase by phrase, bite by bite).



1. READ aloud phrase 1 (first bite) Joshua 1:8.
2. REFLECT: (Chew) Think deeply, slowly what you read.
PRAY: "Father, Reveal what I need to see to Know you & Grow in my relationship to you.
3. RESPOND: Swallow this into your heart to not just know about God, (information) but to know Him grow in your intimate relationship with Him (formation). Repeat 1-3 using phrase 2
4. REST: Take a few moments of silence to rest or "abide" in what God has shown you in these two phrases or "bites". This is the "4R's" of Meditative Bible Reading and is how God wants you to read His word!

MEMORIZE

"Thy word have I hid in my heart that I may not sin against thee." PS. 119:11 KJV. Many people think they cannot memorize scripture. However faithfully using the following phrase by phrase procedure guarantees memorization.

"Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God - - - this is your spiritual act of worship." Romans 12:1,

This verse has at least 5 phrases.

1. Write the first phrase.
2. Without looking write the phrase, then say it aloud.
3. Continue writing and saying the phrase until you can write it from memory including the reference.

Continue this process until you can write all of the phrases in the verse from memory. Daily review verses. This will enable you to continue remembering all that you have memorized.

Note that both meditating on and memorizing God's word is based on a phrase by phrase method which assures a daily diet of feasting on the Bread of Life. Memorization of and Meditating on God's word are the sweet, Biblical "M & M's" which, as a Jesus follower, you will learn to delight and savor.

The Memorization of and Meditating on God's word are Biblical "M & M's" which, when grasped by your mind begins the renewing necessary for transforming our character and conduct into the holiness (separation from the world) which God desires for us. Romans 12:1. They melt in your mind, heart, not your hand.

The Rhythmic Community Project
"READING GOD'S WORD HIS WAY"
The Association of Wellness Educators
The Christian Clinic
421 W. Wade Ave.
Mountain Home, AR 72653
870-425-5010
www.MHChristianClinic.com

BIBLICAL M&M'S WORKSHOP

INTRODUCTION

"TOOLS FOR SPIRITUAL GROWTH"

Philippians 2:12

"Tools imply work. Salvation is indeed based on work. First, Jesus' "work" on the cross saves us from sin's' PENALTY. He paid the penalty for our sins. When we trust Him as Savior, we accept the result of His work and say, "I am saved, from sin's penalty". We refer to this as "Justification," the first stage of The Salvation Process. When you ask someone if they are saved, they usually talk about trusting Jesus as their Savior, their conversion, and being born again. However, as the song made famous by Peggy Lee asks: "Is That All There Is?"

NO! because having saved us from sin's penalty, Jesus is now at work in our lives, by the indwelling Holy Spirit, saving us from sin's POWER (Romans 5:10). Sin no longer has dominion over us. Therefore, we can now say, "I am being saved". This stage of The Salvation Process is known as Sanctification. It is crucial to understand this as an ongoing process, not as a conversion, a one-time event. The Salvation Process is continuous, with each stage connected to the previous. So far, all of the work in The Salvation Process has been done by Jesus.

Paul wrote to the Philippians to "work out your salvation with fear and trembling..." Phil. 2:12. Since we have already been saved from sin's penalty, to what is Paul referring? Understanding salvation as a process enables us to realize that he is referring to our ongoing responsibility in the second stage of The Salvation Process: "Saved from Sin's Dominion", our Sanctification. This means continuing to work at growing in our relationship with God by using tools that produce results. We work out our salvation by going to the very source of our salvation, the word of God, which, with the Holy Spirit, renews our hearts and transforms our minds. The power of God's word and the power of the Holy Spirit rewires our minds, thus achieving the transformation Paul writes about in Romans 12:2. The mind is renewed through the continuous use of two special Biblical tools: Meditative Bible Reading and Memorizing God's word, Biblical M&M's. When used consistently, these tools can rewire our minds and transform our thoughts, so we begin living from the inside out, according to the Word rather than the outside in, according to the world.

As we continue living "the way" of Jesus, one day, we will come to the end when Jesus takes us home, thus saving us from sin's PRESENCE. We call this final stage of the Salvation Process, our Glorification. I have been saved.

Until then, in order to "work out your salvation (Sanctification: living set apart from the world)..." it is important to learn how to use the Tools For Spiritual Growth. So let's begin!

"Be transformed by the renewal of your mind!"

The verb be transformed in Romans 12:2 is a command to do something. This indicates that we as believers are not passive in this transforming process. We're not like blocks of marble being transformed into a beautiful sculpture by a master sculptor. God has given us a mind and heart with which to respond to and cooperate with the Spirit as he does his work in us.

That thought leads naturally to a classic statement in Scripture of the working together of the believer and the Holy Spirit within: "Therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, so now, not only as in my presence but much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God who works in you, both to will and to work for his good pleasure"

(Philippians 2:12-13).

Paul urged the Philippian believers to apply themselves diligently to working out their salvation. He urged them to display the evidences of salvation in their daily lives through their obedience to God's commands and through putting on the godly character traits that Paul elsewhere called the fruit of the Spirit. And, according to William Hendriksen, the tense of the verb work out indicates "continuous, sustained, strenuous effort." Here again we see that sanctification is a process, and a process in which we, as believers, are very actively involved.

But Paul's strong exhortation to the Philippians is based on the confidence that God's Spirit is working in them, working to enlighten their understanding of his will, to stimulate in their emotions a desire to do his will, and to turn their wills so they actually obey. He gives them the enabling power so that they're able to do his will. (Excerpt taken from Transforming Grace)

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PO Box 6000, Colorado Springs, Colorado 80934

"For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son."

Romans 8:29

"For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son."

The Spirit's work within us is as much a gift of God's grace as is our justification and adoption as sons. But whereas justification and adoption are instantaneous and complete at once, our growth in Christ-likeness is a lifelong process. Therefore, we should never look solely to our love and obedience for our assurance of salvation. At most they can demonstrate our salvation, never prove it. Ultimately our assurance must rest on the Gospel and on the promises of God.

Meanwhile, we can grow in realizing how those promises point to both a glorious present and an even more glorious future. John spoke of our glorious present when he wrote, "Beloved, we are God's children now" (1 John 3:2). In the same verse he went on to speak of our even more glorious future: "We know that when he appears we shall be like him, because we shall see him as he is." Likeness to Christ is God's ultimate purpose for us and the hope we look forward to.

What does it mean to be like Jesus?

First, it means to be like him in spirit, in our true inner being. This is a process that begins at conversion and will reach its ultimate fulfillment when we enter the Lord's presence at death. Paul calls this process transformation. "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" (2 Corinthians 3: 18). God has predestined us to be conformed to the likeness or image of his Son, and he's now at work in us through his Spirit to bring that to pass.

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BIBLICAL M&M WORKSHOP

MEDITATIVE BIBLE READING and SCRIPTURE MEMORIZATION

MEDITATIVE BIBLE READING, A 20-30 minute daily appointment with God to “Read His Word. His Way”

Joshua 1:8, Ps. 1:2

1. To KNOW God, not just to know about Him (Information) I John 2: 3-4
2. To GROW in your relationship with Him. (Spiritual Formation), Romans 8:29

SESSION 1:

READ

I. What?

1. Wide for context.
 - 1) Paragraphs or chapters.
 - 2) Who did it?: A brief history of chapters and verses.

WHO DID IT? (SEE QUIZ ON P. 63)

Answer: Cardinal Archbishop Stephen Langton

Stephen Langton was an English cardinal of the Catholic Church and served as Archbishop of Canterbury from 1207 until his death in 1228. During this time, he developed the system of chapter divisions now used in modern Bibles.

The oldest biblical manuscripts present the text in continuous fashion with occasional paragraph breaks. It was not until the tenth century CE that the Masoretes, highly trained Jewish scholars of the biblical text, developed a system of cantillation symbols that included the *sof pasuq* or “end of verse,” a special colon-like mark used to divide the text into verses. With minor exceptions, the resulting versification has informed subsequent treatments of the text of the Hebrew Bible up to the present day.

It was Langton, however, who divided the biblical text into chapters, thus providing both a convenient division into smaller units and a simple system by which specific passages could be referenced.

The versification of the New



Window commemorating Stephen Langton in the Guild Church of St Dunstan in the West, London.

Testament would come a few centuries later, with the 16th-century system developed by a French printer named Robert Estienne serving as the basis for subsequent numbering schemes.

Although modern Bibles generally reflect Langton's system, there remain minor discrepancies, most notably between Jewish and Christian textual traditions. For example, the superscriptions that begin various Psalms are treated in the Hebrew tradition as part of the biblical text and accordingly receive verse numbers of their own, whereas Protestant Christian Bibles treat these introductory phrases as paratextual. Likewise, the five verses of Joel 3 in the Hebrew text are considered part of the preceding chapter in Protestant Bibles, leaving the Book of Joel with only three chapters, not four.

With the advent of the printing press in the 15th century, Langton's system became widely accepted. The first English Bible to be printed with chapter and verse numbers was the Geneva Bible of 1560. ⁹

2. Deep by verse groups for thoughts.

1) Groups: 2 verses=couplet (an “a”), 3 verses= triplet (a “b”). For an additional verse in the group, add + (a+, b+, etc.)

2) Keywords: to identify/confirm verse groups:

i. Repetitions: words repeated in the 2 or 3-verse groups.

ii. Transitions: Examples: “because, then, but, therefore, so, for, now.” The subject or thought of the group changes.

iii. Connectors: “and, into” The subject or thought continues.

3) Adjectives: words describing God’s characteristics, attributes that help you “know” Him.

II. How? Deep for reflecting on God’s revelation to you. Meditative Bible Reading is a reading method rather than a study or a program. However, MBR should always be used before a study or reading a devotional to first read the primary source, God’s Word, before a secondary source such as a devotional, study Guide, sermons, etc. (page 25)

III. Practice: Psalm 1. READ . . .

1. Wide for context: A portion of scripture (paragraph, chapter)

2. Deep to KNOW and GROW: Determine verse groups and “bites” on which to chew.

Psalm 1 English Standard Version

The Way of the Righteous and the Wicked

1 Blessed is the man^[a]
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^[b] of the LORD,
and on his law he meditates day and night.

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.

4 The wicked are not so,
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 for the LORD knows the way of the righteous,
but the way of the wicked will perish.

NOTES

Orientation

Principles for Memorizing Scripture

You'll want to refer to these principles often in the coming weeks:

As you start to memorize a verse –

- Be sure to read and follow each week the plans given in this handout for memorizing the verses. Following this plan will help you gain more than a shallow understanding of the verses as you learn them.
- Read in your Bible the context of each verse you memorize.
- Try to gain a clear understanding of what each verse actually means. (You may want to read the verse in other Bible translations or paraphrases to get a better grasp of the meaning.)
- Read the verse several times thoughtfully, aloud or in a whisper. This will help you grasp the verse as a whole. Each time you read it, say reference, verse, and then the reference again.
- Discuss the verse with God in prayer and continue to seek his help for success in Scripture memory.

While you are memorizing the verse –

- Work on saying the verse aloud as much as possible.
- After learning the reference, learn the first phrase of the verse. Once you have learned the reference and first phrase and have repeated them several times, continue adding more phrases, after you can quote correctly what you have already learned.
- Think about how the verse applies to you and your daily circumstances.
- Always include the reference as part of the verse as you learn and review it.

After you can quote correctly the reference, verse, and reference again –

- It is helpful to write the verse out. This deepens the impression on your mind.
- Review the verse immediately after learning it and repeat it frequently in the next few days. This is crucial for getting the verse firmly fixed in mind, because of how quickly we tend to forget something recently learned.
- REVIEW! REVIEW! REVIEW! Repetition is the best way to engrave the verses in your memory.



Navigators Discipleship Tool



Why Memorize Scripture? 5 Benefits of Dwelling on God's Word

Have you ever wondered, "Why memorize Scripture?" Studies have shown that memorization not only helps with synaptic connections in your brain, but changes it physically by creating strong neural pathways.

When it comes to specifically memorizing Scripture, you're not only changing your brain, but dwelling on truth that will change your life forever. Use this resource to become familiar with the benefits of Scripture memorization and get that boost of motivation you need to make this a regular rhythm in your life.

Why Memorize Scripture? Through these five benefits you will . . .



1. Be Rooted in Faith

Memorizing Scripture, especially verses that reveal God's character, will deepen your relationship with Him and strengthen your faith. As you move from reading the Bible to putting God's Word to memory, these truths will reinforce your faith foundation like deep roots.

"But blessed is the one who trusts in the Lord, whose confidence is in him. They will be like a tree planted by the water that sends out its roots by the stream. It does not fear when heat comes; its leaves are always green. It has no worries in a year of drought and never fails to bear fruit" Jeremiah 17:7-8 (NIV).

When your faith roots go deep, then when you face difficult circumstances your relationship with God can remain strong even when you're questioning Him. Your heart and mind will recall Scripture about His character and unfailing love for you.



2. Resist Temptation

In Matthew 4:1-11, Jesus faced various temptations when He was most vulnerable. The tempter tried to get Him to listen to His appetites rather than God. The way Jesus faced these temptations was through speaking truth.

Scripture memory allows these truths to be at the forefront of your mind and heart, so you can grab a hold of them when you need them most. As you consider where you're most tempted to follow your way rather than God's, find verses to memorize that will help strengthen you against those temptations. Psalm 119:11: "I have hidden your word in my heart that I might not sin against you" (NIV).

@navigators

THIS TOOL IS MEANT TO BE SHARED.

To download a copy, visit navlink.org/why-memorize-scripture



Navigators Discipleship Tool



3. Renew Your Mind

Scripture memory is a key component of renewing your mind. By rehearsing God's truth consistently and intentionally, you are more aware of those thoughts that don't align with God's Word.

The apostle Paul shares, "Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God — this is your true and proper worship. Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is — his good, pleasing and perfect will" Romans 12:1-2 (NIV).

A renewed mind can impact your perspective, decisions, and mood, by taking those interjecting thoughts captive (2 Corinthians 10:5) and replacing them with God's truth. In a world that is constantly seeking your attention, memorizing specific Bible verses that counteract those lies you're tempted to believe as truth is beneficial.



4. Make Wise Decisions

The Bible is meant to give you insight into who God is, who you are, and the sacredness of life. Scripture even has an entire section devoted to wisdom literature— Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and Song of Songs. Scripture memory takes this wisdom and places it within reach for your mind and heart as you seek to navigate your next steps as a Christ-follower.

"Your word is a lamp for my feet, a light on my path" Psalm 119:105 (NIVJ). As you seek God to discern the best path, He will often use His Word to remind you of His perspective and wisdom.



5. Be Ready to Answer with Hope

As you memorize Scripture, God's truth grows deep within you. Then you're able to easily respond to those who are curious about why you follow Jesus. "But in your hearts revere Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect ..." 1 Peter 3:15 (NIVJ).

Allowing God's Word to saturate your thinking through Scripture memorization gives you a strong understanding and grasp on why you believe what you believe. This could even lead to sharing God's heart, wisdom, truth, and ultimately the gospel without people even realizing you're quoting Scripture.

1. "The Power of Testing Memory: Basic Research and Implications for Educational Practice" by Roediger & Butler (2006), published in *Psychological Science* focuses on the benefits of active recall (the process of testing yourself) for improving memory retention and cognitive performance.

THIS TOOL IS MEANT TO BE SHARED.

Session 1

How to Keep Learning and Reviewing

Keep reviewing

God has given us a “forgetter,” so you must continue reviewing the verses you have learned in order to retain them. A simple, workable review system will help you.

Don’t lose what you have worked so hard to obtain! Be faithful in reviewing your verses.

Use the “buddy system”

Self-discipline is hard, so try to find someone to help you in reviewing your memorized verses regularly. This “buddy” could be your spouse or one of your children, or a friend or co-worker.

What about learning new verses?

You may already have a list of verses for future memory – verses that have impressed you from your devotional time, from a sermon, or from a conversation with a friend who shared the verse with you. You will want to continue memorizing and meditating on key Bible portions, so the Holy Spirit will have them at his disposal to use in your life and ministry.

Two Essentials in Scripture Memory

Two rules form the foundation for successful Scripture memory program:

- 1.) Consistently memorize new verses each week.
- 2.) Follow a regular, daily program of reviewing the verses you have already memorized.

When is the best time to memorize?

Memorizing the verses is easiest when you can concentrate without distraction. Two of the best times are just before you go to bed at night and just before or after your morning devotional time. A few minutes at lunchtime or just before supper may also work well for you.

Use spare moments during the day – such as while you wait, walk, or drive – to review your verses. Develop the habit of carrying your verse pack with you.

Session 1

Why learn word-perfectly?

Have as your aim to always quote a verse word-perfectly. It is easier to learn verses correctly at first. This also makes it easier to review them later. Knowing them word-perfectly will also give you greater confidence in using your verses.

Once you have chosen a particular Bible translation for the verses you memorize, it is best to learn all your verses in that translation, rather than mixing in others.

WEEK 1

Your plan this week

- 1.) Before beginning to memorize these first two verses, read through the “Principles for Memorizing Scripture.”
- 2.) Use the first two days of the week to memorize Psalms 1:1-2. Follow the steps outlined in the Principles for Memorizing Scripture.
- 3.) Use the remainder of the week to review and meditate on both verses, making sure you know them well before going on to memorize others.
- 4.) At the end of the week, check yourself by writing out your verses from memory or quoting them to someone else. (Use this same procedure each week.)

Meditation and review

Plan to record your thoughts as you meditate on your verses, or to write them from memory to check how well you have learned them.

Joshua 1:8

This book of the law shall not depart
from your mouth;

But you shall meditate on it day and
night,

So that you may be careful to .do
according to all that is written in it,

For then you will make your way
prosperous,

And then you will have good success...

But you shall _____ on it day and night,
So that you may be careful to do _____ to all that is written in it.
For then you will make your way _____,
And then you will have _____ success.

Joshua 1:8

This book of the _____ shall not depart from your _____,
But you shall _____ on it day and night,
So that you may be careful to do _____ to all that is written in it.
For then you will make your way _____,
And then you will have _____ success.

Joshua 1:8

This book of the _____ shall not depart from your _____,
But you shall _____ on it day and night,
So that you may be careful to do _____ to all that is written in it.
For then you will make your way _____,
And then you will have _____ success.

Joshua 1:8

This book of the _____ shall not depart from your _____,
But you shall _____ on it day and night,
So that you may be careful to do _____ to all that is written in it.
For then you will make your way _____,
And then you will have _____ success.

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;

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;

Psalm 1:2

But his delight is in the law of the Lord,

And on his law he meditates day and night.

Psalm 1:2

But his delight is in the law of the Lord,

And on his law he meditates day and night.

Psalm 1:1-2 “Blessed is the _____ who _____ not in the _____ of
the _____ nor _____ in the way of _____, nor _____ in
the seat of the _____. But his _____ is in the _____ of the
_____, and on his _____ he _____ day and night.”

Psalm 1:1-2 “Blessed is the _____ who _____ not in the _____ of
the _____ nor _____ in the way of _____, nor _____ in
the seat of the _____. But his _____ is in the _____ of the
_____, and on his _____ he _____ day and night.”

Psalm 1:1-2 “Blessed is the _____ who _____ not in the _____ of
the _____ nor _____ in the way of _____, nor _____ in
the seat of the _____. But his _____ is in the _____ of the
_____, and on his _____ he _____ day and night.”

Psalm 1:1-2 “Blessed is the _____ who _____ not in the _____ of
the _____ nor _____ in the way of _____, nor _____ in
the seat of the _____. But his _____ is in the _____ of the
_____, and on his _____ he _____ day and night.”

Psalms 119:9,11

How can a young man keep his way pure?

By guarding it according to your word.

I have stored up your word in my heart,

That I might not sin against you.

Psalms 119:9,11

How can a young man keep his way pure?

By guarding it according to your word.

I have stored up your word in my heart,

That I might not sin against you.

Psalm 119: 9, 11 “How can a _____ man _____ his way by _____ it according to your _____. I have _____ up your _____ in my _____, that I might not _____ against you.”

Psalm 119: 9, 11 “How can a _____ man _____ his way by _____ it according to your _____. I have _____ up your _____ in my _____, that I might not _____ against you.”

Psalm 119: 9, 11 “How can a _____ man _____ his way by _____ it according to your _____. I have _____ up your _____ in my _____, that I might not _____ against you.”

Psalm 119: 9, 11 “How can a _____ man _____ his way by _____ it according to your _____. I have _____ up your _____ in my _____, that I might not _____ against you.”

Psalm 119: 9, 11 “How can a _____ man _____ his way by _____ it according to your _____. I have _____ up your _____ in my _____, that I might not _____ against you.”

NOTES

SESSION 2

REFLECT

REFLECT (Think deeply, “Now let me think about that”) chew on the “bites” (verse phrases).

I. Verse groups and bites are “speed bumps” to help you read slower. Read by Verse groups.

Reflect by bites.

1. The bites (phrases) on which you “chew.”

1) Determined by punctuation.

2) Count lists (names, items, places) as one bite.

3) Determine the time needed to chew all bites in each verse group. Ex.: 30 seconds per bite equals 2 minutes in a 4-phrase verse group.

2. Pray before beginning to reflect (chew):

“Heavenly Father, thank you for revealing what I need to see to KNOW you and GROW in my personal relationship with You.”

“. . .that I may know Him. . .Phil 3:10. I John 2:3 (NRSV)

“But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ” 2 Pet. 3:18 (NRSV).

In the original language, the word translated as “grow” means to increase. This verse indicates that we are to “grow” in the grace and “knowledge” of our Lord Savior Jesus Christ, thus emphasizing both KNOW and GROW. It is the key verse for the preceding prayer. Peter encourages us to increase or grow in knowing Jesus. **IMPORTANT NOTE: Meditative Bible Reading (The “4’s” Spiritual Discipline) requires an essential 20-minute commitment beginning with REFLECT. At that point, determine 20 minutes for REFLECT, RESPOND, and REST.**

II. PRACTICE: Psalm 1.

1. Review verse groups (2 verses: doublet or 3 verses: triplet), and select one on which to reflect.

2. Review “bites” (determined by punctuation) on which to chew, think deeply, and reflect.

3. Determine the length of time to chew and reflect. Approximately 30 seconds per bite.

4. Begin the 20 minutes.

“Imagine a cow chewing its cud. While chewing, the cow turns the food over and over in its mouth; in meditation, we turn God’s Word over and over in our minds.” *Soul Care in African American Practice*, Barbara Peacock (See page 22)

5. The “Revelation Prayer”. “Heavenly Father, thank you for revealing what I need to see to KNOW you and GROW in my relationship with you.”

6. REFLECT: What attributes, names, and characteristics (stated or inferred in text) of God do you see that help you to KNOW Him? How does this help you to GROW in your relationship with Him?

Throughout Scripture, God's people have been encouraged to take his Word into their bodies—to wear it, chew it, and meditate on it. We pray that the words of our mouths and the meditations of our hearts would be sweet to Christ Jesus, the Word who became flesh.



Illustration by Trevor Shin

Journal

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| Loving The Written Word of GOD

| Woman Of Faith Journal

Tuesday, February 1, 2011

MEDITATE GOD'S WORD

Notes from Joseph Prince Sermon:

Meditate on GOD's Word & Receive Grace Upon Grace.

The word "meditate" here is *hagah* חָגַג in Hebrew. It means to mutter under ones breath.



Cow chewing its cud

A cow makes this word clear for most. When a cow eats, it does not use-up the grass it eats just yet. The grass, now cud, goes down to its stomachs (it has 4 stomachs). Some time after the cow eats, especially when it rests, it regurgitates the cud back to the mouth. We see the cow chewing cud even when he just had empty mouth. Only then when it takes the cud out from its belly to chew it does the cow really get the best out of what it ate earlier.

Meditate means going back to the word time and time again. It's almost as easy as worrying. The only difference is, worrying is a self-directed thought while meditation is two-way conversation involving GOD in the thought.

This is to be the way Joshua decodes the written word.

Let's look at the original Hebrew script of Moses' instruction to Joshua.

To better understand the word of GOD, it helps to get back to the original text. The scripture was first written on a scroll in Ancient Semitic/Hebrew text.



Thy Word Is Like a Garden, Lord

by JIM KERWIN on JULY 1, 2017

Edwin Hodder

(1837-1904)

Thy Word is like a garden, Lord,
With flowers bright and fair;
And everyone who seeks may pluck
A lovely cluster there.

Thy Word is like a deep, deep mine;
And jewels rich and rare
Are hidden in its mighty depths
For every searcher there.

Thy Word is like a starry host:
A thousand rays of light
Are seen to guide the traveler
And make his pathway bright.

Thy Word is like an armory,
Where soldiers may repair
And find, for life's long battle day,
All needful weapons there.

O may I love Thy precious Word,
May I explore the mine,
May I its fragrant flowers glean,
May light upon me shine!

O may I find my armor there!
Thy Word my trusty sword,
I'll learn to fight with every foe
The battle of the Lord.

May the Mind of Christ, My Savior

May the mind of Christ, my Savior,
Live in me from day to day,
By His love and pow'r controlling
All I do and say.

May the word of God dwell richly
In my heart from hour to hour,
So that all may see I triumph
Only through His pow'r.

May the peace of God my Father
Rule my life in ev'rything,
That I may be calm to comfort
Sick and sorrowing.

May the love of Jesus fill me
As the waters fill the sea;
Him exalting, self abasing—
This is victory.

May I run the race before me,
Strong and brave to face the foe,
Looking only unto Jesus
As I onward go.

May His beauty rest upon me
As I seek the lost to win,
And may they forget the channel,
Seeing only Him.

Kate B. Wilkinson (1859–1928)



ANY CHRISTIANS have made the New Year's resolution to be more like Jesus—but where do you start? The apostle Paul told the Philippian believers, “Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus” (Philippians 2:5, KJV). And that's just where this hymn begins. But how does the mind of Christ become part of us? Kate Wilkinson directs us to Colossians 3:16 for the answer: “Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly.” In the third stanza Wilkinson returns to Philippians for this promise: “And the peace of God . . . will guard your hearts and your minds” (Philippians 4:7). And so the song builds.

Christian growth is not instantaneous but gradual. It flows naturally from obeying God's Word. Thomas à Kempis, who wrote the Christian classic *The Imitation of Christ*, said, “One thing that draws back many from spiritual progress is the fear of the difficulty of the labor of the combat.” Don't give up what you have started.



Your attitude should be the kind that was shown us by Jesus Christ, who, though he was God, did not demand and cling to his rights as God, but laid aside his mighty power and glory, taking the disguise of a slave and becoming like men. And he humbled himself even further, going so far as actually to die a criminal's death on a cross. Yet it was because of this that God raised him up to the heights of heaven and gave him a name which is above every other name. Philippians 2:5-9, TLB

GOD'S WORD

IS

"... living and active, sharper than any TWO-EDGED SWORD, piercing until it divides soul from spirit, joints from marrow; it can judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart." Hebrews 4:12, NRSV

CHARACTER REVEALED

CHARACTER REFORMED

What is your heart's intention? "knowing about God" (knowledge, information) OR

"knowing God" (Continuing to form the intimate relationship with God begun at conversion)

RESULTS

Religion, theology, doctrine, dogma, denominations,

Relationship, intimacy with God, transformation

NOTE:

1. Unless taught and revealed by the Holy Spirit, all RESULTS will be in the flesh rather than the Spirit.
2. Engaging God's Word: reading, listening (regardless of medium), and studying (either alone or in a group), which results in information without formation, can lead to spiritual stagnation. Without prioritizing the relationship with God, engagement with God's word can lead to misunderstandings, misinterpretations, and misapplications of the truth. The ongoing relationship with God must be given priority over information about God. Relationship with God always trumps information about God. Again, information (knowledge) without Spiritual Formation can lead to spiritual stagnation.
3. The Spiritual Disciplines of Meditative Bible Reading, Contemplative Prayer, and Scripture Memorization are practical tools for engaging God's word and enabling 9the Spiritual Formation of Jesus' Disciples.

Jon Gilbert, Isa:50:4-5, 10/14/2024, rvs: 9/12/25

NOTES

Session 2

Begin a Lifetime of Scripture Memory and Meditation

You can memorize Scripture. The process may seem slow at first as you begin building consistent Scripture memory and meditation into your life. But in the long run, it saves you time. Do your best to form good memory habits now as you follow the weekly plan.

Attitude makes the difference. Be confident as you begin memorizing, and you *will* develop skill.

You can count on God's help as you memorize. Remember his counsel – “These commandments that I give you today are to be upon your hearts” (Deuteronomy 6:6); and “Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly” (Colossians 3:16).

What Scripture memory will do for you

Memorizing and meditating on God's word will help you *overcome worry*. You can experience God's perfect peace by knowing his promises and having them written on your heart.

Another benefit is *victory over sin*. The psalmist wrote, “I have stored up your word in my heart that I might not sin against you” (Psalm 119:11). God's word hidden in your heart is the sword of the Spirit, available for battle at any time against sin and Satan.

Scripture memory will also help you gain *confidence in witnessing*.

Scripture memory will help you keep spiritually fit. You will experience immediate benefits and become better equipped to meet future needs and opportunities.

Memorize the references

Knowing the references for each verse you memorize makes it possible to find the verses in the Bible immediately when you need them for personal use or in helping others. So, make the reference a part of each verse you memorize.

The surest way to remember the reference is to say it both before *and* after the verse each time you review it. This will connect the reference and the verse in your mind.

When learning or reviewing a verse, *make it a habit to say the reference, then the verse, and the reference again at the end*. This may seem tedious at first, but it is important – and it works!

Session 2

The Value of Scripture Memorization

There are numerous spiritual benefits to the memorization of Scripture. A proper assessment of these benefits begins with understanding the role of the written word of God in our spiritual development. Jesus Christ openly stated that our spiritual existence depends upon the word of God: “man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God.” (Matthew 4:4) The words of God are found in only one place: the Bible. Also, according to the Apostle Peter one of our ongoing responsibilities is to “grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ,” (2 Peter 3:18a) and that we are to “make every effort to supplement your faith with virtue, and virtue with knowledge...” (2 Peter 1:5). But how are we to grow? Growth in the Lord is called “sanctification,” the process by which we become more and more like Jesus Christ and more and more separated from the world. Jesus Christ says that happens by the Word of God: “Sanctify them in the truth; your word is truth.” (John 17:17) However, the Word of God must enter us through our MIND-through our understanding-in order to change our hearts. Thus, we are to meditate deeply on Scripture in order to understand it better, so that our hearts may be changed. And we are to meditate on “every word that comes from the mouth of God.” There is no more useful discipline to this careful process of verse by verse meditation than memorization. Memorization is not the same as meditation, but it is almost impossible for someone to memorize a passage of Scripture without somewhat deepening his/her understanding of those verses. Plus, once the passage is memorized, a lifetime of reflection is now available through ongoing review. . . while driving on long trips, while walking on beaches, while conversing with friends, memorized verses can flow from you and cause a deepening of understanding.

Furthermore, these verses also sanctify us by causing us to hate sin and to determine to fight it vigorously. Through memorization, we are able to stand in the moment of temptation through the “sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God.” (Ephesians 6:17) Therefore did the Psalmist say, “How can a young man keep his way pure? By guarding it according to your word. I have stored up your word in my heart that I might not sin against you.” (Psalm 119: 9, 11)

In addition, the word sanctifies us by transforming our entire worldview from secular to heavenly: “Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.” (Romans 12:2) The “renewing of your minds” happens by the flow of Scripture through them like a pure river. As this river flows through your mind constantly, you will see things more and more the way God does, if you are a child of God... for “we have the mind of Christ.” (1 Corinthians 2:16b) This gives us more and more wisdom to deal with this world.

However, this benefit does not merely bless US in our own growth and development, but it becomes a treasure trove for the growth of the church as well. The Scripture memorizer will be used mightily by God to teach and encourage other Christians, with an apt word from the perfect Word of God: “Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom...” (Colossians 3:16) How better can you obey Colossians 3:16 than by Scripture memorization? The “word of Christ” will indeed “dwell in you rightly” as you memorize it and then work it over in your mind through meditation. Then you will most certainly be useful to God to “teach and admonish” another brother or sister. Scripture builds the Church to its final doctrinal and practical maturity (Ephesians 4:13-16), and God uses those who memorize it to do this building in a powerful and eternally fruitful way.

1.) Why is it helpful to memorize and review Scripture with one or more friends?

(Check three best answers.)

- ☐ a. It provides mutual encouragement.
- ☐ b. You can show others how well you are doing.
- ☐ c. It provides opportunities to discuss difficulties in memorization.
- ☐ d. It allows you to compare yourself with others.
- ☐ e. You have someone with whom to share how God is using the verses in your life.

2.) A first step toward knowing and obeying God’s will is to . . .

(Check the correct answer.)

- ☐ a. first straighten out your life as best you can.
- ☐ b. know a lot about the Bible.
- ☐ c. meditate on the Scripture.

3.) It is best to learn the verses word-perfectly because this . . .

(Check *two* best answers.)

- ☐ a. will give you greater confidence in using your verses.
- ☐ b. makes it easier both to learn verses initially and to review them later.
- ☐ c. impresses others with your knowledge of Scripture.

Acts 17:11b ... they received the word with all eagerness,

Examining the scriptures daily to see if these things were so.

Acts 17:11b ... they received the word with all eagerness,

Examining the scriptures daily to see if these things were so.

NOTES

SESSION 3

“RESPOND”

What is my response to God’s revelation? (Praise, Thanksgiving, Adoration, WOW!)

“Swallow” the revelation into your heart (formation) of relationship, rather than your head (information).

I. FOCUS

1. KNOW God (names, attributes, traits).

1) List characteristics

2) Familiarity or confirmation of those already known.

3) Seeing the Gospel in the Old Testament

2. GROW in relationship (Application)

1) How does this revelation help you GROW your relationship with God?

2) How are you going to practice (imitate) this revelation?

II. PRACTICE:

Share with your mentor or group what God revealed to you to KNOW Him and GROW in your relationship with Him.

KNOW GOD:

GROW: Relationship with Him (Application)

Session 3

Finally, the memorization of Scripture enables us to bless lost people with a powerful and vivid presentation of the gospel of salvation. "Faith comes from hearing and hearing through the word of Christ." (Romans 10:17) Those who memorize Scripture obey Peter's command in this regard: "Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give a reason for the hope that you have." (1 Peter 3:15) The "preparation" Peter had in mind is best done by memorizing Scripture. Remember that it is Scripture which is "able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus." (2 Timothy 3:15) The evangelist who stores up Scripture on the life of Christ, for example, can vividly retell the miracle stories to a generation which is biblically illiterate, which knows very little about the life of Christ. That person can also give the theology of salvation from Paul's epistles, if they have memorized those books. In short, Scripture memorization makes one a much more powerful and effective evangelist.

There are other benefits... comfort during trials and bereavement, power and wisdom for counseling, the development of heavenly-mindedness, the manifestation of the fruit of the Spirit, conviction over indwelling sin, fruitful passage of time while waiting for delayed plane flights, etc. Suffice it to say that this is well worth our time.

When Judgment Day comes, we will regret the waste of a single moment not used for the glory of Christ. We will, however, not regret one moment we spent diligently studying God's Word "...they received the word with all eagerness, examining the scriptures daily to see if these things were so." (Acts 17:11b)* and hiding it in our heart. (Psalm 119:11) We will only wish we'd spent more moments doing this.

*Acts 17:10-11a

Acts 17:11b ... they received the word with all eagerness,

Examining the scriptures daily to see if these things were so.

Acts 17:11b ... they received the word with all eagerness,

Examining the scriptures daily to see if these things were so.

Acts 17:11 "... they received the _____ with all _____, examining the
_____ daily to see if these _____ were so."

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_____ daily to see if these _____ were so."

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_____ daily to see if these _____ were so."

Acts 17:10-15 English Standard Version

Paul and Silas in Berea

Group: b

10-12, b

Bites: 8

time: 4

13-14, a

Bites: 7

¹⁰ The brothers^[a] immediately sent Paul and Silas away by night to Berea, and when they arrived they went into the Jewish synagogue. ¹¹ Now these Jews were more noble than those in Thessalonica; they received the word with all eagerness, examining the Scriptures daily to see if these things were so. ¹² Many of them therefore believed, with not a few Greek women of high standing as well as men. ¹³ But when the Jews from Thessalonica learned that the word of God was proclaimed by Paul at Berea also, they came there too, agitating and stirring up the crowds. ¹⁴ Then the brothers immediately sent Paul off on his way to the sea, but Silas and Timothy remained there. ¹⁵ Those who conducted Paul brought him as far as Athens, and after receiving a command for Silas and Timothy to come to him as soon as possible, they departed.

NOTES

SESSION 4

REST

REST: Continue silently reflecting on God's revelation to the end of the allotted time.

I. RESPOND into REST (silent reflection) TRANSITION:

1. Scriptural References for silence:

1) "The Lord is in His holy temple. Let all the earth keep silent. Habakkuk 2:20

2) "When the Lamb opened the seventh seal, there was silence in heaven for about half an hour." Rev. 8:31, "Wait for the Lord, be strong and let your heart take courage, wait for the Lord" PS. 27:14.

2. Scriptural Transition: Ps. 62:1-2, 5-6 "For God alone my soul waits in silence; from him comes my salvation. He alone is my rock and my salvation, my fortress; I shall never be shaken." Vss. 1-2. "For God alone, my soul waits in silence, for my hope is from him; he alone is my rock and my salvation, my fortress, I shall not be shaken." Vss. 5-6.

These four verses are condensed and paraphrased as follows: "My soul waits in silence for God alone, who is my hope, my salvation, my rock, my fortress; therefore, I shall never be shaken." This paraphrase can be used as a transition into REST.

II. PRACTICE:

1. Repeat transition scripture, either memorized or paraphrased.

2. "Thoughts" will not cease, but can be decreased by a countdown of a minute or a decision to pause to take these thoughts captive and release them to Christ. "Taking every thought captive. . ." (2 Cor. 10:5)

3. Decide how much of the remaining 20 minutes to allot to REST in God's revelation to you during REFLECT.

4. REST for the allotted time.

1) Continue to REST in God's revelation to KNOW Him and GROW in your relationship with Him.

2) Conclude REST at the end of the MBR's 20-30 minutes.

5. Share additional revelations with a mentor or group.

6. Conclude MBR with Psalm 23, The Lord's Prayer, or spontaneous prayer.

7. Journal: RECORD in a notebook (journal) what God revealed to you in the KNOW and GROW during REFLECT.

✠ To be a spiritual friend one must have detachment, discretion, and discernment, with all that prepares for those gifts. Spiritual companionship is a gentle art, demanding a willingness to listen as if one had a third ear attuned to the inner self. It is neither psychotherapy nor is it the sacrament of reconciliation. Sometimes one needs to confront, but far more often the best intervention of the spiritual guide is in parabolic language, nudging the friend into a new way of seeing. The journey belongs to the other and that person's uniqueness must always be honored.

The friend of the soul is an instrumental image. Such a person is not to be a "buddy," but someone who listens, comforts, and supports. He or she serves as a hermeneut, which means that he or she is a means, not an end. It is important for me not to think too highly of myself in this relationship, but to stand in awe of what God is doing in the life of the other person. Often this requires me to get out of the way. When in ignorance I have nothing to say, I must remain silent.

—From *Spirituality for Ministry* by Urban T. Holmes III

✠ Inner silence is absence of any sort of inward stirring of thought or emotion, but it is complete alertness, openness to God. We must keep complete silence when we can, but never allow it to degenerate into simple contentment. To prevent this the great writers of Orthodoxy warn us never to abandon completely the normal forms of prayer, because even those who reached this contemplative silence found it necessary, whenever they were in danger of spiritual slackness, to reintroduce words of prayer until prayer had renewed silence.

The Greek Fathers set this silence, which they called *hesychia*, both as the starting-point and the final achievement of a life of prayer. Silence is the state in which all the powers of the soul and all the faculties of the body are completely at peace, quiet and recollected, perfectly alert yet free from any turmoil or agitation. A simile which we find in many writings of the Fathers is that of the waters of a pond. As long as there are ripples on the surface, nothing can be reflected properly, neither the trees nor the sky; when the surface is quite still, the sky is perfectly

reflected, the trees on the bank and everything is there as distinct as in reality.

Another simile of the same sort used by the Fathers is that as long as the mud which is at the bottom of a pond has not settled, the water is not clear and one can see nothing through it. These two analogies apply to the state of the human heart. 'Blessed are the pure in heart for they shall see God' (Mt 5:8). As long as the mud is in motion in the water there is no clear vision through it, and again as long as the surface is covered with ripples there can be no adequate reflection of what surrounds the pond.

As long as the soul is not still there can be no vision, but when stillness has brought us into the presence of God, then another sort of silence, much more absolute, intervenes: the silence of a soul that is not only still and recollected but which is overawed in an act of worship by God's presence; a silence in which, as Julian of Norwich puts it, 'Prayer oneth the soul to God.'

—From *Living Prayer* by Anthony Bloom

Hymn: St. Patrick's Breastplate

I bind unto myself today
The strong Name of the Trinity,
By invocation of the same,
The Three in One, and One in Three.

I bind this day to me forever,
By power of faith, Christ's Incarnation;
His baptism in the Jordan river;
His death on the cross for my salvation.
His bursting from the spiced tomb;
His riding up the heav'nly way;
His coming at the day of doom:
I bind unto myself today.

I bind unto myself the power
Of the great love of cherubim;
The sweet "Well done" in judgment hour;
The service of the seraphim:
Confessors' faith, apostles' word,
The patriarchs' prayers, the prophets' scrolls;

Text: Be Still, My Soul
Author: Katharina von Schlegel
Translator: Jane Borthwick
Tune: FINLANDIA
Composer: Jean Sibelius

532. Be Still, My Soul

1 Be still, my soul: the Lord is on your side;
bear patiently the cross of grief or pain;
leave to your God to order and provide;
in ev'ry change he faithful will remain.
Be still, my soul: your best, your heav'nly Friend
through thorny ways leads to a joyful end.

2 Be still, my soul: your God will undertake
to guide the future as he has the past.
Your hope, your confidence let nothing shake;
all now mysterious shall be bright at last.
Be still, my soul: the waves and winds still know
his voice who ruled them while he dwelt below.

3 Be still, my soul: when dearest friends depart,
and all is darkened in the vale of tears,
then shall you better know his love, his heart,
who comes to soothe your sorrow and your fears.
Be still, my soul: your Jesus can repay
from his own fullness all he takes away.

4 Be still, my soul: the hour is hast'ning on
when we shall be forever with the Lord,
when disappointment, grief, and fear are gone,
sorrow forgot, love's purest joys restored.
Be still, my soul: when change and tears are past,
all safe and blessed we shall meet at last.

Text Information

First Line: Be still, my soul: the Lord is on
your side
Title: Be Still, My Soul

If Your Scripture Memory Work Becomes Too Routine

Don't get discouraged if your Scripture memory work begins to seem to routine. The process of recording Scripture on your mind and heart does have a mechanical aspect. It requires certain methods and a great deal of perseverance. But as long as the process of imprinting God's word on your heart is moving forward, these Scriptures will be continually available for life-giving work.

There are helpful things you can do, however, "Blessed is the one who reads aloud the words of this prophecy, and blessed are those who hear, and who keep what is written in it, for the time is near." (Revelation 1:3) Try spending more time going over your verses in your conversations or in letters. New freshness can come through sharing the Scriptures with others.

Keep in mind that memorizing and meditating on the Scriptures is a practical way of making them available to the Holy Spirit to use in your life. "So faith comes from hearing, and hearing through the word of Christ." (Romans 10:17)

What to Memorize

1. Life Verses

What I consider to be my life verses are based on some of my desires for my life, like: Psalm 51:10; Psalm 19:14

2. Bible Portions

What are you drawn to?

What is your interest?

I like positive words. I was on a trip one time, and I couldn't get my mind to stop thinking about something. So, to get my mind off that, and on to Christ I sat up and started reading my Bible, when I came across Psalm 100. I said to myself, Self – this is it, and I started studying Psalm 100 before I went to sleep I almost had it memorized.

1. Sunday Bible study Key verses

I brought next week's lesson for my class to use as an example.

2. Topical

I brought some of my topical lessons. I would be glad to help anyone interested.

When I hear certain phrases, I think of verses that I've memorized like: Topical Series A, B, C Verses.

When I hear, all have sinned; the penalty of sin;

3. Rhythmic Community Key Verses

Romans 12: 1 – 2

1 Peter 1:13-16 key verses 15-16 Call to be Holy

Verse 15) "but as he who called you is holy; you also be holy in all your conduct."

16) since it is written "you shall be holy, for I am holy."

Colossians 3:1-4 key verses 1-2 Put on the new self (2) "Set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth."

Psalm 62:1-2, or 5-6

(5) "For God alone, O my soul wait in silence for my hope is from him."

(6) "He only, is my rock and my salvation my fortress; I shall not be shaken."

Revelation 1:3

Blessed it the one who reads aloud the words of this prophecy,

And blessed are those who hear,

And who keep what is written in it,

For the time is near.

Revelation 1:3

Blessed it the one who reads aloud the words of this prophecy,

And blessed are those who hear,

And who keep what is written in it,

For the time is near.

Revelation 1:3 "Blessed is the one who _____ aloud the _____ of this
_____, and blessed are those who _____ and who _____ what is
written in it, for the _____ is near."

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written in it, for the _____ is near."

Romans 10:17

So faith comes from hearing,

And hearing through the word of Christ.

Romans 10:17

So faith comes from hearing,

And hearing through the word of Christ.

Romans 10:17

“So _____ comes from _____ and _____ through the _____ of _____.”

Romans 10:17

“So _____ comes from _____ and _____ through the _____ of _____.”

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