

Lesson 3

Teacher's Manual

HIDING THE WORD IN OUR HEART

READ & MEDITATE ON: Luke 8:4-15

MEMORIZE: I John 2:3-5

INTRODUCTION

subject matter:
Using the Word of God in personal devotions.

Your Bible is the greatest book in the world. It is a book from God, about God. It was penned by God's men about how to be God's men and women. It contains the most dramatic and scholarly literature ever known. Within its pages you will find classical stories about: love, adventure, war and mystery. It also contains the very best in poetry, history, human relations and philosophy. But above all, it gives us God's plan for the salvation of man.

Christians are a people of His book. To really know and love our Lord we must know and love the book that reveals Him. We do not really love God more than we obey Him. And we do not really obey Him more than we obey His Word.

I. THE BIBLE: GOD'S WORD

The Bible is no ordinary book. It is unique because God is its author. It was written by men who listened to the voice of God. It speaks with absolute authority because it is the only book of its kind.

Unique In Continuity

The Bible was written over a 1600 year span, over 60 generations, by more than 40 writers from diverse walks of life: kings, peasants, herdsmen, soldiers, fishermen, poets, statesmen, scholars, professional men, priests, prophets, and others. It was written on three continents: Asia, Africa and Europe, in three languages: Hebrew, Greek and Aramaic. Yet, it contains one unfolding story: the drama of redemption.

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Psalm 138:2
Thou hast magnified
Thy Word above His
name - We should
be as enthused
about His Word
as we are His
name.

II. THE BENEFITS OF THE BIBLE

All we need to enjoy this life and the next is found between the covers of our Bible. The following benefits are available to us through giving attention to the Word of God:

A. Salvation

as Adam was created physically by His Word, so are we brought to life spiritually by His Word

James said, "...of His own will begat He us with the word of truth that we should be a kind of first fruits of his creatures" (James 1:18). Human beings and all creatures of the earth reproduce and pass on their replicating material in their genes, so that children look like their parents. The Law of God in the book of Genesis says each produces after its kind. The Word of God is God's replicating material. We are like Him; we are His offspring. The Bible says that we are His children and He begets us by the Word. This is not to say that we are begotten without Jesus name baptism and the Holy Ghost. We need the water and Spirit to be born again, but it is accomplished through the Word.

"Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever. For all flesh is as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass. The grass withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away: But the word of the Lord endureth for ever. And this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you."

I Peter 1:23-25

B. Faith

Paul told the Colossians, "...As ye have received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in Him..." (Colossians 2:6). We received salvation by faith and it is important to continue our walk with God by faith. In fact, without faith, it is impossible to please God (Hebrews 11:6). Our walk with God is completely dependent on our absolute trust and reliability in His power, wisdom and goodness. "For we walk by faith, not by sight" (II Corinthians 5:7). We see then, that faith is very important. Where does it come from? How do we get it?

"So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God."

Romans 10:17

Job realized that spiritual food is much more important than material food

and meat (I Corinthians 3:2) and honey (Psalms 19:10). Job said, "I have esteemed the words of his mouth more than my necessary food" (Job 23:12). If we are not careful to eat properly and regularly in the natural realm, we become weak and vulnerable to sickness. Just so, going without a consistent intake of God's Word will result in spiritual malnutrition.

"As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby:"
I Peter 2:2

sincere = unadulterated (pure word, not defiled by human reasoning, etc.)

F. Fruitfulness

In the first Psalm we read concerning the man who, "walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful. But his delight is in the law of the Lord; and in his law doth he meditate day and night." Does it do any good to meditate in the law of the Lord day and night? Yes, it does:

"And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper."
Psalms 1:3

G. Success

Modern psychology tells us that almost every human being has a natural desire to succeed. The Bible has a plan for prosperity and a promise that we can be successful wherever we go--if we will give ourselves to the consistent application of the scriptures.

"This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth; but thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein: for then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success."
Joshua 1:8

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The Word gives success spiritually & materially = Timothy 6:10 money & material success is not good - but loving and not keeping it in perspective is what is best.

H. Guidance

It is very difficult for a person to find their way along a road in the darkness of night. Just so, it is hard for us to find our way along life's pathway without the guiding influence of God's Word.

2nd Part

"Great peace have they which love thy law:
and nothing shall offend them."

Psalms 119:165

→ cause to fall or ruin

God's Word creates stability

III. WHY WE SHOULD HIDE THE WORD IN OUR HEART

Folks are mainly interested in HOW to hide the Word in their hearts but the HOW is not nearly as important as the WHY.

A. To Control Thoughts

The Word of God is effective in controlling thoughts. As a man "...thinketh in his heart, so is he,..." says Proverbs 23:7. The thoughts inside of a person eventually result in external behavior. There are several admonitions in the Word about controlling our thoughts. Perhaps the most prominent is found in Philippians 4:8:

"Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, if there be any praise, think on these things."

honest = upright

just = innocent or holy

lovely = acceptable

In other words, we are to control our thoughts, using thought control. What does that mean? Does it mean that we should go around thinking about flowers and birds and nature? Well, that would not hurt us because that is a part of God's creation, but there is something even more practical, more at hand than nature to think on or meditate upon. Namely, the Word of God. The Bible says the blessed man is one whose, "...delight is in the law of the Lord; and in his law doth he meditate day and night" (Psalms 1:1-2).

→ to ponder, to study, or to think upon

The Bible tells us there are things we are not to think about. Why? Because our own thoughts are ineffectual. Instead, we should try to think God's thoughts, to meditate on the Word of God. Matthew 12:34 says, "Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh." The principle is that what goes on in our minds has its eventual expression in our actions. This inward to outward principle is exhibited in God's own behavior. The Bible tells us that God thinks. Isaiah 55:8 says, "...My thoughts are not your thoughts...." His acts are a direct result of His thoughts. John 1:1 says, "In the beginning was the Word..." "Word" is the Greek word "Logos." It embodies thought or concept. In the beginning was the thought or concept.

what is put into a computer is what can be gotten out

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God's Word has power to do things in our hearts. Especially when we get it hidden down in the heart. There it can operate. There it can do many, many things. Our enemy knows this, and that is why he gives us so many excuses for not getting God's Word in our hearts. Beware of such things as: no desire, contentment with sermons only, no time, lack of discipline, or ideas that the Bible is too difficult or boring.

Always remember what David said in the 119th Psalm, verse 11, "Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee." In other words, he did it for a purpose. He put it in his heart because he knew that it would do something for him. It would help him control his thoughts and overcome sin. This is WHY we want to hide the Word of God in our heart.

IV. HOW WE CAN HIDE THE WORD IN OUR HEART

David's son, the wise King Solomon, says to hide the Word of God with you (Proverbs 2:1). He goes on to tell us that if we hide God's commandments in our heart, we are kept from evil men, evil women, and moral sin. It is a powerful device. The 7th chapter of Proverbs, verse 1, says, "Lay up my commandments with thee." As a farmer would bring his grain into his barn from the fields, we can be hoarders for the Word of God and store it up in our mental granary. Hiding the Word of God in our heart is not only beneficial, but is a necessary practice for every child of God. It helps us fully realize all the benefits God wants us to have.

A. Methods

There are several relationships that we can have with the Word of God, and they are all important. We can be a hearer of the word and we can read it. We can also study the Word, memorize it and meditate on it.

1. Hearing:

We can hear the Word of God by paying close attention to the preaching and teaching of godly pastors, evangelists and teachers. This is accomplished when we gather together for worship to hear the Word of the Lord go forth. Under the unction of the Holy Ghost, we will be provided with deep spiritual insights as we glean from the ministers' study of the scriptures. Of course we must always mix what we hear with faith.

"So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God."

Romans 10:17

"Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that
I might not sin against thee."

Psalms 119:11

5. Meditating:

This method can be used in conjunction with each of the others. We must take time to meditate on what God is speaking to us about in our hearing, reading, studying and memorizing of the Word. Most importantly, to be a doer of the Word, we must think through some practical ways to apply what we learn to our daily lives.

"But his delight is in the law of the Lord;
and in his law doth he meditate day and
night."

Psalms 1:2

These are five ways in which we can hide the Word of God in our hearts. We should be careful to practice each one of the above methods. Otherwise, our relationship with the scriptures will be incomplete--like a puzzle with a missing piece.

How B.

B. Involvement

We may feel that this is hard work. Admittedly, it does take effort and discipline at first. However, when we start hiding the Word in our hearts, it literally comes alive to us in a way we have never known before and is not something we have to continually force ourselves to do. If we ever start doing it, it will become self-perpetuating. If we discontinue doing it for a while, we will want to get back to it--to that joy and blessing we experienced when we were doing it.

To begin, decide to set aside a special time to be with the Word. Set yourself reasonable goals. Choose a portion of scripture that spoke to you when you heard it preached, or one that you have always enjoyed reading, and start there. Try to find a chapter that you love the best because you are motivated by it from within. Read the verses through several times. Then study them carefully. Go over them backwards and forwards. Analyze the setting, significance and related scriptures. Memorize a few favorite verses from your text. Meditate on your scriptures day and night for several weeks. Think about how you might put the truth you learned into action in your own personal life.

Another device is to share your scriptures with family and friends. The Bible says to teach them to your children and talk about them always (Deuteronomy 6:6-7). Use them in your family altar. Say

them back and forth to your loved ones. Nothing ever sounds so beautiful as the precious Word of God coming from the most precious people on earth to you. Have them correct your memorization until you can say it perfectly. It will not be long until the Bible will become a part of you.

The direct result of applying the precious Word of God to our lives is enrichment, encouragement, excitement, stability, fruitfulness, growth and prosperity--right from our own hearts!

2. Reading:

Reading the Bible gives us an overall picture of God's Word. It is a source of great mental enrichment and spiritual enjoyment. It is something we can do to review what we have heard as well as a starting point to launch further study, memorization and meditation.
The average person in Old Testament times never had an opportunity to read the Word of God because it cost one year's wages. Even today, about one-half of the world's people have never read a Bible. What a privilege we have! We should take advantage of it.

"Blessed is he that readeth and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein: for the time is at hand."

Revelation 1:3

3. Studying:

Studying the Bible leads us into personal discoveries of God's truths. We can study systematically by subjects, biographies, chapters, or books. To add interest and understanding, take advantage of the many available helps, including: a Bible dictionary, a concordance, accurate translations, column references, and other study aids.

"These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so."

Acts 17:11

4. Memorizing:

Committing God's Word to memory enables us to use the sword of the Spirit to overcome Satan and temptations. When resident in our minds, we can draw upon a storehouse of scripture in times of need. Being ready to give an answer to every man from the Word is invaluable for witnessing or encouraging ourselves and others.

Memorizing is an ancient practice that Jewish children learned well. Jesus learned by memory the scriptures that he later used. When He spoke to the devil he said, "It is written." He knew the 8th chapter of the book of Deuteronomy, verse 3. He knew the verse before it and the verse after it. He knew the exact verse that He wanted to use to defeat the devil.

The thought or concept was with God. He foresaw what He would some day be--the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world, the firstfruits of them that slept, the first born of every creature, the first born among many brethren--and He conceived the eventual glory that would come to Jesus Christ. Creation is also an example of the thoughts of God. God thought first, then He created man in the image of His thought or concept, God's thoughts preceded His acts. He thinks and then He creates. The outward action (in this case, creation) proceeds directly from the mind of God, the thought of God.

As with God, our thoughts are given permanent expression by words and acts. We must find a way of elevating our thoughts, getting our thoughts higher than the heavens. Let us turn our attention to Isaiah 55:7-9. The Lord said, "Let the wicked forsake His way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the Lord, and He will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon." The wicked man has to forsake his thoughts. The Lord went on to say, "For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways..., For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts." God's thoughts are far above the earth. If somehow we could figure out what God's thoughts are, and get God's thoughts in our mind, in our hearts; how they would elevate our behavior! What great things they would do. What profound changes in our lives would take place! Where do we find God's thoughts? We must come into an intimate relationship with the Word.

B. To Overcome Sin

David, the shepherd boy who became a king, a man after God's own heart, lets us know the reason he felt that God's Word was so important in his life...

"Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee."

Psalms 119:11

...because it was able to keep him from sin. Sin is our greatest enemy. It is the reason for all of our spiritual problems. Sin begins in the thought world. What goes on in our minds eventually results in outward acts. There is a bridge from the mind to the body. Internal thoughts result in external acts. This is not just a theory but a constant principle. The Apostle James said that, "...Every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed" (James 1:14). It starts inside. "Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin." "And sin..." the external act, "...when it is finished, bringeth forth death" (James 1:15).

to Word often called
a roadmap to
Heaven

"Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light
unto my path."

Psalms 119:105

I. Wisdom

The Bible will make you, "...understand more than the ancients...",
more understanding than Socrates, Plato, Aristotle, or Einstein.
We may not know the mathematical equations that Einstein used but
he did not know what we do about this great God that we serve.

the Bible will
help us better
understand the
principals of life

"Thou through thy commandments hast made me
wiser than mine enemies: for they are ever
with me. I have more understanding than all
my teachers: for thy testimonies are my medi-
tation. I understand more than the ancients,
because I keep thy precepts."

Psalms 119:98-100

J. Freedom

The truth of God's Word is the only thing that can give real and
lasting liberty to a man, woman, boy or girl. If we will take time
to get to know the truth, it will set us free as we continue in it.

"Then said Jesus to those Jews which be-
lieved on him, If ye continue in my word,
then are ye my disciples indeed: And ye
shall know the truth, and the truth shall
make you free."

John 8:31-32

↳ the truth becomes our Deliverer

K. Life

Jesus himself is the Way, the Truth and the Life. The words He
speaks also impart life.

John 1:14
This also explains
the oneness: WORD =
FLESH, WORD = SPIRIT,
SPIRIT = FLESH (JESUS)
↑ John 4:24 God is a Spirit
Because the flesh equals
the Spirit that is
the Word Jesus
said is a Spirit.

"It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh
profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto
you, they are spirit, and they are life."

John 6:63

Peace

Isaiah the prophet said, "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace whose
mind is staid on thee..." (Isaiah 26:3). Is there a better way to
get your mind on God and obtain serenity than to go to His Word?

↳ staid means to be settled and steady

C. Power

discuss awesomeness
of creation in regard
to stars being light-
years away, etc.

The worlds were framed by the Word of God. Stop and think about the immensity of the universe, how great it is; and to think that it came into instant being (as near as we can tell) from a divine command! God spoke the universe into existence with His word. What power that is! What tremendous and awesome power! It is beyond our ability to comprehend.

"For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart."

Hebrews 4:12

D. Protection

We find that one capability of the Word of God is that it defeats Satan. There is a marvelous lesson for us in Matthew 4:1-11 where the two greatest beings in all of the universe--Almighty God manifest in the flesh (the Lord Jesus Christ), and the highest created being, Lucifer--engaged in combat upon this earth. The Lord, of course, must have had weapons in His arsenal that we could never even imagine. Yet, when He wanted to defeat the devil, He reached for the word of God. He was teaching us that the way to defeat the devil on this earth is through the powerful Word of God. Jesus said three times, "It is written." It is encouraging to us that our Lord did not reach for a weapon that would not be available to all of us, but He used the weapon that is at our disposal...the Word of God. It puts to flight the enemy. The Apostle Paul lists the Scriptures as part of the armour of God:

"...take...the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God:"

Ephesians 6:17

E. Nourishment

The Bible is our soul's food. We cannot live by natural bread alone. Our spiritual health is maintained by every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God. The Bible describes itself as milk

The Bible includes hundreds of controversial subjects that would create opposing opinions when mentioned or discussed, yet the human authors speak with phenomenal harmony and agreement, regardless of drastic time, cultural, geographical and language differences. This is nothing short of a miracle when one considers the disagreement that would result if just ten authors from one walk of life, one generation, one place, one time, one continent and one language wrote on merely one controversial subject. It is truly amazing that the Bible maintains its continuity and never contradicts itself in its completeness.

"Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation. For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost."

II Peter 1:20-21

B. Unique In Survival

Through centuries of time, persecution, and criticism, the Bible has not merely survived, but has become one of the best loved books in history, increasing in its circulation until it has become one of the all-time bestsellers. Although the French infidel Voltaire said the Bible would be extinct by 1850, Jesus Christ said,

"Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away."

Matthew 24:35

C. Unique In Reliability

No other religious book in the world can claim the Bible's accuracy in prophecy. It is the only volume ever produced by man that predicted without fail the futures of nations, a race of people (Israel), cities, peoples of the earth and the coming of the one who was to be the Messiah. There are over 300 prophecies in the Old Testament alone, given from 1600 to 400 years in advance, concerning the Messiah which depict exactly the birth, life, death and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ.

"Remember the former things of old: for I am God, and there is none else; I am God, and there is none like me. Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure:"

Isaiah 46:9-10

advice

*example:
the more you
tell someone
something and it
passes down a
chain of people
and when it reaches
the end it is different
than first told.*