

Intro:

Bible study material taken from Donald S. Whitney, *Spiritual Disciplines for the Christian Life* (Colorado Springs, CO: NavPress, 1991)

Two brothers were walking through the Father's woods and they found a young tree with delicious fruit. They ate from the tree and enjoyed the fruit. One brother grabbed a bunch of the fruit to take home. The other brother dug up the tree and brought it home with him.

That is God's word when we just hear it at church or other gatherings, but we don't take it home with us.

1. Bible Intake:

a. **Memorizing** God's Word- Benefits and methods

- i. Many Christians look on the Spiritual Discipline of memorizing God's Word as something tantamount to modern-day martyrdom. Ask them to memorize Bible verses and they react with about as much eagerness as a request for volunteers to face Nero's lions.¹
- ii. Excuses: Bad memory
- iii. What if I offered you money for each verse? What are the spiritual blessings you will receive?

b. Memorization Supplies **Spiritual Power**

- i. When Scripture is stored in the mind, it is available for the **Holy Spirit** to take and bring to your attention when you need it most
 1. Psalms 119:11 (ESV Strong's) I have stored up your word in my heart, that I might not sin against you.
- ii. Application:
 1. You are in a situation watching something or in a conversation that you know you shouldn't be involved with, and then scripture comes to mind:
 - a. Colossians 3:2 (ESV Strong's) Set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth.
- iii. Think of the temptation of Jesus in the wilderness recorded in Mt. 4:1-11
 1. Matthew 4:4 (ESV Strong's) But he answered, "It is written, "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God."
 2. Matthew 4:7 (ESV Strong's) Jesus said to him, "Again it is written, You shall not put the Lord your God to the test."

¹ Donald S. Whitney, [*Spiritual Disciplines for the Christian Life*](#) (Colorado Springs, CO: NavPress, 1991), 41-42.

3. Matthew 4:10 (ESV Strong's) Then Jesus said to him, "Be gone, Satan! For it is written,""You shall worship the Lord your God and him only shall you serve."

c. Memorization Strengthens Your Faith

- i. Proverbs 22:17-19 (ESV Strong's) Incline your ear, and hear the words of the wise, and apply your heart to my knowledge, 18 for it will be pleasant if you keep them within you, if all of them are ready on your lips. 19 That your trust may be in the Lord, I have made them known to you today, even to you.
- ii. Memorizing Scripture strengthens your faith because it repeatedly reinforces the truth, often just when you need to hear it again

d. Memorization for Witnessing and Counseling

- i. We see the extraordinary example in Peter's sermon in Acts 2:14-20.
 1. Acts 2:16 (ESV Strong's) But this is what was uttered through the prophet Joel...
 2. Acts 2:25 (ESV Strong's) For David says concerning him...
- ii. Most people are not going to see such a great movement of God when they share using scripture that comes to mind. But every person that we can share the truth with whether we are witnessing or even sitting around listening to a brother or sister is worth our efforts.
- iii. We don't want to walk away from the conversation thinking, "man what was that scripture?"

e. Memorization as a means for God's guidance

- i. I hear people all of the time wanting to know what to do in a certain situation to follow God's will. So the heading in my bible for Psalm 119 reads "Your word is a lamp to my feet." I'm not sure about you, but to me that means it is a guiding light. We will find direction.
 1. Psalms 119:24 (ESV Strong's) 24 Your testimonies are my delight; they are my counselors.
 2. So if you have memorized scripture you might already have your answer.
- ii. Application.
 - a. We have been discussing the need to formalize our security efforts here at church. A scripture comes to mind every time I am talking about this.
 - i. Matthew 10:16 (ESV Strong's) "Behold, I am sending you out as sheep in the midst of wolves, so be wise as serpents and innocent as doves.
 - b. Maybe you are in a conversation and you have a very strong opinion about something. Maybe this verse should come to mind.
 - i. Ephesians 4:29 (ESV Strong's) 29 Let no corrupting talk come out of your mouths, but only such as is good for building up, as fits the occasion, that it may give grace to those who hear.

f. Memorization stimulates meditation

- i. The word meditation brings up bad thoughts in many people..

1. One sad feature of our modern culture is that meditation has become identified more with nonChristian systems of thought than with biblical Christianity..Even among believers, the practice of meditation is often more closely associated with yoga, transcendental meditation, relaxation therapy, or the New Age Movement. Because meditation is so prominent in many spiritually counterfeit groups and movements, some Christians are uncomfortable with the whole subject and suspicious of those who engage in it. But we must remember that meditation is both commanded by God and modeled by the Godly in Scripture. Just because a cult uses the cross as a symbol doesn't mean the Church should cease to use it. In the same way, we shouldn't discard or be afraid of scriptural meditation simply because the world has adapted it for its own purposes.²
- ii. The world has tried to redefine meditation by telling you to empty your mind.
- iii. Lets define meditation as "deep thinking on the truths and spiritual realities revealed in Scripture for the purposes of understanding, application, and prayer."
 1. Meditation goes beyond hearing, reading, studying, and even memorizing as a means of taking in God's Word.³
- iv. Christian Meditation is when you fill your mind with something and think deeply about it.
 1. You are the cup of hot water and the intake of Scripture is represented by the tea bag.⁴ One quick dip and you have some weak tea. The longer it soaks the stronger it gets.
 - a. Have you seen someone that has just realized some big truth of the bible because they have been studying God's word?
 2. As Christians we should fill our minds with God's word's, his truth, and then think deeply about its meaning and application for our life, meditate on it.
 - a. ⁹⁷ Oh how I love your law! It is my meditation all the day. Psalms 119:97
 - b. It is that thought of scripture that you just can't get out of your head. You read it during a devotional and you think about it all day.
 - c. When we memorize scripture we can meditate on that truth no matter where we are.
 - d. You are outside in nature.
 - i. ¹ The heavens declare the glory of God, and the sky above proclaims his handiwork. Psalms 19:1

² Donald S. Whitney, *Spiritual Disciplines for the Christian Life* (Colorado Springs, CO: NavPress, 1991), 47

³ Donald S. Whitney, *Spiritual Disciplines for the Christian Life* (Colorado Springs, CO: NavPress, 1991), 48

⁴ Donald S. Whitney, *Spiritual Disciplines for the Christian Life* (Colorado Springs, CO: NavPress, 1991), 48.

v. You can memorize scripture

1. Most people say they have a bad memory. The truth is most of the time it is a lack of motivation.
2. Make a Plan
 - a. See handout
3. Write out the verses
4. Draw picture reminders
 - a. Many people can remember a picture better than words
 - i. Psalm 119:11- Draw a heart with a bible in the middle
 - ii. If you saw a picture of a sword would you remember Eph. 6:17?
5. Remember them word perfectly in a specific bible translation
 - a. Use an objective standard
 - b. You will lose confidence referencing it in a conversation if it is not perfect.
6. Find a method of accountability
 - a. When you meet regularly with someone and repeat the scriptures you will do better.
7. Review and meditate daily
 - a. Review is what keeps things fresh.
 - b. Don't begrudge devoting so much time to polishing your swords. Rejoice instead at having so many...The goal is not to see how many verses we can memorize, the goal is Godliness. The goal is to memorize the Word of God so that it can transform our minds and our lives.⁵
8. Application:
 - a. Select a passage.
 - i. John 1:1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.
 - b. Repeat it and emphasize a different word each time.
 - c. With a pen in hand re-write it in your own words. (insert Jesus)
 - d. Pray through the text.
 - e. Don't rush but take time
 - f. Understand the text
 - g. Apply it to your day

⁵ Donald S. Whitney, *Spiritual Disciplines for the Christian Life* (Colorado Springs, CO: NavPress, 1991), 46-47.