

IGNITE INSTITUTE | HOW TO GROW

CLASS 3: BIBLE INTAKE

For the word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the division of soul and spirit, of joints and of marrow, and discerning the thoughts and intention of the heart.

Hebrews 4:12

THE WORD OF GOD

Simply stated, the Bible is the word of God. It is one book made up of 66 small books that all have a common theme. That theme is: **Creation – Fall – Redemption – Restoration**. This is called the metanarrative of Scripture.

1. The Bible is Inspired

To say the Bible is inspired means it is, “breathed out by God so as to make the Scripture God’s own words”¹⁶ (John Piper)

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. (2 Timothy 3:14-17)

→ God used his Spirit in different authors, with different personalities, different contexts, and different backgrounds over hundreds of years to compile his Word. Observe the tone in this passage:

And I applied my heart to seek and to search out by wisdom all that is done under heaven. It is an unhappy business that God has given to the children of man to be busy with. I have seen everything that is done under the sun, and behold, all is vanity and a striving after wind. (Ecclesiastes 1:13-14)

→ Two points from Scripture.

- His word transcends and applies to all people, cultures, and eras
- Passages in Scripture only have one meaning, but many applications

2. The Bible is Absolute Truth

Since God himself inspires scripture, we can trust everything it says.

→ The truth of Scripture is what should define our framework

3. The Bible is Life-Giving

Since you have been born again, not of perishable seed, but of imperishable, through the living and abiding word of God. (1 Peter 1:23)

→ The Bible is living and active

- *Living* in Greek entails: living water, having vital power in itself and exerting the same upon the soul.

¹⁶ Piper, John (2016, June 15). *What Spiritual Disciplines Are Most Important?*, Retrieved from www.desiringgod.org/interviews/what-spiritual-disciplines-are-most-important.

- The Word gives us life.
- Scripture is *actively* doing this. It is not passive

→ The Bible is sharper than any two-edged sword.

“[The Word] penetrates very deep—like a sword through tough, hard layers—and makes judgments about what’s there”¹⁷ (John Piper)

The power of the Word at work in our lives perpetuates the process of sanctification: growing in Christlikeness.

This is the most important spiritual discipline because all other disciplines flow from it. We cannot grow in Christlikeness if we do not know who Christ is or what he has done.

INTERACTING WITH THE WORD

1. We Hear the Word (Preaching)

They read from the book, from the Law of God, clearly, and they gave the sense, so that the people understood the reading. (Nehemiah 8:8)

Until I come, devote yourself to the public reading of Scripture, to exhortation, to teaching. (1 Timothy 4: 13)

... when you received the word of God, which you heard from us, you accepted it not as the word of men but as what it really is, the word of God, which is at work in you believers. (1 Thessalonians 2:13)

→ We should be devoted to the preaching of the Word.

The preaching of the Word is supernatural.

“Preaching in Paul’s mind did not consist of someone discussing religion. Instead, God himself spoke through the personality and message of a preacher to confront men and women and bring them to himself.”¹⁸ (Haddon Robinson)

Listening to faithful preaching has cumulative effect on our lives.

2. We Read the Word

→ We can’t live off of hearing alone; we need to study and know the word for ourselves as well.

- Reading God’s Word needs to be a consistent part of our daily lives.
- We cannot eat once a week and expect to be sustained or satisfied.¹⁹ (John Piper)
- The Spirit helps us understand.
- What is your daily rhythm?

¹⁷Piper, John (1996, Sept. 8). *The Word of God: Living, Active, Sharp*. Retrieved from www.desiringgod.org/messages/the-word-of-god-living-active-sharp.

¹⁸ Robinson, Haddon W. (2014). *Biblical Preaching: the Development and Delivery of Expository Messages*. third ed., (Baker Academic, a Division of Baker Publishing Group), 3.

¹⁹ Piper, John (2016, June 15). *What Spiritual Disciplines Are Most Important?* Retrieved from www.desiringgod.org/interviews/what-spiritual-disciplines-are-most-important.

MEDITATING ON THE WORD

To meditate on God's Word is to thoughtfully consider its truths, speak it into our own hearts, and then apply it to our daily lives.

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; but his delight is in the law of the Lord, and on his law he meditates day and night. (Psalm 1:1-2)

1. Meditation is Vital to our Intake of the Word

→ Chewing on the Word of God brings about complete saturation of its work in our lives.

- Meditation is the bridge that links the truths we know in our mind to the application of it in our lives
- Meditation is continually speaking Scripture into our own hearts.

2. Strategies for Meditation

→ Manage your time well.

“Let's say you only have 10 minutes for the Word of God. Don't read for 10 minutes. Read for 5 minutes. Meditate for 5 minutes. Far better to read less, if necessary, and remember something than to read more and remember nothing.”³
(John Piper)

→ Memorize Scripture.

“Memorization stimulates meditation.”²⁰ (Capitol Hill Baptist)

Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand firm. Stand therefore, having fastened on the belt of truth... (Ephesians 6:13-14a)

Jesus' knowledge of scripture is a perfect example of how memorizing God's Word equips us in our everyday walk.

- Jesus answered, “It is written...” (Matthew 4)
- Remember your incentive
- Go in with a strategy

→ Pray the Bible.

Scripture informs and guides our prayer.

HELPFUL TOOLS

1. Know your context (for help, see the Context Worksheet)
2. Read entirely and repeatedly (find the key themes)
3. Find repeated words and phrases
4. Ask the right questions

²⁰ Capitol Hill Baptist. “Class 4: Bible Intake (Part 2).” *Core Seminars* | Capitol Hill Baptist, <https://www.capitolhillbaptist.org/sermon/class-4-bible-intake-part-2/>