

February- Bible Intake (Reading, Hearing, Studying)

"This Book [is] the most valuable things that this world affords. Here is Wisdom; this is the royal Law; these are the lively Oracles of God." – ESV, Crossway

Read 2 Timothy 3:16-17

"The Bible gets its true, authoritative, powerful, holy Character from God himself, who inspired human authority to write exactly what he wanted them to write."- ESV, Crossway

"The Bible is entirely truthful and reliable..." – ESV. Crossway

1. Reading

- a. Why do we read? Why is it important to spend time in the Word of God?
- b. Read Ezra 7:10
 - i. His mission was to teach God's statutes and rules (The extensive law of God given to Moses) with the purpose of leading people in worship and holiness of life. Ezra was effective because he was a well-versed student of the word of God.
- c. How can we set ourselves up to read the Word of God? (i.e., think physical and mental space)
 - i. Finding time (Discipline)
 1. We should discipline ourselves to find the time.
 - a. Try to make your time for studying the word the same time every day, preferably before bed (to improve retention and attention). Strive to encounter scripture when it can impact your day, says Don Whitney.
 - ii. Mindset (What's our headspace when we approach scripture?)
 1. Consider prayer before engaging in scripture to set your heart and mind up for the intake of scripture (similar to the way we pray prior to a sermon being preached)
 - iii. Meditate (*See additional sheet for techniques of meditating/intake of scripture*)
 1. Find at least one word, verse, or phrase to meditate on during your time in the Word
 2. Discern the main passage of the section of your encounter with the scripture and meditate on its meaning and application
 3. Read Philippians 4:8 and Joshua 1:8- meditating on scripture can be thought of as a command
 - iv. Read less if necessary to meditate/intake more.
 - v. Note- Reading three chapters of the Bible every day will take you through the Bible in a year. Or you can always find a Bible plan through apps such from Crossway, The Bible App, The Bible Recap, etc. But remember this is a marathon and not a sprint
 - vi. Understand the text (We cannot apply scripture unless we understand scripture)- Read 1 John 4:1
 1. Be encouraged to test scripture with scripture- but it requires some level of study to do this successfully. We have the ability to check if the message spoken matches what the Bible says.

2. Hearing

- a. Read Isaiah 6:9-10 (posture your heart and mind)- “The openness of faith is a gift of grace, but the unresponsive hearer finds the message only hardens him to God’s gracious purposes.” Crossway ESV
- b. One of the easiest Disciplines is to simply hear the Word, but as just stated, we must be open to the Word and be willing to apply it to our lives
- c. Read Romans 10:17 (Hearing often starts with the Good News, per Paul) and 1 Timothy 4:13 (Reading aloud). Both scriptures emphasize reading aloud, particularly in a communal setting. We can see the benefits of reading aloud as an individual and in fellowship with brothers or sisters
- d. Techniques- practice reading the passage aloud, listen to your favorite recording of the Bible, call for a time of quiet reflection, and focus for a couple of minutes on hearing the word prior to hearing Scripture
- e. “...Hearing the Word of God is not merely passive listening; it is a Discipline to be cultivated.”

3. Studying

- a. Write down observations about the text as you read
- b. Record questions that come to your mind
- c. Review Cross-references – easy location of important words, passages and biblical themes
 - i. (Example- Matthew 19:1)
 1. Matthew 19:1- Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal.
 - a. Luke 12:21- So is the one who lays up treasure for himself and is not rich toward God
 - b. 1 Timothy 6:9- But those who desire to be rich fall into temptation, into a snare, into many senseless and harmful desires that plunge people into ruin and destruction.
- d. Record your insights, note your findings, and follow up with your questions!
- e. See the value of in-depth word studies, character studies, topical studies, and book studies

4. Closing Scripture- John 17:17

- a. Don’t expect immediate mastery, don’t give up, and maintain a form of accountability to keep you on track with these Disciplines. Sanctification is a lifelong process. The truth comprises of the whole Bible. It is the standard of truth to which everything else should be measured

5. Small group questions/considerations

1. What is one thing you can do to improve your intake of God’s Word?
2. How are you leading or encouraging your family in these Disciplines?
3. How does this Discipline help you grow closer to God?
4. How do these Disciplines challenge your priorities or habits or schedules?