



Spiritual Disciplines for the Christian Life

Unit 2 – Bible Intake: Part 1

No Spiritual Discipline is more important than the intake of God's Word. Nothing can substitute for it. There simply is no healthy Christian life apart from a diet of the milk and meat of Scripture.

1) Hearing God's Word

- a) Nourishment for our Soul - Luke 11:27-28;
- b) Foundation for our Faith - Romans 10:14-17;
- c) Alignment for our Walk - 1 Timothy 4:13;
- d) Acceptance of the Truth - 1 Thessalonians 2:13

2) Reading God's Word

Acts 17:10-12; 2 Timothy 3:15-17; Psalm 119: 19-16, 57-64, 105-106;

- a) Find the Time – Ephesians 5:15-17
- b) Find a Plan – Deuteronomy 6:4-9
- c) Find a Truth – Psalm 1

3) Studying God's Word

Ezra 7:10; 2 Timothy 2:2

- a) Devotion of Self – Romans 12:1-2
- b) Know the Doctrine – 1 Peter 3:15
- c) Apply the Truth – Ephesians 4:14
- d) Pass on the Knowledge – Luke 24:25-32, 45

Homework – Reflections:

- 1) Describe the Bible intake that took place—or didn't take place—in your home and church as you were growing up. Has that affected your view of Bible intake today? If so, how?

- 2) Have you—and your family, if you are married—developed a consistent pattern of Bible intake? If so, describe the difference it has made in your life. If not, what keeps you from developing such a pattern?

- 3) Do you agree with the following statement: “there simply is no healthy Christian life apart from a diet of the milk and meat of Scripture”? Why, or why not?

- 4) How might your beliefs be different if you did not have a Bible? If you never received Bible intake?

- 5) Why is knowing the Bible intimately such a vital part of knowing God and being Godly?

- 6) Many have stated that we often honor God's Word only with our lips. In what practical ways might you add to that honor with your heart, hands, ears, eyes, and mind?

- 7) In our busy lives, it's easy to become preoccupied with “Christian” activities and not spend enough time in God's Word. What “Christian” activities are you involved in? In what ways is or is not Bible intake a part of these activities?

- 8) Read Luke 11:28. Why do you think Jesus emphasizes this point?
- 9) If we aren't disciplined in hearing God's Word, which negative consequences will occur? Be specific.
- 10) What do the following verses say about hearing God's Word?
- a) Romans 10:17
 - b) 1 Timothy 4:13
- 11) What other ways, besides in a local church ministry, can you hear God's Word?
- 12) Why is it important to not be a "passive listener" to God's Word? How can you cultivate the ability to be an "intent listener"? Be specific.
- 13) Read 1 Timothy 4:7 and 2 Timothy 3:16. How much time, on the average, do you spend reading the Bible each day? Be honest.
- 14) What happens to a person who reads the Bible? (See Revelation 1:3.)
- 15) In the past, have you seen a connection between the time you spend in Bible intake and your knowledge of God and His power? Describe your experiences.

- 16) Why can Bible intake become a chore instead of a Discipline of joy? In what ways might meditating on Scripture deepen your appreciation of God's Word?

- 17) In 2 Timothy 4:13, Paul asks Timothy to bring several items. What does Paul's request communicate to us about the importance of studying God's Word?

- 18) What, in your mind, are the differences between hearing, reading, and studying God's Word?

- 19) If your growth in Godliness were measured by the quality of your Bible intake, how would you measure up?

- 20) What do you think Jesus meant when He prayed, "Sanctify them by the truth; your word is truth" (John 17:17)?

- 21) How does the emphasis of Philippians 3:13 apply to the failure many of us have experienced in daily Bible intake?

- 22) What can you do today to improve your intake of God's Word in the areas of hearing, reading, and studying?

- 23) Why is it important to continually receive Bible intake even when such intake doesn't emotionally uplift you or give you a sense of peace?

24) How do you think you'll feel when you finally see the Word of God in the flesh, in Heaven? How can this perspective encourage you in your commitment to know God more deeply today?

25) Consider how the following might enhance your study of Scripture:

- a) Writing down observations and questions about what you read.
- b) Looking up cross-references.
- c) Finding key words and seeing how they're used in other Scripture portions.
- d) Outlining chapters, one paragraph at a time.
- e) Doing book studies, character studies, topical studies, and/or word studies.