

Knowing and Following Christ – God's Word

What Are the Questions?:

Read Matthew 4:1-11, Matthew 7:24-27, and Psalm 1

LAUNCH

Today's topic of study is God's word, or the Bible. It has a big part to play in our journey with Christ. It's like a course textbook for what it means to be Christian. Imagine your lecturer guaranteed that everything you need to know for a class was in the course book. If you wanted to do well in that class, you'd likely pay a lot of attention to it. The Bible is like that for us as Christians. Being diligent in our studies is important, but of greater significance is our walk with God. In light of this, how diligent should we be to read about God through his word the bible?

To begin, let's briefly look at what these passages say about God's word.

Psalm 12:6; Psalm 119:105; 2 Timothy 3:16-17; Hebrews 4:12; 1 Peter 1:24-25

EXPLORE

"Whoever claims to live in Him must walk as Jesus did" (1 John 2:6). God's word was a massive part of Jesus' life. Let's look at Him putting God's word to use. Read Matthew 4:1-11

1. How does Jesus answer the devil in every instance? What can we learn from that?
2. What was the source of the devil's second temptation, and what can we learn from that?
3. Jesus quotes Old Testament scriptures to defend Himself against the evil one. What does this say about the relevance of learning and memorising scripture ourselves?
4. Read Verse 4 again.
 - What might it look like for us to live from God's word?
 - What does this imply for us if we don't make time for the Bible in our lives?
5. Jesus used scripture in the face of temptation. What temptations do you face in your life? Take some time to find scriptures that could be a helpful defense against these temptations.

APPLY

We have seen that for a believer that spending time in God's word is important.

1. How much time would you like to spend reading God's word from now on? Share your answer with the group and ask someone to check up on you 3 times during the next week to help you keep on track.
2. Meditate on and memorise the verses you listed earlier to help yourself defend against temptations.

Jesus taught about God's word to his followers. Read Matthew 7:24-27 and see what you learn.

1. What does Jesus say we must do in order to be compared to a wise man?
2. When the storms came, why was the wise man able to stand?
3. What is the "rock" on which the man built his house?
4. What does Jesus say about those who are like the foolish man?
5. Ask yourself, do I want to be wise or foolish? What do I need to do to be wise?

Now let's do some Bible study together. We are going to look at Psalm 1. Read it through together once, then look over the passage and discuss what you learn as you go.

1. What does the blessed man not do? Why do you think this is?
2. In what does the blessed man delight, and how often does he delight in it?
3. What does it mean to meditate on God's word?
4. What metaphor is used to describe the blessed man?
5. What does the metaphor mean? What is the source of the blessed man's fruitfulness?
6. In contrast to the blessed man, how are the wicked described?
7. What is the outcome of the wicked?
8. According to the psalmist, the blessed man meditates on God's word day and night. How often do you reflect on or ponder God's word?

For the Leader:

- The heart of this study is for our students to understand the significance of God's word.
- The section dealing with Psalm 1 is there to encourage them to get started in some bible study straight away. If you don't have time to cover everything in this study, maybe you could get them to go through Psalm 1 in their own time outside the Action Group.

What are the Answers?:

Intro:

- Psalm 12:6; God's Word is pure
- Psalm 119:105; A lamp to our feet and a light to our path
- 2 Timothy 3:16-17; Inspired by God. Great for training and equipping us
- Hebrews 4:12; Alive and active. Able to judge the thoughts and intents of our hearts
- 1 Peter 1:24-25; It endures forever.

Matthew 4:1-11

1. He answers him with God's word. Jesus viewed Scripture as the source of truth.
2. Scripture was the source. The devil can try and confuse us with false teachings. We need to know God's word well so we can discern truth
3. If Jesus used God's word to resist the Devil, we must need it for our own trials and temptations.
4. It probably looks like a daily habit of filling our minds with God's word. If we don't do this, we are starving ourselves spiritually.
5. Group discussion and explore

Matthew 7:24-27

1. We need to put God's word into practice
2. Because the person's life was based on a solid foundation
3. God's word
4. Their lives will come to ruin
5. Discuss

Psalm 1

1. He does not walk in the council of the wicked, stand in the path of sinners, or sit in the seat of scoffers. This is probably because he has found how amazing God's fellowship and love is through spending time with God and his word. He does not need these other things to fulfill him
2. The law of the Lord (God's word). He meditates on it day and night
3. To think about it and ponder it deeply
4. He is described as a fruitful tree which bears it's fruit in season and whose leaf never withers
5. The metaphor means he is a person who is fruitful for God's kingdom. The source of his fruitfulness is God through His word.
6. Chaff which the wind drives away
7. They will not stand in the judgment. The way of the wicked will perish
8. Group Discussion

What's the Big Idea?

God's word is so significant to the growth of a Christian. If our students can grasp this and develop healthy habits of reading, hearing and knowing God's word, God will bring them to a place of maturity that we cannot just through having them in our Action Groups. Hopefully this study will help them see this and cause them to take action!

What's the Problem?

Our lives are busy, and many Christians do not make time for God's word. But if we don't, we will not grow to being fruitful. We want to turn "lost students into Christ centred laborers." If our students don't start reading God's word for themselves regularly, they will not become Christ centred laborers.

What's Our Response?

In this study we have seen for ourselves that the Bible is essential for growth as a Christian. Our response to this must be to take it seriously. We need to feed ourselves spiritually from God's word every day. All of us must ask ourselves how we will make time to read God's word on a daily basis. This is not a chore. We don't consider eating a chore. We starve if we don't eat and we are not able to function how we should if we are not eating properly. If we fail to read God's word, we will starve ourselves spiritually, and we won't function as the person God intends for us to be.