

# Greater Pleasant Branch Baptist Church

Connect learn Grow

Wednesday Bible Study-Theme: Practicing Spiritual Disciplines

Lesson # 3 - Bible Intake ( Part 2) - For the Purpose of Godliness

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## I. Central Idea

The intake of God's word is the most important Spiritual Discipline. We practice this Discipline not only by hearing, reading, and studying God's Word, but also through memorizing and meditating on Scripture, and by applying what we learn to our daily lives. When rightly practiced, these promote increased knowledge of God and closer conformity to Christ.

## II. The value of Scripture memorization

1. Memorizing Scripture strengthens your faith because it repeatedly reinforces the truth, often just when you need to hear it again.

2. Scripture memory can prepare you for unexpected witnessing or counseling opportunities.

3. When Scripture is stored in the mind, it is available for the Holy Spirit to bring to your attention when you need it most. That is why Psalm 119 states, "I have stored up your word in my heart, that I might not sin against you." -verse 11.

4. One of the most underrated benefits of memorizing Scripture is that it provides fuel for meditation.

5. Tips for Scripture memory:

\*\* Make a list of the verses on a sheet of paper.

\*\* Draw picture reminders to trigger your memory of key words in the verses.

\*\* Memorize the verses word for word.

\*\* Find someone who will hold you accountable for your memory work and will review verses with you.

\*\* Every day, review some of the verses you have previously memorized and meditate on them.

## III. The value of meditation

1. Meditation is both commanded by God and modeled by the godly in Scripture.

2. Meditation is deep thinking on the truths and spiritual realities revealed in Scripture or upon life from a scriptural perspective, for the purpose of understanding, application, and prayer.

3. Christian meditation involves filling your mind with God and the truth of God and requires constructive mental activity.

4. Suggestions for meditation:

\*\* After your Bible reading, choose the verse, phrase or word that impresses you most from the passage of Scripture you read.

\*\* If nothing attracted particular attention, choose one of the most important verses from the section you read.

\*\* Read at length, a chapter or more, then go back over what you read and select something specific from that as the focus of your meditation. Read big-meditate small.

\*\* Review the verse repeatedly, emphasizing a different word each time, review the verse at least seven times, emphasizing a different word each of the seven times.

\*\* Rewrite the verse in your own words.

\*\* Formulate a principle from the text, asking what this particular text teaches.

\*\* Think of an illustration of the text. What story, object, event, or similar item pictures or explains it?

\*\* Look for applications of the text. What should you do in response to it? After your meditation, you should be able to name one or more definite responses or actions you will make because of what you read.

\*\* Ask how the text points to some aspect of God's law or to the gospel.

\*\* Ask how the text points to something about the person and work of Jesus.

\*\* Ask what question is answered or what problem is solved.

\*\* Pray through the text. Turn the words of the text into prayer. Talk to God about the things that come to mind as you consider the verse or passage.

\*\* Memorize the text.

\*\* Identify a minimum number of insights into the text.

\*\* Ask how the text speaks to your current issue or question.

Do not rush through the biblical text. Read less if necessary in order to have adequate time for meditation. So, if you have only ten minutes, don't read for ten minutes. Read for five minutes, then meditate for five minutes. Far better to read less and remember something, than to read more and remember nothing.

#### IV. Questions and Applications

1. How does Jesus' confrontation with Satan ( Matthew 4:1-11) illustrate the power of Scripture that is committed to memory?

2. Why should we keep God's Word within us and ready on our lips according to Proverbs 22: 17-19?

3. Describe a time when Scripture memory helped you during a witnessing or counseling opportunity?

4. What does Psalm 119:24 say about guidance? How might you apply this truth to your busy life?

5. What was the psalmist's attitude toward Scripture? See all of Psalm 119, but especially verse 97.

6. Read Joshua 1:8. What did God command Joshua to do, and what did God promise would happen as a result of Joshua's obedience ?

7. What do you think it means to meditate on God's word throughout the day and night ?

8. As we meditate on Scripture what happens to our minds? See Romans 12:2.

9. Read James 1:22-25. When you read the Bible, do you find it easy to apply what you read to your life ?

10. Why is it so important for people to understand the meaning particular verses in context before applying the verses to their lives ?

11. Why is an overall Bible intake through hearing, reading, studying, memorizing, and meditating on Scripture so important ?

12. What steps can you take to cultivate the Discipline of meditating on God's Word ?