

Spiritual Formation

Growing Into the Image of Christ



Session 5: Bible Intake

Main Idea

- **The most important of the spiritual disciplines is Bible Intake. We will discuss many different kinds of Bible Intake.**

How can the Man/Woman of God Grow Spiritually

- **This lesson will cover Bible-Intake**
 - Why call it Bible-Intake rather than Bible reading?
- **You have to get into the Word of God to get the Word of God into you.**



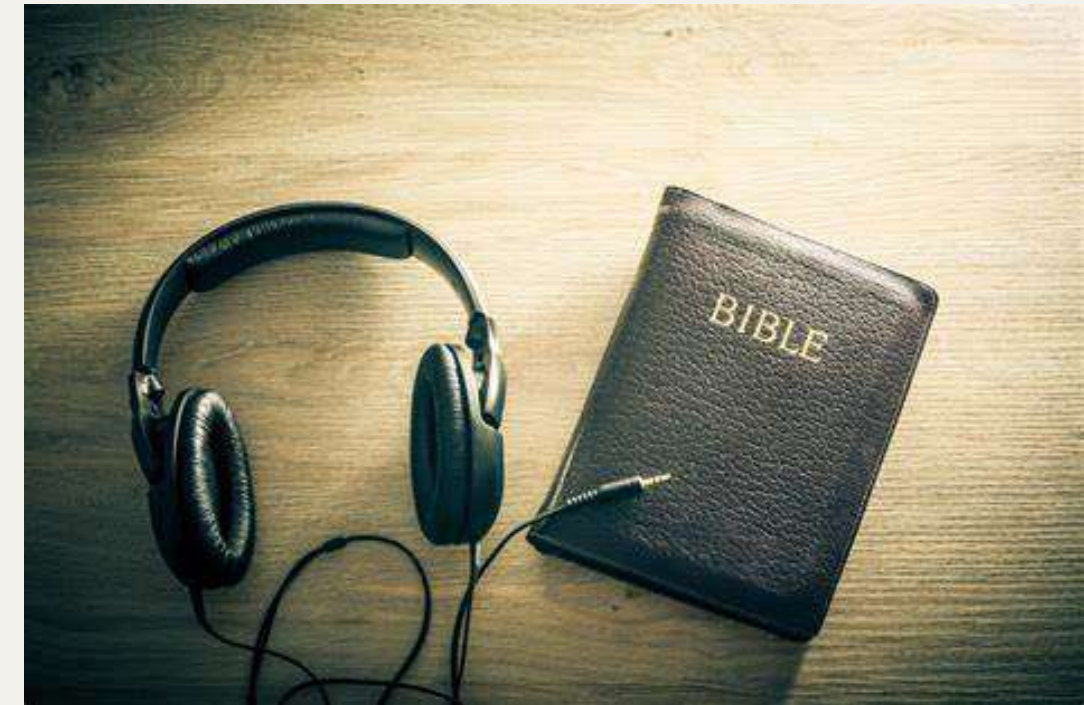
Bible-Intake

- **Don Whitney's Kenya Story**
- **Proverbs 10:14**
- **Believers that ignore the Bible do so to their own hurt.**
- **Bible Intake is the most important spiritual discipline.**
 - All other disciplines grow out of them.



Hearing

- **Bible Intake is the broadest of the spiritual disciplines because there are a lot different disciplines that fall under it.**
- **First is the discipling of hearing.**
- **Luke 11:28**
 - “Blessed are those who hear the word of God and keep it.”**
- **1 Timothy 4:13**
 - “Until I come, give your attention to public reading, exhortation, and teaching.”**



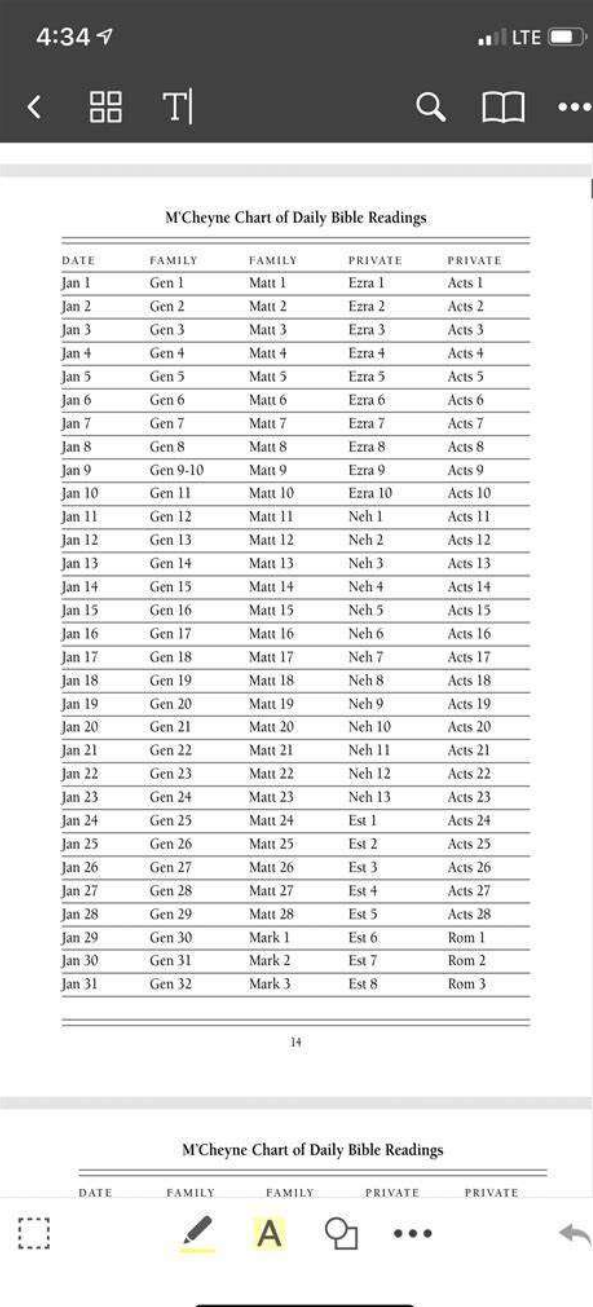
Hearing

- **It's worth finding ways to read it more during service.**
- **We should aspire to be good readers.**
- **How much do you listen to Scripture out loud? How much Scripture do you read out loud to your family?**



Reading

- **What question does Jesus ask more than all others?**
 - Have you not read?
- **Jesus countered Satanic temptation by quoting Scripture.**
 - Matt 4:4–“He answered, “It is written: Man must not live on bread alone but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.”
- **There are many ways to read the Bible (allow for flex).**
 - Robert Murray M’Cheyne
 - In order (Christian or Jewish)
 - Chronologically



M'Cheyne Chart of Daily Bible Readings

| DATE | FAMILY | FAMILY | PRIVATE | PRIVATE |
|--------|----------|---------|---------|---------|
| Jan 1 | Gen 1 | Matt 1 | Ezra 1 | Acts 1 |
| Jan 2 | Gen 2 | Matt 2 | Ezra 2 | Acts 2 |
| Jan 3 | Gen 3 | Matt 3 | Ezra 3 | Acts 3 |
| Jan 4 | Gen 4 | Matt 4 | Ezra 4 | Acts 4 |
| Jan 5 | Gen 5 | Matt 5 | Ezra 5 | Acts 5 |
| Jan 6 | Gen 6 | Matt 6 | Ezra 6 | Acts 6 |
| Jan 7 | Gen 7 | Matt 7 | Ezra 7 | Acts 7 |
| Jan 8 | Gen 8 | Matt 8 | Ezra 8 | Acts 8 |
| Jan 9 | Gen 9-10 | Matt 9 | Ezra 9 | Acts 9 |
| Jan 10 | Gen 11 | Matt 10 | Ezra 10 | Acts 10 |
| Jan 11 | Gen 12 | Matt 11 | Neh 1 | Acts 11 |
| Jan 12 | Gen 13 | Matt 12 | Neh 2 | Acts 12 |
| Jan 13 | Gen 14 | Matt 13 | Neh 3 | Acts 13 |
| Jan 14 | Gen 15 | Matt 14 | Neh 4 | Acts 14 |
| Jan 15 | Gen 16 | Matt 15 | Neh 5 | Acts 15 |
| Jan 16 | Gen 17 | Matt 16 | Neh 6 | Acts 16 |
| Jan 17 | Gen 18 | Matt 17 | Neh 7 | Acts 17 |
| Jan 18 | Gen 19 | Matt 18 | Neh 8 | Acts 18 |
| Jan 19 | Gen 20 | Matt 19 | Neh 9 | Acts 19 |
| Jan 20 | Gen 21 | Matt 20 | Neh 10 | Acts 20 |
| Jan 21 | Gen 22 | Matt 21 | Neh 11 | Acts 21 |
| Jan 22 | Gen 23 | Matt 22 | Neh 12 | Acts 22 |
| Jan 23 | Gen 24 | Matt 23 | Neh 13 | Acts 23 |
| Jan 24 | Gen 25 | Matt 24 | Est 1 | Acts 24 |
| Jan 25 | Gen 26 | Matt 25 | Est 2 | Acts 25 |
| Jan 26 | Gen 27 | Matt 26 | Est 3 | Acts 26 |
| Jan 27 | Gen 28 | Matt 27 | Est 4 | Acts 27 |
| Jan 28 | Gen 29 | Matt 28 | Est 5 | Acts 28 |
| Jan 29 | Gen 30 | Mark 1 | Est 6 | Rom 1 |
| Jan 30 | Gen 31 | Mark 2 | Est 7 | Rom 2 |
| Jan 31 | Gen 32 | Mark 3 | Est 8 | Rom 3 |

14

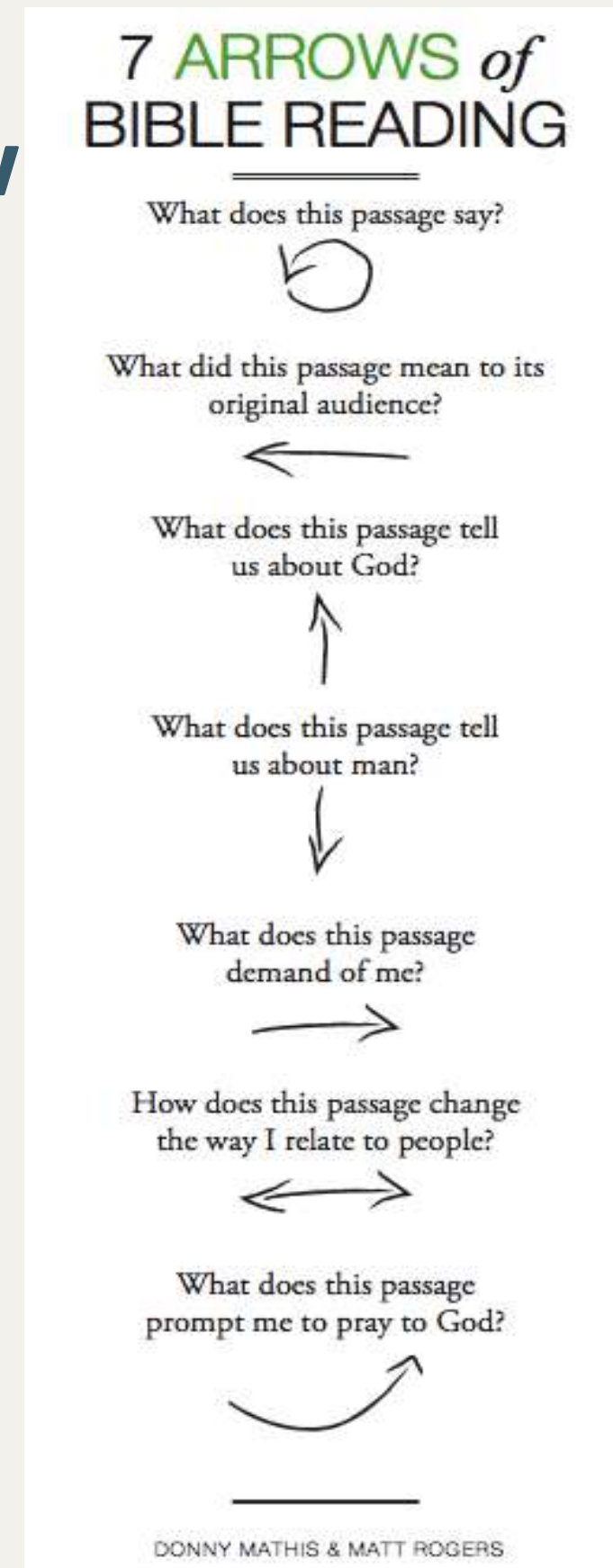
M'Cheyne Chart of Daily Bible Readings

| DATE | FAMILY | FAMILY | PRIVATE | PRIVATE |
|------|--------|--------|---------|---------|
|------|--------|--------|---------|---------|



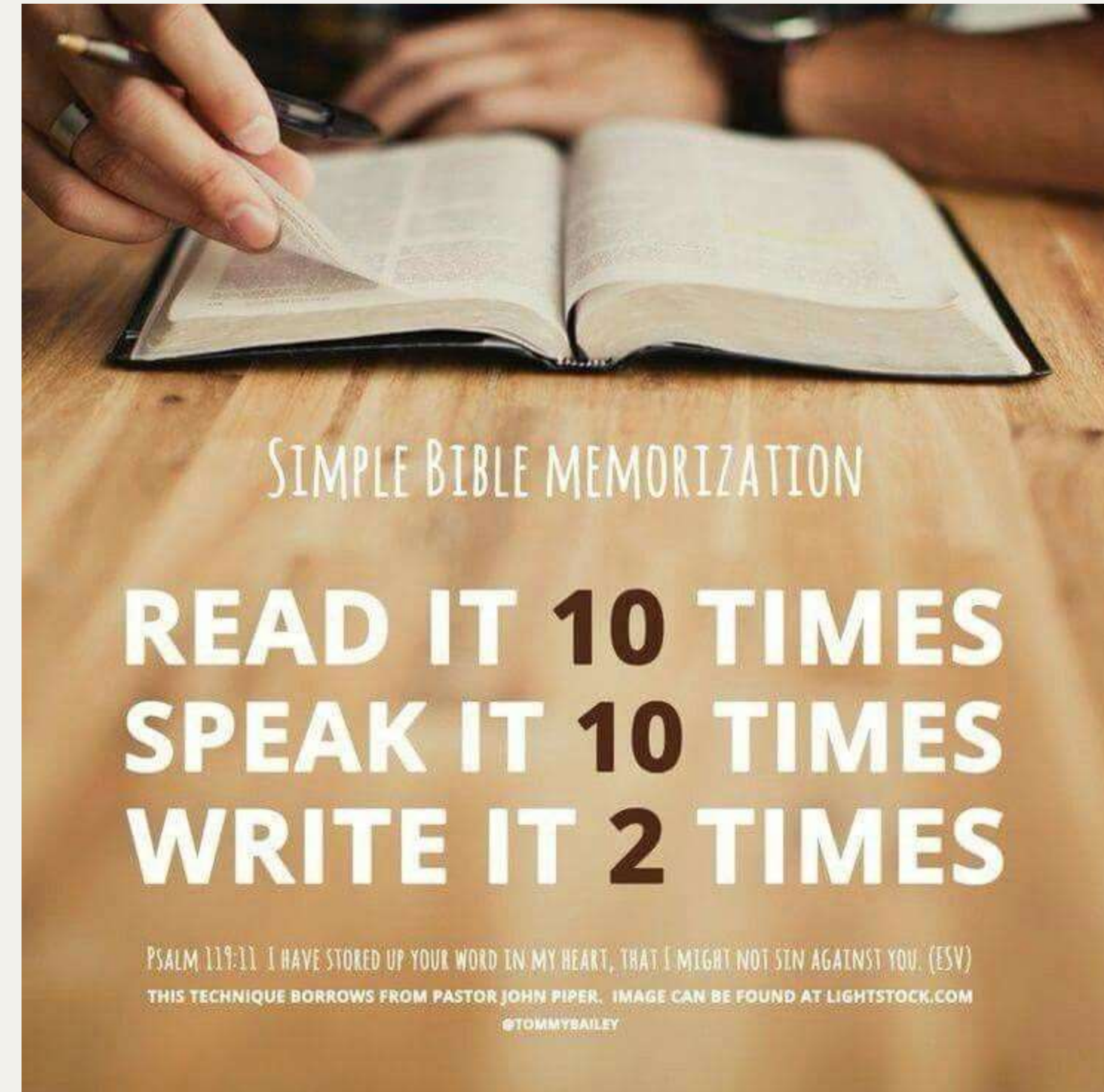
Study

- **Studying goes beyond reading**
 - Ezra 7:10–“Now Ezra determined in his heart to study the law of the Lord, obey it, and teach its statutes and ordinances to Israel.”
- **Examples: Bereans (Acts 17:11) and Paul (2 Tim 4:13).**
- **How do you study?**
 - Word studies, grammar/syntax, historical context, biblical context, etc.
 - Seven Arrows is a good start.
- **What is your method for studying Scripture? How often do you do it?**



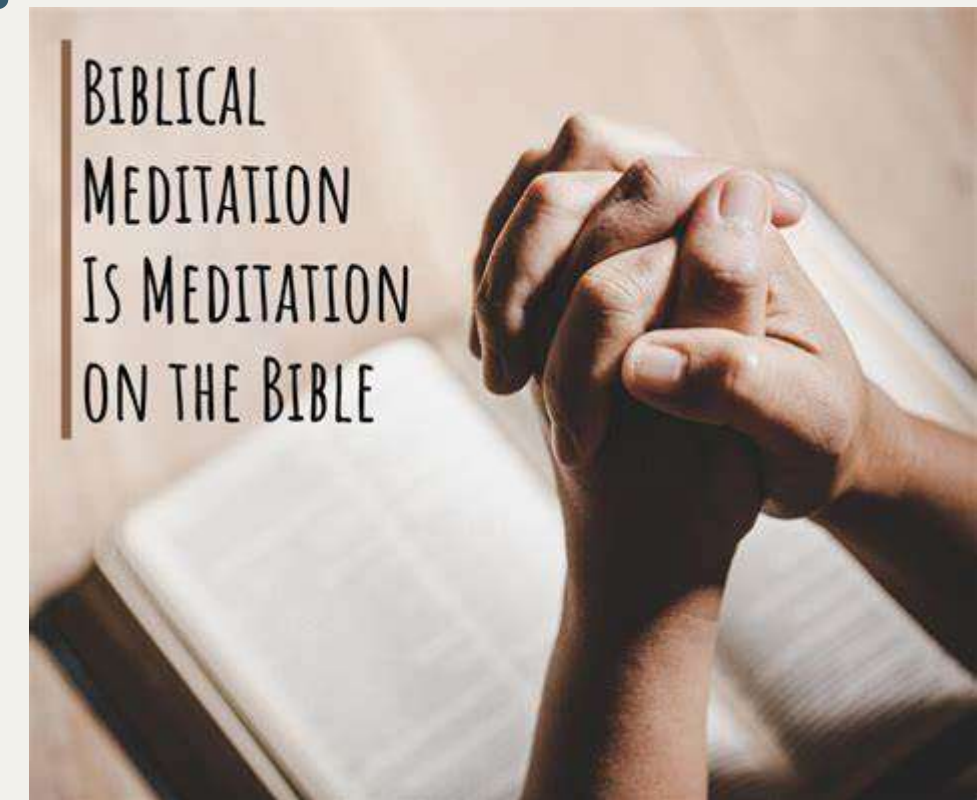
Memorization

- Having a bad memory is not an excuse.
- Thought experiment (\$1,000).
- *Moonwalking with Einstein*
- Do you regularly memorize biblical texts? If so, how much do you memorize?



Meditation

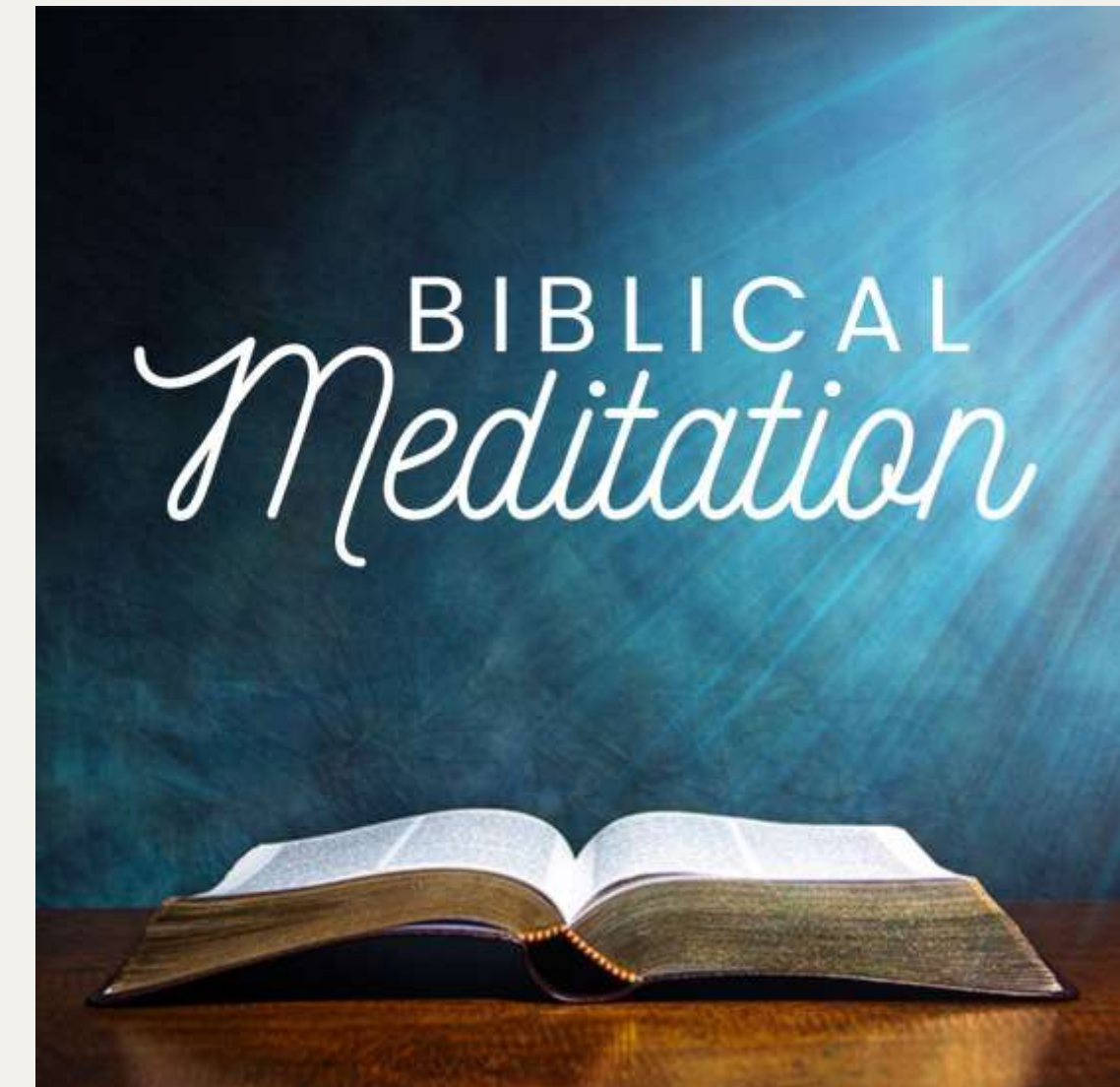
- **This is the greatest devotional need for Christians**
- **Reading is the starting place, but not the ending place.**
- **Difference between worldly meditation and Christian meditation**
 - Empty mind vs. fill mind with Scripture
 - Mental passivity vs. mental activity
 - Imagination and visualization vs. God and His Word



Philippians 4:8—“Finally brothers and sisters, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is commendable—if there is any moral excellence and if there is anything praiseworthy—dwell on these things.”

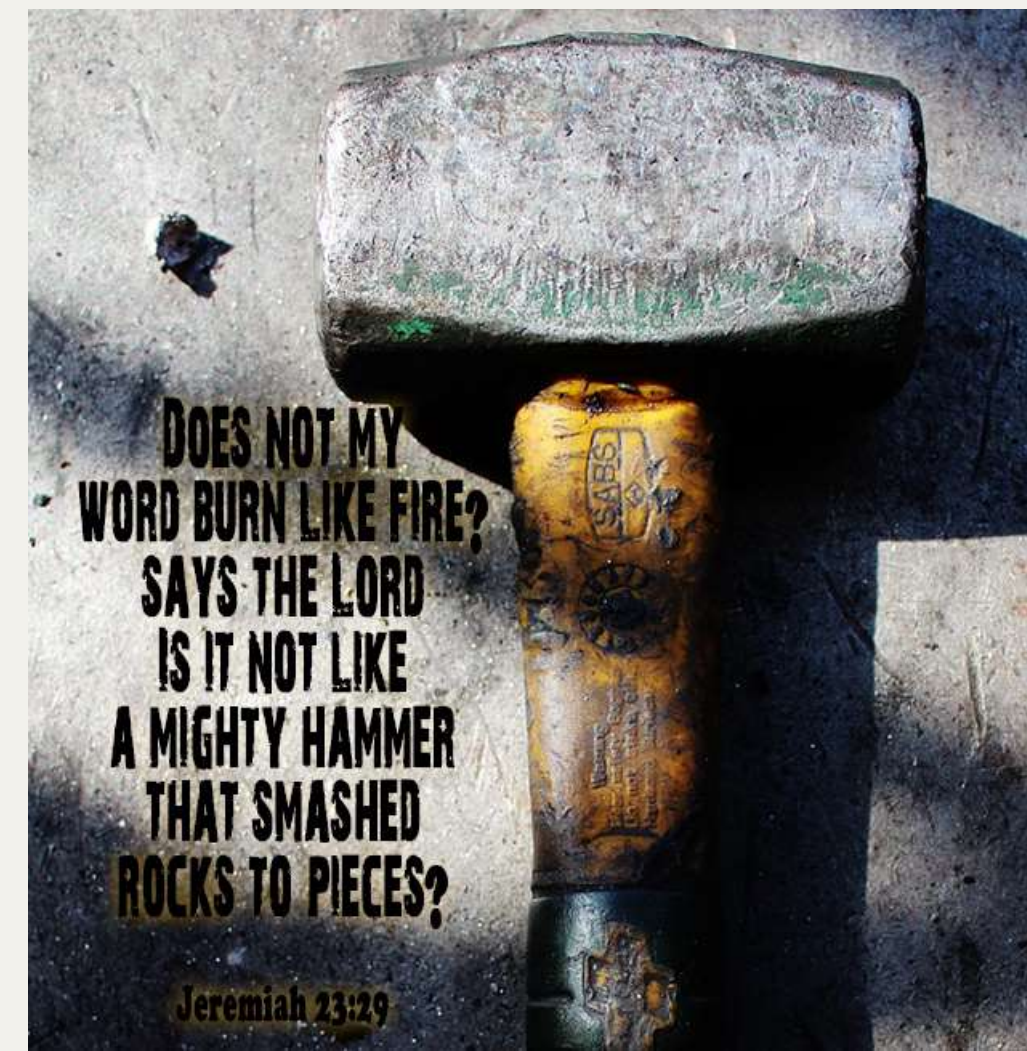
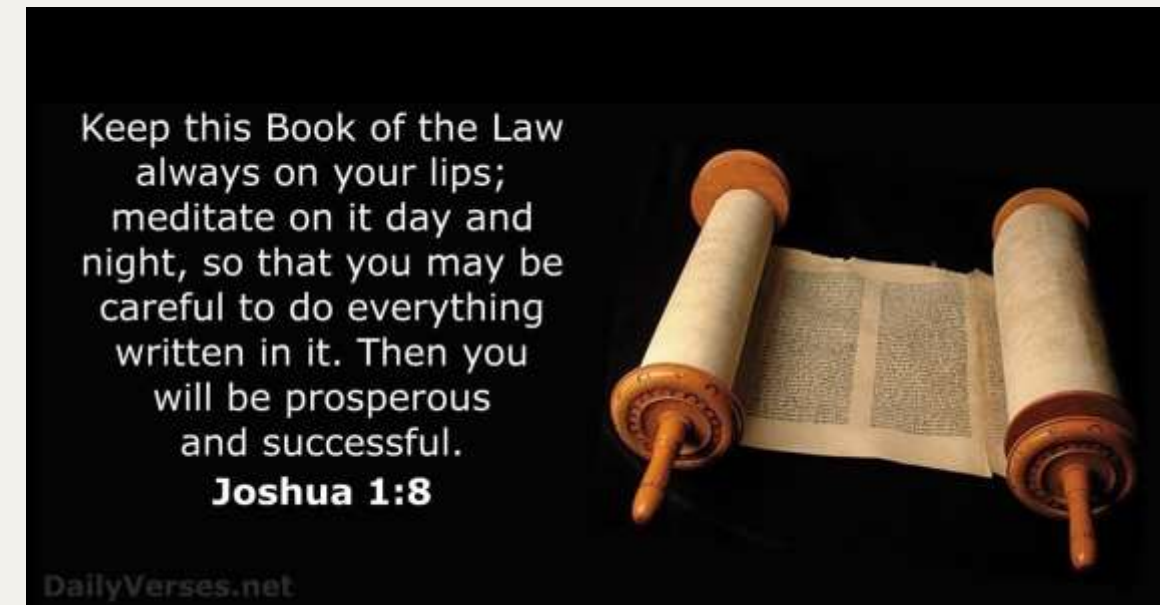
Meditation

- **Don Whitney's definition of biblical meditation:**
 - Meditation is deep thinking on the truths and spiritual realities revealed in Scripture, or upon life from a Scriptural perspective, for the purposes of understanding, application, and prayer.
- **Analogy: hot water and teabag.**



Meditation

- **Joshua 1:8**—“This book of instruction must not depart from your mouth; you are to meditate on it day and night so that you may carefully observe everything written in it. For then you will prosper and succeed in whatever you do.”
 - Notice the order: Meditation → Obedience → Blessing.
- **Why does meditation help with obedience?**
 - Psalm 39:3—“My heart grew hot within me; as I mused, a fire burned.”
 - Jeremiah 23:29—“Is not my word like a fire”—this is the Lord’s declaration—“and like a hammer that pulverizes rock?”



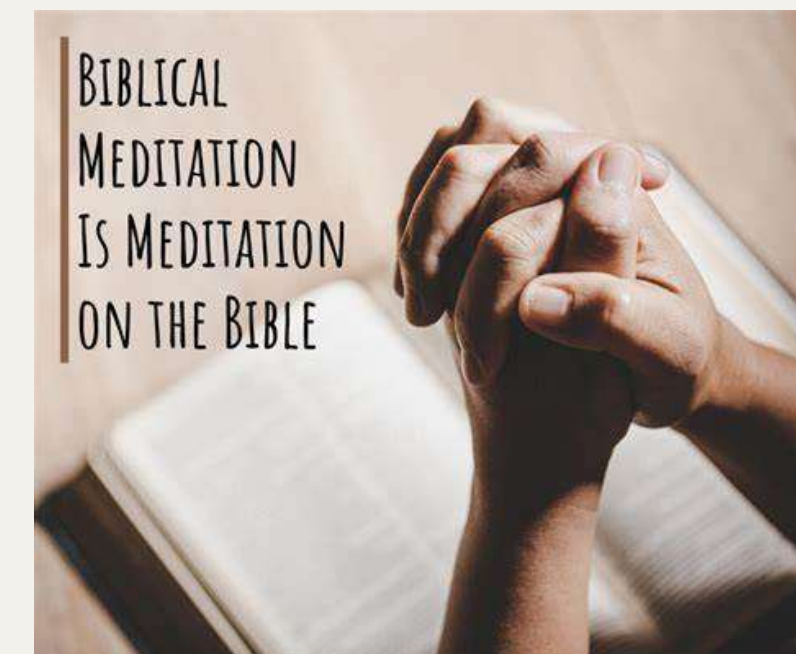
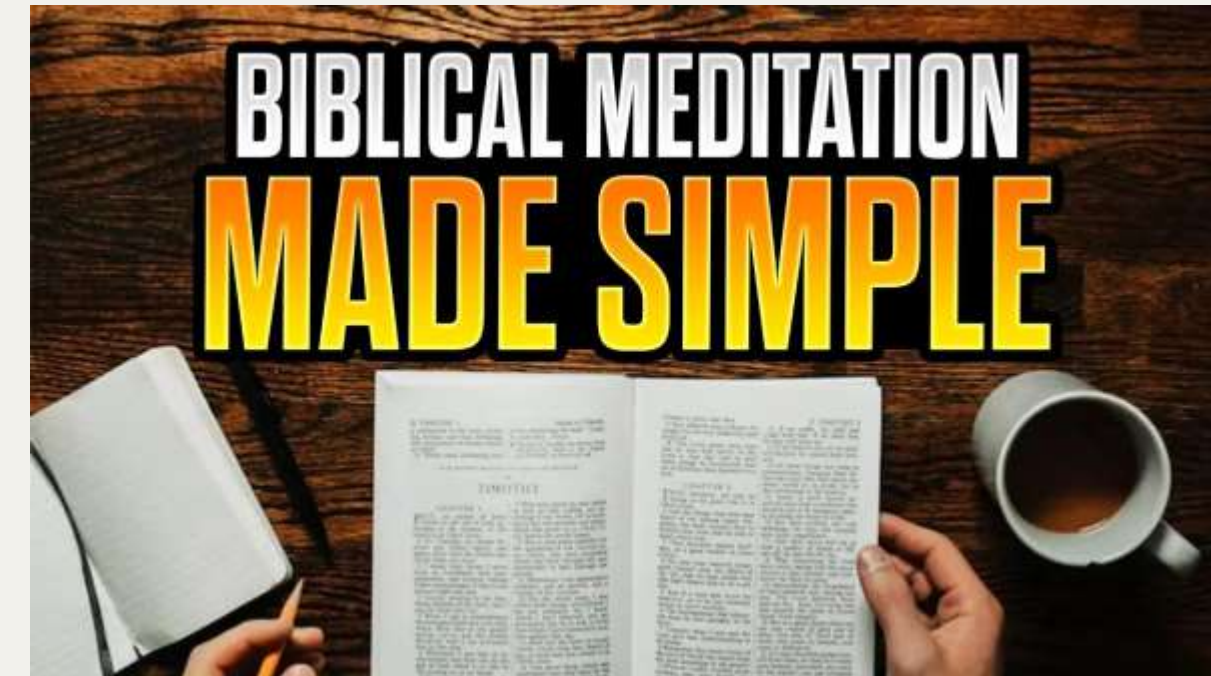
Meditation

- **Psalm 1:1-3**—“How happy is the one who does not walk in the advice of the wicked or stand in the pathway with sinners or sit in the company of mockers! Instead, his delight is in the Lord’s instruction, and he meditates on it day and night. He is like a tree planted beside flowing streams that bears its fruit in its season, and its leaf does not wither. Whatever he does prospers.”
 - The order: Meditate → Endurance → Blessing.
- **James 1:25**—“But the one who looks intently into the perfect law of freedom and perseveres in it, and is not a forgetful hearer by a doer who works—this person will be blessed in what he does.”
 - The order: Meditate → Remembers Scripture → Obeys → Blessing.



What does Meditation Look Like?

- **Start with regular reading; then pick a verse, phrase, or word from it.**
- **Once you have a verse, there are many methods to choose from.**
 1. **Repeat the verse over and over again, emphasizing a different word each time. (ex. Rom 8:28).**
 2. **Rewrite the verse or phrase in your own words.**
 3. **Look for applications in the text (is there something to start, stop, pray, or say to someone?). Then make a concrete plan (who, what, when, where, and how)**



What does Meditation Look Like?

- **Methods Continued.**

- 4. Ask how verse or phrase points to some aspect of the law and the gospel. This improves your theology.**
- 5. Ask how the verse or phrase points to the person or work of Jesus Christ. It gives us a Christocentric view.**
- 6. Formulate a principle from the text.**
- 7. Ask yourself if the text answers a question or solves a problem.**
- 8. Pray through the text.**
- 9. Ask the text the Philippians 4:8 questions.**



*how to meditate on
Scripture*

What does Meditation Look Like?

- **Methods Continued.**

10. **Ask the Joseph Hall (*Art of Divine Meditation*) questions of the text.**

1. Describe the “what it is” of the text.
2. What are its divisions or parts?
3. What causes it?
4. What does it cause? (fruits and effects)
5. What is its place, location, or use in life?
6. What are its qualities and attachments? (i.e., what is it made of, and what things are attached to it.)
7. What is contrary, contradictory, or different to it?
8. What compares to it? (what is like it?)
9. What are its titles or names?
10. What are the testimonies or examples of Scripture about it?



Application

- A sixth method of Bible Intake is biblical application.
- The goal is always to be a doer of the Word of God.
- What kind of questions do you ask the Bible as you read of it?



Personal Application

- **I would like each person to pick a text and perform one of the kinds of meditation upon it. Take ten minutes**

Group Assignment

Discuss this case study as a class.

A fellow member of your church confided in you that he/she has a hard time getting anything out of Bible reading. The content is usually forgotten pretty quickly. The person also mentioned that he/she would like to learn how to study the Bible in order to go deeper into it. You agreed to meet with your fellow member to offer advice on how to study the Bible and get more out of Bible reading in general. What would you teach this person?