

Spiritual Discipline of Bible Intake

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To
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All Scripture verse references the New Living Translation (NLT).

Agenda

Introduction

Section 1: Who is God and How Does He Speak?

Section 2: The Reliability of the Word

Section 3: How Do We Practice Bible Intake?

Application

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Introduction - Getting Nourished by the Word

Psalm 19:7-11

The law of the Lord is perfect, reviving the soul; the testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple...

The spiritual discipline of Bible Intake is all about absorbing God's word into our lives. The goal is simple yet profound: to allow the Word to nourish us spiritually and actively work to conform us into the image of Christ. As Psalm 19:7 suggests, the Word of God is perfect and revives the soul.

Example: You might feel exhausted and anxious after a long week. When you spend time in the Psalms, you feel a clarity and peace return—that's the Word "reviving the soul."

Objective

Learners' awareness of the nurturing nature of Bible Intake in the development of an acquired love of Scripture and the intimacy of knowing God.

Who is God and How Does He Speak?

God is the Supreme Ruler and Ultimate Authority over the universe.

- His Nature - Trinity, holy, infinite, eternal, immortal, all-present, all-knowing, all-powerful, and all authority (1 Tim 1:17)
- His Character - just, loving, holy, truthful, compassionate, merciful, gracious, and forgiving
- His Work - Creator, Sustainer, Redeemer, Judge, Everything

Who is God and How Does He Speak?

Key Concept: Revelation

God has revealed Himself to humanity in two main ways:

General Revelation (Psalm 19:1-4; Romans 1:20): These are the general truths about God that can be known through the world He created—His power, deity, and glory are visible in nature.

Example: Staring at a massive canyon or the millions of stars in the night sky makes you realize there must be a powerful, intelligent Creator.

Who is God and How Does He Speak?

God has revealed Himself to humanity in two main ways:

Special Revelation: These are the more specific truths about God known through supernatural means. This includes:

- **Example (Physical Appearance):** God appearing to Moses in the burning bush (Exodus 3).
- **Example (Dreams/Visions):** Joseph's dreams in the book of Genesis or the Apostle Peter's vision of the sheet with animals in Acts 10.
- The **Written Word of God** (The Bible).
- Most importantly: **Jesus Christ** (The Living Word).

The Reliability of the Word

Key Concept: Trustworthiness

If the Bible is part of God's special revelation, how do we know it is reliable and can be trusted?

- **Archaeology:** Discoveries continue to support the historical and geographical accuracy of the biblical accounts.

Example: The discovery of the Pool of Siloam, which confirmed the location mentioned in the Gospel of John, or the Tel Dan Stele, which confirmed the existence of the "House of David."

- **History:** Historical records and non-biblical sources often confirm people, places, and events mentioned in Scripture.

Example: The Roman historian Josephus wrote about Jesus, corroborating the biblical account of his life and crucifixion.

How Do We Practice Bible Intake?

This discipline isn't about just *having* a Bible; it's about actively *engaging* with it. Nothing is as important to a believer's spiritual growth as the regular intake of Scripture.

- **Bible Study:** Deeper investigation into the context, meaning, and application of a text.
 - **Example:** Using a commentary or a study Bible to understand the cultural background of the book of Ephesians.
- **Bible Reading:** Simply reading through the Scriptures regularly (e.g., daily).
 - **Example:** Following a one-year Bible reading plan or committing to reading one Gospel a month.

How Do We Practice Bible Intake?

- **Listening:** Hearing the Bible read aloud (e.g., audio Bibles).
 - **Example:** Playing an audio Bible chapter during your commute to work or while doing household chores.
- **Meditation:** Reflecting deeply on a specific passage, chewing on it, and allowing the Holy Spirit to apply it to your heart.
 - **Example:** Slowing down to reflect on Psalm 23:1 ("The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want") and considering what it means to be truly satisfied in Christ.
- **Music:** Using music to absorb biblical truths (e.g., worship songs with rich, biblical lyrics).
 - **Example:** Listening to a song that quotes Scripture directly, like a hymn based on the book of Romans.
- **Memorization:** Hiding God's word in your heart so you can recall it at any time.
 - **Example:** Intentionally working to memorize Romans 8:28 so you can bring it to mind when you face a difficult situation.

Application

Take a moment to commit to one new or improved way to engage with the Bible this week. This could be trying to listen to a chapter while driving, or committing to meditating on one verse from Psalm 19 each morning.

Example: "I will try to read one chapter of the book of Proverbs every day this week to focus on wisdom."

Questions