

A Love for the Word

Intro

- When it comes to spiritual growth, there are clear ways to grow and clear ways to stunt our growth.
- This series will be a limited look at some of the 'nutrients' that bring about Christian growth.

"If reading the Bible can be compared to cruising the width of a clear lake in a motorboat, studying the Bible is like slowly crossing that same lake in a glass-bottom boat." –Donald Whitney, *Spiritual Disciplines for the Christian Life*, p. 35

Study the Word: 2 reasons

Reason #1: for your personal growth

2 Peter 1:2-3 Grace and peace be multiplied to you in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord; seeing that His divine power has granted to us everything pertaining to life and godliness, through the true knowledge of Him who called us by His own glory and excellence.

Scripture points us to the 'chief end'

- Remember the big question?

Question #1 "What is the chief end of man?: (looked at this at Pivot retreat)

Question #2 "What authority from God directs us how to glorify and enjoy Him?"

- The Bible is the most practical and authoritative help in pursuing the ultimate calling of our lives.

"The Bible is like a telescope. If a man looks through his telescope, then he sees worlds beyond; but if he looks at his telescope, then he does not see anything but that. The Bible is a thing to be looked through, to see that which is beyond." –Phillip Barsh

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Series "Am I Growing?" (pt 1)

May 15th,
Matt Mason

"I believe in Christianity as I believe that the Sun has risen: not only because I see it, but because by it I see everything else. —C.S. Lewis, "Is Theology Poetry"

"Disregard the study of God, and you sentence yourself to stumble and blunder through life blindfolded, as it were, with no sense of direction and no understanding of what surrounds you." —J.I. Packer

Scripture/truth has a drastic impact on our battle with sin

- Clearly the Bible points to a connection between the power of God's Word planted in our hearts and the bringing forth of the fruit of maturity.

James 1:21-22 Therefore, putting aside all filthiness and all that remains of wickedness, in humility receive *the word implanted, which is able to save your souls*. But prove yourselves doers of the word, and not merely hearers who delude themselves.

John 8:31-33 So Jesus was saying to those Jews who had believed Him, " If you continue in My word, then you are truly disciples of Mine; and you will know the truth, and the *truth will make you free*."

2 Tim 2:24-26 The Lord's bond-servant must not be quarrelsome, but be kind to all, *able to teach, patient when wronged, with gentleness correcting those who are in opposition, if perhaps God may grant them repentance leading to the knowledge of the truth*, and they may come to their senses and escape from the snare of the devil, having been held captive by him to do his will.

Ps 119:9 How can a young man keep his way pure? By keeping it according to Your Word.

Ps 119:11 *Your Word I have treasured in my heart, that I may not sin against You.*

"That sinful habit you struggle with daily, that low-grade addiction that keeps you in the throes of guilt and shame, that inability to walk with consistency in the things you know please God, ultimately will only be overcome when your heart, soul, mind, spirit, and will are captivated by the majesty, mercy, splendor, beauty, and magnificence of who God is and what He has done..."
-Sam Storms, Pleasures Evermore, p.106

Reason #2: for the sake of the future church

The Bible & the making of a 'bulwark'

2 Tim 3:14-17

- Wisdom that leads to salvation ... and beyond!
- What does 'every good work' entail?

A man who is well-grounded in the testimonies of the Scripture is the bulwark of the Church. —Jerome (c.340-420)

- The Church is made up of individuals, and its strength will depend on people who love the Word and courageously contend for God's Word to be maintained as the "rule of faith and practice" for the Church of all ages.

▶ A PRACTICAL ASIDE: LET THE TEACHERS HELP

- But, be careful choosing teachers (2 Tim 4.3)

His parting request (value of study viewed from the deathbed of Paul)

2 Tim 4.6-13

"He is inspired, and yet he wants books! He has been preaching at least for thirty years, and yet he wants books! He had seen the Lord, and yet he wants books!... He had written the major part of the New Testament, and yet he wants books!... YOU need to read.... Paul cries, "Bring the books" – join the cry."

—Charles Spurgeon, quoted by Ligon Duncan, *Dear Timothy*, p.1 98-199

- Let's die in exploration mode.
- Let's not get captured by the trivial.

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● Let's take up the Word, read it, study it, and let it's truth transform our lives.