

Quarter Two: Growing in a Relationship with God

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Lesson 4—The Role of the Bible

Sunday: The Most Powerful Weapon

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- **Last Week:** “Pride Versus Humility”
 - How to recognize ourselves & that pride inside
 - Impact of that pride in our relationship with God & others
 - How to walk in humility & look to Jesus
- **This Week:** “The Role of the Bible”
 - The Word of God has been fought for & fought over.
 - It’s been burned & banned.
 - It’s been copied in secret & smuggled.
 - People have died so that the Bible could be preserved.
 - Most published Book in the world, in any language.
 - *Those in Cuba – Bibles held together by staples; some are Christians & don’t even own one.
 - *Lack of knowledge of God’s Word is astounding
 - Western world: own more than one Bible & many collect dust.
 - Research shows that Americans struggle to name:
 - The 4 gospels
 - More than 2 or 3 of Jesus’ disciples
 - Even half of the 10 Commandments
 - American Bible Society’s annual report
 - Reading of the Bible is on the decline: % of Bible users in the US
 - 2000 – 59%
 - 2024 – 38%
 - Bible user is defined someone who read the Bible 3 – 4 times each year on their own (outside of a church setting)
 - Next week: “How to Study the Bible”
 - **This week:** Why the Bible?
 - What role does it play in the life of the believer?
 - How can it change me?

Memory Text: “For the Word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discernor of the thoughts and intents of the heart” (Heb 4:12, NKJV).

The week in brief:

- 1. **Sunday:** The Most Powerful Weapon (Jill)
 - Various Scriptures – what keeps us away from God’s Word; the strength & power of the Word for victory & transformation
- 2. **Monday:** Scripture, the Authority (John L)
 - 2 Tim 3:15 – 17 – importance of the Word in the life of the believer
- 3. **Tuesday:** Bible Truth (Ryan)
 - Various Scriptures – the “truth” in the Word; Jesus = the Truth; importance of the Word being absolute
- 4. **Wednesday:** Bible Claims (Rise)
 - Various Scriptures – the “words” in God’s Word having power for victory & life
- 5. **Thursday:** State of the Heart (John D)
 - Various –importance of faith & humility in receiving the power of God’s Word

Sunday: The Most Powerful Weapon

Eph 6:17, 18; Heb 4:12; Ps 33:6; John 11:41 – 44; Matt 4:1 – 11; Lam 3:22, 23; Eze 28:14 – 17

- Why do some people die for the Word and others let it collect dust?
 - Depends on how much you care about it / have experienced it.
 - *Friend: “The more you open your Bible, the more you would die for it.”
- Today’s lesson: (2 sides of same coin)
 - What happens in the life of the believer when we truly experience the Word?
 - Conversely, what happens when we neglect the Word?

Neglect the Word:

- Lesson: “One of the most significant attacks Satan can make on you is to stop you from spending time with God in His Word.”
- **5 dangers when we neglect the Word**
 - **1. Danger of the Drift**
 - Heb 2:1 – “Therefore we must give the more earnest heed to the things we have heard, lest we drift away.”
 - Danger isn’t always the “open” apostasy, but often, the subtle “drift”
 - When we ignore the Word, we can begin to drift - & eventually lose our salvation (Vs 3 – “how shall we escape if we neglect so great a salvation? ...”)
 - Neglect reading the Word – our spiritual life begins to drift
 - *Ask, why am I not as close to Jesus? Neglecting the Word
 - **2. Danger of Doubt**
 - Heb 3:12 – “Beware, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief in departing from the living God.”
 - Can doubt cause us to neglect God’s Word?
 - Doubt in the authority of God’s Word
 - Doubt in the teachings in God’s Word
 - *Ask, why is there doubt in my Christian exp? Neglecting the Word

- The first antidote against apostasy is an analysis of our own heart
 - Ps 139:23, 24 – search me Oh God
- **3. Danger of the Deaf**
 - Heb 5:11 – “of whom we have much to say (Jesus, the Son & High Priest), and hard to explain, since you have become dull of hearing.”
 - Danger of ignoring the teachings of the Word – our spiritual life decreases
 - We might even read God’s Word – but aren’t willing to apply – apathy, busyness, tiredness – gets in the way
 - Vs 12 – “For though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you again the first principles of the oracles of God; and you have come to need milk and not solid food.”
 - Neglect applying the Word, our spiritual life weakens
 - *Ask, why is my spiritual life weakening? Neglecting the Word
- **4. Danger of Deception**
 - Rom 1:25 – “Who exchanged the truth of God for the lie...”
 - Why would we change the truth for a lie?
 - God’s Word trains us to recognize truth from error. When it’s neglected, right & wrong become blurry.
 - *No moral absolutes vs the absolute truth of God’s Word
 - *Ask, why am I confused on direction? Neglecting the Word
- **5. Danger of Disobedience**
 - James 1:22 – “But be doers of the Word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves.”
 - Neglect obeying the Word, we walk into deception – we become powerless
 - Hearers look hastily at their face & forget what it looked like;
 - Doers look intensely into the law & Jesus & act on it
 - Hearers remain unchanged because of their superficial glance at themselves, while doers are changed since they act
 - *Ask, why do I not have victory? Neglecting the Word

Experience the Word:

- Don’t need to expound: rest of lesson on what the Word does in the believer’s life.
- **7 gifts of the Word**
 - **1. God’s Word has power**
 - Heb 4:12 – Word is living & powerful
 - Ps 33:9 – “He spake & it was done; He commanded & it stood fast”
 - **2. God’s Word can create & recreate**
 - Gen 1:1 – In the beginning, God created (*bara* = made something from nothing)
 - Ps 51:10 – Create (*bara*) in me a clean heart & renew a right spirit within me

- **3. God's Word grows my faith**
 - Rom 10:17 – faith comes by hearing & hearing by the Word
- **4. God's Word reveals Jesus**
 - John 1:1 – in the beginning was the Word & the Word was with God & the Word was God... Vs 14 - & the Word become flesh & dwelt among us
 - makes Satan powerless
- **5. God's Word transforms me**
 - John 17:17 – Sanctify (from *hagios*) them through Your truth...
 - Jesus = the Truth (John 14:6 ... I am the Way...)
 - Eph 5:26 – “That He might **sanctify** and cleanse her with the washing of water by the Word.”
 - Sanctify = *hagios* = set apart, sanctify, make holy
- **6. God's Word gives me victory**
 - Matt 4:4 – “But He (Jesus) answered and said, ‘It is written, “Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God.””’
 - Use the Word against temptation
 - Ps 119:11 – Your Word have I hid in my heart that I might not sin...
- **7. God's Word is trustworthy**
 - Ps 18:30, NLT – “God's way is perfect. All the Lord's promises prove true. He is a shield for all who look to Him for protection.”

5 dangers when we neglect God's Word

- 1. Danger of the Drift
 - Ask, why am I not as close to Jesus? I'm neglecting the Word.
- 2. Danger of Doubt
 - Ask, why is there doubt in my Christian experience? I'm neglecting the Word.
- 3. Danger of the Deaf
 - Ask, why is my spiritual life weakening? I'm neglecting the Word.
- 4. Danger of Deception
 - Ask, why am I confused on direction? I'm neglecting the Word.
- 5. Danger of Disobedience
 - Ask, why do I not have victory? I'm neglecting the Word.

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- 6. God's Word gives me victory
- 7. God's Word is trustworthy

Q: How can you live by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God?

Lesson 5: “How to Study the Bible”