

Xenos Christian Fellowship
Christian Principles Unit 3, Week 4
The Word as a Means of Growth & Overview of the Bible

Introduction

Importance of the Word as a Means of Growth

- A. ESSENTIAL FOR SPIRITUAL HEALTH (1 **Pet. 2:2***) like newborn babes, long for the pure milk of the word, that by it you may grow in respect to salvation,

Attitude:

Appetite:

Aim:

See also Psalm 1; Matt. 7:24-27; Jn. 8:31,32; 17:17; 2 Cor. 3:18; Rom. 12:2; 1 Tim. 4:6

How often do we need Word intake?

Acts 2:42 And they were continually devoting themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer.

Matt. 4:4; Ps. 1:2; 119:97

Deut. 8:3- "And He humbled you and let you be hungry, and fed you with manna which you did not know, nor did your fathers know, that He might make you understand that man does not live by bread alone, but man lives by everything that proceeds out of the mouth of the LORD.

- B. ESSENTIAL FOR SPIRITUAL MATURITY (**Heb. 5:11-14****) 11 Concerning him we have much to say, and it is hard to explain, since you have become dull of hearing. 12 For though by this time you ought to be teachers, you have need again for someone to teach you the elementary principles of the oracles of God, and you have come to need milk and not solid food. 13 For everyone who partakes only of milk is not accustomed to the word of righteousness, for he is a babe. 14 But solid food is for the mature, who because of practice have their senses trained to discern good and evil.

1. We should be

2. We should be

3. We should be

4. We should be

1 Cor. 2:15 "able to appraise all things"

How quickly should we be able to attain this level of understanding?

1 Cor. 2:13-3:2** ...which things we also speak, not in words taught by human wisdom, but in those taught by the Spirit, combining spiritual thoughts with spiritual words. 14 But a natural man does not accept the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness to him, and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually appraised.¹⁵ But he who is spiritual appraises all things, yet he himself is appraised by no man. 16 For WHO HAS KNOWN THE MIND OF THE LORD, THAT HE SHOULD INSTRUCT HIM? But we have the mind of Christ. 3:1 And I, brethren, could not speak to you as to spiritual men, but as to men of flesh, as to babes in Christ. 2 I gave you milk to drink, not solid food; for you were not yet able to receive it. Indeed, even now you are not yet able,

Signs that we may be going soft in our Biblical knowledge:

-
-
-

Phil. 1:9; 1 Jn. 3:18; Eph. 4:14,15

C. ESSENTIAL FOR EFFECTIVE MINISTRY

2 Tim. 3:16-4:4- All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness;¹⁷ that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work. ^{4:1} I solemnly charge *you* in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who is to judge the living and the dead, and by His appearing and His kingdom: ² preach the word; be ready in season *and* out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort, with great patience and instruction. ³ For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but *wanting* to have their ears tickled, they will accumulate for themselves teachers in accordance to their own desires; ⁴ and will turn away their ears from the truth, and will turn aside to myths.

-
-
-
-

Heb. 4:12* For the word of God is living and active and sharper than any two-edged sword, and piercing as far as the division of soul and spirit, of both joints and marrow, and able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart.

Relationship with Other Means Of Growth

Prayer: In our prayer life, the Bible provides the proper basis for knowing God by telling us what he is like. According to Jesus, effective prayer is based on the Word (John 15:7). John promises that "if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us. And if we know that He hears us in whatever we ask, we know that we have the requests which we have asked from Him" (1 John 5:14). This is a powerful promise, but it is conditional. We have to ask "according to His will." But how do we know what God's will is apart from Scripture?

Ministry: Serving love is a means of growth, but effective service involves "speaking the truth in love" (Ephesians 4:15). No ministry will have the power God wants it to have unless the one ministering is powerful in the Word of God. Even task-oriented ministers who may not teach or preach need the wisdom available in God's Word. We will not be effective at ministry or in our personal growth if we cannot fend off the attacks of Satan, and this is not possible unless we are able to cite our authority from Scripture.

Body-Life: The basis for Christian fellowship is not only love but truth. The Body of Christ is a community of truth, and these two can never be separated. In Philippians 1:9-10 Paul prays, "that your love may abound still more and more in real knowledge and all discernment, so that you may approve the things that are excellent, in order to be sincere and blameless until the day of Christ." Truth is the framework that makes real love possible. This is why we are called on to "speak the truth in love" to one another (Ephesians 4:15).

Discipline Of The Holy Spirit: The discipline of the Holy Spirit is a means of growth, but it won't be effective unless we respond appropriately. We need Scripture, like that in Hebrews 12, to teach us how to respond to discipline in a way that promotes growth, as we shall see.

Overview of the Bible

Dates	Events	Scriptures
?	<p>Creation ⇒ Intimacy with God and dominion, conditioned on obedience (the forbidden fruit symbolizes the choice to obey or disobey God)</p> <p>The Fall and its effects: ⇒ #1 SEPARATION FROM GOD ⇒ #2 <u>LOST DOMINION</u></p> <p>God's Rescue Plan (Genesis 3:15)</p>	<p>Genesis 1, 2</p> <p>Genesis 3-11</p>
2100BC - 1800BC 1440BC	<p>The Abrahamic Covenant ⇒ Land ⇒ Nation ⇒ Blessing to the World</p> <p>The Lives of the Patriarchs and the Egyptian Sojourn</p> <p>Exodus from Egypt</p>	<p>Genesis 12:1-3</p> <p>Genesis 12-50</p> <p>Exodus 1-18</p>
1400BC 1375- 1050BC	<p>The Mosaic Covenant (a.k.a. "Old Covenant") ⇒ National Identity and the terms of staying in the land ⇒ Atonement blessing via sacrificial system (addresses problem #1 from the Fall: SEPARATION FROM GOD)</p> <p>The Conquest of the Land and Subsequent Struggles</p>	<p>Exodus 19- Deuteronomy 34</p> <p>Joshua-Judges- Ruth</p>
1050BC 1000BC 931BC 750- 570BC	<p>The Monarchy begins with Saul</p> <p>The Davidic Covenant ⇒ King & kingdom blessing (addresses problem #2 from the fall: <u>LOST DOMINION</u>)</p> <p>Divided Monarchy</p> <p>The Prophets & their two Portraits of the Messiah ⇒ Servant (Isaiah 53) ⇒ <u>King (Isaiah 9, 11)</u></p>	<p>1 Sam. 1-2 Kings</p> <p>2 Sam. 7:12-16</p> <p>Isaiah, Ezekiel, Micah, Jeremiah</p>

722BC	Exile of the Northern Kingdom (Israel) to Assyria	
600BC	Exile of the Southern Kingdom (Judah) to Babylon ⇒ <u>Daniel's vision of the Kingdom of God</u>	Daniel 2, 7, 8, 9
550BC	The New Covenant Foretold	Jer. 31:31-33
538BC	Return from Exile	Ezra-Nehemiah
4 BC-33AD	Jesus Christ's Coming #1 (Servant) ⇒ <i>Atonement blessing</i> fulfilled (addresses problem #1 from the Fall: SEPARATION FROM GOD)	Jn. 1:29, Mk. 10:45, Lk. 22:19,20
33 AD-?	The Church Age ⇒ The <i>atonement blessing</i> expounded (Epistles) and expanded (Acts)	Mt. 24:4;28:18-20; Acts 1:8
70 AD	Destruction of Jerusalem and Scattering of the Jews World-wide spread of the gospel	
1948, 1967	Regathering of Israel	
?	Jesus Christ's Coming #2 (King) The Tribulation Period	Rev. 4-22
?	⇒ The Nations are blessed as per the Abrahamic Covenant ⇒ <i>King & kingdom blessing fulfilled</i>: restored to co-rulership (addresses problem #2 from the Fall: LOST DOMINION)	Rev. 5:9,10, Rev. 7:9
?	⇒ The New Heavens and the New Earth (eternal Life)	Rev. 22:1-3

The Function of the Books of the Bible

Old Testament (39 books)	New Testament (27 Books)
<p>Narrative Books: THINGS THAT HAPPENED THAT WERE IMPORTANT TO GOD'S PLAN: Multiplying descendants of Abraham, forming them into a nation with their own land, and ruling them through a king whose heart was after God's.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Key narrative books: Genesis, Exodus, Joshua, 1 and 2 Samuel ➤ The narrative books revolve around the Abrahamic and Davidic Covenants <p>Books of the Prophets: GOD'S VIEW OF WHERE HIS PLAN IS AT AND WHERE IT'S GOING IN THE FUTURE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ The prophets serve as "covenant prosecutors" who call on Israel's lack of compliance to the Mosaic covenant and the consequences ➤ The prophets (God's spokespersons) give increasingly clearer pictures of how God is being faithful to his covenant promises (above) to Abraham and David. ➤ Key Prophetic Books: Isaiah & Daniel <p>Wisdom Books: HOW TO ORIENT YOUR LIFE AROUND GOD'S PLAN</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Key wisdom books: Psalms & Proverbs 	<p>Narrative Books: WHAT JESUS DID AND IS DOING IN THE CHURCH: Jesus announced the arrival of his kingdom and paid for the sins of the world on the cross. Within these narratives are "parables" that illustrate Jesus' theology in vivid, pictorial ways. Jesus also works through the church, the body of Christ, to spread his message in the world.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Key Narrative books: Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, & Acts <p>Letters: RESPONDING TO WHAT JESUS DID AND IS DOING IN OUR LIVES: Urging believers to come more fully under His rule by responding to the Cross. This involves taking His message to the world as we follow Him personally and live in close fellowship with one another</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Key Letters: Romans, Galatians & Ephesians <p>Prophecy: WHAT JESUS <i>WILL DO</i>: Bring about an end to this present phase of history & establish his rule on the earth.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ The Book of Revelation <p>The New Testament is the final unfolding of God's plan in Jesus Christ, the promised descendant of Abraham and David (Matt. 1:1; Rev. 7:9).</p>
<p>Focus is on the Nation of Israel</p>	<p>Focus is on the body of Christ and the Nations of the World</p>

Memory Verses

1 Pet. 2:2* - We will always be dependent on God's Word for spiritual growth.

1 Cor. 2:13-3:2** & Heb. 5:11-14** - Our perspective, world view, and ability to discern what is good is dependent on God's Word. An in-depth understanding of the Word is necessary for spiritual maturity.

Heb. 4:12* - God uses the Bible to change lives.

Assignment

Read handout from *Three Crucial Questions About the Bible*, page 72-83 and write a 1-page summary.