

## **Spiritual Disciplines Series**

**May 06, 2020**

**Scripture: Colossians 2:1-4**

**1 For I would that ye knew what great conflict I have for you, and *for* them at Laodicea, and *for* as many as have not seen my face in the flesh;**

**2 That their hearts might be comforted, being knit together in love, and unto all riches of the full assurance of understanding, to the acknowledgement of the mystery of God, and of the Father, and of Christ;**

**3 In whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.**

**4 And this I say, lest any man should beguile you with enticing words.**

**Summary: Reading the word of God is important but with 2000 years of separation how are we supposed to understand the word of God?**

### **1. Spiritual Disciplines Series**

**With that in mind: do you ever feel like you truly want to know Him but don't really know how?**

**Getting to know God can seem so complicated sometimes but it doesn't have to be.**

**Man is not an independent entity, the Bible calls us vessels.**

**Vessels are designed to be filled with something.**

**We were designed to fill ourselves with God but we sometimes stray from that design.**

**Our lives are filled with one of three things: with ourselves, with God, or with Satan.**

**Sin is essentially when we fill our lives with something other than God.**

**What we put into our lives effects what we get out of them.**

**Man is designed to be filled with God.**

**So then it is important for us to learn how to do that.**

**How do we fill ourselves with God while keeping out the subversive forces of our enemy and our own selfish nature?**

**How do we fill ourselves with God? Psalm 119:11**

**Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee.**

**If we want to fill our lives with God we need to invest ourselves in the Spiritual disciplines.**

**2 Timothy 2:15**

**15 Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.**

**Our lives need more God and less us. Proverbs 3:5-6 (NIV)**

**Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways submit to Him, and He will make your paths straight.**

**When we follow Him, act like He acts, and obey His commands, we open the door for Him to fill our lives that we may become vessels of God.**

**If we want to know God we have to be filled with Him and that takes more than one day a week.**

**We cannot be filled with God simply by attending church on Sunday morning and doing nothing else.**

**If the only dose of Him we get is on Sunday mornings then we cannot hope to be filled with Him.**

**Consider your eating habits.**

**Some people prefer to eat a few big meals a day while others are ‘snickers’ and will eat a little bit all throughout the day.**

**Most people however, are not comfortable eating once or twice a week.**

**Physically you probably wouldn’t starve to death if you ate once or twice a week, but you wouldn’t be able to really accomplish anything because your energy level would be too low.**

**The same is true in our Spiritual lives.**

**When we are content being Spiritual fed once or twice a week we may not die but we are not spiritually healthy.**

**By investing in the Spiritual disciplines we enable ourselves to be filled with God by taking in the nature God.**

**In order to know God we need the Spiritual disciplines.**

**Of all the things a doctor can have, what would you say is the most important? (ASK) For me the most important thing a doctor can have is an understanding of medicine.**

**I want to know that the doctor I go to knows what he is talking about because if he doesn’t know what to do to fix me, no skill as a surgeon, no bedside manner is really going to matter.**

**The most important thing a doctor can have is an intimate understanding of medicine.**

**Just as a doctor should know medicine so Christians should know God.**

**One of the most important ways to know God comes from investing ourselves in the training manual that He gave us in His word.**

**Bible study is perhaps most important Spiritual discipline.**

**Honestly if we truly want to know God, where better to start than with the love letter He wrote us.**

**The Bible is one of the key elements we must have to fill ourselves with God so that we may become His vessels.**

The Barna group did a survey on Bible study and its results are heartbreaking. Only 18% of born again Christians claim to read the Bible every day. That is less than 1 out of 5. 23%, almost 1 in every 4 Christians admits to never reading the word of God. This is a serious problem. Effectively what these statistics tell us is that only 18% of born again Christian are even close to a healthy relationship with Christ and are getting their daily bread. We know Christianity is not about a religion or rules but a relationship. This is not say that these people who aren't reading their Bibles cannot be saved or that they don't have a relationship with God but the Bible is God's primary way of communicating with us. What this shows us is that one of primary ways we can get to know God so that we can be filled with Him is being pretty commonly neglected.

Nothing can replace the importance of God's word.

The Bible is the food for our souls. Psalm 34:8

**8 O taste and see that the LORD is good: blessed is the man that trusteth in him.**

It is vital to our lives. For in its pages are contained the words of God.

In its pages we find life.

They tell us of the law of God that we have broken.

They tell us of the love of God sending His Son to redeem us from our sin.

They tell us how to live our new redeemed life.

What we need for life is found in the pages of word of God.

It tells us how to live, how to find meaning, and most importantly how to know God.

One of the greatest dangers facing the church right now is biblical illiteracy (a lack of ability to read and write).

So many are lead astray by false teaching because they don't know the truth well enough to recognize a lie.

**Many of us don't know the word of God like we should.**

**If we don't know it, how can we share with others?**

**If we don't know it how can we allow it to change our lives?**

**The study of God's word is one of the most important spiritual disciplines.**

**We must know the truth. If we don't we can't live it. John 8:32**

**32 And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.**

**We need to study the word of God but sometimes we misunderstand what that really means.**

**We must develop a good habit of Biblical intake in our lives.**

**We won't see the word of God coming out of our lives unless we are faithful to put it in.**

**In Colossians 2:2 Paul shows us the importance of the word of God in our lives.**

**Col 2:2 My purpose is that they may be encouraged in heart and united in love, so that they may have the full riches of complete understanding, in order that they may know the mystery of God, namely, Christ,**

**Col 2:3 in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.**

**Do you see Paul's desire? He is wants the church to experience the full riches of complete understanding.**

**It is important in our study of the word of God to do more than just read.**

**Bible Study is not just about learning the words but about understanding what they mean because Bible knowledge by itself can be dangerous.**

**Look at the problem that Jesus had with the religious leaders of His day.**

**They knew their Bible front, back, sideways, and inside out.**

**The problem was they knew the Scripture but they did not understand what they meant and it didn't affect how they lived.**

**Bible study is not just about reading, it is about understand what is really being said.**

**To understand Scripture you must read it in context**

**Did you know that you can make the Bible say whatever you want?**

**If you pick and choose verses you can make it mean whatever you want, so you can do whatever you want with it.**

**You can make the Bible support gay marriage.**

**You can make it support murder.**

**Effectively if you ignore context then you can easily change the meaning of Scripture and miss the point all together.**

**You can actually make it say some terrible things:**

**Let me show you:**

**Mt 27:5 Then Judas went away and hanged himself.**

**Luke 17:31: "Go and do likewise."**

**And John 13:27- "What you are about to do, do quickly,"**

**That is all Scripture.**

**Some of it is from the mouth of Jesus Himself.**

**Is that what Scripture is saying?**

**Should we go out and hang ourselves? No. That is terrible.**

**To understand Scripture you must understand Context (the situation, background, framework, circumstance).**

**That example is obvious in its error any time we take Scripture out of context it poses this same danger.**

**Taking a passage out of context is like trying to use a computer after turning it off you have removed its power source.**

**The problem is when we take Scripture out of context we make people promises from God that God never made.**

**Then what happens when things don't play out that way? Who do they blame?**

**Not us for our imperfect interpretation, they blame God.**

**The example is a little silly but any time we take Scripture out of context it can do just as much damage as if we told someone the Bible says they should go hang themselves.**

**If we do not understand the truth we are in danger of doing the wrong thing and believing it to be right.**

**When we ignore context we make Scripture all about us and we change the word of God to fit with our lives rather than changing our lives to fit with the word of God.**

**In order to get the truth of the word of God we have to understand what it is really saying and to do this we need context.**

**If the author of Hebrews had written the Hebrews 12:1 specifically to us then he would have been a very good pastor.**

**1 Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us,**

**His audience was experiencing persecution and considering walking away from the faith. They needed encouragement so what good what it do if he wrote them a letter that wasn't even relevant for 2000 years? Do you see what I am saying? I am not saying that the Bible isn't relevant to us or that it is a second hand love letter. The reason the Bible was canonized is that it is God's inspired word for everyone and it is just as relevant and important today as it**

**was 2000 years ago. What I am saying is in order for us to understand what God is saying to us now we need to have an awareness of what He was saying to His original audience and we need to read His words in the context that they were written.**

**Remember we have the Spirit of God in us that will help guide us to the truth when we allow him to.**

**In many ways reading the Bible is a lot like reading a journal.**

**You see these statements and emotions being expressed but in order to truly understand them you need to know what was going on when they were written.**

**If you just flip open to some random page you feel lead to you may take what you see out of context.**

**If you start at the beginning you learn the history that leads up to what you read so that you can understand the events.**

**This is what we need to do with Scripture.**

**What events lead up this point?**

**What is going on at the time this was written?**

**We need to fill in the gaps understanding Scripture as a whole and reading it in context.**