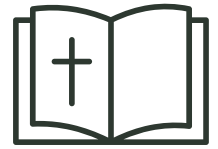


HOW TO HEAR FROM GOD?



LEARNING HOW TO READ
AND STUDY GOD'S WORD



WHY IS IT IMPORTANT TO READ AND STUDY GOD'S WORD?



HEARING GOD'S VOICE COMES
FROM UNDERSTANDING HIS VOICE.
THE BEST WAY TO UNDERSTAND
GOD'S VOICE IS TO READ AND
STUDY HIS WORD.

MAIN POINTS:



- **WHAT** ROLE DOES READING AND LEARNING GOD'S WORD PLAY IN OUR SANCTIFICATION?
- **WHY** DO WE STRUGGLE TO READ AND LEARN SCRIPTURE?
- **HOW** CAN READING AND LEARNING SCRIPTURE HELP US DISTINGUISH BETWEEN GOD'S VOICE AND OTHERS?

WHAT ROLE DOES READING AND LEARNING GOD'S WORD PLAY IN OUR SANCTIFICATION?



WHY IS SCRIPTURE IMPORTANT?

- **2 Timothy 3:16-17 (NLT):** All Scripture is inspired by God and is useful to teach us what is true and to make us realize what is wrong in our lives. It corrects us when we are wrong and teaches us to do what is right. God uses it to prepare and equip his people to do every good work.
- **2 Timothy 3:16-17 (NLT):** All Scripture is God-breathed [given by divine inspiration] and is profitable for instruction, for conviction [of sin], for correction [of error and restoration to obedience], for training in righteousness [learning to live in conformity to God's will, both publicly and privately—behaving honorably with personal integrity and moral courage]; so that the man of God may be complete and proficient, outfitted and thoroughly equipped for every good work..

SCRIPTURE...

- **INSTRUCTS OUR LIVES** (GIVES US GUIDANCE AND WISDOM).
- **CONVICTS OUR LIVES** (TELLS US WHAT SIN IS).
- **CORRECTS OUR LIVES** (SHOWS US A BETTER WAY OF DOING THINGS).
- **TRAINS OUR LIVES** (GROWS US TO BECOME MATURE BELIEVERS, EQUIPPED TO CARRY OUT THE GREAT COMMISSION).
- **COMPLETES OUR LIVES** (GOD'S WORD IS OUR SUSTAINING BREAD, IT IS FULFILLING TO OUR SOULS).

ILLUSTRATION:



IF GROWING DEEPER IN YOUR FAITH IS THE GAME. GOD IS THE HEAD COACH AND SCRIPTURE IS THE PLAYBOOK.

- Scripture is our metaphorical “playbook for life”. God gives us the ways to overcome the enemy through His Word.
- When we study and commit the playbook to our hearts, the game becomes second nature.



HOW CAN WE KNOW WHAT TO DO ON THE FIELD IF WE DON'T EVER LOOK AT THE PLAYBOOK?

- Scripture is our number one tool for knowing, learning, understanding, and applying the ways of Jesus.
- If we neglect to read and study God's Word, we're ultimately neglecting the number one way for us to grow in our sanctification.



THE BETTER WE KNOW SCRIPTURE, THE BETTER WE WILL BE ABLE TO RECOGNIZE TRUTH.

- God will never contradict his Word.
- If we feel like God is saying something but it contradicts Scripture we can be sure that it is not from God.
- Knowing God's Word helps us recognize the enemies attacks.
- Knowing God's Word helps give us awareness of when he is speaking to us.

SO WHY DO WE STRUGGLE TO READ AND LEARN SCRIPTURE?



DISTRACTIONS

- We live in a culture that glorifies busyness.
- Over 50% of Americans admit to being addicted to their phone.
- The average screen time among teenagers is 8 hours and 39 minutes per day.
- We have no problem filling our time with entertainment, social media, and work, yet we struggle to set aside an hour to spend with God in Scripture and prayer.



INTIMIDATION AND OPPOSITION

- We feel overwhelmed by the length and complexity of the Bible.
- Often times we don't know where to start or we struggle with knowing what to read.
- We don't understand something or we don't feel God speaking to us so we give up.
- The enemy does not want you reading Scripture, therefore, he uses all of these tactics to attack us and discourage us from reading God's Word.



LACK OF BIBLE INTAKE

- We are often times more focused on the quantity of our reading than we are on the quality of our reading (What purpose does reading serve if you are not committing and applying what you have read to your life?)
- We rely too heavily on media to teach us the Word. (There are many great resources online that can help you better understand Scripture, but if you solely rely on media to learn about Jesus, you will miss out on having a personal relationship with him.)
- We read devotionals more than we read Scripture. (Devotionals are great, but they should only supplement - not replace - Scripture.)

HOW CAN READING AND LEARNING SCRIPTURE HELP US DISTINGUISH BETWEEN GOD'S VOICE AND OTHERS?

 HOW DOES GOD SPEAK?

GOD SPEAKS... 

- Through Scripture
- Through People
- Through the Spirit
- Through the Son (Jesus)
- Through Angels
- Through Dreams and Visions
- Through Circumstances and Events
- Through an Audible Voice
- **Through a Still, Quiet Voice**

1 Kings 19:11-13 (NIV): “The Lord said, “Go out and stand on the mountain in the presence of the Lord, for the Lord is about to pass by.”

Then a great and powerful wind tore the mountains apart and shattered the rocks before the Lord, but the Lord was not in the wind. After the wind there was an earthquake, but the Lord was not in the earthquake. After the earthquake came a fire, but the Lord was not in the fire. And after the fire came **a gentle whisper**. When Elijah heard it, he pulled his cloak over his face and went out and stood at the mouth of the cave.”



ARE YOU TRYING TO FIND GOD'S VOICE IN THE CHAOS OR ARE YOU SEEKING HIS VOICE IN THE STILL AND QUIET?

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

- In what ways do you struggle to read and/or study God's Word?
- What distractions get in the way of you spending time with God?
- What role does Scripture play in your life? Do you prioritize spending time in God's Word over entertainment, distractions, busyness, etc.
- Have you ever struggled with reading the Bible whether it was not having the motivation to read, being confused by something you read, or not knowing where to start?

CHALLENGE

- Find a time in your day where you can spend time with God, free of all distractions.
- Pick out one verse or passage of Scripture to read every day for a week.
- Memorize the verse or passage and commit it to your heart.
- Meditate on the verse or passage by asking yourself these questions: "What is God saying to me through this?" "How can I apply this verse to my life?" "Where is the Gospel in this verse?"
- Once you have committed the verse or passage to your heart, pick a new verse or passage and repeat the steps.