

## An Absorbing Love of God's Word

Psalm 19:7-11; Matthew 4:4; Hebrews 4:12; 2 Timothy 3:16; Acts 20:21, 26-27

*To CARE for one another in truth and in love,  
To GROW as followers of Jesus,  
To SERVE those God has placed in our path.  
– CG Mission Statement*

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**Icebreaker:** Describe the Bible reading that did or did not take place in your home as you were growing up. How has it affected your view of the Bible today?

**Worship:** Psalm 119: 97-106

*(Read three times, spending time in reflection after each, listening for what God's invitation to you might be.)*

Oh how I love your law!

It is my meditation all the day.

Your commandment makes me wiser than my enemies, for it is ever with me.

I have more understanding than all my teachers, for your testimonies are my meditation.

I understand more than the aged, for I keep your precepts.

I hold back my feet from every evil way, in order to keep your word.

I do not turn aside from your rules, for you have taught me.

How sweet are your words to my taste, sweeter than honey to my mouth!

Through your precepts I get understanding; therefore I hate every false way.

Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path.

I have sworn an oath and confirmed it, to keep your righteous rules.

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**Bible Passage & Guiding Question** *(The following question is intended to help frame your discussion. Keep it in mind as you read the bible passage and review the sermon summary together.)*

**Bible Passage:** Psalm 19:7-11; Matthew 4:4; Hebrews 4:12; 2 Timothy 3:16; Acts 20:21, 26-27

**Guiding Question:** What keeps us from reading and cherishing God's Word?

### Sermon Summary

A healthy church preaches, reads and abides in the whole Word of God (John 8:31). We cannot live in God's world in God's way without being immersed in it. For many of us, though, reading the Bible is like homework or flossing teeth. Why? Why do we have such trouble with the Bible?

(1) Many of us don't trust it, as if it cannot hold up to reasonable scrutiny. But whether we trust the Bible has nothing to do with our intelligence. Nor should we ever fear we'll have to check our intellect when digging into it. (2) Often we don't realize our need for the Bible because we hide and deny our brokenness, which blinds us to our need for Jesus. (3) We all need help learning how to read God's Word, which is often confusing and troubling. For in learning to read and meditate on it, we allow God's promises to permeate our souls. (4) Ultimately, we feel unworthy. And by withholding something good for us, we're able to punish ourselves for our failings.

Where will we get the conviction that we are worth it? That's why it's so important to get to the Gospel each day – which holds together the glorious paradox that we are far worse than we've ever imagined but far more loved than we ever dared hope. How then can we change our posture toward the Bible so we can truly rest in God's promises?

A healthy community depends on God's Word. Meditating on God's promises will ground and transform us, dramatically affecting our outlook each day. Experiencing this will change our perspective from "I should read the Bible" to "I must." Jesus himself said He couldn't live without God's Word (Matt 4:4, 7:24)... and if the wisest, most trustworthy person who ever lived trusted in the Bible, shouldn't we as well?

A healthy community cherishes God's Word. Every book of the Bible is a love letter, written by the One who cares about us most. It's as if God is saying, *"I want you to realize that I never underestimated how thoroughly you'd mess up your life or how painfully you would struggle and suffer. And I don't want you to underestimate your failures or struggles either. They're all part of the story I'm telling. But neither have I underestimated my determination or ability to enter both the mess you've made and the pain you feel... then turn everything around. I can and I will make everything good again. Never underestimate me."* To begin to know how deeply God cherishes us is to begin to cherish His precious Word.

A healthy community submits to God's Word. We place our whole lives under it. For if we only follow God's Word when we agree with it, then there's no way it can comfort us when we need it most. We have to let the Bible challenge and even offend us, because it reveals us to ourselves like nothing else (Heb 4:12). Yes, if we read the whole Bible, each of us will come across doctrines we don't like, for it has something to offend all sides. But Jesus didn't come to pick sides; He came to be our king.

A healthy community commits to knowing and remains curious about God's Word, making it a life goal to learn and become more steeped in it, realizing there will always be so much more to know – and that we want to get to know – about our Father's deep abiding love for us.

### Discussion Questions *(It's better to wrestle deeply with a few good questions than to gloss over many.)*

- Read Psalm 19:7-11 and discuss the ways the word of God is described and its purpose in our lives.
  - From Psalm 19:11 What two things does the Bible do for us?
- If we don't discipline ourselves to hear and read the Bible regularly what negative consequences could occur?
  - What keeps us from depending upon, submitting to and cherishing the Bible?
  - Name a time when you had to rely on God's word.
- How do you know you can trust the Bible and build your life upon it? See 2 Timothy 3:16.
  - Give an example of how the Bible has taught, corrected, or trained you in righteousness.
  - When have you depended on God's word to get you through a difficult time? What did you learn?
- What applications can we make from Hebrews 4:12?
  - Why is brokenness, vulnerability, and depth required for true spiritual community?
- Discuss the idea that all of scripture points to Jesus? Give some examples.
- What steps can you take to cultivate a more regular habit of meditating on, being curious about and cherishing God's word? See Job 23:12; Jeremiah 15:16.
  - How can your community group help you with those steps?

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### What Can We Be Praying For?

As a group consider joining the pre-service prayer time for our church on Sundays at 9:30 AM to 9:50 AM. (Meet in the band room, the room with the trophies on the wall.)

Find verses or passages in the Bible that speak to the needs and concerns of your prayer requests. Meditate on the verses this week.

### Engage & Experience

Consider how the following might enhance your meditating on and reading of Scripture:

- Memorize key verses.
- Pray through the Psalms.
- Journal prayers/thoughts as well as observations/questions about the reading.
- Read cross-references.
- See how keywords are used in other passages of the Bible.
- Outline chapters, a paragraph at a time.
- Do a book study, character study, topical study or word study.