

Prayer & Fasting pt 7 Hiding God's Word in your heart

Intro: Stefan Duerksen Lead Pastor

SONG: Way Maker - Pick a song you like, get your Big Asks, Hit Play & Pray!

Church-Wide Prayer: Life on Mission (Mt 28:18-20, Mt 22:37-40): Love, serve & disciple people to Jesus

- **Prayer & Fasting Big Asks** – pray for your top requests! Pray in faith! Bring your needs to God!
- **Personal: Each one, reach one** – who is one person whom you can build a relationship with? Serve? Help? Encourage? Share your faith with? To Disciple towards Jesus. Pray for them by name. Pray for opportunities to connect with them
- **Church-Wide:** Pray for 1000 ppl in Southland to embrace the Great Commission through “each one, reach one” young & old – everyone using their lives as a living testimony of Christ’s love.
- Pray for Equipping Conference (next weekend). For Dr. Sean McDowell as he travels here. For the sessions to bear fruit in our church and personal lives.
- For our young people, parents, adults, to be equipped to share their faith, have confidence for handling common objections to Christianity, to stand firm despite cultural pressures to conform to a new sexual ethic.
- Israel - For the families of the hostages who are losing hope
- Israel - For courage for believers in the nations to publicly take a stand for Israel
- Israel - For many to turn to God in Israel and Gaza, including Hamas terrorists.

A. Memorize the Bible? I can't do that!

Psalms 119:9-11 How can a young man keep his way pure? By guarding it according to your word. With my whole heart I seek you; let me not wander from your commandments! I have stored up your word in my heart, that I might not sin against you.

Overcoming sin: How many of you believe this? Yet, Jesus used SCRIPTURE on more than one occasion to combat secular ideas and temptation.

Psalms 1:1-3 Blessed is the man who walks not in the counsel of the wicked, nor stands in the way of sinners, nor sits in the seat of scoffers; but his delight is in the law of the Lord, and on his law he meditates day and night. He is like a tree planted by streams of water that yields its fruit in its season, and its leaf does not wither. In all that he does, he prospers.

Worldview: George Barna *described the outcome. “If Jesus Christ came to this planet as a model of how we ought to live, then our goal should be to act like Jesus. Sadly, few people consistently demonstrate the love, obedience and priorities of Jesus. The primary reason that people do not act like Jesus is because they do not think like Jesus. Behavior stems from what we think – our attitudes, beliefs, values and opinions. Although most people own a Bible and know some of its content, our research found that most Americans have little idea how to integrate core biblical principles to form a unified and meaningful response to the challenges and opportunities of life. We’re often more concerned with survival amidst chaos than with experiencing truth and significance.”*

The Power of 4: https://bttbfiles.com/web/docs/cbe/Scientific_Evidence_for_the_Power_of_4.pdf

So what do these have to do with MEMORIZATION? Everything. Memorization is an extension of MEDITATION. What you meditate on you commit to memory. What you memorize has great bearing on WHO YOU ARE. Or, how you live.

Last year we talked about bitterness. Those who stay bitter change their outlook on life. And see things to be bitter about that aren't there.

Anxiety – is an out-of-control focus problem. Did you know that the longer you remain anxious, the more anxious you will become?

Anger – if you are an angry person, you will get better at being angry. In fact, you will lose the need to experience injustice and will be able to be angry for no apparent reason.

Have you ever been called a pessimist? Or an optimist? We think this is part of our personality. They have discovered this is not the case! It has more to do with how you interpret your past. If you look at your life and view it negatively... you will look to the future and expect it to be negative as well. PESSIMIST. If you look at your past and see it through a positive light, you will look to the future and expect similar results! OPTIMIST.

What do these all have in common? MEMORY. They are all by products of your memory. In essence, through constant **practice, focus and repetition (MEDIATION/MEMORIZATION)** you have learned how to do these things and do them well!

Memory is a wonderful gift God has given us that helps shape our identities, enables us to learn new things, skills, and do a whole host of wonderful (and terrible) things! Our memory helps us remember what is important so we can make decisions.

My example of believing a lie: I meditated/memorized a lie. I rehearsed it. I lived out of it. It shaped me. And influenced my day to day thoughts, feelings, and actions. If the power of a lie can change your entire life.

IMAGINE what could happen if we MEDITATED ON TRUTH!!

John 8:31-32 So Jesus said to the Jews who had believed him, "If you abide in my word, you are truly my disciples, and you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free."

- **Abide:** remain, dwell, endure, live. **MEDITATION!!** Think about, ruminate, muller. We STAY CLOSE.

My Story: I have ADHD and began following Jesus, Aug 27, 2004. There have been two KEY THINGS the Lord has used to help me function, overcome and be successful. 1) learning to regulate my emotions! 2) Memorization. And #1 was greatly influenced by my work in #2!

- Almost everyone has a good memory. You must have a good memory or you wouldn't have remembered how to get ready this AM and get to church! If your memory was truly impaired, you would most likely have a learning disability (which does happen!)

I was begging the Lord to teach me! Help me grow in leadership! In developing the ministry I was leading! To help me be content! Overcome anxiety! Overcome temptation! and his invitation for me to MEMORIZE was the KEY TO ANSWERING THOSE PRAYERS.

Choosing to memorize can change your life. Your prayer life. Your relationships. Your learning ability! Your ability to endure temptation! And more. It can change your life. (by the way – you will experience these benefits regardless of how long it takes to memorize a verse – the practice makes you stronger)

Memorization literally writes God’s Word on your BRAIN! Every skill/memory you have has a physical location in your brain. Synapses wired together. As I began to get God’s Word in my heart I was physically writing it into my BRAIN. God’s LIVING WORD was becoming a part of me.

For example: reading & math! If I say, 2+2 you say? 4! If I put up slides, what do you see? THINK ABOUT IT. How do you know this? How is it that you can see a bunch of squiggly lines and know what I am trying to communicate? BECAUSE YOU MEMORIZED HOW TO DO THIS. You meditated on it. And now? it aids you EVERY DAY OF YOUR LIFE.

Memorize the Bible? I can’t do that! → I can’t afford not to try!

B. Key Components of Memorization.

WE ALL MEMORIZE STUFF! Lyrics? Movies? Sports stats? Rehearsing the hurts people have done to you?

Don’t worry about how long it takes – work on being consistent!

1. **Focused attention** – not scrolling the internet while you are doing this. NO. It take focused attention.
2. **Repetition** – keep going until you have it memorized!
 - a. E.g. riding a bike didn’t come the first time. NOTHING YOU DO WELL DID.
3. **Time** – there is no short cut here. And for each person the duration of time it takes to memorize or learn something new will be different.

This is how we learned EVERYTHING we do well. Good and bad. We used those three components!

Romans 12:2 Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.

2 Corinthians 10:3-5 For though we walk in the flesh, we are not waging war according to the flesh. For the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh but have divine power to destroy strongholds. We destroy arguments and every lofty opinion raised against the knowledge of God, and take every thought captive to obey Christ,

When we give Focused attention, repetition, and time to meditating on God’s Word – we are training ourselves to be able to use the Word of God as a weapon!

C. Benefits of memorizing Scripture

1. **Changes our expectations, priorities & perspective** – e.g. shows us how to suffer well vs being stuck in disillusionment
2. **Transforms our actions/reactions** – aligns our behaviors to God’s Word
3. **Restores our soul & leads to emotional wholeness** – meets us in our pain, gives us rest, replaces lies with Truth
4. **Protects us from deception** – enables us to discern lies and stand firm on Truth
5. **Enables us to resist temptation** – we can stand against our flesh and the devils attacks!
6. **Sharpens our witness, ministry & makes us fruitful!** – equips us for Kingdom living! Matures us in our faith!
7. **Gives us wisdom & spiritual understanding for navigating life!**
8. **Energizes our Worship & Prayer lives!**

OBJECTION: I don’t need to memorize! I have GOOGLE! How many times in the moment of anger, stress, crisis, temptation, etc. have you used GOOGLE for something positive? VERY RARE. Why? Because in the moment of overwhelm, when we are stressed, we usually rely on INSTINCTS. Those are tied to our previously held “BELIEF SYSTEMS.” Both GOOD & BAD. E.g. addictions

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Matthew 4 – records 3 separate temptations Jesus faced and how he used Scripture to refute.

Matthew 5-7 & 19 shows Jesus using Scripture to combat cultural lies and misconceptions as well!

Hebrews 5:14 But solid food is for the mature, for those who have their powers of discernment trained by constant practice to distinguish good from evil.

Joshua 1:8 This Book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do according to all that is written in it. For then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have good success.

If you are confused, or uncertain, about what to expect in life. Why is life so hard? Why am I here? What is the meaning of life? Why is same-sex marriage wrong? Who am I? What should I focus on? What should I be doing? Purpose, etc. HIGH CHANCES are you will end up aligning your feelings, attitudes and actions with the world around you – or a distortion of the world around you – Syncretism Worldview.

Memorizing God’s Word can change your life! Building Scripture into your brain! Giving you a firm foundation! Heal you from the inside out! Shape your expectations! Remind you of your purpose! Who you are! And how to love God with your whole life! Memorization and meditation can aid in developing a strong Biblical Worldview.

D. PRACTICE: Hiding God’s Word in your Heart

Chuck Swindoll wrote, “I know of no other single practice in the Christian life more rewarding, practically speaking, than memorizing Scripture... No other single exercise pays greater spiritual dividends! Your prayer life will be strengthened. Your witnessing will be sharper and much more effective. Your attitudes

and outlook will begin to change. Your mind will become alert and observant. Your confidence and assurance will be enhanced. Your faith will be solidified.”

Psalm 119:11 I have stored up your Word in my heart, that I might not sin against you. **4 slides.**

LAST SONG Your Word:

BACK SLIDE 1: What is an area you are struggling in? anxiety, depression, health, purpose, sin struggle, identity, salvation, other

Search for verses that speaks to your issue: (concordance, memory handout)

MEDITATE: Read it, Write it, Pray it, Apply it: Read your verse. Write it out in your journal. Pray accordingly. Apply the Word – is there a step you should take?

MEMORIZE: daily – regularly – review your verse & pray for your struggle

BACK SLIDE 2 cue “verse Our hope is found in you”: **Matthew 22:37** *And he said to him, “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.”*

Psalm 119:11 *I have stored up your Word in my heart, that I might not sin against you.*

2 Corinthians 4:7 *But we have this treasure in jars of clay, to show that the surpassing power belongs to God and not to us.*

Matthew 10:31 *Fear not, therefore; you are of more value than many sparrows.*

AFTER SERVICE PRAYER – PRAYER ROOM – 9AM and 11AM

MARANATHA!! Come soon Lord!

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SC CHURCH WIDE PRAYER REQUESTS 2023/2024

Cruise ship → → → → → Battleship

- 1. Life on Mission** (Mt 28:18-20, Mt 22:37-40): Love, serve & disciple people to Jesus
 - **Each one, reach one**
- 2. Next Generations** (Ps 78:7-8): Encounters with Jesus, strong mental health, boldness & belonging
 - **MS Church during 11:00 AM**
- 3. Persecuted Church & Israel** (Lk 21:13): Faith, fortitude & wisdom “to not waste the opportunity to share the Gospel”
- 4. Heart of Prayer** (Ps 27:4): Every generation to find Jesus & learn to bring their needs to Him in prayer
 - **500 average attendance at Prayer Summit**
- 5. Church Renewal:** Directors for India and other new countries & many global disciple makers