



WORSHIP & PRAYER: A Living Hallelujah

Study: To make a study of, take pains to investigate or acquire knowledge of a subject or scrutinize or earnestly contemplate - Oxford

MONDAY – Jesus valued all His people growing



Luke 10: 40-42 *She (Martha) came to Him and asked, “Lord, don’t you care that my sister has left me to do the work by myself? Tell her to help me!” “Martha, Martha,” the Lord answered, “you are worried and upset about many things, but only one thing is needed. Mary has chosen what is better, and it will not be taken from her.”*

In the New Testament, to “sit at someone’s feet” meant becoming that person’s disciple. Martha did what the culture valued in women: to clean the house and cook the food. Mary did what the culture valued in men: to become a disciple. Jesus put no gender or other limits on who He wished to

teach. He wanted all His followers to grow spiritually.

The contrast challenged stereotypes about gender roles: one sister was “preoccupied with getting everything ready for their meal,” the other one “sat at the Lord’s feet and listened to His message.” Which one sounds

more like the way you live your life? Jesus said, “Mary has chosen the better part.” Are there ways in which you are choosing, day by day, to sit at the Lord’s feet and listen to His message?

Jesus told Martha, who seems to have seen many details of her role as hostess as critically important, that “One thing is necessary.”

- What would making Christ the only essential thing in your life look like?
- How would it affect your priorities, time use, leisure activities and other choices?
- How might it offer you greater freedom in your life?

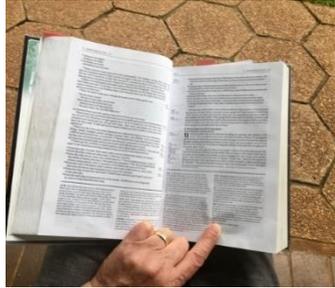


Prayer: O Lord, I have a lot to do. It’s hard to stop all my doing to listen to You. Help me recognize how important that is to my growth as Your follower. AMEN

TUESDAY – Christian Study



2 Timothy 3: 16-17: *All scripture is God-breathed, and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work*



Study is a constant part of our life. Children constantly study to discover the world around them. We study the newspaper to discover what is happening in the world. We study our trade to discover and improve our skills on the job. The fact is, we study what we think will help us to discover ways to live fuller, more effective lives.

How much time do we spend studying our Christian ideal, the Christian way? There is more to Christianity than religious externals. Christianity must become the spiritual core from which all our desires, motivations, and decisions arise. This requires

study, ie. we will grow through study.

Christian study is spiritual discipline. In other words, the discipline of continued discovery. It is the exercise of faith seeking understanding. Through study our patterns of thinking and living change and expand to allow for greater truth – the mind and way of the Christ in us. Our minds will conform to the character of what we study. We study Christ so that our lives will be conformed to the mind of Christ. Christianity calls for growth and change and it does not let us tolerate unmet human needs.



AMEN.

Prayer: Lord Jesus, direct my life to find the necessary time to discover more and more of Your wisdom and will. Instill the discipline in me to regular prayer and the reading of Your word.

WEDNESDAY – Interpret the message of truth correctly



2 Timothy 2: 14-15 *Warn them before God against quarreling about words; it is of no value, and only ruins those who listen. Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a workman who does not need to be ashamed and who correctly handles the word of truth.*



Paul urged Timothy to value reading and applying the principles of the Bible accurately. As Timothy's spiritual mentor, Paul urged him to "Present yourself to God as "a worker who does not need to be ashamed and who correctly handles the word of truth." Doing that correctly also involved embodying its principles in the way he taught and shared. "Be kind toward all people" was an important part of teaching effectively.

You may have heard the saying that "if you don't stand for something, you'll fall for anything." We are urged to learn and understand more of the Bible's overarching message, and not just snippets here and there. Paul didn't just call Timothy to study the Bible for himself. He

wanted him to accurately share its story with others.

Lectio Divina means "divine reading" and is a way for you to open up to what God might be saying to you in Scripture. Practicing this can connect you to understand what God might be saying.

- Read a specific passage 4 times by following these steps:
- Read – What word or phrase speaks to you?
- Meditate– What does your chosen word or phrase mean to you?
- Pray - How is God calling you to act in response to this passage?
Contemplate – Silently reflect

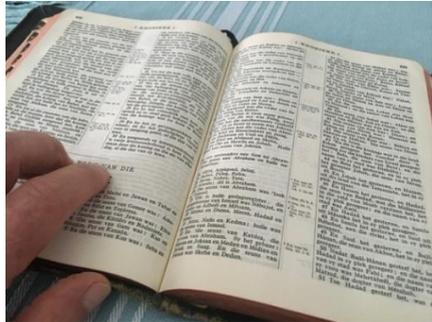


Prayer: Lord of my life, help me to keep growing into a "tried and true worker" for Your kingdom. Make me accurate, kind and gentle in sharing what I learn from You. AMEN

THURSDAY – Devotedly studying God’s word



Psalm 119: 11-12, 103-105 *I have hidden Your word in my heart that I might not sin against You. Praise be to You, O Lord; teach me Your decrees. How sweet are Your words to my taste, sweeter than honey to my mouth! I gain understanding from Your precepts: therefore I hate every wrong path. Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light for my path.*



To grow spiritually from Bible reading calls for us to open our heart as well as our mind to what God wants to say to us through the Bible. Today’s passage offers a lovely prayer model that can prepare us to “hear” and value God’s word on the pages of Scripture.

“I have hidden your word in my heart,” the psalmist wrote. What does it take to move the word from the printed page (or the screen) into your heart? One effective way to start is to choose a short Bible passage (e.g. [John 3:16-17](#), [Psalm 23](#), or even if you want to start with a really short passage [Psalm 119:11](#) from today’s reading) and commit it to memory this week.

At the same time, remember this: “The Bible is more than just a big book of inspirational verses and some do’s and don’ts. It’s a story. And like any story, it requires proper context. The Bible we hold in our hands today has been translated across multiple languages and was originally written in a culture much different than ours. This is important to understand because without proper context you will ultimately read the Bible out of context.

One way to find context is to read a section in front of the bible passage as well as the following section.



Prayer: Lord Jesus, in the Bible, I find the centuries-old story of how You’ve dealt with all kinds of people who loved and followed You. Help me learn more about how my walk with You is woven into that same story. AMEN.

FRIDAY – “Put it into practice”



James 1: 22-25 *But don't just listen to God's word. You must do what it says. Otherwise, you are only fooling yourselves. For if you listen to the word and don't obey, it is like glancing at your face in a mirror. You see yourself, walk away, and forget what you look like."*

Growing in faith involves study, but it is not simply an intellectual exercise. James the apostle said God seeks “doers of the word,” not just “hearers.” That idea shaped the life of John Wesley, Methodism’s founder. Based on what they studied in Scripture, he and his friends got actively involved in helping prisoners and widows in Oxford. Holding together personal and social holiness has remained important to Wesley’s spiritual descendants ever since.

To do: to perform, carry out, effect, bring to pass (work, good, right, wrong) - Oxford

Have you ever known a person who “talked a good game” about religious devotion, but whose actions and attitudes did not match their words? If so, how did that person affect the other people over whom they had influence? Have you ever discovered a mismatch between your words

about faith and your actions; or has your allegiance to Christ altered your activities, priorities and lifestyle?

The whole Bible is God’s inspired Word. Because it is inspired and trustworthy, we should read it and apply it to our life. The Bible is our standard for testing everything else that claims to be true. It is our safeguard against false teaching and our source of guidance for how we should live. It is our only source of knowledge about how we can be saved. God wants to show you what is true and equip you to live for Him.

How much time do you spend in God’s Word? **Read** it regularly to discover God’s truth and become confident in your life and faith. **Develop** a plan for reading the whole Bible, and not just the familiar pages. Then **share** it. **Discuss** it with your family, your friends, and fellow Christians. Doing so will allow you to **grow** even stronger in faith.



Prayer: Lord Jesus, I don’t want to be only a listener or reader of Your Word but give me the courage to also strive to do what it says. AMEN.