

Engrafting the Word of God James 1:21

Intro: If the hearing and reading of God's Word is the diet balanced diet we need to get fit for the journey then today we are going to look at three spiritual disciplines that will take that diet to an entirely different level.

I like Abraham Lincoln's wise perspective on preparation. He said, "*If I had ten hours to cut down a tree, I'd spend the first eight sharpening my ax.*"

A very wealthy man was asked by a group of students how he amassed his fortune. His reply was simple: "*I plan half the day, and I work the other half.*" A buzz raced through the small group as they dreamed of how they would apply the easy plan. "*Imagine, four glorious hours of planning, then a mere four hours of labor!*" The rich man abruptly dashed their dreams: "*I didn't mean I plan four hours and work four hours a day,*" he declared. "*I plan twelve hours, then work twelve hours!*"

Every time a boy went to his friend's house he saw his grandmother studying her Bible. Finally, he asked his friend about it. Why is your Grandmother always studying that Bible? He answered, I don't know. But I think she is cramming for her finals."

If our balanced Diet of God's Word is going to have its desired effect then the hearing and the reading of the Word of God are just the beginning; we need to begin '*cramming for*' our finals. It has to be taken down deep into our souls; it has to become who we are and hearing and reading of the Word only falls short. You see hearing and reading the Word of God is like crossing a lake in a motor boat; we get a good look at the surface of the lake and a feel for the overall look of the surrounding area but to truly get a sense of the what the lake is you would have to cross it in glass bottom boat. That way you can look down deep into the water and see all the fish, plants and everything that makes up that lake.

We have already looked at what James has to say about looking deeper into the Word...

[Stand/read James 1:21/pray/dimiss Jr. Church]

I want to look at the word *engrafted* for a moment. *Engrafted* means '*to fix or set deeply, to plant firmly or to establish, to take two different things and make one new one.*'

This idea of *engrafting* is a big deal in the world of genetic engineering. Paul, in Romans 11 used the same word when he compared the religious leaders of his day to the good olive tree and the Gentiles to a wild one and how the wild one has been *engrafted* into the good one.

In both the plant world and the world of genetic engineering the process of engrafting is the same; you have to take two different living things but them together so they can grow into something new. This process always requires that you go to the very heart of each item to put them together so one can begin to feed off of the life source of the other.

That is what James is talking about here when he speaks of...the "*...engrafted word...*" it has to get deep into our heart so the life source of the Word of God can begin to grow in us and transform us into the image of his Son.

How can the Word of God be engrafted into me?

IT IS ENGRAFTED IN OUR HEARTS

1. WHEN WE STUDY THE WORD OF GOD

A. What it takes to Study the Word "***For Ezra had prepared [devoted] his heart to seek the law of the LORD, and to do it, and to teach in Israel statutes and judgments***" (Ezra 7:10).

- 1) To Study the Word it takes a Prepared [devoted] Heart
- 2) To Study the Word it takes a Surrendered Will – '*...and to do it...*'

- 3) To Study the Word it takes a Sharing Witness – ‘...to teach...’
- B. What is gained by Studying the Word
 - 1) Approval of God 2 Tim 2:15 **“Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.”**
 - 2) Godly Character Act 17:11, **“These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so.”**

IT IS ENGRAFTED IN OUR HEARTS

2. WHEN WE MEMORIZE THE WORD OF GOD

- A. Spiritual Power is Supplied by memorizing God’s Word
 - 1) When Scripture is stored in the mind, it is available for the Holy Spirit to take and bring to your attention when you need it most.
 - (a) That is why the Psalmist wrote 119:11, **“Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee.”**
 - (b) Its one thing, for instance, to be watching or thinking about something you know you shouldn’t be, but there’s added power against the temptation when a specific verse can be brought to you mind, like Colossians 3:2, **“Set your affection [mind] on things above, not on things on the earth.”**
 - 2) Eph 6:17 tells us that our weapon in battle is **“...the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.”**
 - (a) We are in a battle 24/7 and the only weapon we have at our disposal is the Sword of God’s Word
 - (b) Memorizing that Word is how we can
 - (1) Sharpen that sword
 - (2) Learn how to use that sword
- B. Our Faith is Strengthened by memorizing God’s Word
 - 1) Ps 22:17-19 **“Bow down thine ear, and hear the words of the wise, and apply thine heart unto my knowledge. For it is a pleasant thing if thou keep them within thee; they shall withal be fitted in thy lips. That thy trust may be in the LORD, I have made known to thee this day, even to thee.”**
 - (a) It says **“...apply thine heart [mind]...”** to the words of the wise.
 - (b) And **“...keep them within thee...”**
 - (c) These two phrases certainly are talking about scripture memorization.
 - 2) Note the two reasons for this memorization,
 - (a) **To strengthen your trust or faith** in the Lord – **“That thy [your] trust may be in the Lord...”**
 - (b) **To give you confidence when challenged** to defend your faith – **“...they shall withal be fitted [ready] in thy [your] lips.”**
- C. When we memorize Scripture the Holy Spirit can draw them to our mind when helping us defeat sinful behavior in our lives.
 - 1) It is one thing to set and watch or think about something we know we shouldn’t
 - 2) It’s quite another when the Holy Spirit calls to our memory Colossians 3:2, **“Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth.”**

FINALLY, IT IS ENGRAFTED IN OUR HEARTS

3. WHEN WE MEDITATE ON THE WORD OF GOD.

- A. I am not talking about the kind of meditation the 21st century culture is talking about when it speaks of meditation.
 - 1) Today the idea of meditation has become synonymous with the New Age movement, things like: Yoga, transcendental meditation, relaxation therapy all advocate the aspect of meditation but that is not what meditating on the Word of God is talking about.
- B. In Philippians 4:8 Paul gives a practical explanation of Biblical meditation when he says, **“Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things.”**
- C. By Meditating on the Word of God we can have Godly success

- (a) Joshua 1:8 ***“This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth; but thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein: for then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success.”***
- (1) Of course this is success measured the way God measures success not man...it is success in God's eyes not the eyes of the World.
 - (2) This is speaking of Spiritual success
 - (3) This is not to say that a certain amount of success won't bleed over into our every day lives but God is more concerned with your Spiritual success than the success the world has to offer.
- (b) True success is promised to those who Meditate on God's Word – that is thinks deeply on Scripture.
- (1) This kind of meditation isn't something you set aside a portion of your Bible Study and Reading to do, no meditation is something you day moments throughout the entire day.
 - (i) As we **Hear the Word, Read the Word, Study the Word and Memorize the Word** it begins to saturate your thinking that when ever you let you mind wonder for a moment it runs directly to Scripture.
 - (ii) When we have become this saturated by God's Word then every situation and every decision we make will be built firmly on His Word and inline with His will.
 - (2) The fruit of our meditation will bring action that is Pleasing to God.
- 2) By Meditating on The Word of God brings Stability and prosperity to our lives Ps 1:1-3
- (a) Ps 1:1-3 ***“Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful. But his delight is in the law of the LORD; and in his law doth he meditate day and night. And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper.”***
- (b) This runs hand and hand with Joshua 1:8, which also speaks of meditation bringing prosperity.
- (1) The prosperity spoken of here in Ps and in Joshua is prosperity as measured by God not man.
 - (2) It says that when we meditate on God's Word we are like a tree ***“...planted by the rivers of water...”***
 - (i) A tree planted next to the rivers edge strengthens the tree because its roots are watered continually and deeply; this makes the roots stronger which making the tree more stable.
 - (ii) A tree that is healthy and stable is able to bring forth more fruit than one that is planted far from the water – hence more prosperous.
- (c) Ephesians 5:26 likens the Word of God to water; it says that when Jesus gave Himself for the church He did so that, ***“he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word.”***
- (1) We can draw the comparison therefore between the water in Psalm 1 with the Word of God
 - (2) That means that the deeper the Word is in our heart the more stable and prosperous we will be.
- (d) But notice that the prosperity spoken of here is referred to as fruit.
- (1) Our Spiritual fruit is found in Gal. 5:22-23 ***“...love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, ²³Meekness, temperance...”***
 - (2) Paul also referred to souls won as fruit when he said to the church a Philippi, ***“Not because I desire a gift: but I desire fruit that may abound to your account”***
 - (3) The writer of Hebrews calls our giving God thanks fruit (Heb 13:15).
- (e) If we are going to be fruitful and prosperous Christians it is meditation that breaks up the hard soil of our heart enabling the water of the word to be absorbed deep into our hearts.
- (1) In Jeremiah 4: 3 God tells the people they are to ***“...Break up your fallow ground, and sow not among thorns.”***
 - (2) It is our meditation upon the Word of God that *breaks up the fallow ground of your heart and prepares it to receive the engrafted word.*

- (f) **ILL:** We can be exposed to a torrential down pour of God's Word, in fact that is what often happens when someone goes to a revival meeting or some special service. Unfortunately, because of the hardness of our hearts there is little real absorption; little lasting impact is realized in their lives. Meditation is how we can prepare our hearts for receiving God's Word when we hear it and read it.

Conclusion: It is our Studying, Memorizing and Meditating on God's Word that will ultimately do what Paul was referring to when he wrote to the Romans, "...**be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind...**" (Rom 12:2). Real transformation comes when the balanced diet of God's Word penetrates deep into the heart and begins to break up the hardness of our hearts making room for the Word of God to be planted deep. In Matthew 13 Jesus tells the story of the sower and the different soils. In each of the four instances of planting of the seed of the word of God it was the condition of the soil that determined whether the Word grew and persevered or not. The soils in that parable are compared to the hearts of people who receive the Word. If we are ever going to see the Word truly grow in our lives then we need to get the word **engrafted into the soil of our heart**. How does this **engrafting** take place? It takes place as we **Study, Memorize and Meditate upon God's Word**. Just as in the parable not everyone will receive the seed of the Word of God into a prepared heart; in fact none of us will receive it every day with a prepared heart. We can, however, increase the likelihood of our heart receiving it; **of it being engrafted** if we prepare our heart daily by **Studying, Memorizing and Meditating on it every day**.

Won't you choose today to **Daily receive the Engrafted Word by Studying, Memorizing and Meditation**.