

## CROSS TRAINING – ESSENTIALS 2, CLASS 5

### KNOWING THE WORD AND READING IT CORRECTLY

*“The great need of the hour among persons spiritually hungry is twofold: First, to know the Scriptures, apart from which no saving truth will be vouchsafed by our Lord; the second, to be enlightened by the Spirit, apart from whom the Scriptures will not be understood.” – A.W. Tozer*

*“The Word of God is the absolute the world will always try to relativeize.” – Ravi Zacharius*

*“Correct interpretation of the Bible involves analyzing all the Biblical information so that the genuine, true meaning of the passage studied is illuminated by the Holy Spirit, and learned without distortion from the reader, so that the full Biblical communication of God’s Truth from revelation to inspiration to illumination to interpretation to application, remains pure”. – Russ Akins*

#### **1. The Word of God is the absolute foundation upon which every part of the Christian life must be built.**

**Verses: Romans 12:2** – *“Do not be conformed any longer to the pattern of this world but be transformed by the renewing of your mind...”*

**2Tim.2:15** – *“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.”*

**Heb. 4:12** – *“For the Word of God is living and active. Sharper than any double edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart.”*

- a. The Christian must live a life based on Truth not feeling, circumstance or human wisdom and knowledge.
- b. Improper interpretation of God’s word has led to many false ideologies and destructive theologies – the Christian will only be able to recognize a counterfeit by knowing the real thing.
- c. In our society, objective Truth has been replaced with subjective rationalism.
- d. Many Christians spend much more time developing worldly knowledge (T.V, movies, etc.) than they do cultivating their knowledge of the Truth (Rom.12:2).

**Important note:** God says that His thoughts and ways are not our thoughts and ways (Isa.55:8). Jesus showed that action is birthed first in thought (Mat.5:21-30, 12:34, also described in James 1:15 and Prov.4:23). ***To act like Him we must think like Him.*** That is why Rom.12:2 says “be transformed by the renewing of your mind.” Repentance actually means, “to change one’s mind or purpose” (Vines dictionary of Bible words). The development of God’s character in our life (Gal.5:22-23) requires that we change our old way of thinking and begin to think the way God thinks, focussing on Jesus (Heb. 12:1-2), through the power and illumination of the Holy Spirit. The more you know the Word, the more you’ll think like Him and the more you think like Him the more you’ll act like Him. This process is one to which the Christian must be committed but fundamentally it is the work of His Holy Spirit who shows us God’s thoughts by illuminating His Word (1Cor.2:6-16). Victorious Christian life (Jn.10:10) is founded and built on God’s Word.

#### **2. The victorious Christian life requires a commitment to knowing God’s Word, and submission to the Holy Spirit’s illumination of the Word.**

- a. A deep relationship with God requires an increasing knowledge of Him and His Word (Phil.1:9).

- b. Victory over sin and temptation requires a knowledge of His Word (Ps.119:11, Luke 4:4,8,12).
  - c. The Christian's growth and development requires an increasing knowledge of the Word (Rom.12:2, Heb.4:12, James 1:21).
  - d. Having a foundation in proper doctrine requires knowledge of God's Word (2Cor.10:5-6, 2Tim.4:2).
3. **To know the Word you must <sup>1</sup>read it correctly, <sup>2</sup>study it, <sup>3</sup>meditate on it, <sup>4</sup>memorize it and <sup>5</sup>apply it (Acts 17:10-12, 1Cor.4:6, 2Jn.1:9).** Ask the Holy Spirit to illuminate what you read, ask for wisdom (James 1:5, 1Cor.1:16, 2Tim.1:7) and then read the Word according to the following principals.
- a. **Read the Word correctly (Ps.119:28 and all, Heb.4:12, James1:21).** It is vital that you read the Word correctly. There are certain principals which will allow you to do this.
    1. Read the passage as a whole, in context.
      - a. Study the immediate context (that passage).
      - b. Study the greater context (whole Bible).
      - c. Study the cultural context (was it written only to one group or to all people).
      - d. Study the progressive revelation. How was God dealing with mankind during this particular time (Old Testament age, New Testament stage, church age, apostolic age).
    2. Look at the order things are written in. If you see a therefore find out what its there for.
    3. Ask pertinent questions: Why was this written, who was it written to and what was it written for.
    4. Keep the big things big and the small things small, keep isolated issues isolated.
    5. Read all particular occurrences and history in the context of the rest of God's Word.
    6. Identify **commands** and **principals**. Commands give direct communication about certain subjects, principals give direction about subjects not necessarily addressed.
    7. Identify promises and claim them in their proper context.
    8. There are two types of interpretation.
      - a. The literal application: application is direct similar and to the point.
      - b. The symbolic interpretation: Usually interpret symbolic passages symbolically. Symbolic passages always illustrate literal truths which can be applied.
    9. Read illustrations, stories and parables in their greater context.
    10. Be balanced. Extreme applications of isolated principals will lead to incorrect balance and false doctrines. Keep

everything in the context of the big picture – the whole Word.

- b. Study the Word (Ps.119:30, 2Tim.2:15, 1Peter 1:13, Titus 1:9, 2:1,7-8)).** Reading the Word according to the above principals requires that you study it. Write down what you are learning.
1. Develop a method of study: Topical, book, etc. Study inductively (from specific to general) and deductively (from general to specific).
  2. Use a concordance to check what the rest of the Word says about a certain subject.
  3. Use a Bible dictionary to better understand the words and context that were being used.
  4. Write down all the connections you are seeing; answer the who, what, why and when questions.
  5. Write out what the Passage and Biblical contexts are – then look at the verses in context.
  6. Avoid incorrect study methods; don't just open up the Bible randomly and start pulling verses out of context. Don't start with an expectation or idea and then got to the Word to find proof.
- c. Meditate on the Word (Ps.1:2-3, 119:15-16).** “Camp” on a certain passage for a while. Spend a couple of quiet time on a particular passage. Think about it throughout the day. Let God continue illuminating one passage before you jump on to the next.
- d. Memorize Scripture (Ps.119:11).** The Bible says that “hiding the Word in your heart” will keep you from falling. There are many good ways to memorize scripture.
1. Write out the verse or passage several times.
  2. Carry a note card, with the verse written on it, around for a couple of days – read it periodically.
  3. Have an accountability partner, someone who can memorize the scripture with you or someone who will “quiz” you on it.
  4. Find out how you best memorize things and start memorizing scripture.
- e. Apply the Word (James 1:22-23).** If the Word is not applied it will be almost useless in your life. It is vital that you apply the Word. Be committed to training and learning the Word. Practice what you learn.

**Remember:** Read the Word, study the Word, Meditate on the Word, memorize the Word and apply the Word.

