

USG Union 2015

Week 5

Chapter 6 Study, Learning, Journaling

Chapter 7 Meditation

When we think of the words, Christian Disciplines, what two (2) words come to mind?

Prayer and Fasting... But there are several others.

Different theologians' lists will vary, but prayer and fasting will always be on the list.

The list we will use is rather long, even exhausting, but we will not be spending a lot of time on each one.

P. # 51 You can see the list and hopefully how they are related.

Prayer
 Study-Learning-Journaling
 Meditation
 Praise-Celebration
 Fellowship
 Fasting-Solitude-Quietness
 Service-Giving-Submission

The 2 chapters for tonight will be hard to teach because they are short. We could simply read them out loud in less than 15 minutes, but just because they are short doesn't mean they are not important.

Tonight, Study, Learning, Journaling, Meditation.

Recall with me from 2 Peter 1:5-7 that we add to our faith...goodness
 and to goodness, knowledge
 and to knowledge, self-control
 and to self-control, perseverance
 and to perseverance, brotherly kindness
 and to brotherly kindness, love.

Again, why do we add to faith? Because it is not enough.

Open your Bibles to 2 Peter 1:8

...by doing these things will keep us from being ineffective in our knowledge of Jesus.

Q./ Why is that important? to be effective in our knowledge of Jesus?

A./ Ideas????

Vs 3... God (The Father) by his divine power, (the Holy Spirit) has given us everything we need for life and godliness...

Q./ HOW?

A./ ...by our knowledge of Jesus.

Look at this... We receive everything we need, according to our knowledge of Jesus. Knowledge of the Teachings of Jesus is key to our receiving everything we need.

Is knowledge of Jesus important?

Is what Jesus taught important?

Does that make the Teachings of Righteousness important?

Yes, I think so and that means the duplicatable activities of Jesus or Christian Disciplines are important.

Peter was on to something when he said to add knowledge to our faith and goodness.

That means we need knowledge to be effective in our knowledge because salvation gets us saved, but does not give us Spiritual Maturity or godliness.

Can we agree knowledge is good...

the acquisition of knowledge is good...

the application of knowledge is wisdom and that is good.

Q./ What is necessary for the acquisition of knowledge and hopefully, wisdom?

A. Study/ Learning/ Journaling

Didn't see that coming, did you?

We study and learn to gain knowledge and we are to add knowledge to our faith if we are going to increase our Spiritual Maturity.

Study, Learning and Journaling are the Cause or Method...
Knowledge and Wisdom are the Effect or Result.

Lets back up and see what God says about Knowledge and Wisdom.

Proverbs 10:14 Wise men store up knowledge

James 1:5 If we lack wisdom, we ask for it.

Psalm 111:10 the beginning of wisdom is the fear of the Lord.
(Nearly every version says fear, except Amplified says reverent fear and worship.

Message is unrecognizable, but says...

God's works are worth a lifetime of study and goes on to say...

all who follow His instructions have good understanding or insight.

Knowledge is the goal and Study, Learning and taking notes is the method to get there.

More about Study...

2 Timothy 2:15

Study to show thyself approved...

Present yourself as one approved, as a workman (not laborer) but workman, one skilled his craft...

Q./ To do what? or so that we can do what?
Rightly handle the word of God.

A./ To rightly handle it we have to know it, to know it we have to learn it and to learn it we have to study it, there are no shortcuts.

So the discipline or self will to study is important because it leads to knowledge of Jesus.

Paul was speaking to Timothy and he was a preacher.
Do you think Paul's message is for teachers and preachers only?

No, we too, are to be able to rightly handle the Word of God.

KJV	Study
ESV, NIV	Do your best to present...
NKJV, NASB	Be diligent
Message	Repeat these basic essentials over and over

We see the need and instruction to study, but Jesus in John 5:39 has an interesting perspective...

"You diligently study the scripture because you think that by them you possess eternal life. These are the scriptures that testify about me, yet you refuse to come to me to have life."

What does that mean?

Faith is not enough...
Goodness is not enough...
Knowledge is of scriptures is not enough...

The progression Peter speaks of is not complete until he reaches Love and Jesus is Love, the Ultimate expression of Love.

Jesus said we couldn't build our house in the sand, we need a firm foundation. Our foundation isn't complete until all the steps are done, we can't skip knowledge, self control and perseverance and go straight to Jesus.

(We can for Salvation but not for Spiritual Maturity and power.)

Practically speaking, How do we study?

What, When, Where and With Whom ...

What do we study?

1. Bible
2. Bible Characters OT/NT
3. Teachings of Jesus
4. Parables of Jesus
5. Theology of Creation, Trinity, Resurrection, Sin, Heaven / Hell, etc.
6. Books by Christian authors
7. Commentaries
8. CD/ DVD/ etc...

You get the idea

How do we study? I think we have the right idea at Union. We study all sorts of ways.

1. Individually, we encourage to read and study before class
2. Sunday School
3. Small Groups, Monday AM, Tuesday PM, etc
4. Larger Groups, Half-time

We do need individual study time to get the basics, but we need the group experience so we can learn from each other.

What has been your experience learning in a group?

It is easier, we learn from each other and it is helpful to brainstorm with each other, often one will have an experience that impacts the others.

It is good to study in a group, but we need the individual background first.

As iron sharpens iron...

One or two cords is strong, but three is stronger...

But the benefit of small groups goes way beyond learning, doesn't it.

Are you seeing the importance of studying,
in order to learn
in order to gain knowledge?

Because we add knowledge on to our faith, etc. etc... I hope so.

Practically, What do you need to Study?

Certainly a time and place that is free of distractions and that can be a challenge.

If that is impossible, and for some it may be, remember this building is open over 50 hours a week. There is a very good library and enough books and commentaries to help you. It is available to you as are those resources. So you are without excuse re: resources or a place free of distractions.

Personal Resources

1. Study Bible with notes, commentary ... Good for Group Study
2. Possibly a Parallel Bible ... KJV/NIV ... Good for Group Study
3. At least one easy to read version
4. Access to internet, all this is available for free... Bible Gateway
5. Commentaries
6. Concordance also can help look up words, verses online
7. Maps We understood Paul's travels better with the maps
 Gary drew. You understand Easter Day better when
 you know where Emmaus is in relation to Jerusalem
 and the days following the resurrection better when
 you understand the Sea of Galilee where Jesus met
 the disciples was nearly 100 miles away.
8. Books by respected Christian Authors, preachers, etc.
9. Especially important is a notebook, either to record what you learn so
 you do not forget, or...
 to record questions to ask when you are back with others.

I study at home and at my office. Beside my recliner are 3 Bibles, a concordance, a commentary and usually a supply of paper. Also are books on hiking, mountains, guns and an iPad, but I digress.

I haven't said much about the discipline of scheduling time to study, but I think you can see the importance of adding knowledge to your faith.

Again, we purposely add knowledge to our faith so that we are not ineffective in and for Jesus.

Chapter 7 Meditation

You can and should have read Chapter 7 already. All I will add here is that there are three (3) applications of Meditation for us.

1. A purposeful time of emptying our minds of daily stuff, and then asking God to fill us. You may simply reflect on what God has done for you. Not necessarily a prayer, but a time devoted to him.
2. A time to meditate or reflect on scripture, seeking a deeper understanding. If you spend much time studying you will run across passages that don't make sense. This is one time you can think about them. Also if you haven't journaled the verses you have trouble with, you will forget to do it.
3. The quiet time following your daily prayers. You may find it when God will speak to you if you get still and quiet enough long enough.

Finally, as with all Disciplines, While Knowledge is the by-product of Studying, Learning, Journaling, and Meditating, it is not the goal.

The Attitude of Submission to God and love for our Neighbor is the goal.

Next Week, Chapter 8 Solitude, Stillness Silence and Chapter 9 Fasting