



CHRISTIAN SPIRITUAL DISCIPLINES



“No spiritual discipline is more important than the intake of God’s word.” - Whitney, p.28

Above all, you must realize that no prophecy in Scripture ever came from the prophet's own understanding, ²¹ or from human initiative. No, those prophets were moved by the Holy Spirit, and they spoke from God.

2 Peter 1:20-21 NLT

All Scripture is inspired by God and is useful to teach us what is true and to make us realize what is wrong in our lives. It corrects us when we are wrong and teaches us to do what is right. ¹⁷ God uses it to prepare and equip his people to do every good work.

2 Timothy 3:16-17 NLT

For you have been born again, but not to a life that will quickly end. Your new life will last forever because it comes from the eternal, living word of God.

1 Peter 1:23 NLT

Work hard so you can present yourself to God and receive his approval. Be a good worker, one who does not need to be ashamed and who correctly explains the word of truth.

2 Timothy 2:15 NLT

"Listen, O Israel! The LORD is our God, the LORD alone.
⁵ And you must love the LORD your God with all your heart, all your soul, and all your strength. ⁶ And you must commit yourselves wholeheartedly to these commands that I am giving you today. ⁷ Repeat them again and again to your children. Talk about them when you are at home and when you are on the road, when you are going to bed and when you are getting up. ⁸ Tie them to your hands and wear them on your forehead as reminders. ⁹ Write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates.

Deuteronomy 6:4-9 NLT

Therefore, we never stop thanking God that when you received his message from us, you didn't think of our words as mere human ideas. You accepted what we said as the very word of God-- which, of course, it is. And this word continues to work in you who believe.

1 Thessalonians 2:13 NLT

Until I get there, focus on reading the Scriptures to the church, encouraging the believers, and teaching them.

1 Timothy 4:13 NLT

Methods of Bible Intake

1. Church – The Public Gathering
2. Bible Study and Small Group
3. Private Reading
4. Audio/Podcasts
5. TV and Radio
6. Apps
7. Our Memory



The Purpose of Bible Intake

1. Godliness (1 Tim. 4:7).
2. Renewing of our minds. (Rom. 12:2)

Geoffrey Thomas “Let the Word break over your heart and mind again and again as the years go by, and imperceptibly there will come great changes in your attitude and outlook and conduct.”

3. Conviction & Judging our lives. Heb. 4:12
4. Spiritual Life and sustenance. Matthew 4:2-4;
1 Pet. 2: 2.
5. Spiritual Warfare. Eph. 6:12.
6. Correction, teaching, rebuking, and training in righteousness. 2 Tim. 3:16

The Purpose of Bible Intake

7. Blessing and Success. Rev. 1: 3; Joshua 1:8.
8. It defines every human characteristic 1 Cor. 13;
Ecc. 8:11
9. Points us to Jesus

The Plan

1. Find the time! No excuses. It takes only 71 hrs. to read the entire Bible (15 min a day).
2. Don't do it just before sleeping. You retain very little and you don't get to apply it immediately.
3. Three from the Old, Three from the New (OT once a year; NT four times).
4. Five places each day: The Law, History, Poetry, Prophets, and New Testament.
5. Three places each day starting at Genesis, Job, and Matthew.
6. Find a challenge or directed reading plan!

The Canonical Hours

1. The evening service, or *lucernarium*, which was the service of ***Vespers***;
2. The midnight service, the origin of the ***Nocturns*** or ***Martins***;
3. The service at daybreak, the origin of ***Lauds***.

The Canonical Hours

- In the West this was later divided further into the seven daily times of *lauds*, *prime*, *tierce*, *sext*, *nones*, *vespers*, and *complin*.
- These times consisted of a reading of numerous Psalms (often 6) as well as selections from the New and Old Testaments.

Lent

A season of forty days, not counting Sundays, which begins on Ash Wednesday and ends on Holy Saturday. The forty days represents the time Jesus spent in the wilderness.

Lent is a time of fasting, repentance, and preparing for Easter. It is a time of self-examination and reflection and a time for believers to reflect on their relationship with God. It is a time where believers give up specific pleasures or fast as a means of fostering simplicity, self-control, and spiritual focus.

Lent comes from the Anglo Saxon word lencten, which means "spring."

Advent

Is celebrated the four Sundays/weeks before Christmas. Historically it did not begin with a connection to Christmas, but as a season of preparation for the baptism of new believers for Epiphany (a January feast 12 days after Christmas celebrating the arrival of the Magi).

Advent

Advent eventually evolved into its present form. Though it mostly focuses on the coming of Christ as a babe in a manger, it also looks forward in anticipation of Christ's kingdom when he returns. Many traditions use Advent wreaths, different coloured candles, and specific themes for the Sundays preceding Christmas.

Advent

The word “Advent” is derived from the Latin word *adventus*, meaning “coming,” which is a translation of the Greek word *parousia*.

In the Orthodox and Catholic traditions especially, there are many more feasts and celebrations that fill the liturgical calendar, such as Epiphany, Pentecost, Ascension, and so forth.

The Ancient Art of Memory

Listen to the words of the wise; apply your heart to
my instruction.

Proverbs 22:17 NLT

The Ancient Art of Memory

Therefore, I will always remind you about these things-- even though you already know them and are standing firm in the truth you have been taught. ¹³ And it is only right that I should keep on reminding you as long as I live. ¹⁴ For our Lord Jesus Christ has shown me that I must soon leave this earthly life, ¹⁵ so I will work hard to make sure you always remember these things after I am gone.

2 Peter 1:12-15 NLT

The Ancient Art of Memory

Let me now remind you, dear brothers and sisters, of the Good News I preached to you before. You welcomed it then, and you still stand firm in it. ² It is this Good News that saves you if you continue to believe the message I told you-- unless, of course, you believed something that was never true in the first place.

1 Corinthians 15:1-2 NLT

The Ancient Art of Memory

I have hidden your word in my heart, that I might not
sin against you.

Psalm 119:11 NLT

According to Augustine, God can be found in our
memories. (*The Confessions* 10.24-25)

The Ancient Art of Memory

Athanasius on St. Anthony – “his memory served him for books.”

Memorization is about the re-creation of our minds.

The Purpose of Memorization

1. Memorization re-creates our minds.
2. Memorization supplies spiritual power.
3. Memorization strengthens our faith.
4. Memorization is a tool for witnessing and counseling.
5. Memorization is the way the Spirit guides us.

Hints for Memorization

1. Have a plan.
2. Write out the verses.
3. Draw pictures.
4. Memorize word-perfectly.
5. Find a partner for accountability.
6. Choose a quiet and lonely spot to memorize if possible.
7. Review and meditate every day.
8. Use puns and word-pictures (*enargeia*).
9. Use key words (or ideas) as chains (*catena*) linking different verses. Words glow with associated meanings.

Hints for Memorization

10. Often outrageous, violent, or disturbing pictures help in memorization. The mind remembers original or outstanding things better.
11. Deliberately create emotion in your reading and memorization.
12. Visualize the words, think of letters as pictures.
13. Use etymology, the origin of words.
14. Focus on the sound of words and patterns in the verses.
15. Think of your memory as a cognitive map, building (*ekphrasis* – making a building), beehive, piece of paper, a mosaic, or a bookshelf – choose which schemata you want to organize your thoughts.