

The Biblical Counselor: The Word of God and the Counselor

Read and consider the following study. You are not assigned to fill in the blanks or answer the questions.

THE WORD: GOD COMMENTS ON HIS WORD

James 1:22-25 But prove yourselves doers of the word, and not merely hearers who delude themselves.
For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man who looks at his natural face in a mirror;
for once he has looked at himself and gone away, he has immediately forgotten what kind of person he was.
But one who looks intently at the perfect law, the law of liberty, and abides by it, not having become a forgetful hearer but an effectual doer, this man will be blessed in what he does.

What are the two choices for responding to the Word and the result of each?

What life changes have you made because you chose to be a doer of the Word? What verses from the Bible did you specifically put into practice?

What parts of your life have you not subjected to the authority of God's Word? Is that because you do not know what Scripture says on that topic, because you choose not to obey it or because of some other reason?

1 Peter 2:1-3 Therefore, putting aside all malice and all deceit and hypocrisy and envy and all slander,
like newborn babies, long for the pure milk of the word, so that by it you may grow in respect to salvation,
if you have tasted the kindness of the Lord.

Make a list of 3 examples of when you have recently done each of these things: deceit (lying or deceiving others), hypocrisy (saying you believe one thing but in private doing something else) and envy (desiring things you don't have):

Consider Peter's illustration. What happens to babies who get plenty of milk and to those who get little? What will happen to you if you get plenty of God's Word, according to verse 2?

2 Timothy 3:16-17 All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness; so that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work.

God has chosen His Word to be the primary means of causing growth in the lives of His children. Teaching involves instruction, showing us truth. Reproving is showing us the sin in our lives, the wrong that we do that must be stopped. Correction occurs when God shows us the right way to go, the righteousness with which we replace the sin. God trains us in righteousness by enabling us to make life patterns of obeying His Word.

What are God's intended results of His use of the Word in your life?

Will you choose this day to seek to know what the Bible says about the different areas of your life and will you be committed to obeying God in what He shows you? If so, write your prayer of commitment to the Author of the Word.

Psalm 119:9 How can a young man keep his way pure?
By keeping it according to Your word.

Psalm 119:11 Your word I have treasured in my heart,
That I may not sin against You.

Psalm 119:32 I shall run the way of Your commandments,
For You will enlarge my heart.

Psalm 119:105 Your word is a lamp to my feet
And a light to my path.

Based on these passages, make a list of the great things God intends to cause in your life through His Word.

Exactly what could you do to treasure God's Word in your heart, to run the way of His commands and to see because of the Light of His Word?

In what areas of your life do you desire to grow and change?

Psalm 1:1-3 How blessed is the man who does not walk in the counsel of the wicked,
Nor stand in the path of sinners,
Nor sit in the seat of scoffers!
But his delight is in the law of the LORD,
And in His law he meditates day and night.
He will be like a tree firmly planted by streams of water,
Which yields its fruit in its season
And its leaf does not wither;
 And in whatever he does, he prospers.

What two responses to God's Word are endorsed in verse 2?

What will be the result in our lives if we do those two things?

Give thanks to God for this great hope and the certainty of a full life if you love and pursue His Word.

The Place of The Scriptures in the Life of the Biblical Counselor

First and foremost, the Bible must be the source of sanctification in our own lives. We all have sin to put off and righteousness with which to replace it. The Word is God's way to accomplish this. Living a life of change toward holiness pleases the Lord. It also orients us to a way of thinking that is biblical. It enables us to see the truth about other

lives more clearly. This is who we are as Christians: redeemed sinners changing into the image of Christ. The method of being remade is hearing and yielding to the Word.

My personal time in the Word gives me the opportunity to choose to subject my will to God's in response to the Word every day. This one thing should be the defining mark of who we are. When God knocks us down by showing us the truth of our sin, we must be able to get to the point of repentance. Our prayer should end with a commitment to never sin against the Almighty in that way again. To regularly submit my will to His will is essential to sanctification. It resolves again who God is and who I am. If this happens day after day, I am one with Him.

Maintaining intimacy with God is accomplished through the Word. He speaks to us in the Word. He causes it to be living and active. He reaches the thoughts and intentions of our hearts with the Bible. Then when we respond in obedience, He is honored. We speak back to Him in prayer. As change toward holiness occurs, there is a powerful bond forged. He is the true friend. He is the companion who has walked with us in difficult times. He has helped us gain victory. We are pleasing to Him. He is most certainly our God. His Word is the unquestioned source of power and truth. As each chapter ends and the next adventure begins, we are more sure than ever of who He is and that we are His children forever.

We find and use the truth of the Scriptures in our own life problems. Our personal times of winning against sin prove the authenticity of our faith. They provide assurance of our salvation. Becoming skilled at this process also helps us as counselors. We understand better how the heart is to respond to the Word. We know the road of change in Christ. We have lived the battle inside the heart that ends in obedience to God. We are certain of the sufficiency of the Word. We know that God's grace will be enough for this person, as it was for us.

The impact of all these blessings in our own souls equips us to study the Bible efficiently to prepare to counsel. When we are growing in holiness, yielding our desires to God's, enjoying close fellowship with the Creator and viewing our own problems biblically, we are best prepared to hear the truth for counseling. Truth includes what the Scriptures say about the counselee's struggle as well as how to communicate it, how to love them and how to connect them with the Lord through discipleship. The stronger you are in the Word, the more effective you will be in counseling. When the Word is doing all it is intended in your own soul, you are strongest in functioning as God's tool to boldly confront and encourage others with the Scriptures.

That being true, do not lose sight of the primary motive. God's glory. Yield your will to His when He teaches, reproveth, corrects and trains you in righteousness. But do so first because you love Him, not to excel as a counselor.