

INTEGRATING GOD'S WORD INTO MY LIFE

22March 2015

40 Days in the word is almost over –

You can then go back to your old habits of

- Irregular bible reading
- Reading without too much thought
- Never applying the word to your daily life
- Never attending a small group
- No more memorizing scripture
- No more meditation on scripture
- It was nice while it lasted but now thank goodness its over
- We can get back to normal – just like it was before.

Is that how it should be?

Was that the purpose of this concentrated look at the benefits of knowing the bible?

Today - How do I maintain a heart for God's Word?

How do I keep on continuing in the skills and the habits that we've been developing for the past six weeks?

Jesus said *"If you continue in my word then you're really my followers...then you're my disciples."* John 8:31

He didn't say if you do it for forty days and stop. He said if you continue in my word then you are my disciple.

So this week I want us to look at how do you maintain a heart for God's Word, how do you integrate God's Word into every area of your life?

Integrate - The opposite of segregation.

Segregation means to separate into groups. When you segment your life you live a segregated life.

- Personal life
- Church life
- Business life
- My home life, and here's my
- Sex life, and here's my
- My Relationships
- Social life
-

If you don't have an integrated life; it means you lack - integrity.

Integrity comes from that same word as integration.

To have integrity means to live your life integrated, a whole.

Not - Different ways to different people and circumstances.

Blackpool Rock.

Not a Christian on Sunday and one of the drinking crowd on Monday – Not words of love and faith on Sunday – words of hatred and anger to wife and kids on Monday.

How can I have the Word integrated into my life? = I must Desire it – you must want it

The psalmist said, Maldyn and the Welsh preacher!!

Ps 42:1-2

As the deer pants for the water brooks, So pants my soul for You, O God.
2 My soul thirsts for God, for the living God. NKJV – explain

Psalms 119 verse 20 the Contemporary English Version says this:

What I want most of all and at all times is to honour your laws.”

- ***“What I want most of all*** [in other words the number one priority in my life,
- ***And at all times*** [that means it’s integrated. It’s not just at church time, but at all times]
- ***Is to honour your laws.”*** David is saying here I want to be a man of the Word.

Whether I’m at work or I’m at home I’m playing with my children or I’m on a golf course, I want to be a man of the Word. I want my life to be led and guided and directed by the Word of God.

Today six steps to help you –

The first thing I’m going to do if I’m going to become a man of the Word or a woman of the Word is

1. I must build on it.

In other words I make the Bible the foundation for my life. Whatever is the foundation will determine how big the structure can be on top of it. So I’m going to build my life on the Bible.

The Two builders

Jesus said, *“Everyone who hears these words of mine, and puts them into practice, is like a wise man who built his house on the rock.”* Matthew 7:24.

If you build your life on the rock of truth, truth never changes.

Sands of popular opinion change but truth doesn’t. If it’s true, it was true a thousand years ago; it’ll be true a thousand years from today.

Say “God, I’m going to build my life on this book. I don’t always understand it. I don’t even always like it.

Most people build their lives on shifting foundations and their lives fall apart.

Four common foundations you *don't* want to build your life on.

1. Popular culture.

“I just do what everybody else is doing. If it's popular I do it and if it's not I don't do it.”

The problem with that is whatever is popular today is going to be unpopular tomorrow.

God says this in Exodus 23:2 “*Don't follow the crowd in doing wrong...*”

Because the crowd is often wrong. He says don't build yourself on a shifting sand of popular culture.

2. Tradition.

A lot of people build their lives on tradition. In other words I do it because I've always done it.

Seven words of a dying church – We've never done it this way before.

Tradition isn't bad. In fact something becomes a tradition because it works. But no tradition lasts forever. Truth lasts forever but no tradition lasts forever. Traditions eventually wear out, become obsolete and they're not valid.

Jesus says to a group of religious leaders “*You have let go of the commands of God and are holding on to the traditions of men.*” Mark 7:8,

3. Reason.

We all need reason. In fact, God gives us the ability to reason.

But some times what you think is reasonable is not actually right.

“I've always thought

Reason is a good thing but it's not infallible.

Proverbs 16:25 *“There’s a way that seems right to man, [It seems like the right thing] but in the end [it’s a dead end] it leads to death.”*

How many times have you made a decision that you thought was reasonable – I need to marry this person... I need to get into this business... I need to accept this job offer... I need to make this investment. What seemed like the right thing was an absolute disaster. Because your reason isn’t always infallible. You make mistakes.

The most important one to avoid is.

4. Emotion.

Some people build their lives simply on emotion. If it feels right, I do it. If it feels wrong, I don’t do it. In other words I do what I feel like doing. Do what you feel.

Feelings lie.

If you live by your feelings you will spend your life manipulated by your moods.

You don’t feel like getting up in the morning – the boss may not feel like keeping you on!

And if you build your life simply on emotions, there’s a word for that: immaturity.

Maturity and wisdom is when you act

- according to your values,
- according to your convictions and
- according to what’s right rather than what I feel like doing.

In Relationships – finding the right person – don’t rely on just emotion, ask

- Is he/she walking with God
- Have they honesty and integrity – do they have secrets (debts) etc.
- Do they have a job

Men promise love to get sex – women promise sex to get love.

After you start building on it, the second thing you have to do is you have to

2. Feed on it.

Open my eyes that I may see wonderful things in your law Ps 119:18

You have to feed on the Bible to get the strength you need.

Be a self-feeder - toddlers want to feed themselves, (growing Christians want to feed themselves)

Physical food gives you physical strength
Spiritual ----- spiritual -----

Some Christians live on a Starvation diet!!

1 Peter 2:2-3

Like new-born babies, you must crave pure spiritual milk so that you will grow into a full experience of salvation.

How do we feed ourselves on the Word of God?

The first way you can take the Word of God in is by my

1. Ears.

That means I have to be hearing the Word of God. The Bible says "*Faith comes through hearing the word of God.*"

So how do you hear it?

- Come to church. Listen to the Word of God being preached to you.
- Listen to Christian teaching on MP3s or CDs in your car.

Of course the problem with that, as most of us know, is we forget just about everything that we hear. I think the statistic is we forget about 95% of what we hear.

The second way to feed on the Word of God is I read it with my

2. **Eyes.** Read it

Have the bible in an accessible place in your home.

3. **I research it with my hands and with my mouth.**

Write it down – underline in the bible

But you also do it with your mouth by talking to other believers.

Mal 3:16

16 Then they that feared the Lord spoke often one to another: and the Lord hearkened, and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before him for them that feared the Lord, and that thought upon his name. KJV

Community group life is all about this. Leader ask – what have you been reading this week – what impressed you.

We hear we see, and we discuss

A fourth way to feed yourself on the Word is to

3. **Reflect on it.** – meditate – talk to yourself – chew it over

Then a fifth way I can feed myself is

4. **Remember it.**

There's a difference between remembering with your mind and with your heart. This is talking about memorizing Scripture.

Tea bags – how long do they stay in the cup – Debbie Fuge – (Steve Kitto)

Let it brew – The word = Hear it, then See it, discuss it, memorize it.

Not only are we to feed on it; we integrate the Word into our lives when we live by it.

You've got to

3. Live by the Word of God.

Do not merely listen to the word – deceiving yourselves - do what it says James 1:22

Jesus said Man shall not live by bread alone but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God.

The Word of God is not only food for your soul; the Word of God is your standard of living. Some people have a good standard of living!! It is the Word of God that sets the standard. Do you have a good standard of living??

The Bible says in Psalm 1, *“Blessed is the one [the man, the woman] who doesn't walk in the counsel of the ungodly, but who meditates on the word of God.”*

What does that mean? It means if you want your life to be blessed you don't build your life on the counsel of the world, on the way the world thinks. But you meditate; you build your life on the way that God thinks.

The counsel of the ungodly – is everywhere

TV, newspapers, atheistic and secular thinking, schools etc. Jeremy Kyle, Opera Winfrey

The word of God gives you hope, faith, confidence, peace, joy.

The fourth thing you do is you make it the seed that you grow by. This is the fourth metaphor. How do I integrate God's Word?

4. I grow through it.

I have hidden your word in my heart that I might not sin against you Ps 119:11

119:18 *“Open my eyes that I may see wonderful things in your law.”*

Jesus told the parable of the seed and the soil –

Not just four different types of people

Four different attitudes to the seed (word)

1. The first is the hardened soil. = the path

The hardened soil represents

- **A closed mind. My mind’s made up**
- Don’t talk to me about boyfriends/girls
- ----- debt
- ----- Sex
- ----- Business

So the first action is I must **cultivate an open mind**. Be open to God – soften your heart

- **Shallow ground** - That represents the superficial mind.

Responds enthusiastically at first but never gets round to doing it

Jesus story of the two sons both brought Joy and sorrow

You must make time for God’s Word.

If I just do a quick little glance at it, I don’t give it any time, and then I can’t build any roots. Roots take time to develop. And no root, no fruit.

Busyness is a major barrier that keeps you from being a man of the Word or a woman of the Word.

- A third soil is a **soil with weeds**.

The soil with weeds represents a **preoccupied mind**.

Other things choke it out of my life – worry and busyness and money and job and all these other things. My time is so full of other things!

We must eliminate the distractions.

The urgent is the enemy of the important –

Martha = One thing is needful and Mary has chosen that good part that shall not be taken away from her.

That's the soil with weeds. Preoccupied I must eliminate the distractions.

Then finally Jesus says there's a fourth kind of soil.

- **Good soil** = A willing mind. Some 30% 60% 100%

That's the good soil where the seed of truth gets planted, in your heart and it is allowed to grow and develop. It takes root and then it gets fruit.

A willing mind says, God, I'm willing to learn. I'm teachable. I'm humble. I don't think I know it all, so God, teach me.

If I want to be a Man/woman of the Word, I've got to

- build on it,
- I've got to feed on it,
- I've got to live by it,
- I've got to grow through it and number five.
- **I've got to act on it.**

The fifth Bible verse that we memorized during these six weeks together is

James 1:22. *“Do not merely listen to the word and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says.”*

Finally

- **I must trust in it.**

I build on it, I feed on it, I live by it, I grow through it, I act on it, and I then live it out by trusting in it.

Why can I trust the Bible?

Geoff did a whole session on that. God is never going to guide you in the wrong direction. Other people will.

Psalm 119:105 is our memory verse for this week *“Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light for my path.”*

This final week’s challenge

- Keep doing what you have been doing
- Read the word every day
- Meditate on it
- Keep in a small group – even if you change to another group or can’t get every week – keep in fellowship with a few positive believers.
- Have a daily time with the Lord.

Final Prayer:

Father, I want to thank you for the Word of God. I thank you that it calms our fears. It enlightens our mind. It strengthens our will. It grows our maturity. I thank you, Lord that it calms our worries and it leads us in the dark. All the things that your Word does we want to commit to being a part of an ongoing process of continuing in your word.

Sinner’s prayer

If you've never invited Jesus Christ into your heart, say Jesus Christ, I don't understand it all but I open my life to you. I want to start that journey. I want to get to know you and I want to know your purpose for my life. In your name I pray. Amen.