

MEETING GOD IN HIS WORD

As your group comes together each week, one of the actions you and your disciple-making group will want to take is to spend a few moments and share how you have **met God in His Word** this week. The following quote is one that is worthy of following:

The Bible is not an end in itself, but a means to bring men to an intimate knowledge of God, that they may delight in His presence.

A. W. Tozer

Reading the Bible is not just about facts; it is facts that lead to fellowship with God! Dr. Adrian Rogers said, “God has not given us His Word that we might merely be a reservoir of truth, but a river of blessing.” While we glean facts as we read the Word, fellowship—transforming fellowship with God—is the aim.

With that in mind, I want to give you two approaches, two highways on which to travel, to meet God in His Word. Again, the main focus is not the means, but the end. Don’t get lost in details of Bible study and miss fellowshiping with the Author.

The first approach to meeting God in His Word is through asking two questions:

- **What did God say?**
- **What did God say to me?**

Robby Gallaty, in our first book, *Growing Up*, in chapter 10 lays out the HEAR method. This approach centers around four steps that he calls the HEAR approach. That acronym stands for:

- Highlight
- Explain
- Apply
- Respond

Regardless of what method you take (and you are free to take another approach if you have one), the aim is the same, **meeting God in His Word.**

I encourage your group to all be on one Bible reading plan—*such as, but not limited to*—the One Year Bible.

I also want to encourage you to aim for what may be a new discipline for many in your D group, writing down what God says to you. The length can be as short or long as they choose—they

are doing this to **hear from God**, not impress anyone. Everyone will have time to share one or two of their insights with the group as you meet together each week.

Let me share two examples of what I am talking about in meeting God in His Word. These following insights from the One Year Bible are what I saw the morning I read them. They are from the first two days of the year:

Genesis 1:1 "In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth."

As I read this verse, it is apparent that GOD is the center and the focus of Himself and His creation. It is God who speaks, who creates, and who breathes.

We live in a world in which we, the created, make everything center around us. We see part of this in Romans 1:21, "We know God; yet we do not honor Him as God." This is the beginning of the downward spiral of man. If we get this right, placing God as the center and circumference of everything, we lay the foundation upon which we can get everything else right. If we get this wrong, we get everything else wrong and we live in a world in which God's responsibility is to make life good and right for us. That is the essence of sin . . . and failure. Today, live a God-centered life!

Psalms 2:8, "Ask of Me, and I will surely give the nations as Your inheritance, and the very ends of the earth as Your possession."

Prayer is God's way to see God's will on earth done. Here, God the Father is instructing God the Son to ask of Him and He will give the Kingdom. If God the Son must ask, HOW MUCH MORE AM I IN NEED TO ASK. By ask, I mean not merely thinking about asking, but taking time to actually ASK. I am guilty at times of being someone who believes in the power of prayer without practicing prayer. I am the doctor who believes that if someone will take a certain medicine or follow a certain set of physical steps, they will be healed, but as someone who has that disease, I honestly and believingly prescribe the medicine, BUT DON'T TAKE IT MYSELF. I have to confess I sometimes live in a state of poverty--missing what God wants to give--simply because I won't do one thing--ASK!! Today, don't just believe in prayer, actually take the time to pray!

Those two insights are simply that, insights. That is what God said to me as I read His Word. God may have said something entirely different to someone else as they read these passages. That is great! However, that is what I sensed Him saying to me. I encourage you to allow God to speak to you in a personal, practical way and share these insights with your group. Your insights from God's Word should be as personal, just like your relationship with your Heavenly Father is personal.

Let me encourage you to write down what God reveals to you. **What God says to you may be a sentence; it may be a couple of words! Your goal, your desire every day, is to hear from and**

know God. Don't focus on length of reflection (writing a lot); focus on being able to say, "This is what God said to me today."

Let me share one other practical (and personal) conviction regarding my approach to reading the Word and what happens if I miss a day—or two.

- First, my approach to reading the Word. My aim as I read God's Word is to hear from God, not necessarily to get to the end of the passage. I find that if I make it my goal to read the entire Bible section that day (the Old Testament, the New Testament, Psalms, and Proverbs), that becomes my focus instead of hearing from God. There are times that once I hear from God, especially in a powerful, awe-inspiring way, I will not finish reading the entire days reading, or I will seek to come back to it later.
- Secondly, what if I miss a day? Most of the time I can't do anything about missing out on the will of God yesterday (except to confess and repent). The Bible says, "Behold, 'now is the acceptable time,' behold now, 'is the day of salvation'" (2 Corinthians 6:2). I can and need to confess and repent of yesterday's sins; however, trying to "make up for them" is a mistaken strategy. I would **never discourage** someone from wanting to read God's Word through in a year. However, my goal is to meet with God in His Word, not necessarily read so many chapters and verses every day.

Some of you may disagree with that approach and feel like everyone should read a preset amount of Scripture every day. Time spent in God's Word is much like time a parent spends with a child, quality and quantity are both very important! However, over the years I have seen countless numbers of people give up because they feel bound by the constraints of time and feel pressure and guilt if they get behind.

For every D group leader, the first step to leading others to meet God in His Word is consistently experiencing this reality yourself. Come each week, having heard from God. **You teach what you know, you reproduce what you are.**

I leave you with Paul's word to the Roman church, "For whatever was written in earlier times was written for our instruction, so that through perseverance and the encouragement of the Scriptures, we might have hope. . . Now, may the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that you will abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit" (Romans 15:4,13).

Multiplying Disciple Makers,
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