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LESSON 3

Matt 4:4 - The Lord Jesus said: 'MAN SHALL NOT LIVE BY BREAD ALONE, BUT BY

.....'

As the body requires food for nourishment, so spiritual growth and maturity needs to feed off the Word of God.

Paul refers to the Bible as the very "Word of Life" (Phil. 2:16)

The world, that is, the planet in which we live, is a dying planet. Death reigns over all physical matter. The law of thermodynamics teaches that all living matter is not regenerating, but rather degenerating. Like an old clock that is wound up and ticks away until it is unwound, and has to be rewound again, so our world of material matter is winding down. The earth's condition is terminal. Most people think they are "living it up" but in fact they are on the downhill side of life. Thermodynamics exposes the lie of revolution.

1 Peter 1:24 says: "For all flesh is as grass and all the glory of man as the flower of grass. The grass (or flowers) wither and fade (wilt)." Conversely, says 1 Peter 1:25: "The Word of the Lord endures forever."

Our World

Our world is dying and pretends to offer life. Artificial life is like a plastic flower; it looks real, but it is lifeless. The systems of the world cannot offer real life. Death, decay and destruction in our world are hidden by all the outward trimmings of entertainment, pleasure and prosperity. Beneath it all is the cruel reality that life is winding down and that the Grim Reaper can strike without warning.

God's Word

In contrast, the Bible is alive; it is permanently fresh and relevant. In every era and phase of history, the Word of God remains a constant and invariable. There is no other book known to man that remains as up to date and relevant, despite our changing times. With such an inexhaustible resource in our lives, we should be drinking and feasting on it daily. Jer 15:16 "Your words were found, and I ate them, Your word was to me the joy and rejoicing of my heart; For I am called by Your name, O Lord God of hosts". Spiritual malnutrition is caused by neglect of the word.

Hebrews 5:13-14. For everyone who partakes only of milk is unskilled in the word of righteousness, for he is a

.....Heb 5:14 But solid food (meat) belongs to those who are of full age, that is, those who by

reason of use have their senses exercised to discern

Holiness or Spirituality is not attained through some experience or instant happening. There is no short cut to Spiritual maturity. Spiritual maturity does not come through attending conferences or reading self-help books. Practical Holiness is a process or journey that takes us to Christ likeness. How often we quote Romans 8:28:

“All things work together for good...” Unfortunately, we end at that verse! But the very next verse Romans 8:29 reveals what **is the purpose** in all these things happening in our lives! God is in the process of conforming our lives into the image of His Son. Our minds are renewed through the reading and studying of the Word.

Rom 12:2. And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the

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When you come across a miserable, defeated Christian, the first thing to consider asking them is how much time they spend in the Word! As a pastor, I know the reason why people battle and grope for attention and purpose. Your spiritual mind stagnates when there is no constant flow of divine information. The Bible is a reservoir or fountain sending forth the water of life. One of the lessons of hiking in the forest or wilderness is that you never drink from a stagnant pool. A running stream most certainly carries life refreshing water. Keep the flow of knowledge and information trickling through your soul and people will want to learn from you.

Consider the following five ways of growing spiritually.

- Read** and re-read the Scriptures. Choose a book of the Bible like Romans or Galatians. Read it, study it for 30 days, then make notes on it and memorize some key verses. Become acquainted with the content and character of a chapter. Know what each chapter of the book refers to.
- Believe** what it says. It is God’s inspired Word, accept it as such. If you doubt the Word you will be robbed of joy. Science, economics, mysticism and a host of other segments of life will challenge your faith. Believe God and shame the Devil. What did Peter say about Christ’s words? Read John 6:68.
- Rightly Divide:** Develop a love and passion for the Word **rightly divided**. What did the Psalmist say about God’s Word? Psalm 119:97.
- Honour:** Begin to **honour** the Word. Don’t give lip service to the Bible when in reality you dishonour its principles.
- Obey.** Seek to obey God’s Word. Remember that obedience is better than sacrifice. 1 Samuel 15:22.

The Bible is God’s treasure chest of rich information. Proverbs 3:14 & 15. For more than fifty years I’ve read my Bible daily and yet I have so much to learn and discover. My passion for God and His people is fuelled and energised by the Word of God and His Spirit within me rejoices in the reality of my response.

- Let’s worship God in Spirit and in Truth. John 4:24.
- God’s Word is Truth. John 17:14-17.
- Sanctification and holiness come through truth. John 17:17.
- The Holy Spirit leads us into truth – into the Word. John 16:12-14.

When reading a passage, consider the following questions to gain greater insight and understanding:

WHAT?
WHEN?
WHY?
WHOM?
WHO?

- When was it written?
- Why was it written?
- Whom was it written to?
- Who wrote the passage?
- What dispensation does this fit into?