



# DESERT VIEW BIBLE CHURCH

SERIES: THE SPIRITUAL DISCIPLINES MEDITATION •

JAMES 1:21-25 • 7/2/2023

## MAIN POINT

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If we want to grow in Christ, we must humbly receive and meditate upon the Word of God.

## INTRODUCTION

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As your group time begins, use this section to introduce the topic of discussion.

**If a non-Christian were to ask you why the Bible is important, what would you say? Why?**

**Do you feel like your Bible intake is important to you right now as it always has been? If not, what changed?**

**What are some of the main obstacles we face as we read and study the Bible?**

The Bible is God's Word, and is therefore an essential part of growing in Christ. Sadly, though, this spiritual discipline is one in which very few Christians regularly engage in. As Darrin Patrick will show us, though we have access to God's Word, we don't throw ourselves into it. Most of the time, our Bible intake comes exclusively in some kind of worship service if we have any at all. If we truly want to grow in Christ, we must humbly receive, study, and meditate upon the Word of God.

## UNDERSTANDING

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**READ JAMES 1:21-25.**

**Two obstacles we often face which can keep us from receiving the Word are pride and shallowness. How might pride keep us from truly receiving God's Word?**

**What about shallowness? Why might this tendency keep us from receiving the Word?**

When we approach the Word of God with pride, we tend to think that the commands don't apply to us. Pride looks at God's Word as information, but not applicable to me. If we approach the Word with shallowness, then we treat it purely as information. We learn truth, but we don't implement that truth in obedience. This can be particularly dangerous because it can lead to a hardened heart.

**Do either of those tendencies strike a chord with you? Why or why not?**

**Why do you think we struggle in our Christianity with both pride and shallowness when we come to the Word of God?**

The Book of James show us that God's Word is like a seed that, when implanted into the good soil of our hearts, can grow and mature. But this only happens if we are eager and ready to receive it. The text also compares God's Word to a mirror.

**In your own words, how is God's Word like a mirror? How does it reflect God? How does it reflect ourselves?**

**Why must we recognize that God's Word reflects both God and ourselves?**

God's Word gives us a true and clear picture of who God is. But as we see Him, we are also forced to see ourselves in light of Him. God's Word, then, both reveals the perfect character and acts of God and at the same time shows us our imperfect sinfulness. As we see ourselves in God's Word, we must be willing to gaze deeply into it.

**When it comes to Bible reading, study, and meditation, why is consistency important in the discipline of Bible intake?**

**What are some of the tools you need to utilize in order to study God's Word?**

**We must commit ourselves to memorizing God's Word. What are some ways you've found helpful to hide God's Word in your heart? Why is it important to do so?**

**Finally, we must be willing to meditate on the Word, soaking in the truth. What's the difference between reading and studying, and meditating on God's Word?**

When we meditate on God's Word, we find the missing link between Bible intake and prayer. Meditation is thinking deeply about what God has said in order to hear what God is saying. This is the process where we truly digest the truth instead of just tasting it. The end result is freedom and liberty as we not only read God's Word, but see it become living and active in our lives.

## APPLICATION

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Which of the steps in Bible intake do you need to focus on this week? How are you going to do that?

What is one way our group can pray for you as you seek to interact with God's Word this week?

## PRAYER

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Pray through your group's specific requests in regard to their Bible intake to close the group. Close by thanking God that He has not left us without a Word.

## COMMENTARY

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JAMES 1:21-25
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1:21. Here James used the metaphor of removing soiled clothing (see Romans 13:12; Ephesians 4:22). We must eliminate everything in our lives that is contrary to God's Word and prevents righteous living. In order to experience personal transformation, we should receive the teachings of God's Word humbly rather than defensively or negatively. An humble attitude will provide an open door for God's wisdom to penetrate our minds and hearts.

1:22. James was concerned that believers persevere in living out God's Word (v. 22). The word "doers" refers to believers who hear the Word taught, read, or preached and put it into action in their lives. The term "hearer" describes someone who hears the words of Scripture without really listening to them. That person takes no actions as a result of attending a session in which the Bible is read and taught. People who do not act on God's Word cheat themselves of the full, meaningful, and useful life God intends for them.

1:23. One who is content to listen to God's Word and take no action is self-deceived because that individual has no clear, precise, lasting perception of self. James drew an illustration from everyday life to drive home this point (vv. 23-24).

1:24. James compared the person who listens without taking action with a man looking at his own face in a mirror but neglecting to do the needed grooming the mirror reveals.

1:25. In contrast to the person content to be a hearer of God's Word without acting on it, James presented a doer who acts (v. 25). This person looks intently into the perfect law of freedom. The law to which James referred is perfect because it gives freedom. James probably had in mind the gospel, God's message of salvation in Christ and the implications of redemption for daily living. It is this message of grace that sets people free.