



SESSION 11 CHAPTER 7

THE WAYS OF THE ALONGSIDER

Pray

This week we step away from the issues of describing what our discipling relationship looks like in order to look at what it actually is that this relationship is built upon and around.

Our author, Bill Mowry, starts out with a personal story related to his early years while being disciplined. Notice how at the bottom of page 69 he avoids speaking the obvious. He doesn't use the 'M' word to describe his disciplers. He tells you what they did, and he tells you the results of their actions. Yet that 'M' word is perfectly described. It's obvious that the way they 'did life' was a perfect example of modeling. And, it was their modeling that set the stage for a lifetime of delight in reading and sharing insights into Scripture for Bill.

Katie/Becki, please turn over to page 70 and read the last two sentences in the second paragraph. Have you ever noticed that I try to always keep an open Bible on the table as we have time together? These sentences tell you why, and I hope that you will do likewise. Doing so keeps us prepared to answer questions not with words that express our opinions but rather with the true instruction of God.

What insights did you gain from the five passages you reviewed at Q 1? (Look for this answer - They were Jesus' responses to five different audiences: Satan, Pharisees, Sadducees, His Disciples, His Father)

Would someone read 2nd Timothy 3: 16-17? Did you read the phrase, "so that"? If not, where is it?

What did you make of Bill's illustration? What is a 'path'? Why is that word appropriate to one's life? (Look for 'Life is not lived in a straight line.') Paths are easier to step off of than is a cement roadway. At Psalm 119: 105 the author, perhaps Ezra, states, 'Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light for my path.'

We're going to look at the verse that underpins the next few questions, Hebrews 4:12. Who has a KJV Bible and who has a NIV one? Please read both versions?

KJV: 12 For the word of God [is] quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and [is] a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

NIV: 12 For the word of God is alive and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart.

Now here one more. This is Eugene Peterson's version taken from THE MESSAGE: 12 God means what he says. What he says goes. His powerful Word is (as) sharp as a surgeon's scalpel, cutting through everything, whether doubt or defense, laying us open to listen and obey.

If you're wondering why I am making an issue of this text, know that there is a reason. The Word of God is original; it is true; it is unerring; it guides; it leads; it answers; it encourages, it exhorts, it holds us together; it tells us who we are; it tells us who we can be; it even tells us what our futures will be. No other writing can do these things, and this list is so very short. We could continue adding to this list for hours, but there is a lesson to attend to.

Look at questions 4,5, & 6 and discuss answers.

Hand out "HAND" Sheets

Continue text on page 4...

The Hand Illustration Abiding in God's Word

Hear to be informed - Romans 10:17; Jeremiah 3:15 Hearing the Word from godly pastors and teachers provides us insight into other's study of the Scriptures as well as stimulating our own appetites for the Word.

Read to be healthy - Revelation 1:3; Deuteronomy 17:19 Reading the Bible gives us an overall picture of God's Word. Many find helpful a daily reading program which takes them systematically through the Bible. Study to be intelligent - Acts 17:11; II Timothy 2:15

Studying the Scriptures leads us into personal discoveries of God's truths. Writing down these discoveries helps us organize and remember them better.

Memorize to be skillful - Deuteronomy 6:6-7; Proverbs 7:1-3 Memorizing God's Word enables us to have it readily available for personal meditation, for witnessing to and helping others, and for overcoming temptations.

Meditate to be fruitful - Psalm 1:2-3; I Timothy 4:15 Meditating on God's Word, thinking of its meaning and application to our daily life, enables us to release its transforming power to continually work within us.



You are the only one qualified to accurately answer the 'grading' assessment. It is worth asking ourselves these questions, but to simply grade ourselves is not Bill's intent. His intent is to take your thoughts up one more level. At that level we ask ourselves, "What am I going to do about it?" In other words, now that you know what your strengths and weaknesses are, do you choose to take some kind of action that would impact that grade? The questions are meant as exhortations. Not as questions to invoke guilt or negative images, but encouragements to look to greater heights of just who you can be in Christ Jesus!

Over at Q 10 on page 76 we are asked a good question. How did you answer it?

Look at the last few sentences of the paragraph at the top of page 75. "Biblical..." How do you think meditation can connect the head and heart? (Look for 'It is the work of the Holy Spirit'.) As a co-laboring disciple who comes alongside the Holy Spirit, we can't make that connection for the disciple, but we can ask questions that will allow the Holy Spirit to help the disciple to discover the connecting 'dots'. The key is to make sure that those questions provoke discussion, not curtail it.

Here is the spot to offer a reminder about the use of those analytics we use when we read scripture. Remember to circle and underline, highlight and take notes.

Joshua 1: 8 "This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth; but thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein: for then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success."

Review/Discuss the answers to the aspects of Q 13.

Hand out '6 Principles Sheet'

Discuss the principles.

Discuss answers to the 'Intentionality' and 'Means' sections.

Close in prayer unless there is time to have a 'story' told.

Six Principles for Planning a Daily Appointment with God.

"We have almost forgotten that God is a Person and, as such, can be cultivated as any person can." A. W. Tozer

Refocus - Refocus your heart and mind through confession and praise. Before coming into God's presence, consider any sins to confess. If you're anxious, quickly record your anxious thoughts on a piece of paper and ask God to help you focus on Him. Review the previous 24 hours and thank Him for His goodness toward you. Be as specific as possible.

Read - Read a passage from the Scriptures. Select a passage ahead of time. You might begin by reading through one of the Gospels, focusing on Jesus. Many like to read a Psalm a day or a chapter in Proverbs. A daily reading program, to read the Bible in an entire year, can be a good place to start.

Reflect - Reflect and think about what you're reading. Bible meditation helps us get below the surface of the text. Ask some questions of the passage or verse using who, what, why, when, where, how. Spend a few minutes answering some of the questions.

Record - Record your discoveries in a small notebook. Ask the Holy Spirit to give a new insight from His Word daily. Record one take-away thought from your time of Bible meditation to reflect on during the day.

Respond - Respond to the Father in simple, practical obedience to what you've read. Take time to imagine what your life would be like if you applied this new discovery today. Jan Johnson writes, "You train yourself never to walk away from Scripture without responding." Pray over your schedule, committing the day's events to His glory.

Repeat - Practice this appointment daily. Decide on a daily time and place to meet with God. To put first things first, schedule your time with the Father on your PDA or daily planner. Forming an accountability partnership with a friend to check your progress has been a help to many. Remember, don't become devoted to a habit but to a Person.