

## January 2023 Spiritual Formation Exercise

### The Word of God

God is a communicator. Which only makes sense. Why would he create humans in his own image and not communicate to them? And how would we know him unless he took the initiative to tell us what is true about himself, about ourselves, and about our world? Fortunately he didn't leave us in the dark, but has inspired the writing of the Bible and shepherded it through the ages so that we have it in our hands today. And so we take it upon ourselves to "rightly handle the word of truth" (2Tim. 2:15) so that we don't miss any of what God is revealing to us. Being in the Word, we can hear from God, become saturated in truth, and grow into maturity as a follower of Jesus.

### So Why do we have the Bible?

Because this is a God who communicates.

Why?

Because he wants us to know truth about himself and us.

Why?

Because truth will set us free. Free from our sin. Free from separation from God. Free from being under the tyranny of the devil's lies. Etc. (John 8:32)

### Ultimately, here is what the Bible does:

- a) It reveals and teaches us THE Truth- it anchors us in God's teaching and what we need to know about our journey of being restored to God through Christ.
  - This anchoring brings us ultimate freedom (John 8:32), which is the freedom from the angst and lostness of NOT knowing what to believe nor how to live.
  - And it gives us a foundation upon which to stand when the enemy lies to us.
- b) It trains us in godly living (2Timothy 3:16,17)
- c) It facilitates our transformation and spiritual growth (John 17:17)
  - Because there is power in it. (Isaiah 55:11 and Ephesians 5:25-27)
  - Because the HS uses it to convict us of sin, enlighten us, and illuminate the truth we need to hear! (2 Peter 1:3,4; Psalm 119:9-11; Hebrews 4:12)

### What are the basics of utilizing the Bible in our walk with Jesus?

- We read the bible asking what the simple meaning of the text is based on its genre and its original context to its original audience. "What is the Truth(s) this passage is teaching about God, humans, the spiritual journey, etc."
- As we study carefully, we are also inviting the Holy Spirit to engage with our spirit and lead us into all truth. (John 16:13)
- Then, we reflect with God on how we could or should apply this truth in our life and journey today. (James 1:22-25)

**Let's try this 31-day experiment for the month of January.**

1) Have a daily time of reading/studying God's word.

2) Then, in your journal complete the following reflections:

a) "The Holy Spirit is illuminating this TRUTH for me today..."

b) "I think I might be able to apply this to my life by... "

c) "The opposite of this this truth that I see at work in the devil's schemes is..."

d) "This passage also leaves me with these questions..."