

GOD

Making God's Word Our Own

God, our loving heavenly Father, earnestly desires that everyone not only gets saved, born again of His spirit, but gains a full, experiential knowledge of the truth, His Word and will (I Timothy 2:4). There's much more to "full, experiential knowledge" (*epignōsis*) than just reading and even memorizing God's rightly divided Word. God's desire for us is that we not only "know", mentally perceive (*oida*) His Word, but that we make it our own and apply that knowledge in our lives. Only then can we experience the greatest impact not only in our own lives but in the lives of others in the household.

Before we can make God's Word our own, we first need to receive His Word. Let's look at a familiar verse:

James

1:21 Wherefore lay apart all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness, and receive with meekness the engrafted word, which is able to save your souls.

We want to receive God's Word with meekness. That word "receive" is from the Greek word *dechomai*, to receive subjectively. That's the first step. We might read God's Word on our own or listen to somebody else teach it. Once we've received it, we can begin to make it our own. Part of this is by studying God's Word, endeavoring to rightly divide it. II Timothy 2:15 tells us: "Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth." As workers of the Word we strive to know and understand exactly what God said and meant, without succumbing to any private interpretation that might try to creep in due to our backgrounds, what we or others think, or what we may have been previously taught – even if it was taught by a church, ministry, or great minister known for their own work and teachings. This is especially important in our day and time when we have no access to the original Word of God that was written when "holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the holy spirit" (II Peter 1:21).

Once we read and hear God's Word then study it, we are well on our way to making God's Word our own. When we have God's rightly divided Word, we then want to retain it with conviction, holding it fast (Titus 1:9) as we keep it in our minds and hearts. We want God's Word to be so engrained in our hearts and lives that it will be manifested in our actions.

Psalms 119 verse 11 says: "Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee." As we make it our lifestyle to keep God's Word in our hearts, rather than giving in to the opportunities to break fellowship, we'll manifest God's love as our actions and conduct are in alignment and harmony with God's Word. Because God's Word is His will, we'll not only be making God's Word our own, but also His will.

As we make God's Word and will our own, we are better able to consistently accomplish what we are exhorted to do in II Corinthians chapter 10, verse 5:

II Corinthians

10:5 Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ.

Considered literally, we can better understand this verse: “Demolish your human logic from the high position to which you have lifted it vertically against the knowledge of God which you have known by experience; be wise, lead captive everything to Christ which you have attentively listened to and heard.” In other words, quit depending on human sense-knowledge logic and depend on God. If our mind starts to drift, we immediately bring it back to God and His Word which we have made our own.

Bringing our thoughts back to God’s Word which we have made our own is part of renewing our mind:

Romans

12:1 I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, *which is* your reasonable service.

12:2 And be not conformed to this world, but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what *is* that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.

To renew our mind is to put the Word of God in mind and act accordingly.

Ephesians

4:22 That ye put off concerning the former conversation (*conduct, lifestyle*) the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts;

4:23 And be renewed in the spirit of your mind;

4:24 And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness.

Once we have renewed our minds to God’s Word, we “put on the new man”, which involves taking action. The remainder of chapter 4 of Ephesians tells us more about how to do this.

Let’s look at a couple familiar verses in Philippians chapter 4:

Philippians

4:8 Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things *are* honest, whatsoever things *are* just, whatsoever things *are* pure, whatsoever things *are* lovely, whatsoever things *are* of good report; if *there be* any virtue, and if *there be* any praise, think on these things.

4:9 Those things, which ye have both learned, and received, and heard, and seen in me, do; and the God of peace shall be with you.

Verse 8 lists eight things that we are to “think on”, each of which is a quality of God’s Word. It’s interesting to note that Biblically, the number 8 is the number for new beginning. The words “think on” are from one Greek word, *logizomai*, which means “to occupy oneself

with, consider, conclude”. We dwell on these things, God’s Word; then we put them into practice in our lives. Notice that verse 9 says “do” – we take action.

Take a look at James chapter 1, beginning in verse 22. We already read verse 21 that told us to “receive with meekness the engrafted word”.

James

- 1:22 But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves.
1:25 But whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty (*God’s Word*), and continueth *therein*, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed.

Part of making God’s Word our own is taking action on that Word we’ve put in our minds and hearts. Then we will be blessed.

We can see more vividly the impact of our taking action on God’s Word that we have made our own in Ephesians, chapter 6. We’ll begin in verse 10:

Ephesians

- 6:10 Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might.
6:11 Put on the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.
6:12 For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high *places*.
6:13 Wherefore take unto you the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.

We are exhorted to be strong “in the Lord” - standing together with others in the household, and in “the power of his might” – God’s power with an impact that comes from His ability to do. Verse 11 says to “put on the whole armor of God”, or more accurately in the text, “put on all the resources of God” – everything that God has made available to us. We can only do this if we have made His Word our own. Then, we can stand against the “wiles”, the methods and strategies, of our adversary, the devil. Verse 13 again exhorts us to do this, so it’s established. “Withstand in the evil day” is more accurately “withstand the evil one”. As we do this, putting on the Word that we have made our own in our minds and acting accordingly, we will not only take a stand now but will, “having done all”, stand at the *bema* for rewards when Christ returns.

One great verse we can keep in our minds and claim as we make God’s Word our own is Romans chapter 8, verse 28:

Romans

- 8:28 And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to *his* purpose.

As we take a stand on that Word of God, we have made our own, we “know”, mentally perceive, that no matter what the situation, God will work all things together for good. The word “good” is from the Greek word *agathos*, which we can understand as “a harmonious perfection, spiritually advantageous and admirable, the best Godly solution according to what is available in that situation”. God takes care of us.

We’ll conclude by taking a look at a few verses in Colossians chapter 3 that nicely sum up some of the ways we can manifest that Word of God that we have made our own. We’ll begin in verse 12:

Colossians

- 3:12 Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering;
- 3:13 Forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also *do ye*.
- 3:14 And above all these things *put on* charity (*the love of God in the renewed mind in manifestation*), which is the bond of perfectness.
- 3:15 And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which also ye are called in one body: and be ye thankful.
- 3:16 Let the word of (*pertaining to*) Christ dwell (*abide, make itself at home*) in you richly, in all wisdom teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord. (*more accurate punctuation indicated here*)
- 3:17 And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, *do* all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him.

We have considered making God’s Word our own, not only studying and learning it but by keeping it in our hearts and manifesting it as we take action. Then, not only will we individually be blessed but we will have a profound impact as we stand together with others in the household.

- Dr. Rick Batt