

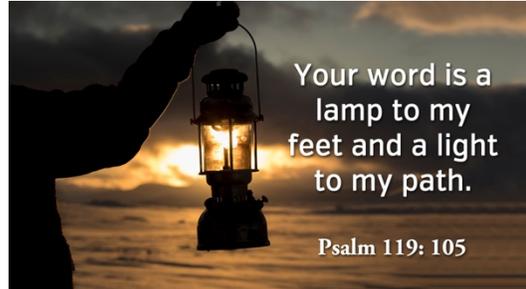
“Study: The Importance of Listening and Paying Attention”

January 9, 2022 with Jim Post

The Walk: Five Essential Practices of the Christian Life series

SHOW SLIDE: Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path. (Psalm 119:105)

“Listening is where love begins: Listening to ourselves and then listening to your neighbors”.
Mr. Rogers.

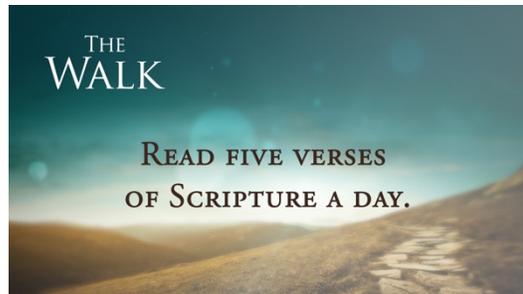


Tell the story about my 2020 star word, “listen,” and listening.

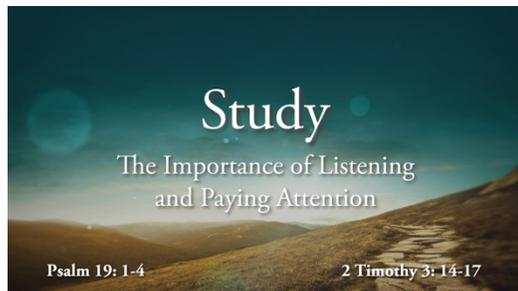
So how do we begin to be readers and students of the Bible? Hamilton gives us a guide on how to begin. Look at your hand. Use the principle of 5. Read a verse a day for 5 days. **SHOW SLIDE**



As you become accustomed to that, graduate to reading a chapter a day for 5 days. Using the 6th day as your catch-up day. Read and try to understand what God is trying to tell you.



Maybe you know someone who has read the entire bible in a year. It takes discipline and you must read it pretty much everyday. This is something I have tried a few times but have never been able to complete it on my own. I was lucky like some of you who have taken Disciple Bible. It is a controlled study that takes you from Genesis to Revelation. You almost read the entire bible in 26 weeks. You meet weekly with a class and discuss what you have read that week and are able to ask and answer questions.



Even though the bible is the best-selling book of all time and Christians claim it is the word of God most Christians read it very little. Recent studies found 87% of all Americans own a bible, but most of these people have read little or none of it. Another poll found

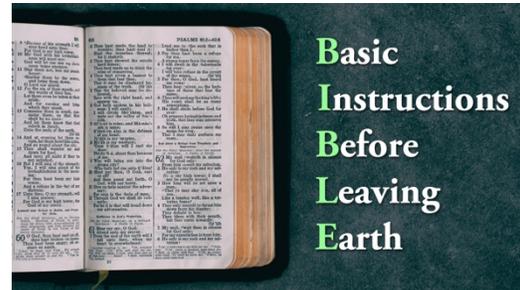
that only 35% of Christians read the bible weekly. Jesus not only read scripture he memorized it. **Tell the story about the people coming to the House.**

Hamilton said the Bible is a love letter from God or an owner's manual on how we are to live among ourselves and have a greater connection with Him.

SHOW SLIDE: Bible - Some call it

Basic – Instruction – Before – Leaving – Earth

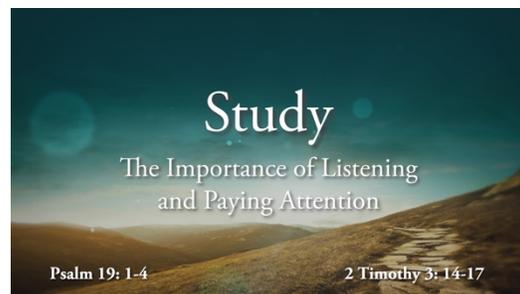
Hamilton states that the Bible is much more than these things. It was written by people who experienced God in profound ways as they were led by intuition and the Holy Spirit. If we are seeking to walk with Jesus and have a relationship with him our view of scripture should be shaped by his view of it.



What we call the Old Testament was written over a 1000-year period. It was inspired by the same spirit at work within us and by people reflecting on their experience with God.

The New Testament is the story of Jesus, Gods Son. The long-awaited Jewish Messiah. He came to show us who God is and who God calls us to be. To love each other. To love all people.

How does God speak to us as we read and study his word? God has given us a conscious, intuition, and reason. God gave us these things for a specific way to speak to us. Our conscious is our inner sense of right and wrong which aligned with in our intuition or “gut feeling”. These coupled with capacity with reason are all means that God has given us to know him.



Nature and natural revelation. People talk about how they experience God. They experience Him through nature. A walk through the woods or a walk on the beach or walk your spouse neighborhood with your spouse or significant other. Looking to the heavens and observing the stars at night and being in awe of what God has made.

The Arts. God has given human beings the ability to create art, literature, and music. What makes great art is the way it speaks to us. I am constantly amazed on the talent

that people have in the ability to draw and paint, play a musical instrument or sing. God has given these people a rare talent which they cultivated.

Through Life Experiences and People. We have all heard of people who have experienced unimaginable tragedies, the loss of family members and close friends, or have experienced what seems to be an unforgivable wrong done to them and are able to forgive and even go to the person who have wronged them and tell them they forgive. These people are a true inspiration and have searched and have been touched by God.

The Holy Spirit. Read John 14:15-21 “Jesus Promises the Holy Spirit”

¹⁵ “If you love me, keep my commands. ¹⁶ And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another advocate to help you and be with you forever— ¹⁷ the Spirit of truth. The world cannot accept him, because it neither sees him nor knows him. But you know him, for he lives with you and will be in you. ¹⁸ I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you. ¹⁹ Before long, the world will not see me anymore, but you will see me. Because I live, you also will live. ²⁰ On that day you will realize that I am in my Father, and you are in me, and I am in you. ²¹ Whoever has my commands and keeps them is the one who loves me. The one who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I too will love them and show myself to them.”

When do you hear the Holy Spirit talking to you? Studying, praying, reading scripture, listening to music, or the pastor preaching? Ultimately, we turn to the scriptures, to the person, works and words of Jesus to discern God’s will and make sense of the Word.

We all know that through the ages man has used this wonderful book to do great harm to his fellow man and some people continue to use it for the same purpose. I don’t understand the violence and killing from the Old Testament and if I find myself questioning God’s love for me, I turn back to the words of Jesus. When asked what the Greatest Commandment is Jesus said “to love the Lord with all your heart, with all your soul and with all of your mind, and the second greatest is to love your neighbor as yourself.” I truly believe if you are reading the bible and you think it is telling you to exclude, hurt, or hate any person or a group of people something is wrong with your interpretation of what God is telling you. I believe this with every fiber in my body.

I have found over the years of Bible study, such as disciple bible, men’s group, and attending church, I have learned that God loves all people and he sent Jesus to earth to live, teach us, and to die for our sins and if we turn to him even though things will still happen that hurt us, we have a savior and a God who wants us to be happy if we can and will trust him - the Father, Son and Holy Ghost. We also have a community of faith that will surround us in love and understanding if we give the community a chance.