



TALKINGPOINTS WALKINGPOINTS



A publication of , the adult discipleship ministry of Triangle Community Church.

Talk together about the glory of God's kingdom. —Psalm 145:11
Love the Lord your God and **walk** in all his ways. —Joshua 22:5

Questions for Community Group Discussion

- Pastor Doug noted: "Sow a thought, reap an action. Sow an action, reap a habit. Sow a habit, reap a character. Sow a character, reap a destiny." How have you seen this to be true?
- Review the Sermon Summary.
Which **one** of the **five benefits** of Bible study is **most meaningful** to you—and **why**?

Which **one** of the **three obstacles** is **most difficult** for you? **How** will you overcome it?

Talk about the **five tips** for successful Bible study.

- What time is best for you—and why?
- What special place will you choose?
- What resources do you lack?
- What attitudes do you need to develop?
- What plan will you follow?

Need help getting started?
Write to:
BiblicalHopeAndHelp@gmail.com

Application-Challenge

Develop the habit of spending time daily in God's Word. *Need help getting started?*
Use the "**Digging Deeper**" feature included in your **Walking Points Talking Points**.

Talking To Others About This Week's Message

If a neighbor or friend at work asked you, "What kind of stuff do they talk about at your church?", how would you summarize the most important elements of this week's sermon and the key lessons you intend to apply to your life? Can you explain it in **plain language** anyone could understand?

Talking To God About This Week's Message

"Heavenly Father, please help me today to be a 'doer' of the Word, and not just a 'hearer'. Amen."

Take One Step: What is one small, concrete step of obedience you will put into practice this week?



Sermon Summary Key Passage: Matthew 4:4

Spiritual maturity looks like Jesus. He is our role model and the standard against which all humanity is measured, because He is the only person who has ever lived whose life was perfectly aligned with God's will (Matthew 22:37-39). When we look at the news, we are confronted with the consequences of our failure to love: broken lives, broken families, and broken institutions. And it all can be traced back to the human heart; we are the problem! We need to change, and the Bible teaches and our experience confirms that only Jesus can bring about the radical heart change we need. Sanctification, growth in spiritual maturity, is not automatic. It is a process which requires discipline (Hebrews 5:12-13; 2 Peter 3:18; 1 Timothy 4:7). To become like Jesus, we must consistently practice those habits, those inner disciplines, that Jesus modeled and passed along to his disciples. The first spiritual discipline to consider is Bible Study. The faithful study of God's Word brings many **benefits**:

[1] God's Word nourishes the human spirit (Matthew 4:4). As God's image-bearers we are not just physical beings, we are also spiritual beings. We rarely go an entire day without eating, but we regularly starve our spirits (1 Peter 2:2). We recently had some guests in our home who have a young baby. Little Rachel was an angel—until she got hungry. Then she turned into a different creature entirely! That is a picture of how we should long for God's Word. God's Word is just as critical to our spiritual growth as that milk is to a baby's physical growth.

[2] God's Word renews our mind (Philippians 4:8). To become like Christ, our minds must be renewed, and consistent study of God's Word is indispensable to that process. We are constantly receiving input from the sinful world in which we live. It would be naïve to think that it doesn't affect us. What we view throughout the day shapes our beliefs, our values, and ultimately our choices. Our minds are like supercomputers. "Garbage in, garbage out." Problem is, we don't recognize the bad "code" we are being "programmed" with because it is packaged so deceptively. We are deceived when we allow ungodly ideas, dressed up as worldly wisdom, to pass into our minds undetected. All day long we are exposed to mental trash. We need to program our minds with God's Word on a daily basis. But there is a spiritual battle going on for your soul. Satan knows that one of the few places the world's anti-God values will be challenged is when God's people gather to worship and open God's Word together.

[3] God's Word liberates us from sin's power (John 8:31-32). We are in bondage to our anger, our lust, our unforgiveness, our jealousy, our bitterness, our impulsiveness and our selfishness, and we need to be set free. Jesus said, "If you continue to follow my teaching...you will know the truth and the truth will set you free." Merely knowing the right thing to do does not help you very much. Our liberation comes when we choose to act on what we know to be true.

[4] God's Word equips us (2 Timothy 3:16-17). Scripture is "inspired by God", literally "God-breathed." This means that we can trust it, it is authoritative, and we must submit to it. When Scripture speaks, God speaks, and we would do well to listen. Scripture is profitable for these four things: (a) For teaching us how to get on God's path, (b) for reproving us when we get off the path, (c) for correcting us by getting us back on God's path, and (d) for training us in righteousness—how to stay on the right path. And the end result is that "the man (or woman) of God will be adequate, equipped for every good work."

[5] God's Word gives us wisdom beyond our years (Psalm 119:99). Armed with God's Word we're not left to guessing and speculation on topics on which God has spoken. Ask ten people what they think God is like and you will probably get ten different answers. Ask people what mankind's biggest problem is and you'll discover a lot of variation in their answers. But in the Scriptures, God clearly speaks. He reveals himself in his Word and in his Son, the Lord Jesus. In the Scriptures, God has spoken his mind on many topics, so that we are not left to conjecture. If you want to be truly wise, dig into God's Word.

Some **TIPS** that will help you make daily time with God a habit include: **[a] Select a specific time.** The best time to have a quiet time is when you are at your best, so select the time when you are most alert. Many people find the early morning to be an ideal time. Musicians say, "The best time to tune your instruments is before the concert, not after!" There is a compelling logic there! Beginning your day with Bible study demonstrates that meeting with God is your first priority. In the morning, you are likely to be more rested, your mind is less cluttered, and it's often the quietest time of the day. But whatever time you set for personal Bible study, be consistent. **[b] Choose a special place.** Wherever it is, it needs to be a place where you can give God your undivided attention (Mark 1:35). **[c] Gather the resources you'll need.** Your Bible and a notebook and pen to write down observations and prayer requests. Other helpful resources can be a commentary, Bible atlas, and a Bible dictionary. All of these resources are combined in something called a "Study Bible". Consider one of these: ESV Study Bible, NASB Study Bible, Life Application Bible, or the Ryrie Study Bible. **[d] Begin with right attitudes:** Reverence (Psalm 111:10), expectancy (Psalm 119:18), and a prior commitment to obedience (John 7:17). **[e] Follow a simple plan.** For example, a simple 30-minute plan could be: Relax (1 minute), Read (10 minutes), Reflect (10 minutes), Record (5 minutes), Request (4 minutes).

Overcoming the problems of... **[i] Discipline:** Be aware of quiet time robbers, such as late night TV or video games and caffeine. Fall asleep thinking spiritual thoughts—praying, listening to Christian music, etc. Go to bed on time, then, in the morning, get up immediately. **[ii] Distractions:** Get out of bed, shower and have coffee. Read and pray aloud, if necessary. Try walking during your prayer time. Finally, keep a "To Do List" handy (jot distracting tasks down, then return to God's Word). **[iii] Diligence:** Developing habits requires diligence at the beginning. You have to overcome a lot of negative inertia, so make a vow to God, schedule it in your daily calendar, and be prepared for Satanic excuses!

Digging Deeper in Your Daily Quiet Time

"Five Question Bible Study" (see page below) is a simple way to study any passage.
We can use it to explore the unique power and value of God's Word.

Monday— Psalm 19:7a & 10-14

Tuesday— Psalm 19:7b & 10-14

Wednesday— Psalm 19:8a & 10-14

Thursday— Psalm 19:8b & 10-14

Friday— Psalm 19:9-14

Saturday— ***In preparation for worshipping your risen Lord tomorrow with your church family,*** study Matthew 6:5-13.

Need blank copies for doing more
"Five Question Bible Study"?
e-mail: Dan.Clement.TCC@gmail.com

Bible Text: _____

Date: _____



What idea particularly strikes me from this text? [Note in which verse(s) is it found.]



What question does this text raise in my mind—and how would **this text** answer it?



What about Jesus Christ—his character and/or his redemption—relates to this text?



What action must I take as a result of this text? Be concrete and specific.



With whom will I share what I learned from this text?