

Paradigm Discipleship

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The purpose of this resource is to provide some guidance for you as you encourage your disciple to develop a strong devotional relationship with God.

The following resource is a guide that provides some basic structure to developing a study on the importance of allowing the Word of God to influence and season your life.

We encourage you to do your own study, using this resource as a guide, to develop a learning experience for you and your disciple that will help you both move deeper in your appreciation of the Word of God.

Seasoned with Salt

Opening question: Read Colossians 4:2-6 together. What do you think Paul means here by letting our conversations be “seasoned with salt”?

*Affirm any answers that connect to the concept of wisdom or discernment or truth.

*A good follow up question would be to ask your disciple to describe the context of 4:2-6. It is in the context of sharing the Gospel.

*A good personal study for you would be to examine other passages in the New Testament where salt is used as an illustration or metaphor; or to study the uses of salt in the first century to draw out the full meaning of this illustration of Paul.

Follow up question: How do we make our conversations salty?

*The obvious answer is to saturate our conversations with truth.

*What is the ultimate source of truth? God’s Word.

Study Question: What are some of the other benefits of knowing God’s Word?

*This list could be long or short, depending on how much interaction your disciple has had with the Word. Once you have brainstormed it a bit, go on to 2 Timothy.

Look up 2 Timothy 3:16-17 together.

Study Question: Discuss with your disciple each of the elements of this verse:

*God-breathed – what implications does this have for us?

*Useful for teaching – how many different teaching contexts can you think of?

*Useful for rebuking – be sure to highlight rebuking OURSELVES, not just others. The Holy Spirit uses the Word of God to rebuke us.

*Useful for Correcting – lots of different ways to be corrected, brainstorm all the different types of correction the Word can offer you.

*Useful for Training – training in what?

*Result – a thoroughly trained disciple of Jesus.

Challenge:

*There are two ways to read the Bible: for depth and for breadth. For depth we read carefully, slowly, thoughtfully. We will get into more detail about studying, memorizing and meditating on the Word later.

The second approach, reading for breadth, is reading the Bible like a novel. You want to see the full panorama of scripture. You want to see how all the different letters fit together into one cohesive whole.

Challenge your disciple (and yourself if you haven’t already) to develop a plan of Bible reading that allows you to see the Bible as a whole. It can be any kind of plan, **the best plan is the one you will actually do.**

Study Question: We all know that reading God's Word is important, but why do you think hearing God's Word is important?

*Romans 10:17 says that faith comes from hearing

*Mark 4:24, in the middle of several parables, Jesus says to those gathered around Him, "Consider carefully what you hear."

-Lots of implications: First there is the element of discernment. Examine what you hear to see if it is truth. Second, pay attention to what you hear so that you really listen and understand. Third, make sure to apply what you hear (implied in the rest of the verse and the context) or you may lose it.

*The final point of hearing God's Word is that it is often God's appointed means to speak to us. It is even more clear in Luke's account of the same story in Luke 8:18. Jesus tells His followers to think carefully how we listen. God often uses gifted teachers of the Word to work in our lives. We need to place ourselves under the teaching of the Word and pay close attention to what we hear.

American Christians have an independent streak that can get us into trouble. We often view our faith as just that: OUR faith. It is nobody else's business.

If we isolate ourselves and only rely upon ourselves to know the Word, we are getting a very narrow and often shallow view of the Word of God. Now it is true that the Spirit is at work in the life of every believer, but He uses other people in our lives to help us understand and assimilate the Word of God.

The challenge is to find mentors we can trust, who preach the Word of God clearly, and place ourselves at their feet to learn. This is a powerful expression of humility and a necessary path to growth.