

THE BIG IDEA: The more truth we put in, the less lies can get in.

The Take-Off

We're here, y'all!! First Sunday in this wonderful resource that the Lord has given to us, and I am super pumped that the first message I get to preach from this platform is about Scripture - specifically, the part Scripture plays in the rhythms that we're learning to establish.

Remember our key Scriptures - it's from **Matthew 11:28-30** in The Message translation of the Bible:

*"Are you tired? Worn out? Burned out on religion? Come to me. Get away with me and you'll recover your life. I'll show you how to take a real rest. Walk with me and work with me—watch how I do it. **Learn the unforced rhythms of grace.** I won't lay anything heavy or ill-fitting on you. Keep company with me and you'll learn to live freely and lightly."*

This month we're committing ourselves to learning the unforced rhythms of grace. We've talked about our need of a Savior - someone to keep the beat steady in our lives - and then how solitude and serving can be incorporated into the rhythm God wants for us.

This morning, we're looking at Scripture - the Bible - and I want to caution you against being a Bible thumper.

UNFORCED rhythms - that word unforced is huge - we don't MAKE people read and obey Scripture

I would argue that one reason people don't love the Bible is because they've been hit with it so much

So our goal this morning isn't to hit you with a bunch of "Thou shalt's" or to guilt you into buying a Bible

We just want to help explain the one reason we don't use the Bible and the one reason we should

1. The one reason people don't use the Bible

- a. When it comes to Scripture, there are 4 types of people here today:
 - 1) Some here know the Bible to be God's word, anointed by the Holy Spirit and a non-negotiable for how we grow in relationship with the Son
 - 2) Some know why the Bible's important (they accept that it's the word of God - so duh, it's a big deal), but don't treat it as you'd expect them to if they really do believe that
 - 3) Some know the Bible is important, but don't know why.
 - 4) The rest here have no idea what to believe about the Bible
- b. I believe that everyone here (outside of that smaller first group) has the same question about the Bible: does it work?
- c. The majority of people don't use the Word because they're not sure the Word works.
- d. The typical response is that we'd read it if we could get 100% proof that it's God's word, right?
- e. But I don't think that's true at all, because we use things all the time despite 100% proof. Smoking 100% cause cancer, but people still smoke. Playing lit music 100% causes me to dance (badly), but we keep playing it every week. What about the reverse? There are things that are proven 100% to help us that we don't do.
- f. Eating healthy food comes to mind.
- g. But at the end of the day, I think most of us have underestimated the power of Scripture and the role that it needs to play in the rhythms of our lives. We've done that because we don't quite see it being as effective as we think it should be.
- h. Let me give you an example: I can read you a verse like **Hebrews 4:12** and, depending on which category you fall in above, you'll say a rousing "amen" or a softer "that's right" or maybe a matter-of-fact, "so what?" when I'm done.
- i. But most of us - even if we agree with the words I read - would also agree that we don't see the "aliveness" of an active word in our lives day-to-day.
- j. If we did, we'd utilize it a whole lot more.
- k. So, while I don't want to make this simply a pragmatic message about making the Bible work, I do want to answer the one question that most of us - perhaps even all of us - have about the Bible: **why doesn't it seem to work in my life?**

2. The one reason we all should

- a. We could list tons of benefits to building Scripture into our rhythms: it helps us know God's will, it contains power and nourishment for our souls, it's full of God's promises
- b. All of those are good, but a lot of us already know that. What we don't know is how to make it work!
- c. So, let me show you one scripture that will help us understand the one reason we need to take a fresh look at including the Scripture in our rhythms.
- d. **Psalm 119:11** / We'll come back to this, because this verse is BOOM!
- e. First, let's see the result of this verse in the life of Jesus. He had power because he practiced this verse.
- f. He **regularly** spent time with the Father in order to hear God's word.
 - John 12:49 / I don't speak on my own authority. The Father who sent me has commanded me what to say and how to say it.
 - John 8:26 / "I have much to say about you and much to judge. But the One who sent Me is truthful, and what I have heard from Him, I tell the world."
 - John 8:28 / So Jesus said, "When you have lifted up the Son of Man, then you will know that I am He, and that I do nothing on My own, but speak exactly what the Father has taught Me.
 - John 14:10 / Do you not believe that I am in the Father and the Father is in Me? The words I say to you, I do not speak on My own. Instead, it is the Father dwelling in Me, performing His works.
 - John 14:24 / Whoever does not love Me does not keep My words. The word that you hear is not My own, but it is from the Father who sent Me.
- g. A lot of us include the Bible accidentally but not intentionally
- h. With reading plans, verses of the day, and under 5 minutes devos, we've reduced the soundtrack of Scripture to sound bites.
- i. Sound bites aren't bad, but they're like splashing the ocean on yourself vs actually getting into the water.
- j. So, back to **Psalm 119:11**, and let's unpack it and find the secret to being transformed by Scripture - the secret Jesus knew and practiced in his rhythms
- k. It all lies in the phrase "have hidden"
 - the Hebrew word means "to hide, treasure, treasure up" - but that's not all!
 - it also means "to lie hidden, lurk" - sounds like a bomb waiting to go off to protect us from the enemy!
 - that got my attention, so I dug a bit further
 - the verb is in the perfect tense (what??), and the perfect tense is often used in the case of general truths of actions of frequent occurrence - truths or actions which have been often experienced or observed
 - actions of FREQUENT occurrence, which have been OFTEN experienced
 - Jesus knew it! The more he heard the word of God, the less he heard the lies of the enemy
- l. The reason the Bible doesn't seem to work is because we pick it up when we're in trouble to find one verse to encourage us until it's alright again
- m. We reduce the soundtrack to a sound bite, and wonder why it doesn't work
- n. We need to embrace what Jesus knew: **the more truth we put in, the less lies can get in!**

The Landing

Now, that's a lot, and it's easy right now for your head to be spinning.

So much Scripture, so much Hebrew, so much it's hard to know what to do with it.

So, I brought a visual to help you really get a hold of the power of consistent, relational time in Scripture with God.

[Ping pong balls]

God isn't trying to get rid of the bad in you - he's trying get his good in you!

Let's pray.