

A LIFE
Transformed



THROUGH
GOD'S WORD

————— Sojo ACADEMY —————



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A vertical photograph on the left side of the page shows a person from the chest down, sitting and reading an open Bible. The person is wearing a light-colored t-shirt with the word 'LOVE' printed vertically and blue jeans. The scene is bathed in a warm, golden light from a low sun, creating a soft, hazy atmosphere. The background is out of focus, showing what appears to be a body of water and distant hills.

Introduction

We all know God's word is critical to the life and health of a believer. Even so, many of us struggle to make time for this all-important book. We also wonder how to make practical application from what we read or may even question if the Bible is truly relevant to us today.

During this month's study, we're going to cover much ground and not only look at some very convincing reasons WHY we should make time in God's word a priority, but also examine our own practices. We'll discover different ways for getting into God's word... and for getting His word into us. You'll be refreshed as you see how transformative this spiritual discipline is and how it does indeed relate to your daily life.

As you work through the study this month, ask the Lord to revive your heart afresh, to spark godly desire for His word, and to cause His word to come alive as you seek Him via the pages of Scripture.

Week One

As believers, we want our lives to be centered around God's word. Scripture is the North Star that guides our lives. It's the foundation on which we build, because we know our lives are only as strong as our foundation is sure. The good news is that intake of God's word comes in many forms. There are actually several spiritual disciplines to aid us in utilizing this amazing gift God has given us. Let's start by looking at some of them this week.

Day One: The discipline of hearing God's Word

Look up these Scriptures and summarize what each says about hearing the word of God:

Luke 11:28	
Romans 10:17	
I Timothy 4:13	
Mark 8:15-25	

Think of a time someone was physically listening to you and heard what you were saying but wasn't listening with their heart, meaning they weren't REALLY tuned in to what you were saying. Do you agree or disagree with this statement: True "hearing" involves both the ears and the heart.



What are some obstacles to “hearing” God’s word with our hearts? List all you can think of.

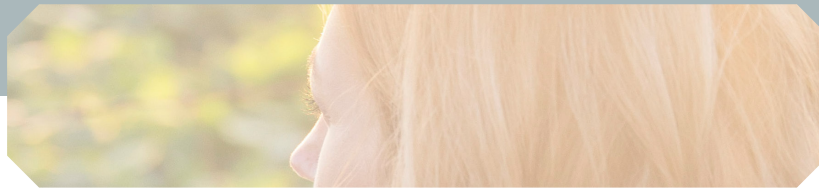
What are some ways you can do a better job of posturing your heart to hear God’s word?

How can you practice “actively listening” to the Word (as opposed to passively)?

Read this quote by Jeremiah Burroughs, a Puritan who died in 1646. How does it help your understanding?

“First, when you come to hear the Word, if you would sanctify God’s name, you must possess your souls with what it is you are going to hear, that what you are going to hear is the Word of God... Therefore you find that the Apostle, writing to the Thessalonians, gives them the reason why the Word did them so much good as it did. It was because they heard it as the Word of God, “ And we also thank God continually because, when you received the word of God, which you heard from us, you accepted it not as a human word, but as it actually is, the word of God, which is indeed at work in you who believe.” (I Thess 2:13, NIV)

List some ways you can physically “hear” and intake more of Scripture through your ears?



As a final exercise for today, choose one of the passages below to listen to on www.biblegateway.com. You can do this by clicking on the sound icon to the right of the passage. Before you do, posture your heart to hear by:

1. Placing weight on the words you're about to hear as GOD'S words to you. This is the King of the Universe speaking and He is communicating with YOU.
2. Listen expectantly and with anticipation.
3. Pray and ask God to give you ears to hear.

Psalm 18 John 1 Philippians 2

Day Two: The disciplines of reading & studying God's word

Did you realize that reading God's word and studying it are two different things? They are! Today, let's look at these two different disciplines by reading these scriptures. First, summarize what each says and/or implies regarding **reading** God's Word:

Matthew 19:4

Revelation 1:3

I Timothy 4:13

Now do the same regarding **studying** God's word:

Ezra 7:10

Acts 17:11

II Timothy 2:15

What does "reading" look like? Why is it important?

How about “studying?” What does it look like and why is it important?

What makes studying God’s word different than reading it?

Spend a few minutes assessing how frequently you intake God’s word through reading and study.

Do you have an understanding of the Bible as a whole?

If you asked a question similar to the one re: divorce asked in Matthew 19, would Jesus say to you, “*Haven’t you read...*?”

Have you read God’s word through cover to cover?

Do you know how to find answers to your life questions and daily situations in God’s word?

Do you have set times for Bible reading?

Do you have set times for Bible study?

Do you have a Bible **reading** plan?

Do you know HOW to **study** God’s word?

Do you have a plan for studying God’s word?

These questions may have been challenging and a bit touchy! However, the goal of these questions is not to make you feel ashamed or guilty but rather, to take your answers to the Lord and let Him reveal opportunities for deeper intimacy with Him. Ask Him to speak to your heart and reveal how He would have you respond. Record your thoughts below. We’ll be working through these things all month :)



Day Three:



The discipline of meditation

Using a dictionary, define the word “meditation.”

Read the following Scriptures and note the following:

What meditation is:

Benefits/result of meditation:

Psalms 1:1-3

Joshua 1:8

Psalms 119:97-99

Psalms 119:148

How does the Bible define or describe meditation and how does that differ from the dictionary meaning you wrote down above?



Watch this video from AJ on 5 ways to meditate on Scripture.

<https://youtu.be/CkxQDEuhbPk>

Choose one of the 5 ways to use for the rest of your time today. Write the way you've selected here:

Now, set a timer for ten minutes. Using the meditation tool you listed above, meditate on Psalm 19:7-11. When you are done, write down what stood out to you.

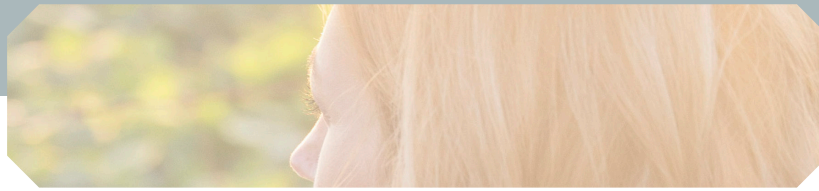
Day Four: The discipline of memorization

Ugh, memorization! For many, it's the one discipline that seems the hardest. Let's start by looking at why Scripture memory is worth the effort. Jot down the reasons you find in the Scriptures below:

Psalm 119:9,11

Matthew 4:1-11

Deuteronomy 6:4-9



Colossians 3:16

I Thessalonians 4:18

I Peter 3:15

As you can see, having the Scripture stored up in our minds and hearts allows us to fight temptation, bless others, fill our minds and mouths with truth, and so much more. I have learned it's one of the chief ways the Spirit speaks to me in everyday life. As I go through my day, He brings to mind passages I've memorized in the past. Pastor Charles Swindoll wrote,

"I know of no other single practice in the Christian life more rewarding, practically speaking, than memorizing Scripture. . . . No other single exercise pays greater spiritual dividends! Your prayer life will be strengthened. Your witnessing will be sharper and much more effective. Your attitudes and outlook will begin to change. Your mind will become alert and observant. Your confidence and assurance will be enhanced. Your faith will be solidified (*Growing Strong in the Seasons of Life*)."

Given that it is so powerful, I'm going to challenge you to memorize Psalm 19:7-11 with me this month! This is one of my favorite passages because it is so rich. Let's start today by reviewing HOW we're going to do this. Today, you'll complete steps 1-4.

1. Choose a translation to memorize from.
2. Read through the passage to gain an overall understanding of what it is saying. Don't try to memorize at this point, just understand using the disciplines of reading, hearing, and meditation.
3. Write the passage out. Be sure to include the reference before and after.
4. Now read through the passage you wrote out aloud 3 times, including the reference.
5. Each day, read through the passage aloud as many times as you can (at least 3 times each day). The key to memorization is REPETITION!
6. Starting with the first phrase, start memorizing the passage phrase by phrase. Don't try to learn too much too fast. Be sure to include the reference before and after as you practice. Prayerfully memorize, asking the Lord to help you apply it to your life.
7. Continue doing this with each phrase.

For the remainder of your time today, complete steps 1-4 for Psalm 19:7-11

Day Five: The discipline of application

Before we start today, read through Psalm 19:7-11 three times aloud and spend five minutes memorizing (remember to work phrase by phrase and don't forget the reference!)

Now let's talk about application. If our lives are going to be transformed through the Word, we have to obey it. Look up the following passages and record what each says about obeying the word.

John 14:15, 23, 24

I John 5:3

James 1:22-25

Matthew 7:24-27

Luke 8:4-15

Write a summary of what you've learned from these passages:



Week Two

We've learned Scripture teaches us to hear, read, study, meditate on, memorize, and obey God's word. For the rest of our study, we'll focus on ONE scripture each week and practice each of these spiritual disciplines. Blessed is the one who DOES, so that's exactly what we are going to do! This week we'll dive deep into Psalm 19:7-11.

Day One

Today, let's focus on hearing and reading the word.

Begin by posturing your heart to hear God's word (review Week One Day One if needed). Ask the Lord to speak and to open your spiritual ears to hear.

Go to BibleGateway.com and listen to Psalm 19 in the translation of your choice. *Please note, not all translations have the audio version available, but there are several to choose from.*

What jumps out at you in this passage?

What questions do you have about this passage?

How do verses 7-11 relate to the verses preceding them? Following them?

Now, let's combine your memorization work with reading. Read Psalm 19:7-11 three times aloud and spend five minutes memorizing (remember to work phrase by phrase and don't forget the reference!)



Day Two

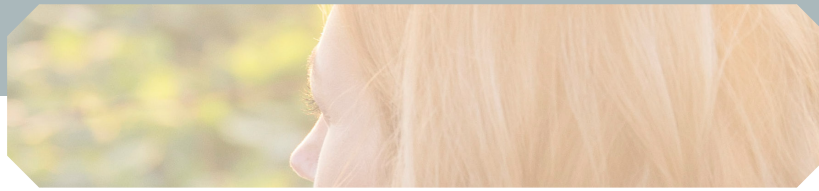
Using Psalm 19:7-9, complete the following chart:

God's word is called (synonyms for):	What it is:	What it accomplishes:
<i>Ex: The law of the Lord</i>	<i>perfect</i>	<i>restoring the soul</i>

Now read Psalm 119:97-104 and circle each time the author references God's word. List the different descriptions he uses below:

Now list all the reasons WHY the author loves God's word:

IMPORTANT! It's critical we understand what the author understood when reading passages such as these. What "Law" was the psalmist referring to in Psalm 119:97 when he says, "Oh how I love your law!"



Have you read through the Pentatuch? Spend a few minutes thumbing through the first five books of the Bible to see what David delighted in so much. As you thumb, place yourself in his shoes, seeing the word through his eyes. What do you see that makes it sweet, precious, and desirable?

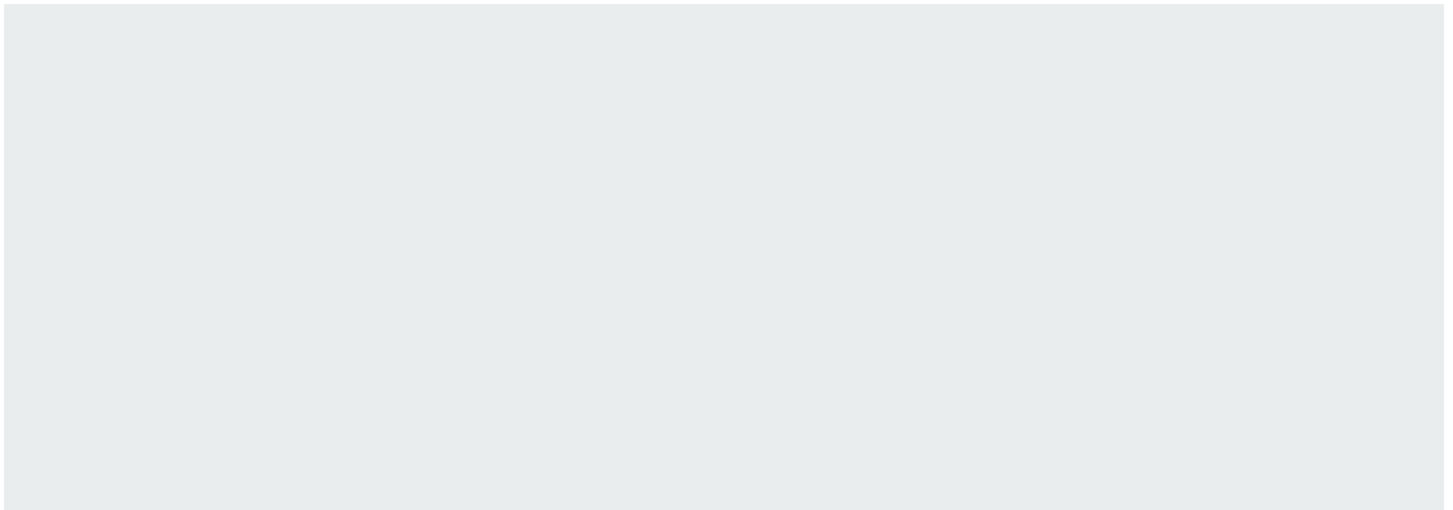
Spend your final few minutes working on your memory work. Read Psalm 19:7-11 three times aloud and spend five minutes memorizing (remember to work phrase by phrase and don't forget the reference!)

Day Three

Yesterday we looked at the law David would have had access to. We have the complete cannon of Scripture available to us. Let's look at some New Testament scriptures regarding the Law.

Read Galatians 3:24 and Romans 7:7-12. How does the law work to restore or convert the soul? Think about how this might differ in the life of an unbeliever and the life of a believer.

Scripture also contains many testimonies to God's nature and character. David relied on these testimonies to make him wise. A testimony gives witness to something. Which of God's deeds found in the Pentatuch do you think David might have relied on as King of Israel? How did these deeds teach him who God is?



Choose one of the “testimonies of the Lord” below to read. Note what you learn about God from the story.

- Genesis 16- God speaks with Hagar
- I Samuel 1:1-20- God hears Hannah
- II Kings 4- God provides for the widow
- 1 Kings 17:17-24- God raises son from the dead

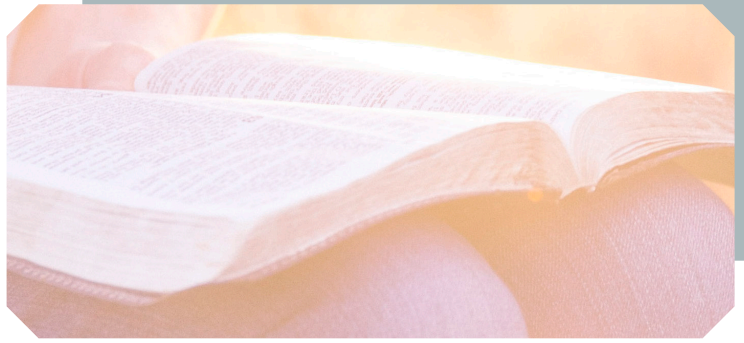
What did you learn about God from this story?

How does this (or can this) make you wise? How does it give you understanding? How can you apply this understanding of God to something you are facing in your life?



Close out your time today with your memory work. Read Psalm 19:7-11 three times aloud and spend five minutes memorizing (remember to work phrase by phrase and don't forget the reference!)

Day Four



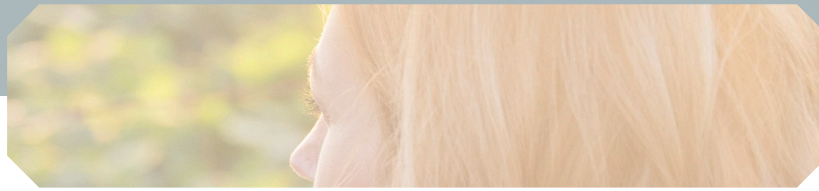
Start your time today by re-visiting Psalm 19:7-11. List all the benefits or outcomes of God's word you find in these verses. Then list any synonyms you can think of for each. Finally, list the antonyms or opposites of each.

Outcome:	Synonyms:	Antonyms:
<i>Ex: restores the soul</i>	<i>rebuild, renew, revive,</i>	<i>breaks, damages, crushes</i>

Now list all the "is's" of God's word, their synonyms, and their antonyms.

Is:	Synonyms:	Antonyms:
<i>Ex: perfect</i>	<i>complete, full, not lacking</i>	<i>faulty, broken, imperfect</i>

Ex: The law of the Lord is not faulty, broken, or imperfect and will not break, damage, or crush my soul.



Day Five

As we close out the week, spend some time meditating on Psalm 19:7-11. Set your timer for ten minutes and use some of the meditation tips AJ shared last week if needed. Here are some questions you may want to think through as you meditate on this passage:

- In what area of your life do you need to be revived?
- How does God's word restore the soul?
- Do I desire God's word more than gold?
- What things in life give me great delight?
- What do I find rewarding in life?
- How have I experienced the reward of obeying God's words?
- In what ways have I been made a witness to the goodness of God?

Close out your time today with memory work. Read Psalm 19:7-11 three times aloud and spend five minutes memorizing (remember to work phrase by phrase and don't forget the reference!)

Week Three

This week we'll be diving into II Timothy 3:14-17. Let's discover how God intends for His word to enrich our lives.

Day One

Start by reading II Timothy 3:14-17. What four things is Scripture "profitable" for?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____

Look up the following and note what each says about why the Scripture was written:

Romans 15:4

I Corinthians 10:11

John 20:31

Hebrews 4:12

In your own words, describe why God's word is essential to a believer's life.

Choose one of the passages above to listen to on Biblegateway.com

Before you go, spend some time on your memory work. Read Psalm 19:7-11 three times aloud and spend five minutes memorizing (remember to work phrase by phrase and don't forget the reference!)



Day Two

Take a look at II Timothy 3:14-17 again and complete the chart below:

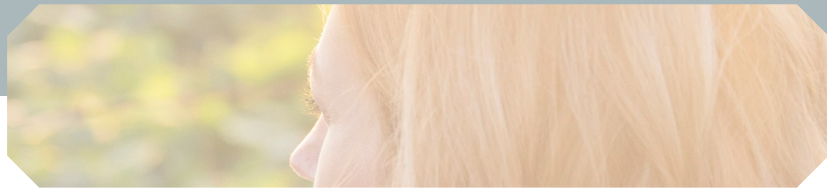
	Definition
Teaching	
Reproof	
Correction	
Training	

How are each of these similar? How are they different?

Apart from the Bible, what (or who) do you rely on for teaching and training in righteousness? What about correction and reproof?

Share about a time when God's word gave you the guidance and direction you needed at just the right time.

Close out your time today with your memory work. Read Psalm 19:7-11 three times aloud and spend five minutes memorizing (remember to work phrase by phrase and don't forget the reference!)



Day Three

Today we're going to give context to II Timothy 3:14-17. Remember, this passage was written instructively by Paul to Timothy.

Listen to the entire book of II Timothy on Biblegateway.com in the version of your choice. It should only take 15 minutes or so. As you listen, jot down what stands out to you.

Close your time with memory work. Read Psalm 19:7-11 three times aloud and spend five minutes memorizing (remember to work phrase by phrase and don't forget the reference!)

Day Four

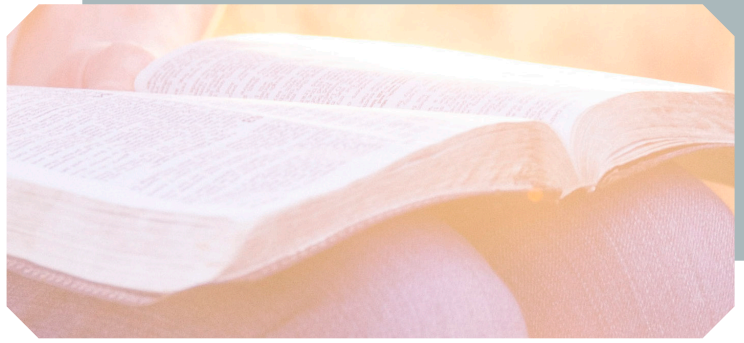
Today we'll focus on the discipline of meditation. Set your timer for ten minutes to meditate on II Timothy 3:14-17. Here are some questions you may want to consider as you meditate:

- What kinds of things did Timothy learn from Paul? What kind of example did Paul set?
- How does the word of God equip us for good deeds?
- How did the Scripture equip Timothy to lead God's people?
- Do my actions confirm my belief that God's word is profitable?
- What areas in my life need training? Reproof? Correction? Teaching?

Wrap up with some memory work. Read Psalm 19:7-11 three times aloud and spend five minutes memorizing (remember to work phrase by phrase and don't forget the reference!)



Day Five



We're going to close out this week with some application. What area of your life needs instruction or direction from God's word? Is there a question you have that needs answering? An anxiety that needs God's truth spoken over? An area of temptation that needs spiritual warfare? Identify that below.

Take some time today researching what God's word says about the area you have selected. You may find it helpful to do a topical study on the area you identified above.

Summarize what you found in God's word:

What wisdom does God's word give you?

What principle, promise, or direction did you discover in God's word?

What do you need to DO in response to what you learned today? How can you apply what you learned?

Close out with your memory work. Read Psalm 19:7-11 three times aloud and spend five minutes memorizing (remember to work phrase by phrase and don't forget the reference!)

Week Four

This week we'll be spending time with Isaiah 55:10-11 and seeing specifically how God uses His word to transform us.

Day One

Read Isaiah 55:10-11 in several different translations. Summarize what these verses say.

Where does the word originate?

To what is the word of God likened? Why is this significant?

List all the promises you can find in this passage:



Look up the following cross references and note what each says about sowing and reaping:

Psalms 126:6

I Corinthians 3:6-9

Galatians 6:9

II Corinthians 9:6

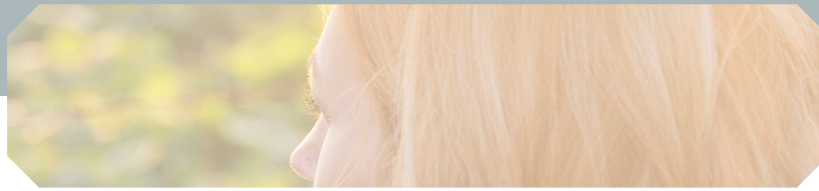
How do these verses encourage you to spend time in God's word?

Finish out your time today with your memory work. Read Psalm 19:7-11 three times aloud and spend five minutes memorizing (remember to work phrase by phrase and don't forget the reference!)

Day Two

Yesterday we saw how God's word is like rain and seed. The word is likened to several more things in Scripture. Look up each of these scriptures and list what the word is "like" and the purpose of each:

Scripture:	Likened to:	Purpose:
I Peter 2:2		
Psalms 119:105		
Jeremiah 23:29a		
Jeremiah 23:29b		
James 1:23		
Hebrews 4:12-13		



Based on what you've learned from the above scriptures, describe how powerful the word of God is.

Finish your time today with your memory work. Read Psalm 19:7-11 three times aloud and spend five minutes memorizing (remember to work phrase by phrase and don't forget the reference!)

Day Three

Review the Scriptures from yesterday. Choose one of the passages to write out and meditate on. Consider using the following questions to guide your meditation.

- What is the word of God likened to? List all the characteristics of this item. What are the opposite characteristics?
- Why is God's word compared with this item?
- Who would best benefit from this particular item?
- When would this item be necessary, or even life-saving?
- In what ways is this item life-transforming?

Summarize your thoughts and findings from your time meditating today.

Close out your time with your memory work. Read Psalm 19:7-11 three times aloud and spend five minutes memorizing (remember to work phrase by phrase and don't forget the reference!)

Day Four

As you think about all you've studied this week, let's start to think about application. Review each of the Scriptures from Day two of this week and note the following for each passage:

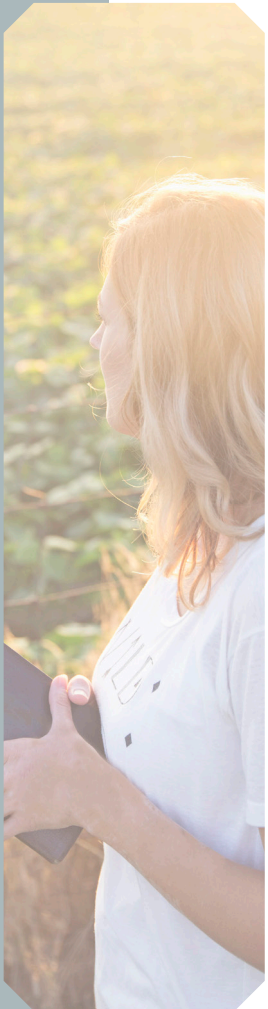
Is there a promise for me to believe?

Is there a command for me to obey?

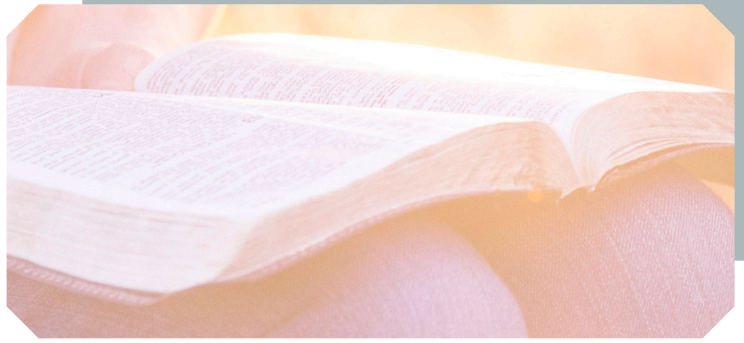
Is there a truth I need to share?

Is there an attitude or activity that I need to confess and repent of?

How does God want me to respond to what I've studied this week?



Close by completing your memory work. Read Psalm 19:7-11 three times aloud and spend five minutes memorizing (remember to work phrase by phrase and don't forget the reference!)



Day Five

For our final day, once again incline your heart to Psalm 19. Listen to this Psalm on Biblegateway.com, just listening to the beauty of these words.

Then, do your final memory work- recite Psalm 19:7-11 slowly and with great joy. Reflect on what you've learned this month.

Spend some time thanking God for His powerful word and the benefits it brings to our lives. Ask Him to help you share His precious and powerful word with others.

notes