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Meditation: Part 1 Living the Word Filled Life – In Distracting Times



Part 33 (031026AM)

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Let's open our Bibles to 1Timothy 4. We are going to begin studying what I call the Word Filled Life. You are going to hear that a lot because we are going to actually, after this introduction go back to the 119 th Psalm and study the concept of meditation from the 119 th Psalm. There are 8 different passages and I really think that in all the Bible in one place the 119 th Psalm distills down the essence of what meditation and the Word Filled Life is all about. But as you turn to 1Timothy 4 let me introduce that idea by talking to you about the distracted generation- that's the generation that you and I live in this morning.

Have you ever noticed how distracted people are?

It seems like everyone is looking for something to do, and then when they do it, they didn't enjoy it – because they were thinking about doing something else. Now think about that- I was thinking about that Friday night- somehow I was conned into taking the kids to the noisiest place in Tulsa- it's called Chunk-E-Cheeses or something like that. It's certainly a place you would never find me. I actually wore my earplugs I use when I mow the lawn. So there I am with these big orange earplugs in—just too noisy for me.

The kids were having a blast. They had raked our half acre of leaves and for that they each got a dollar to spend at Chuck E. Cheese's. But I am not selling their services, you can't have them do your yard. It was wonderful, they went and they had their little cup of coins- those little tokens and so I was enjoying watching them. And while I was enjoying them, listening to them and watching their delight, I began going like this and looking at all the adults that were around me. I noticed something interesting about them. I noticed how distracted they were. Here my children were excited and having a blast and for a few moments I looked at the parents around us, many of them appeared to still be at the office. Their children were so excited running from game to game gleefully enjoying themselves. And there were those parents like me holding their cup of tokens but if you looked at their faces they were not connected with where they were at that moment. As they stood there holding the cup of tokens looking off into the distance at what I couldn't tell, one thing I was sure of, they were not at Chuck E. Cheese's. Those parents were riveted in my mind because they were a picture of our distracted culture. Holding tokens to life, those around us are spending them and we aren't even paying attention. You see they weren't where they were, they were somewhere else wishing they were somewhere else but they had to be here and so they were enjoying neither place- neither they were enjoying where they wanted to be nor were they enjoying where they were. They were distracted and torn between two worlds.

Hand in hand with distraction is dissatisfaction. Part of the reason that there are so many dissatisfied people in our world is that they are completely distracted from what they are doing – by something else they think they want to do.

This morning we live in a distracted world, among distracted people, with distracted minds, distracted families, and distracted lives.

Distraction when practiced by habit leads to aimlessness- we don't really have a direction because we are always wanting to be somewhere than where we are and then that leads to a feeling of uselessness and uselessness often leads to hopelessness, and then we are powerless to do anything about it and it just becomes a vicious cycle.

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For a believer God has said and we are going to see specifically starting in verse 11 – God has said that the guard against a distracted life is what the Lord offers to us He calls the Word Filled Life. A life that is filled with God's Word so that He can focus us so that God Himself can nurture us to go in a direction that He has chosen. That is the only protection we have to prevent our lives becoming distracted is a Word Filled Life- from being dissatisfied is a Word Filled Life- from being useless is a Word Filled Life. **God wants me to have His focus in life.**

God wants our lives to be aimed at his Glory, fulfilling our calling, filled and overflowing with His hope, and living after the power of an endless life. That's what a believer has and that's what you and I are to be doing.

God has one solution for the aimlessness, hopelessness, uselessness, and powerlessness of the lives of his people. He describes it 8 times in Psalm 119 - meditation. Before we get there and we are going to look at a complete view of the Word Filled Life – but not this morning. Before we study Psalm 119 – we need to look at a discipleship manual. Now I love 1Timothy. I want you to think about what this is. The Apostle Paul led a young man to faith- his name was Timothy. He nurtured that young man until he grew up and went off into living out what Paul taught him and then Paul wrote him discipleship lessons. Now I don't know if you collect these but I check on my shelf and I have about 120 different books on discipleship in my office, I was thumbing through different ones this week and I kept looking on the spines at the numbers going up. I thought of all of those books that are trying to take what this one book says and put it into our language. Let's see what this one book says because the letter Paul wrote to Timothy, whom he had led to Christ was a letter of nurture. First Timothy is a discipleship manual: a guide for directing a life Godward. In chapter four we find a series of steps. What I love is, it's not suggestions, it's not principles- each one of these steps that I am going to show you God COMMANDS. Very interesting- He commands through the Spirit of God breathing out through the apostle Paul- Paul says to Timothy you must do this. The thing about my 120 discipleship books I have on my shelf, you don't know which one to do. They all have a different pattern and plan and idea and steps and you know and all that. But what's neat about this is it just cuts right through it and says this is what you have to do if you want to be nurtured, if you want to be a disciple, if you want to grow in Christlikeness. Please look closely with me at the words of Paul's discipleship manual for a godly young believer in 1 st Timothy 4.11-16. Follow along with me as we stand for the reading of God's Word.

11 These things command (now that's an imperative- I got my green marker out again- I love to mark these commands because remember Jesus said in the Great Commission go into all the world and teach all those who come to faith, to obey those things which I commanded you- and if you ever wonder what He has commanded, He puts them in the imperative mode- Here's one- These things command and teach. He says I want you to get these things down so you can tell others, you can command and teach them.

12 Let no one despise your youth, (Timothy was a young fellow, weak from an unsaved father home with a Godly mother, he cried, if you read this letter, he was weak, people didn't think well of him and he just had a lot of problems and so he says---- and one of the things- they looked down on him because he was young- he says Let no one despise your youth, (here's another imperative) but be an example to the believers in word, (the idea and the force of this is you repeat that idea- be a good example) in conduct, (that's an imperative- be an example) in love, be an example in spirit, be an example in faith, be an example in purity. (the word example is _____ (Gk) if you have a coin in your pocket and you look at that thing, that was die cut. There was a blank and a die came and stamped against it and the exact image on the die was cut into that blank, that coin. He says I want you to be an exact representation that can be stamped on to someone else's life of what they should be in their conduct, in how they talk, in how their love is expressed, how their spiritual life is, their faith, their purity and then here is another imperative) 13 Till I come, give attention to reading, (and it's the same idea- give attention to exhortation, give attention to doctrine. Here is another imperative- 14 Do not neglect the gift that is in you, (this is what discipleship is all about- if you are here this morning and you are born again, you have a gift that God put inside of you, don't neglect it. You are going to answer to Him, one day, all alone what you did with the gift that He put within you. You know in our churches we often are so concerned about the abuse of gifts in other places that we neglect the gifts that we have and we should—verse 14 is a sobering--- 14Do not neglect the gift (the charismata) that is in you, which was given to you by prophecy with the laying on of the hands of the eldership. 15Meditate on these things; (this is commanded- have a word filled life) give yourself entirely to (what you are finding in the Word) them, that your progress may be evident to all. (then a couple more imperatives) 16 Take heed to yourself and to the doctrine. Continue in them, for in doing this you will save both yourself and those who hear you.

Let's bow for a word of prayer. We bow our hearts before You, our redeemer and king, we have already been so blessed, so ministered to, so led into worship through your dear servants who have ministered to us. We join with them in our hearts, with our voices. And now we ask You with our prepared hearts as you have said, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God and Him only shalt thou serve. Worship precedes service but service is based on the Word that You give us—How we are to act out and apply that in our lives and serve you. Show us how this morning, open our eyes, open our wills, open our hearts to say yes to You in such specific ways. In the name of Jesus we pray, AMEN.

THINKING DEEPLY ABOUT GOD

IN OUR SHALLOW WORLD

We live in a shallow world, a distracted world as I call it.

Meditation – or as some of your Bibles translate this word "take pains with ". What is meditation? Meditation can be described and select the digestive faculty of the mind. Meditation is taking pains with or being absorbed by or getting into what we take into our minds. What we take into our minds we process by meditation.

Meditation is learning to think deeply upon something; meditation digests what we have learned. Meditation is chewing through, digesting what it is that we've taken in. There is a terrible spiritual condition that just is rampant in the Church - Biblical anorexia – a lack of hunger for God's Word and its twin sister – Biblical bulimia - that means that they loose all of it before they leave the building- they don't even remember what the sermon is about. It's OK when you are four- because every week I do this, this is my habit with my kids, I say what did you learn in Sunday School? It's so sweet to hear four year olds say I don't remember- but it was good. That's OK when you are four. It's horrible when you are 40 or 24 or 34 or 14. That's bulimia when you eject it from your mind and you don't even let it take root and meditate on it.

When meditation is going on, we take God's Word, we examine it, and turn it over and over in our minds. That is the only way to properly nourish ourselves in our unhealthy world. The Scriptures tell us because we are surrounded by confusing voices, twisted path ways that kind of lay out before us and we are not sure which one to take. And because there are so many voices coming and so many paths before us and so many lives that are in confusion and traveling fast, God says I have just the cure for His children. It's right there, it's in this sequence. He starts earlier in verse 7 of 1 Timothy 4, reject profane and old wives' fables, and exercise yourself toward godliness. That's where we started--- December 29 th of last year, we started on verse 7 of chapter 4 almost a year ago now, looking at the disciplines of a Godly life. Discipline yourself---- that's how we got to Psalm 119. Then he goes down and says in verse 12- be an example. Verse 13- give attention- you see he says I want you---- all of those are the concept of getting your mind focused on one thing and doing something about it.

Paul instructs Timothy to devote himself completely to Jesus Christ. He gives him a simple list of items to follow; they start back in verse seven. He is first to exercise himself toward godliness; then he is to command and teach the truth. In verse 12 is commanded to be an example in all that he does. Then he is to get focused and use his gifts. Then we come to verse 15, meditate on these things. Paul says to think deeply, to digest these, and to apply them to his life.

In fact in the New Testament world, the Word Paul chose for meditate or "take pains with" carries the idea of "being in something". In fact what's interesting this word uses the idea of being absorbed by something or being submerged in something. I was thinking about that - when we were sitting we had a little spill- children are so full of illustrations- they spilled something- so what do you do? You put your napkin over by where the little spill is. If you put a napkin near liquid, the napkin draws water to itself. I love watching it. You know what? That's the idea of the Word Filled Life. You and I should allow our lives to get in contract with the Word and to be capillated and drawn up into our lives like the spill goes up into the napkin. That is what he is saying--- Timothy, let it in, give yourself totally to absorbing like a napkin absorbing water, its hard to keep them apart, the napkin draws the water to itself and the believer is to draw the Word into his life.

What we meditate on controls our thinking; it dominates us. One way to look upon meditation is to think of all of the applications to life that is certain verse could have for us. I would challenge you this morning – start applying God's Word to your life. You look at this verse and you say, for example, verse 12- Let no one despise your youth, but be an example to the believers in word. You start saying how could that apply to me? Do I ever say things I wish I hadn't said? Do I ever look back and say I wish I hadn't said that, I wish I hadn't spoken so quickly, I wish I hadn't--- You know and you start applying that and say OK, I want to, as the Scriptures say, set a watch at the door of my mouth. See that's--- right there, what I am doing, right now, out loud, is meditation. I am taking a word from the Scriptures, allow that word into my mind and applying it to my life and I am thinking of all the ways that that Scripture could apply to me. That is meditation, that is thinking deeply. You think deeply about what a verse implies and what our response should be to God. Then we think of every possible application that Scripture could have in my life. And when we do that, we are meditating.

- Think deeply about flight of verse implies your response should be to God.
- Think of every possible application that a Scripture can have in your life. If you do that -- you are meditating.

Now all of you that are students – I've had students in my home for a long time and I was just looking at Elisabeth and I have 14 more years of her so I mean we are going to have about--- I don't know how many years—I don't want to think about that it will wear me out. How many years we been having students that are learning. What would you think of a computer class that had no computers for you to work at?

Would you feel cheated if you never held a mouse, never typed on a keyboard, never looked at a monitor? Never actually interacted with a computer? Wouldn't you feel cheated? Do you get the idea? You're not really studying the Bible if you read it and never apply it to your life. Meditation is the application to my life.

How about an aviation class that you went to and you never saw an airplane, you never went to an airport, you never took a flight, you never did any thing to do with airplanes. Would you feel cheated about aviation class? Don't you feel cheated if you go into this Book and you never experience what it is talking about? Now the experiencing is up to you. That is what the Word Filled Life is all about. You want to get your napkin near the water and you have to let it come up into your life and let it start affecting you. That choice is studying the Bible, reading it and applying if. Meditation applies it to my life- the Word applied to my life, lived out. Take the Word, apply the Word, and live the Word.

If you've ever succeeded in anything you understand what meditation takes.

Anyone who succeeds at anything has learned to completely focus on that one thing. How about riding a bicycle- how many children in a row have I ----- the day they take their training wheels off you know and dad holds on to the back of the seat and they've got their- and they can't keep their feet on the pedals and I am saying just keep your feet on the pedals you wont fall over I am going to hold the back of the seat. Pretty soon, they keep both hands on the handle bars, they keep both feet on the pedals and they start feeling the pedals and all of a sudden they don't feel that

they are going to tip over and you just keep holding the back of that seat and usually I just go in a circle with them. I keep my hand there and I'm really not holding on and finally I just pull my hand back and you should see--- they go_____ and then they crash because they weren't watching where they were driving- that's the second lesson- watch where you are driving. It's the idea that finally they totally focused on holding on and pedaling and they did it before they were worried about falling and they were looking at the cement and they were looking at whatever and if you have ever succeeded in anything in life you have learned to completely focus- in anything- in sports, in business, you learn to fully concentrate.

This morning God wants us to succeed. He wants us to achieve the maximum life for us possible on Earth. And to do that we need to stay focused in spite of all the distractions around us.

GOD'S TEAM OF WORD FILLED LIVES

What I want you to do is --- to introduce this idea of meditation, I want to show you how a group of people- I call them God's team- how they made it through life in a very distracting world. They were men and women who went through every single distraction you and I face. They went through upheaval, job loss, spouse loss, family loss, health loss- they went through everything- success and affliction- they went through it all. And yet they all had what I like to call a Word Filled Life in spite of what was going on around them. I look at these people and say if they can do it I can do it. God's team of Word filled lives is a collection of individuals, God's team, men and women who lived extraordinary lives, yet they were ordinary people. By the way all of them were not sinless, they all had problems, they all made mistakes, they all sinned, disobeyed, they all crashed. They took their eyes off where they were going like the bicycle learner and tumbled. Even saying that I can still see them flying off the bicycle. It's a good thing they are young and nothing breaks, usually. This collection of people we are going to look at as we go on a journey through chapters of the Bible this morning. Let's go back to Genesis 5. I want you to do this, if you have a pen, pull it out because I would like you to write just one little phrase about each of these people. I want to show you starting in Genesis 5 a group of Word filled lives in a distracting world with ancient people having contemporary problems. Nearly every one of us this morning can relate completely to their problems. In Genesis 5 let's see the first one who has a simple habit- in fact each of these I am going to show you has a simple habit that sets them apart from the rest of the world.

They each practiced *the Simple Discipline of Meditation* . Each one practiced what I like to call a Word Filled Life. How did they do it? Were there keys books, seminars, tapes, study guides that they all bought? No; they all heard from the Lord. He gave His Word to them. So we are on common ground, you and I have God's Word. But the difference is all of these people go that Word and they completely focused on what God told them and did something about it and just grasped on to the truth that knowing God is a choice, a lifestyle, a habit we must either make or neglect. They pointed their ordinary everyday lives toward God, and wouldn't let go of Him.

Meet God's Team of Eleven ordinary men and women who had Word Filled Lives.

ENOCH

Please open to Genesis 5. Enoch had a Word Filled Life - even as a dad. [Genesis 5:22](#), 24 After he begot Methuselah, **Enoch walked with God** three hundred years, and had sons and daughters. And Enoch walked with God; and he was not, for God took him. That's all we have about him- a little short--- like that. Look at this- Enoch walked with God and this walk started after the birth of his son. His family wasn't an excuse to neglect the Lord . Did you catch that? I hear a lot of times--- I don't have time for that I got so much going on----- my family is just taking up my time. Did you know that a family cannot be an excuse to neglect time with God? It doesn't stop there---- that family---- it says after he had this child--- it prompted him to seek the Lord daily. Your family- what is a family? It's when you get married- it's a family of two you and your husband or wife. So if you are married you ought to be more than ever prompted to have a Word filled life because that's the only way you are going to make it and not be distracted and empty and aimless and useless. Enoch learned how to seek the Lord while living in a world so wicked God had to drown every person alive on Earth except the 8 in the ark. How did Enoch stay Word Filled? He meditated upon the Lord while he walked! Now there's one---all of us walk or most of us do. What he did is he thought deeply about God while he walked through life. Now you and I are walking and we can choose what we think about while we walk. If you take one verse---- in fact on the way over in the car, this morning I said OK everybody in the car we are going to share one verse that we have on our minds that we have memorized and we are thinking about. Now it was easy because I have been doing that quite a bit. But the first time I said that people dove for their Bible to find one because they knew dad was going to look at them and say what verse are you thinking about? I was just at a lunch and I did this with a group of adults. I said OK, I want all of you to quote at this lunch the verse that you have memorized that you are thinking through in your mind. I mean forks dropped, you know they were going oh no it's coming to me what am I going to say I haven't been thinking about a verse- you know? But we should have a verse in our mind. What I am thinking about is Romans 14: 11-12 As I live, says the LORD, Every knee shall bow to Me, and every tongue shall confess to God." I have been thinking about that for two weeks now. I have to give an account before God for my life. I can't hide behind the Elders, I can hide behind all the great Sunday school teachers, I can't hide behind the whole army of deacons, I can hide behind an incredible Godly wife or wonderful children. I have to give an account of my life before God. And so this idea is that he thought deeply- and you and I should think deeply about a Scripture and so he did. Enoch walked with God, he followed the Lord.

Look at chapter 6 because you know Enoch so well and I want to show you in verse 22 a second member. Enoch walked with God so he meditated while he walked with God. Meditation means that Enoch walked his talk with God. But chapter 6- Noah---

12 So then each of us shall give account of himself to God.

How did Enoch ever do that? **Meditation – which meant** Enoch “walked ” his talk with God each day. **Genesis 5:22, 24** After he begot Methuselah, **Enoch walked with God** three hundred years, and had sons and daughters. And Enoch walked with God; and he was not, for God took him.

- **Who do you think was following whom? Do you really think that this means that a big glowing cloud of Shekinah glory tailed Enoch? I don't think so.**
- **Actually it means that God was invited into every part of Enoch's life. All day long at every meeting, every stop, every call, and every situation – The Lord Himself was a part of it all.**
- **Has the Lord been invited by you personally -- into every part of your life ?**

☐ Enoch chose to take God into every day, every part of his life – what the Lord had said to him went with him. If you want to be great for the Lord, learn to walk through life with God.

☐ Next time you see a teen with their headphones on listening to something – think about your life. Are you listening to the voice of the Lord (through God's Word that you have opened and allowed into your heart and mind)? That is what Enoch did, and it made him a hero on God's Team. He walked through life with his headphones on – listening to the Lord!

NOAH

Please open to Genesis 6. Noah had a Word Filled Life while he was consumed by his job. Do any of you have a job that really consumes you that you really have to do? If anybody had to do a job Noah did- he HAD to finish the ark or everybody was going to drown. You talk about a job with pressure—I mean if he didn't get that boat built- you know—can you understand? I mean this was a make it or break it life or death thing. So he had a consuming job yet that consuming job never kept him from having a Word Filled Life. I know a lot of people whose consuming job consumed their spiritual life.

He lived in the wickedest work spot of all history. Did you catch that? That didn't detract from his walk with the Lord. Noah lived in a time--- if you look back at verse 5--- **we are going to look at 22 but look at verse 5-** every intent of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. Did you know where Noah lived and worked, every single person's every thought was only evil continually. Now you can't say that about here. You might think your co-workers are bad but you do not live with a world that is completely demonized and completely given over to sin. This world was so bad that God said I must exterminate everyone. We don't think about how bad that world was. He lived in the wickedest work spot in history and Noah had to work among people who had every imagination filled with evil. They were demonic, murderous, and immoral. How on Earth did Noah do it? You think your coworkers are bad? How did he do it? It says in verse 22– **Meditation – which meant** Noah “did” what the Lord asked him to do even if it sounded impossible. **Genesis 6:22** Thus Noah did: **according to all that God commanded him**, so he did. Did you know if you read closely in the text—sometimes that God didn't speak to him for as long as a whole year between speakings. In fact we don't even know how much God talked to him during the long period that he built the ark which was anywhere between 60 and 120 years. But you know what? Verse 22 summarizes it-

- **What God had said -- Noah remembered.** Noah did: **according to all that God commanded him**
- **What God had said -- Noah kept thinking about.**
- **What God had said -- Noah obediently did!**
- **Have you remembered, thought about, and obeyed THE LAST THING GOD TOLD YOU TO DO?** Think about it- what is the last thing that your heart was spoken to--- influenced by, impacted by, pierced, warmed, touched---- by the Spirit of God speaking through the Word of God? What is the last thing that God told you through His Word to do? Did you do it? See that's the simple thing. Noah did what God said, what God said he kept thinking about. What God said he obediently did. Have you remembered, thought about and acted upon that last truth you learned when God spoke to you **through the voices of His apostles and prophets in God's Word?**
- **Last time you opened God's Word -- were you listening to God or just reading?** Think about that. When you open this Book it's not like reading the sports page. It's not like the financials, it's not like your emails. It's not just reading and seeing if it's worth even looking at. When you and I open this Book God is speaking and He is saying are you listening? Now Husbands, how many times has your wife talked and talked? And then said are you listening to me? O yeah. What did I say? Then we get so embarrassed- we don't remember, because we really weren't listening from our heart. We heard and yeah we know we are supposed to do that. We have so many voices around us, there is so much coming toward us. In fact for me I get so much communication that sometimes I don't read it all. And what will happen is Bonnie---- I print out a lot of things--- and she will say did you read this? I said yes, and she said did you really? Do you know what it says? I said what did it say? I said I didn't see that in there. She said I know you didn't. That's why we need help in really listening. And if we don't get the voice of God then we don't think deeply about what He wants. And so I have a practice that the only thing that I read every word of is the Bible. Life is so full. So when I read this, I click in. I mean I focus on, that's why I had the earplugs at Chuck E. Cheeses. After I got everybody off spending their tokens, I plugged those things in and started reading. Right there with all the carrying on, I was just enjoying so much because I could look at every word and listen to God. That's what the Lord wants and that's what Noah did. The next time you open God's Word, listen to God, don't just read. Genesis 12 real quickly--- let me show you, there are 11 of these and I want to next week get into the precious women that we are going to look at, Ruth and Hannah.

☐ Noah was on God's Team because he listened and obeyed. He did what God asked him to do. He remembered what God said, thought about it, and made a plan to obey what the Lord said. That is powerful even though it is simple. Noah knew what the Lord had told him and did something about it.

☐ Next time you read God's Word ask your self – what did the Lord just say to me? And what does he want me to do about that? And how can I do that in such a way that I please Him? You are becoming a man or woman of God by meditating upon God's Word by taking it in as you live life (like Enoch) and doing something to

ABRAHAM

Now open with me to Genesis 12. Abraham had a Word Filled Life and in verse 7 of chapter 12 we are going to see he had a Word Filled Life while experiencing complete turmoil in his personal life. Boy, can you relate to him this morning? Abraham had a Word Filled Life while packing to move across the continent from one coast to the other. He went from the coast of the Persian Gulf all the way over to the coast of the Mediterranean. And he had to do a cross-continental move and he packed up and had to go there and didn't have Atlas, United Van Lines to help him. He had to do it himself. Abraham had a Word Filled Life while moving across the continent from coast to coast. He had a Word Filled Life even though he lost his job (??) in the city and had to take up outdoor work as a cattleman. Abraham had a Word Filled Life while he had to move away from his family, raise his brother's son, remember his brother died and he inherited Lot. And even while moving from life in a two-story home in the city to a goat hair tent out in the hills of Canaan. Which I told you he ended up living in for 100 years—camping. He had a Word Filled Life even with all those distractions. How did Abraham do it? **Meditation – which meant** Abraham "built" an altar or meeting place with God where ever he was. [Genesis 12:7](#) Then the Lord appeared to Abram and said, "To your descendants I will give this land." He got something from the Lord and look what he does with what he got from the Lord— And there he built **(established; constructed)** an altar to the Lord, who had appeared to him. How Enoch did it was he walked with God. How Noah did it was he obeyed what God told him to do. How Abraham did it--- look at this--- he built these altars.

- **Abraham marked out reminders of what God had revealed to him.** In a real sense that's how I look on the Bible, that's why I mark in my Bible. When I learn something from the Scriptures I kind of make a little altar out of that and I mark it so that every time I come back to the Scriptures I see what I learned about God. I remember that process of Him revealing something of Himself, some truth, some response He desired of me and I mark that in my Bible. **Abraham marked out reminders of what God had revealed to him.**
- **Abraham wanted to remember what God said, so he invested in special time consuming efforts to never forget what God has done, what God had promised, what God expected.** On that spot he rolled these big stones up and he made this altar and he made it special, he cleared around it so he could find it again and he piled up these stones and actually the word for built an altar isn't just piling stones, it actually is the word for a sacrificial----- he didn't just pile stones, he gathered sticks, he brought a prized lamb or calf or whatever from his flock and he killed them and shed their blood and burned them on top of that altar. We are not talking about a momentary thing--- get a couple of rocks and throw them over there. He invested time- this man was old when he started this walk with God. He didn't have endless energy and yet he wanted to remember anything God did so much that he invested whatever it took to build this altar, to make a sacrifice, to blacken and bloody and mark those rocks so he would never forget what God said. Can you remember what you read in the Bible yesterday? Do you remember what you read last week? Do we even take the time to make a mark in our lives for when the God of the universe intersects with us and reveals himself to us in His Word and we just flip channels and go to something else just like that in life. Abraham couldn't do that.
- **Altars marked the big events of his walk with the Lord. The question to us: Do you listen and mark clearly God's plans for you. Are you remembering or forgetting?** Abraham built altars, Noah obeyed, Enoch walked and each of them were going through personal stress, struggles and distractions that are unparalleled in our lives I have to say. None of us have walked 900 miles with our family and moved across the country walking. None of us have lived in a tent 100 years. All of us can make an altar when God meets with us and say God I am going to hold on to that even if I don't remember anything else in life I am going to remember what you taught me today and I am going to think deeply about that and I am going to apply it to my life because if I do that, then You will continue to reveal Yourself to me. That's what a word filled life is all about.

PRAYER

Let's bow before the Lord. Father I thank You for commanding in that discipleship manual Paul wrote to Timothy that we learn to practice the discipline of meditation in our lives- thinking deeply, applying to our life, not to other people's lives, not for Biblical fact and trivia and questions but applying Your Word to our lives by obedience. I pray that You would help us to get absorbed in Your Word this week so that if You tarry and if You let us gather again next week that when we gather and when I talk about remembering what You have taught us that Your saints in this place will actually remember meeting with You day after day after day this past week. O Lord help us to think deeply about You and apply Your Word to our lives so that we can live a Word Filled Life. In the Name of Jesus we ask that, AMEN.

☐ Our final example this morning is Abraham. His habit of altar making is profound if you think about it. Abraham did everything possible to not forget. If God Almighty took the time to reveal something to him – Abraham was bound and determined not to lose what God said. He went out of his way to raise a vivid marker. He rolled and piled stones into an altar. He went out and chose a special animal to sacrifice. He gathered wood and fire and rope and a knife. Then he bloodied and blackened those rocks with the sacrifice. What a vivid reminder to him. He heard from God, then he offered a sacrifice to God – and declared by that sacrifice that God was worthy of his attention.

☐ He wanted to remember what the Lord said so he would never let the Lord down by forgetting Him. Are we so focused? Do we take the time to set up markers at the spots where God has revealed Himself to us? One way to start is decide that you will read God's Word until you hear Him speak. Then note what He says. Jot a word in the margin of your Bible. Draw an arrow to that verse, then bow and offer a sacrifice. Say to the Lord "I will remember you today" and then by the power of the Holy Spirit of God living inside of you and me – walk through life with God (like Enoch), seeking to obey what you remember He said (like Noah), and set up markers or altars of remembrance (like Abraham).

What a TEAM. What a lesson for us. Often however we don't hear the voice of the Lord in His Word because our lives are too full and too complex. One of the best

ways to experience the discipline of meditation – and the immense rewards that it will bring to our lives, is to practice a spiritual fast.

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