

Soul Care

SESSION #5:

Nourishment for your Soul

SESSION GOALS

The point of every session is a main idea with the goal of informing our knowing, feeling, and doing.

MAIN IDEA: Jesus is more focused on transformation than information.

HEAD CHANGE: To know that knowledge about God doesn't automatically result in personal life change.

HEART CHANGE: To open your heart to the transformative power of God's Word.

LIFE CHANGE: To practise Lectio Divina.

CONNECT

Do you believe knowledge is power? Why or why not?

In this session, we'll consider the truth that knowing more about God doesn't necessarily translate into knowing God more. Jason introduces us to another of the keystone habits modelled by Jesus: learning to feast on God's Word for the nourishment of our souls.

LEARN

As you watch, write down how Jason answers these questions.

1. When Jesus was on earth, what indications were there that He was more focused on transformation than information?
2. Through which medium did Jesus often teach people?
3. What are the four practices associated with Lectio Divina?

Show SESSION #5: Nourishment for your soul (13 minutes)

REVIEW

Jason explains that the knowledge-is-power mindset assumes that more knowledge of a subject results in greater mastery of that subject, but that this doesn't work in our spiritual lives. **Do you agree? Why or why not? Are you aware of gaps between your intellectual knowledge of God and your relationship with Him?**

When Jesus was on earth, He was more focused on transformation than information. He built relationships with people, He told stories, and He used examples from His hearers' everyday lives. He connected peoples' hearts to the truth. **When you read your Bible, is your focus more on information or transformation? Has there been a particular sermon that changed your life? What was it about the preached Word that gripped your heart?**

Paul gives us an indication of how we might approach God's Word the way Jesus did: 'Let the message of Christ dwell among you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom through psalms, hymns, and songs from the Spirit, singing to God with gratitude in your hearts' (Colossians 3:16). Instead of just coming to an intellectual understanding of what Jesus taught, we're to let His teachings become part of us. **If you're in the habit of reading the Bible, what sort of Bible reading plan do you typically follow? How do you go about making sure God's Word 'dwells in you richly'?**

Jason explains that to be nourished by God's Word, we need to meditate on it – chew on it the way cows chew grass... and then chew it again. A helpful method of reading Scripture in smaller bites with slower consumption is called Lectio Divina. This is a prayerful approach to reading short passages of Scripture, and the goal is to be in conversation with Jesus as you read. It's not about gaining intellectual knowledge but rather about conversational intimacy with God as you read His Word. **Have you ever heard of Lectio Divina? Have you ever tried it, or do you know someone who practises this method of Bible reading? How would you explain (in English not Latin) the four steps of this practice (Lectio, Meditatio, Oratio, and Contemplatio) to someone who has recently come to faith in Jesus? Which of the four steps would you find easy, and which ones would require greater focus or practice?**

BIBLE EXPLORATION

Joshua, who took over from Moses and led God's people into the Promised Land, was a charismatic leader and warrior during a bloodthirsty time in history. He doesn't seem like someone who would go on meditation retreats. And yet Joshua 1:8 indicates that his military victories and his success as a leader would be directly linked to him meditating daily on God's Word. **Think about the Christian leaders you know personally and most admire (not the ones you only know through Instagram or RightNow Media). Do their lives mirror Joshua 1:8?**

Psalms 119:105 says, 'Your Word is lamp to my feet and a light to my path.' **Does this indicate intellectual knowledge, relational transformation, or both? Discuss.**

Read 2 Timothy 3:16–17, which reminds us that all scripture is God-breathed. **How does this God-breathed Word change the believer mentioned in these verses?**

Read Hebrews 4:12. **Explain how this verse invalidates any argument that the Bible is purely intellectual or historical. What does this verse suggest about the power of God's Word to transform us?**

REVIEW

In this series so far, we've learned that silence is like sunlight to the soul, Sabbath is like water to the soul, simplicity gives the soul space to flourish and bear fruit, and the slow, relational reading of Scripture is like a slow-release fertiliser for the soul. J.I. Packer said it this way: 'How can we turn our knowledge about God into knowledge of God? The rule for doing this is simple but demanding. It is that we turn each truth that we learn about God into matter for meditation before God, leading to prayer and praise to God.'

BEFORE NEXT TIME

Select at least one activity below to complete before watching the next session.

READ: Choose a short passage of scripture and practise the four steps of Lectio Divina. What has God highlighted in the passage? What response is required from you? How will your response result in personal transformation?

WRITE: As you practise Lectio Divina, journal the words or phrases that strike you as you read, meditate, pray, and contemplate. Write the date, and what you believe God is prompting you to do in response to the passage.

PRAY: If the practice of Lectio Divina feels weird, confusing, or overwhelming: relax. Spend some time in prayer asking God to teach you how to allow His Word to take up residency in your heart.