If you’ve watched the “Greater Intimacy with God - Lesson 3” video, then you know where we are headed in bible study this week. It’s going to all be about - loving our Bibles, which is really demonstrating just how we love Jesus Christ!

Let’s look closely to some Scripture and see just how that is so -

**Read John 1:1-2**

What are these first two verses telling you? Write what thoughts are coming to your mind as you think on John 1:1-2.

Now, read Genesis 1:1 - write out the first four words:

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If “In the beginning, God….” then let’s read John 1:1-2 again and this time, we will read it in the Amplified Bible:

“**In the beginning** [before all time] **was the Word** (Christ), **and the Word was with God, and the Word was God Himself. He was** [continually existing] **in the beginning** [co-eternally] **with God.” John 1:1-2**

How do you see Genesis 1:1 and John 1:1-2 now that you read them together? What are you seeing?

John 1:1 In this phrase, “God” appears first in the Greek word order, emphasizing the fact that “the Word” (Christ) was God—so “God Himself.”

“**And the Word** (Jesus Christ) **became flesh, and lived among us; and we** [actually] **saw His glory, glory as belongs to the** [One and] **only begotten Son of the Father,** [the Son who is truly unique, the only One of His kind, who is] **full of grace and truth** (absolutely free of deception). **I John 1:14**

John knew when he wrote John 1:1, that Jewish readers would consider it blasphemous to say, “The Word was God.” He also knew that to Greek readers, the words, “the Word became flesh” was not only bizarre, but utterly unthinkable. But what John was wanting his readers to understand is that “the Word” was gospel - the Good News of Jesus Christ.

Go to Hebrews 4:12 in your Bible and read it slowly. If you are very familiar with this verse, try reading it as though it is the first time and as you read, keep it hinged with Genesis 1:1 and John1:1-2.

**For the Word of God is living and active and full of power** [making it operative, energizing, and effective]**. It is sharper than any two-edged sword, penetrating as far as the division of the soul and spirit** [the completeness of a person]**, and of both joints and marrow** [the deepest parts of our nature]**, exposing and judging the very thoughts and intentions of the heart. Hebrews 4:12 AMP Study Bible**

WHO is Hebrews 4:12 speaking of? Who is ‘the Word of God?” \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Jesus is living. He is active. He is full of power, power that is operative, energizing and effective. In other words, His power and activity is so penetrating that is able to separate a person’s soul and spirit - the deepest innermost areas of a person - and expose and judge (because He is Judge), the very thoughts and intentions and motivations and mental conditions of a person’s heart.

So, let’s settle this one reality of our life right now, ok?

JESUS is the Word of God. The Word of God is Jesus Christ. The Word of God is how we know God the Father, through the Word of God. And the Word of God is how we receive from the Spirit of God.

If we want genuine and growing intimacy with God there is only one way - it is THROUGH the Life of the Word of God!

Go ahead and circle the word “through” in the sentence above - we are going to come back to that word toward the end of this study.

But let’s look at one other place in Scripture where we find the living, active and all powerful Word of God in communication with His arch enemy - Satan.

Read Matthew 4:1-11 - as you read these verses, take a two colors of pens or 2 colored pencils and underline the words of Satan and then underline in a different color the words of Jesus.

Did they both say, “…it is written?” \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

What comes to your mind when you read how the great Accuser used Scripture against Jesus?

Has that ever happened to you? Has someone ever used a bible verse against you in tempting you to fall into the trap they have set for you; a trap placed before you built on accusations and condemnation, as Satan used Scripture against Jesus?

Remember this, there is NO condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. None. Romans 8:1 is a verse I not only have memorized because the Holy Spirit has engraved it so deeply into my soul and into my spirit, but it is a verse that I want to show the beauty of it to other believers. Believers fail. Believers fall short of the glory of God. Believers sin. There is not a believer who doesn’t, but regardless, no believer in Jesus Christ will EVER experience condemnation from Him. So, here’s a question for you and me to consider….

Is it ever good or permissible, in God’s eyes, for a believer to shun, slander, or reject another believer? If we are going to love our Bibles, love the Word of God, love the Living Word of God, love Jesus Christ, then what thoughts are you having as you ponder on that question?

One of the first things I want us to really notice is the first verse - WHO led Jesus into the wilderness to be tempted? The \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

When you read that, do you think that was entirely an isolated situation between the Holy Spirit and Jesus, or do you believe the Holy Spirit would led YOU into a wilderness to be tempted by Satan? And if that hasn’t happened in your life, do you believe it could? Do you believe it has happened in someone’s life that you personally know?

The Holy Spirit knows how to lead us. He knows where to take us in our walk with God so that His purifying work and His strengthening work takes place in us. He knows what the plans of God are, as He did with Jesus. He knew it was time for Jesus to be alone with His Father for 40 days, with no food and no water. To only feast and drink on the Father’s love through prayer. But the Spirit also knew that the mission of the wilderness season of 40 days was so Jesus would be tempted by the Tempter. It was a “necessary” season of days in Christ’s life that God allowed and it was for a Divine and holy purpose -

When we see people going into “wildernesses” - a time or season in their life when they are more alone, more still and seeking of God, maybe more withdrawn or quiet in their life - are we quick to size it up to be depression, oppression, or willful isolation? I know in my life this year, I was definitely taken into a wilderness by the Holy Spirit and to some, because I was in the wilderness, my life may have appeared “too weird” or “something is just wrong with her.” Because on the outside looking in, all you’d see is a woman spending a good bit more time at home in fervent, pleading prayer with God. A woman seeking His heart like I never have before in my life. A woman feasting on His Word morning, noon and night time. A woman saturating her soul with the Word of God and in hours of prayer. A woman who was just (the year before) out in front leading in several different ways, to now ‘in the wilderness.’ As Jesus did in His wilderness season, I, too, was fasting not only from certain foods, but I was fasting from “the things of this world. ” I stepped back and stepped out of things that He showed me were nothing but a distraction, a very subtle distraction, to just how personal He was wanting to be with me on a daily basis. He wanted to work this verse in my life:

And we all, with unveiled face, continually seeing as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are *progressively being transformed into His image from [one degree of] glory to [even more] glory,* which comes from the Lord, [who is] the Spirit. 2 Corinthians 3:18

This is why we see in Matthew 4:1-11, when Satan came to Jesus in the wilderness to tempt Him, what did Jesus draw as His means of defense and as His means of offense? He drew the Word of God - He drew the living, active and powerful Sword of the Spirit of God. He wielded the Word! And friend, let me just tell you - you are not going to defeat the enemies of God any other way than the same way Jesus did - SPEAKING the living, active, and full of holy power WORD OF GOD!

If the Living Word of God Himself spoke the Word of God in battle, we must do the same and fervently - repeatedly - and full of unwavering doubt that it IS working! And I just want you to know this, too … if you desire a real, growing and greater intimacy with God, please be built-up in the faith to do this one thing - prepare for spiritual warfare. How do you prepare? Get still. Get quiet. And like Jesus, get alone with God. Feast on His Word. Be still as you ask the Spirit to empower you, enrich your mind with the Scriptures. Draw closer to the heart of God through the Bible, through prayer, and through knowing the God of the Bible. Preparation of battle is this - getting quiet, still and equipped by the feasting and on the Word of God.

For 40 days, Jesus didn’t go to church. He didn’t go to the Temple. He didn’t go around people. For 40 days, Jesus suffered in the wilderness and was tempted by Satan, the Tempter, the Accuser, the Deceiver. And this is why Jesus replied ….

*“It is written and forever remains written, ‘Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes out of the mouth of God.’ Matthew 4:4*

* **Circle the words, “comes out of.”**
* **Circle the word “by” in Matthew 4:4 -** and then read the words below, out loud -

***“Man shall … live … by every word that comes out of the mouth of God.***

Now put your name at the first of this statement - {\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_} shall…live…by every word that comes out of the mouth of God.

For the next few minutes, we are going to look at verses that include the word “through” and I have given you the Amplified Study Bible translation so we can see what the fuller meaning. But by now, you should have already circled the words “through” and “by” and “comes out of.” (Hold on to that…we’ll be making a discovery here in just a bit!)

Jesus said in John 5:38 to the unbelieving Jews,

***“****You do not have His Word (Scripture) abiding in you [actually living in your hearts and minds], because you do not believe in Him whom He has sent,” John 5:38.*

**Underline or circle the word “abiding in you.”**

*“So Jesus was saying to the Jews who had believed Him, “If you abide in My* ***word*** *[continually obeying My teachings and* ***living*** *in accordance with them, then] you are truly My disciples,” John 8:31.*

**Circle the words “abide in My word” and “living in accordance.”**

*Then the righteous [those who seek the will of God] will shine forth [radiating the new life] like the sun in the kingdom of their Father. He who has ears [to hear], let him hear and heed My words. Matthew 13:43*

**Circle the words “hear and heed.”**

*Since by your obedience to the truth you have purified yourselves for a sincere love of the believers, [see that you] love one another from the heart [always unselfishly seeking the best for one another], for you have been born again [that is, reborn from above—spiritually transformed, renewed, and set apart for His purpose] not of seed which is perishable but [from that which is] imperishable and immortal, that is, through the living and everlasting word of God. 1 Peter 1:22-23*

**Circle “through the living and everlasting word of God.” (Jesus is the Imperishable Seed)**

**Read John 1:10 - Circle the word “through” and notice it makes reference to Genesis 1:1.**

*He (Christ) was in the world, and though the world was made through Him, the world did not recognize Him.”*

**Read John 1:17 - Circle the word “through.”**

*For the Law was given through Moses, but grace [the unearned, undeserved favor of God] and truth came through Jesus Christ.*

**Read Acts 5:20 - Circle the word “through.”**

*“Go, stand and continue to tell the people in the temple [courtyards] the whole message of this Life [the eternal life revealed by Christ and found through faith in Him].” Acts 5:20 {Eternal life is found through faith in the Living Word of God…who was there “In the beginning.”}*

**Read Acts 8:4 - Circle the word “through.”**

*Now those [believers] who had been scattered went from place to place preaching the word* ***[the good news of salvation through Christ].***

**Read Acts 10:36 - Circle the word “through.”**

*You know the message which He sent to the sons of Israel, announcing the good news of peace through Jesus Christ, who is Lord of all— Acts 10:36*

**Read Acts 11:1 - Circle the word “through.”**

*Now the apostles and the believers who were throughout Judea heard [with astonishment] that the Gentiles also had received and accepted the word of God* ***[the message concerning salvation through Christ]****.*

**Acts 12:24 - Circle the word “through.”**

*But the word of the Lord* ***[the good news about salvation through Christ]*** *continued to grow and spread [increasing in effectiveness].*

**Acts 13:5 - Circle the word “through.”**

*When Barnabas and Saul arrived at Salamis, they began to preach the word of God* ***[proclaiming the message of eternal salvation through faith in Christ]*** *in the synagogues of the Jews; and they also had John [Mark] as their assistant.*

**Acts 13:44 - Circle the word “through.”**

*On the next Sabbath almost the entire city gathered together to hear the word of the Lord* ***[about salvation through faith in Christ].***

As you are seeing in all these verses, where you see “the word of the Lord” you are actually seeing the truth of salvation through faith in Christ being proclaimed. As we live out our faith in Christ, people are SEEING and HEARING the Word of the Lord. This is why we value, love, adore, cling to, crave, desire, study, and most importantly, long to faithfully obey the Word of God, because when we see our copy of the Bible as our personal means to know Christ and to make Him known, then we see more than a book - we see redeeming love! We see eternal life with a loving Father. We see the compassionate plans and purposes of His heart for our life. We see relationship! We see intimacy! We see the heart of God, His abounding in love nature and His power to cast down the proud. We look at our Bibles as the daily opportunity to discover more of who our First Love truly is! We see way beyond black ink on white pages - we see the words of our God being supernaturally imparted to us in making us more and more in the image of His Son. We see fellowship. We see learning and we see experiences. When we look to our Bibles, we see past chapter divisions and headings or titles to grouped context of reading. We see His glory. We see His equipping and sustaining graces. We see His gifts of mercy and His ‘remember no more’ forgiveness. We see His omnipotence! We see His inexpressible joy. We see the everlasting invitation to dine with Him for all eternity!

If you look over all the verses where you have circled or underlined words, you will see the constant theme which is: It is only “through” the Living Word of God that we can experience the Life of the Living Word of God. Let’s say it like this - Jesus said, “I am the way, the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ me.” John 14:6

It is only through our Bibles {through Christ} that we can experience the Life of Christ. He is who gives life, activity and power to the Word of God and to us. As we love our Bibles, we are truly saying we love Jesus and we love LIFE with Him. Remember, “Faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God - Romans 10:17.

As we close this study time in really understanding the significance in our life as we “love our bibles,” what we are truly doing is voicing the passion of our heart - to love our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, and the Life He gives us through Him - through the Word of God. As we read and pray and obey the Word of God, we are expressing our love for Christ, and we are thanking Him for the Life He is and has made possible for us to experience!

Love your bibles!

Crave it. Prize it. Value every word, punctuation and expression. Enjoy it. Read it daily. Soak your soul in it. Rest in it. Let it energize you. Allow it to touch you. Mark it up. Write prayers in it. Talk with God about what you read. Resist being in a rush, instead relish the words of your Bible. Be personal with your bible and most importantly …. Live *through* your bible.