

Discussion Guide



Summer 2010 Sermon Series
<http://www.rbcpc.org/spiritual-apps/>

“Transformed by Study”

Week # 2, July 10/11, 2010

- 1. Scriptures:** Romans 12:2, Genesis 22:1-3, free mobile Bible apps available:
 - iphone: visit App Store, ibible or Bible: Life Church YouVersion
 - blackberry/droid: visit App World, Bible: Life Church YouVersion
- 2. Sermon:** “Transformed by Personal Study” Pastor Bruce Humphrey,
<http://www.rbcpc.org/about-us/sermons/>
Urban Legends Reference: www.snopes.com
Bible Dictionary: www.amazon.com/New-International-Bible-Dictionary-Douglas/
Reading Resource: www.amazon.com/Life-Youve-Always-Wanted-Disciplines/
Practicing the Spiritual Apps: www.rbcpc.org/connect/small-groups/
- 3. Study resources**
 - Primary: John Ortberg, *The Life You’ve Always Wanted*, Ch. 11
 - Secondary: Richard Foster, *Celebration of Discipline*, pg. 62-76
- 4. Study Guide** <http://www.rbcpc.org/spiritual-apps/>
- 5. Blog** <http://spiritualapps.blogspot.com/>

Next week:

July 17/18: **Sermon:** “Transformed by Meditation”
Study: *The Life You’ve Always Wanted*, Ch. 13
Celebration of Discipline, p. 15-32

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Scripture References

Read and reflect on the following scriptures. What do they say to you about the practice of *study*?

Romans 12:2

²Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will.

Notes:

Genesis 22:1-3

¹ Some time later God tested Abraham. He said to him, "Abraham!"

"Here I am," he replied.

² Then God said, "Take your son, your only son, Isaac, whom you love, and go to the region of Moriah. Sacrifice him there as a burnt offering on one of the mountains I will tell you about."

³ Early the next morning Abraham got up and saddled his donkey. He took with him two of his servants and his son Isaac. When he had cut enough wood for the burnt offering, he set out for the place God had told him about.

Notes:

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Sermon

Key Words: ***Study – Knowledge – Information – Repentance***

1. ***“It was a common custom in ancient fertility cults to require parents to sacrifice their first son. If the parents gave up their first-born child, then the god of fertility would give more children. Thus, many of the Canaanite cultures practiced child sacrifice. By Canaanite standards, God was not asking Abraham to do anything unusual.”*** Bruce Humphrey. How does the knowledge of Canaanite sacrificial rites change your interpretation of the story of Abraham’s willingness to sacrifice Isaac?
2. How might information from the study of cultural anthropology illuminate the stories of the Bible?
3. How might it detract?
4. Why is *repentance*, defined as “to change one’s mind,” desirable for followers of Jesus?

Scripture

5. Read the Romans 12:2 scripture. How does the spiritual app of *study* change the way you think?
6. Why does the apostle Paul command us to change the way we think? How is this directly linked to transformation?
7. We cannot change our thinking on our own. What tool(s) do you think Jesus would want us to use to help us change?
8. Read the Genesis 22:1-3 scripture. How is Abraham transformed? How did this encounter with God change his life?

Study Resource

9. ***“The secret of life is pursuing one thing.”*** p. 175, *The Life You’ve Always Wanted*. What is the one thing Jesus calls us to pursue?
10. John Ortberg refers to dark thoughts, *logismoi*, as clods of dirt in our minds. Why is it important to have a cleansed mind?
11. How has discussing the spiritual app of *study* influenced your view of what is involved in pursuing God’s kingdom?
12. Ortberg states that we are: ***“trapped in patterns of thought and behavior that lead to death.”*** p. 192. Discuss this in light of what you know about Jesus’ gift of everlasting life. Why is repentance so important?

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Life Applications SPIRITUAL APP: STUDY

Think about what you are trying to achieve through the discipline of *study* - keep that in mind as you go through this section.

Remember that not all spiritual apps/disciplines will work for everyone. Celebrate that fact! Spiritual disciplines are a lot like spiritual gifts in that the Holy Spirit uses each one of us in a unique way. If this one does not work for you, don't give up, try the next one!

Personal:

The goal of personal study is *transformation*, spend time thinking about one aspect of your life you would like to change/*transform*. Use a Bible concordance or Bible dictionary to locate what the Bible says. Suggested sources:

Bible Concordance: www.biblegateway.com/

Bible Dictionary: www.amazon.com/New-International-Bible-Dictionary-Douglas/

Small Group:

Report on your attempt at the practice of *solitude*. What was easy? What was difficult? How do you think your attempt at *solitude* will affect your attempt at *study*?

Ask each group member to share one of the *logismoi*, clods of dirt, in their mind. What steps will you suggest for each other to wash away the dirt? Share.

Pray:

Personal: Pray for discernment and guidance from the Holy Spirit as you study both the Bible and secular resources.

Group: Pray that the members of your small group will continue to grow and support each other in pursuit of God's kingdom, even when the going gets tough!

Kingdom: Pray that the elected leaders of our country will study and research the information they receive with discernment and cleansed minds as they make decisions *“with liberty and justice for all.”*