

# How To Remain in Christ: Hear & Know the Word of God, Pt. III

## John 15:3

preached @ Hawkwood Baptist Church  
by Shafer Parker, Jr.  
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Intro.

Our theme for this series is I Tim. 4:7 “Discipline yourself for the purpose of godliness” (NASB)

Our text for today is John 15:3, in which Jesus is basically telling the Disciples that he has pruned them and trained them for effective service by means of His teaching, God’s Word.

We’ve been talking about Scripture intake as the foundation for all the Spiritual Disciplines.

Mark 4

26 He also said, “This is what the kingdom of God is like. A man scatters seed on the ground.

27 Night and day, whether he sleeps or gets up, the seed sprouts and grows, *though he does not know how.*

28 All by itself the soil produces grain — first the stalk, then the head, then the full kernel in the head.

29 As soon as the grain is ripe, he puts the sickle to it, because the harvest has come.”

If the seed is the Word of God, and it is, then we can assume that Jesus is telling us something very important. He is telling us that if we plant His Word in our lives it will produce Godly fruit. We will grow and be changed into Christ’s image organically. We will become more and more what God wants us to be.

And all of this will happen without God violating your personal integrity. Quite the opposite, in some miraculous way the Seed of the Word never fails to accomplish its task, never fails to help us grow, but at the same time never turns us into spiritual robots, or god-bots, as it were. It isn’t mechanical. It’s organic. And just as no two plants are exactly alike, no Christian is just like another. As the word takes root in us and begins to bear fruit we become unique and special in ways never seen anywhere else.

So here’s the formula that will transform your life.

- Plant the seed of the word in your mind and it will bear fruit!
- Plant lots of seeds, get lots of fruit.
- Plant seeds each day and you will begin to bear fruit each day.
- Water those seeds with prayer, worship and Christian fellowship and watch them grow.
- Cultivate those plants with accountability and self-diagnosis leading to repentance and you

will find that spiritual weeds cannot choke your spiritual life or diminish the amount or juiciness of your fruit.

- Strengthen those plants with exercise — exposure to the wind and rain and hot sun of real life — and watch them grow stronger and even more fruitful. In fact, if a plant is tough enough, it will produce more fruit under adverse circumstances than it does when times are good. After a couple of dry years a fir tree or spruce tree will put out more cones than ever because it understands that existence is precarious and the species may not survive unless it sends forth seeds that can lead to new growth when the rains return.

For the Christian, then, the most important question in the world is: How do I plant the seed of the Word in my mind and heart? Through the spiritual discipline of Scripture intake.

1. Hear God's Word (this may seem easy, but listening for the purpose of implanting the word requires discipline)
2. Read God's Word (The Bible, not just good books)
3. Study God's Word: this does not require a degree, only a desire to know, to understand.
4. Memorize God's Word
  - a. Memorization plants the word deep in your soul
  - b. Memorization is like sword practice (Eph. 6:17)
  - c. Memorization stimulates meditation.
  - d. Memorization requires a method and it requires work.
  - e. Memorization rewards you with holiness (Ps. 119:11; Jas. 1:21)

Jas. 1:21 Therefore, get rid of all moral filth and the evil that is so prevalent and humbly accept the word planted in you, which can save you.

5. Meditate on God's Word
  - a. Christian meditation is not like other forms of meditation (It is active, not passive)
  - b. Christian meditation is deep thinking on the truths and spiritual realities revealed in Scripture for the purposes of understanding, application and prayer.
  - c. Christian meditation is not "creating your own reality." It is the hard work of learning to interpret life from God's perspective. ("We have the mind of Christ," I Cor. 2:16.)
  - d. Bible reading, study and memorization are like dips of a tea bag in hot water. Meditation is when you drop the bag in and let it steep.

Psalm 1

1 Blessed is the man who does not walk in the counsel of the wicked or stand in the way of sinners or sit in the seat of mockers.

2 But his delight is in the law of the LORD, and on his law he meditates day and night.

3 He is like a tree planted by streams of water, which yields its fruit in season and whose leaf does not wither. Whatever he does prospers.

6. Apply God's Word: the ultimate goal of meditation!
  - a. Does this text reveal something I should believe about God?
  - b. Something I should praise or thank God for?
  - c. Something I need to pray about, for myself or others?
  - d. Something I should have a new attitude about?
  - e. Something I should make a decision about?
  - f. Something I should do for the sake of Christ, others, or myself?
  
7. Do God's Word
  - a. The ultimate goal of all Bible study (Jas.1:22) Be doers of the word and not hearers only.
  - b. This is where the blessing flows.

But the man who looks intently into the perfect law that gives freedom, and continues to do this, not forgetting what he has heard, but doing it — he will be blessed in what he does (Jas. 1:25).

Conclusion: Meditation on John 3:16 (This shows the power of memorization, because most of you can meditate on this verse without ever having to look it up. You can do this on your way to sleep at night. You can do this while driving. It's totally legal. You may be distracted, but the police will never know. You don't need to know the Greek or Hebrew. It isn't even a matter of grammar. It's just taking the verse apart and thinking about it.)

- “For God” (creator, all-powerful, all-knowing, source of everything, including what defines right and wrong, my creator, which means I am subject to Him. If I come from Him, then my life has its ultimate meaning in relationship with Him.)
- “so loved” (the amazing thing is that in His approach to me He does not begin with a display of His power, but rather with a reminder of His love. Love is personal and relational. Only persons can love. Whatever God is, He is first a person. Apparently God intends to relate to His people on a personal level.)
- “the world” (God of the whole world, universal God, one God, non-prejudiced God, inclusive God)
- “that He gave His one and only Son” (one and only means high value, something precious to God, yet He gave His Son for us. Now I begin to understand God's love is real and costly. How did God give His Son? Well, He became one of us! He then became our servant. That's what all the healing and ministry was about. Eventually He served us to the ultimate extent; He took our sins to the cross and paid for them there.
- “That whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life.” (Here, apparently, is the one qualification for experiencing God. I have to believe in Jesus. But what does belief mean? Well, let me think about those in Scripture who believed in Jesus. There I find at least four words are required to describe their belief: recognition, reception, repentance, reliance. But how do I do all these things in an effective way? In fact, I find that the harder I try the further from the goal I seem to be. “What a wretched man I am! Who will rescue me from this body of death? Thanks be to God — through Jesus Christ our Lord!” Rom. 7:24,25)