

JOURNEY IN THE WILDERNESS

Supplemental Reading: Inductive Bible Study Guide

Week 8

Inductive Bible Study Guide

Instructions: Practice using the Inductive Bible study this week in your time spent with Jesus.

We have to remember we grow in our relationships with people by spending time with them. The depth and quality of our relationship really depend on how well we communicate. In our relationship with Jesus we also need to spend time alone with Him and need to communicate with God. Communication is a two way street and we won't get anywhere in our relationship if we do all the talking. We also won't get anywhere if all we do is sit and listen. **Communication is an active process of listening/receiving then speaking/responding.**

WHAT DID YOU SAY?

One of the biggest obstacles in communication is understanding what is being said to us. In the first section of the Inductive Bible study guide we try to isolate and categorize what God is saying to us so that we can better understand and respond to Him. It'd be difficult for us to obey a command God gives us if we don't understand that what He is saying to us is a command. It's like when your parent tells a child to clean his room. The child might hear the words "go clean your room" but will fail to recognize it as an command. For all the child knows the parent is asking a question! It's important for us to recognize what God is saying to us so we understand how to respond to Him.

What does it say?

Commands:

Questions:

Exhortation:

Warnings:

Promises:

Repeated Words/Ideas:

I DON'T GET WHAT YOU MEAN!

Another obstacle we encounter in communicating is simply failing to understand the content of what someone says to us. We can comprehend the sentences and words that are being spoken we just don't

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know how all of it fits together. This is why it's important for us to pay attention to how things a person says fits together. It's difficult to communicate concepts and ideas fully in a single phrase or sentence. Paragraphs are the smallest groupings of words that communicate ideas and concepts. That's why the first section of the Inductive Bible study guide is so important. The next step is linking all of those sentences and words together to piece together how it all relates. When we do this it helps us to understand the content of what is being communicated. Have you ever been in a conversation that seems to go about in circles? Or talked with a person who says seemingly unrelated things then finally blurts out something that ties everything together? The same is true in how we communicate with God. Sometimes we need to spend more time mulling over what God is saying to us because the idea that God is communicating to us goes beyond the content of a single sentence. When we fail to do this we may single out an idea from a phrase and apply it to our lives but miss out on what God is really saying. Take the Sermon on the Mount and verse 30 of chapter 5. It tells us that if our hand causes us to sin that we should cut it off and that it's better to lose your hand than to go to hell. So does this actually mean that we should literally cut off our hand? Without the rest of the context and fitting it into the chapter a person could very easily assume that's what God wants. But that's not what God is saying in the passage. In the context of the passage Jesus is calling us to place our relationship with Him over everything else in our lives. He's asking how serious we are about our relationship with Him. Are we willing to do everything necessary to eliminate distraction and hindrances to our relationship with Jesus. Are we willing to sacrifice the things we want or like so that we can live righteously? Jesus is talking about a changing paradigm and thought life to affect our attitudes, desires, and behaviors. He's not just saying to cut off our hands so we don't sin.

We need to make sure that we pay attention to everything that God says to us through His Word and not be so quick to assume that we know what He's saying from a single sentence or phrase. If we do assume we run the risk of thinking we know what God is saying and our misunderstanding can seriously affect our relationship and other people's relationships in a negative way.

What does it mean?

How do individual phrases connect to each other? Is there a cause effect relationship between phrases?

WHAT'S NEXT

It's important for us to think about why we communicate with other people. When we communicate with people **we are exchanging information**. But what's the point of exchanging information? What's the point of learning **new things about the world, new things about who we communicate with, and new things about ourselves**? When we communicate in relationships it gives us the opportunity to **grow in our intimacy** by applying what we know to our relationship. If someone tells us they hate white rice and we have the opportunity to cook for that person we have two options. We can use the information that we to grow in our relationship or to put more distance between us the other person. We put distance between us and the other person when we serve them white rice. We ignore what they've said. We communicate a lack of respect and attention. The same is true in our relationship with God. When He reveals things He doesn't like we should pay attention to not do those things. We should also pay attention to the things He wants us to do and do them!

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If we spend time communicating we should also take the time to use the information otherwise we are just wasting our time. This would be like having a broken car so you take it into the shop and have a mechanic look at it. The mechanic tells you what's wrong with the car, but instead of moving on what the mechanic says you ignore and drive off with a broken car. You've wasted your time. The way this relates to the spiritual life is when we spend time alone with God praying and reading His Word but not applying any of it to our lives. Time spent with God always results in change. When God speaks to us He reveals things to us that help us change our attitudes, thoughts, and behavior so that we conform to His way of living. Conforming to God's way of living helps us to be like God. When we conform to God's way of living we are pursuing righteousness and grow in our holiness by allowing Jesus to change our lives.

When we make changes to our lives it doesn't just affect our relationship with God. The changes we make in our lives also affect the relationships we have with other people. There is always an individual application that affects how we relate to God but there is also a component that affects how we relate to other people.

How does this apply to me?

What do I learn about God? Jesus? Holy Spirit?

What is God revealing to me? Weakness/sin? Action/Change? Preparation for something?

What can I do to apply this passage to my life?

How do I apply this passage to my life? What actions do I need to take?

Individual application:

Application to Community: