



#73

Theme: Don't Take Shortcuts

Scripture: Psalm 119:97 (HCSB)

*"How I love your teaching! It is my meditation all day long."*

A Thought: I have mentioned this topic in a previous Bottom Line essay. However, I thought it would be worthy of repeating the importance of the theme and its effect on our spiritual life. Two shortcuts in reading the word that I am personally familiar with are devotions and commentaries. Truth be told gents, we have short-circuit personalities. So, we reach for the devotion or a short commentary to fulfill our duty to read the word. We either don't enjoy reading or we just think it takes too much time. Of course, unlike a consuming golf outing or the last two minutes of an NBA game. Right? Palm held devotions or short concise commentaries with three paragraphs, a brief analysis of the aforementioned paragraphs, a couple related verses and twenty-word prayer is as convenient as a frozen food dinner. Defrost, in the microwave and presto dinner time! Sodium and calories galore all in five minutes tops! One more scenario to irked you. Disassembling a toy wrapped in a tough to cut plastic container. Finally, after many minutes of looking for ways to open the stubborn polyethylene you grab the nearest scissors and you become Johnny Depp's film character Edward Scissorhands. Scissors in toil, a few chops and all the toy parts fall to the floor. You stare at the thirty-some bits and pieces and you look at the instruction sheet....step one good, step two okay, step three forget it. Hours later have been accompanied with high energy, frustration, anger and the toy in question is not working. The instruction sheet is merely a straw length from your hand. You ignore it. Of course you do. Another shortcut and another toy that doesn't work one hundred percent. And this is how many of us of the male gender handle the Word. We shortcut the Lord to our peril. A.L. Tozer succinctly tells it like is... *"None of us can expect to get the rich, transforming blessings from God apart from the Scriptures"* Stop and think....why circumvent God's presence?

Now....what are your thoughts? Write them down.

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Talk to yourself:

- We break bad habits everyday....try a good habit read the Word daily.
- Write your thoughts about the passages you have read.
- Talk to someone about what you just read from the Word. Great conversation!
- You will feel His presence...you know it does, don't you?

Scriptures to read: Joshua 1:8; Neh. 8:7-9; Matt.4:4; Luke 8:11; John 6:63; 8:31;14:23, 17:17; Romans 10, 18:4; Acts 20:32; Ephesians 6:11-17; Hebrews 4:12; Phil. 2:5-11; 1Tim 3:16,4:12-13; 2Tim.2:15, 3:16-17,

Quote: Thomas A. Kempis, Regular Cannon, Author (1400s)

*"Let it, then be our chief study to meditate on the life of Jesus Christ."*

Bottom Line:

We take short cuts with the Word when we read it in bits and pieces. We don't receive David's spiritual high when he cried out *"How I love your teaching!"* Fact...not unlike the fellows in the above Thought section we short change our lives by not digesting the wholeness of His spiritual presence. I am not against daily and weekly devotions or even commentaries. The Word is the real sustenance, the meat and potatoes, the grub, the daily bread that provides our daily spiritual nourishment. Simply put everything else is the dessert. Matthew 11:28-39 (NIV) *"Come to me, all of you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light."* Our Lord bestows (an honor) to each of us to read and study His Word. Reading His Word daily should not be a burden. Gents, the return is great.... we receive knowledge, wisdom, love and in indeed as He promises we will find rest and peace in our soul.

NOW.....THAT'S THE BOTTOM LINE.

Spiritual Dabbler,

Your bro, Ray

