



MAN OF THE WORD MANUAL • FALL 2021

W I E L D I N G

O U R W E A P O N S

Knowing & Using the Bible in Our Daily Lives

WIELDING OUR WEAPONS:
KNOWING AND USING THE BIBLE
IN OUR DAILY LIVES

MCBC Man of the Word
Fall 2021

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WIELDING OUR WEAPONS: KNOWING AND USING THE BIBLE IN OUR DAILY LIVES

THEME

Our theme for the Man of the Word this fall is *Wielding Our Weapons: Knowing and Using the Bible in Our Daily Lives*. This booklet is a ten-week study designed to challenge us as men to lead both ourselves and those whom we influence by cultivating our love for God and disciplining ourselves by grace not to love this world.

THEME PASSAGE

3 For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh, 4 for the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh, but divinely powerful for the destruction of fortresses. 5 We are destroying speculations and every lofty thing raised up against the knowledge of God, and we are taking every thought captive to the obedience of Christ, 6 and we are ready to punish all disobedience, whenever your obedience is complete. (2 Cor. 10:3-6)

MANUAL

Each week's resources consist of:

- SCRIPTURE MEDITATION – A passage pertaining to the week's article to be read and considered during the week
- BOOK READING – Tim Berrey's *Winning the War to Walk Worthy: A Devotional Exposition of Ephesians 6:10-18*. Independently published 2020.
- M'CHEYNE BIBLE READING SCHEDULE – A way to keep on track in reading through the Bible in 2020 using the M'Cheyne system
- PERSONAL REFLECTIONS – A week-by-week place to record what God is teaching you
- ARTICLES – Testimonies and devotionals related to the theme, written by Mount Calvary Baptist Church men

Don't let these materials become daunting. Let whatever you do be a delight. If you can't keep up every component, choose the ones that you can use consistently and stick with them.

TIME

10 weeks: September 4 – November 13, 2021

GOALS

1. To learn, despite our failures in the flesh, to use the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God, to engage in this warfare actively and offensively.
2. To draw benefit from a wisely written book on *Winning the War to Walk Worthy*.
3. To edify fellow Mount Calvary men through prayer and accountability.

EVENTS

Men's Prayer Breakfasts: September 4, October 9, November 13

Men and Boys Outing : September 24-25 Wilds Christian Camp

MY PRAYER PARTNER (NAME, PHONE NUMBER, EMAIL):

MAN OF THE WORD PROGRAM

The leadership of Mount Calvary Baptist Church created the Man of the Word program in obedience to the command of 2 Timothy 2:2: “The things which you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses, entrust these to faithful men who will be able to teach others also.” This ministry functions under the leadership of Pastor Mark Minnick and Pastor Jerid Jones. The following men are the current Man of the Word officers.

- President Roger Bradley
- Vice President Phil Sterr
- Treasurer Ken Still
- Manual Director.....Jacob Nicholson
- Food Director Jared Rush
- Project Coordinator Randy Smith

We are grateful to Pastor Mark Minnick and Pastor Jerid Jones for their encouragement and leadership and for their vision for the men of Mount Calvary Baptist Church. We would also like to express our gratitude to the men who have donated their time, energy, and gifts by writing spiritually edifying articles for our growth and encouragement.

SCRIPTURE MEDITATION

“Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of His might. Put on the full armor of God, so that you will be able to stand firm against the schemes of the devil. For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the powers, against the world forces of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenly places.”

Ephesians 6:10-12

BOOK READING

Sept. 5	1 Sam 29,30	1Cor. 10	Eze. 8	Ps. 46,47
Sept. 6	1 Sam. 31	1Cor. 11	Eze. 9	Ps. 48
Sept. 7	2 Sam. 1	1Cor. 12	Eze. 10	Ps. 49
Sept. 8	2 Sam. 2	1Cor. 13	Eze. 11	Ps. 50
Sept. 9	2 Sam. 3	1Cor. 14	Eze. 12	Ps. 51
Sept. 10	2 Sam. 4.5	1Cor. 15	Eze. 13	Ps. 52-54
Sept. 11	2 Sam. 6	1Cor. 16	Eze. 14	Ps. 55

Berrey, pp. 5-23

M'CHEYNE BIBLE READING SCHEDULE

PERSONAL REFLECTION

INTRODUCTION

ROGER BRADLEY

Brothers,

The theme for the 2021 Man of the Word fall cycle is “Wielding Our Weapons: Knowing and Using the Bible in Our Daily Lives,” and is taken in part from 2 Corinthians 10:3-6:3

3 For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh,
4 for the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh, but divinely powerful for the destruction of fortresses.

5 We are destroying speculations and every lofty thing raised up against the knowledge of God, and we are taking every thought captive to the obedience of Christ,

6 and we are ready to punish all disobedience, whenever your obedience is complete.

From these verses we are instructed about several important realities with respect to our lives:

1) “We walk in the flesh” (v. 3) – We must live daily with a fallen nature. We will never in this life be completely free from sin. In the words of our catechism, Treeology Theology, Question 62, we break the commandments of God daily in thought, word, deed, and disposition.

2) Though we would like to enjoy a measure of peace in this life, we are actually in a spiritual war. We may see the effects of that conflict on our world and perhaps even in our own lives and experience, but the war is internal, within our members (James 4:1; I Peter 2:11). The casualties of this war are seen within our circle of acquaintances, our friends, our churches, and even our own families.

3) Though the conflict and its impacts may be discouraging, we are not called to despair. Though we walk in the flesh, we have “divinely powerful” weapons for engaging the enemy. We are called to wage war for the sake of the Lord and the gospel, for our friends and families. We do not have the liberty to opt out. And since it is a spiritual war, our warfare can be effective only if our weapons are spiritual. The Holy Spirit-breathed Bible is the primary weapon at our disposal (v.4).

4) The encouraging lesson for us here is that these weapons are offensive, not defensive in nature. In this passage we find that the weapons are used for:

a) “the destruction of fortresses”

b) “destroying speculations and every lofty thing raised up against the knowledge of God”

c) “taking every thought captive to the obedience of Christ”

d) “punish[ing] all disobedience.”

This language tells us that we are called to a campaign against the forces of darkness.

Given these truths, how then ought we to think about our obligation? Perhaps it could be summarized as follows: to learn despite our failures in the flesh to use the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God, to engage in this warfare actively and offensively. It is the prayer of all the officers of the Man of the Word that the brief articles in this manual would be an encouragement to be relentless in fighting ‘the good fight of faith.’

SCRIPTURE MEDITATION

“Therefore, take up the full armor of God, so that you will be able to resist in the evil day, and having done everything, to stand firm. Stand firm therefore, HAVING GIRDED YOUR LOINS WITH TRUTH, and HAVING PUT ON THE BREASTPLATE OF RIGHTEOUSNESS, and having shod YOUR FEET WITH THE PREPARATION OF THE GOSPEL OF PEACE; in addition to all, taking up the shield of faith with which you will be able to extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one.”

Ephesians 6:13-16

BOOK READING

Berrey, pp. 25-42

M’CHEYNE BIBLE READING SCHEDULE

Sept. 12	2 Sam. 7	2 Cor. 1	Eze. 15	Ps. 56,57
Sept. 13	2 Sam. 8,9	2 Cor. 2	Eze. 16	Ps. 58,59
Sept. 14	2 Sam. 10	2 Cor. 3	Eze. 17	Ps. 60,61
Sept. 15	2 Sam. 11	2 Cor. 4	Eze. 18	Ps. 62,63
Sept. 16	2 Sam. 12	2 Cor. 5	Eze. 19	Ps. 64,65
Sept. 17	2 Sam. 13	2 Cor. 6	Eze. 20	Ps. 66,67
Sept. 18	2 Sam. 14	2 Cor. 7	Eze. 21	Ps. 68

PERSONAL REFLECTION

A COMPLETE CHANGE IN AFFECTION

TIM DAHLHAUSEN

Those of you who have known me from my childhood know that a rebel spirit controlled my life for many years. The governing motivations behind everything I did were selfish ambition and personal pleasure. There is a reason why the Lord tells us through the mouth of Jeremiah that “the heart is more deceitful than all else and is desperately sick; Who can understand it?” (Jeremiah 17:9, NASB) For many years, I was intent on living out that deceitfulness and sin-sickness that characterizes so much of our world today. But that is not my heart’s desire today. Why the change? What can tame a rebel spirit and cause a complete change in affection in a sinner’s life? The only answer is that God alone can do this through the power of His Word.

One of things that changed after I truly gave my life to God was that for the first time I had a real desire to know God through His Word. Before, I would do anything to get out of completing my PACE assignment or memorizing the Bible passages. But now, I finally had a purpose to my life that went hand in hand with this book. I’ve seen God renew my thinking in so many different areas as I’ve taken the time to meditate and apply His Word. Recently, that renewal has come in the area of materialism. I’ve so often found myself drawn into a love for possessions and an “American Dream” mentality. But Jesus himself taught in the Sermon on the Mount that treasures of this earth will rust and be stolen (Matt. 6:19-21). He told people to sell their possessions and give to the needy (Luke 12:33-34). And he even told one man that following Him meant complete sacrifice of all his worldly belongings (Matt. 19:21). These are just some of the passages that God has used in my heart to slowly start changing my affection for things and, instead, place my affection on Him.

That is the beautiful thing about the Bible. It is not just paper and ink between two covers. It is more powerful than we could ever know or experience (Heb. 4:12). That is why consistent exposure to its truth will have an effect and work a change in your heart. Are you giving it a chance to exercise its transforming power or are you letting affections for other things steal your time and energy?

During my freshman year of college, God put me in a room with an international student from Uganda. I have a lot of great memories from

my time as his roommate but perhaps the biggest impact he had on my life was his focus on prayer and Bible reading. A few weeks into school, he asked me if I would like to meet him in the prayer room on the first floor of Smith dormitory to pray and start off the morning with our devotional reading. Looking back, I think that the example he set for me of consistently taking time to know God right at the beginning of my time at college was a huge help to me in building the foundational habit of getting up early to read my Bible and pray.

Over the years, it has been helpful for me to study God's Word in different ways. Below, I've listed several ideas that have been extremely beneficial in my own personal walk with God.

1. Themes and Highlighting - Print out a shorter book of the Bible. I normally take out the verse and chapter markings in order to read it as the original recipients would have read it. Next, read through the book in its entirety multiple times, each time highlighting a different word or theme. After 8-10 readings, you'll be able to look back over the book and trace the major ideas that are presented throughout. I have done this kind of study with books like Ephesians and Philippians and found it to be very beneficial in exposing the general themes of the book.

2. Journaling - While this can seem like a simple study tool, I've found it to be one of the most effective. There are many different journaling techniques. Currently, I am following a suggestion from Pastor Minnick and picking one verse each day to write about. My notes will often be either thoughts or insights that I gain from this verse and how it applies to me today. The goal is eventually to have notes written down for each verse of the Bible. Other methods of journaling I have done in the past are keeping a notebook of lessons from the chapters, journaling my prayers, and writing down connections with other passages.

3. Verse Card - A practical way to hide God's Word in your heart throughout the day is to first hide it in your pocket on a notecard. Write down a verse or a short passage on a 3x5 card and carry it around with you. Whenever you have some down time at work or throughout the day, you can pull out your card and be reminded of your devotional reading that morning. I've also tried to keep a verse on my phone but I've found that a physical card will more often come to my attention.

The point of these methods is not to place a burden on you or to make Bible reading into a checklist, but to give you some practical steps you can take to know God better through His Word. What you will find is

that as you invest in your relationship with God's Word, your affections will change more and more to reflect the image of God Himself (2 Cor. 3:18).

SCRIPTURE MEDITATION

“Not that I have already obtained *it* or have already become perfect, but I press on so that I may lay hold of that for which also I was laid hold of by Christ Jesus. Brethren, I do not regard myself as having laid hold of *it* yet; but one thing *I do*: forgetting what *lies* behind and reaching forward to what *lies* ahead, I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus. Let us therefore, as many as are perfect, have this attitude; and if in anything you have a different attitude, God will reveal that also to you; however, let us keep living by that same *standard* to which we have attained.”

Phillipians 3:12-16

BOOK READING

Berrey, pp. 43-54

Sept. 19	2 Sam. 15	2 Cor. 8	Eze. 22	Ps. 69
Sept. 20	2 Sam. 16	2 Cor. 9	Eze. 23	Ps. 70,71
Sept. 21	2 Sam. 17	2 Cor. 10	Eze. 24	Ps. 72
Sept. 22	2 Sam. 18	2 Cor. 11	Eze. 25	Ps. 73
Sept. 23	2 Sam. 19	2 Cor. 12	Eze. 26	Ps. 74
Sept. 24	2 Sam. 20	2 Cor. 13	Eze. 27	Ps. 75,76
Sept. 25	2 Sam. 21	Gal. 1	Eze. 28	Ps. 77

M'CHEYNE BIBLE READING SCHEDULE

PERSONAL REFLECTION

GOD'S WORD: POWER IN OUR PRAYER

RAJESH GANDHI

I have spent many years online discussing and debating issues with supporters of contemporary worship concerning what music Christians should and should not use in worship. I have had these discussions and debates on two Christian discussion forums, on Facebook, on my blog, and through email. Many of these interactions have involved daily conversations for extended periods.

Over the past 10 years or so, there have been quite a few occasions on which I have encountered notions from supporters of contemporary worship that I knew to be false, but I did not know then how to answer them fully and specifically with Scripture. Through specifically praying and studying, God has granted me illumination of Scripture from more than nine key passages that specifically and decisively have answered these false notions!

In my praying to God about these matters, I have used several passages as the models for how I have prayed. I have not kept track, but I would not be surprised to learn that I have probably prayed along the lines of the following passages and sample prayers (some of these are not verbatim but only representative) many hundreds of times over the years:¹

2 Corinthians 10:4 (For the weapons of our warfare *are* not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds;) ⁵ Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ

Heavenly Father, please grant me specific and clear insight into Thy Word that I would be mighty through Thee to the pulling down of strongholds, casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself

¹ Scripture in this article is taken from the KJV as this is the wording that represents the prayers of Brother Gandhi.

against the knowledge of God in all my hearers, and please bring their every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ.

1 Kings 3:9 Give therefore thy servant an understanding heart to judge thy people, that I may discern between good and bad: for who is able to judge this thy so great a people? . . . ¹² Behold, I have done according to thy words: lo, I have given thee a wise and an understanding heart.

Gracious God, please give to me a wise and understanding heart that I may discern between the good and the bad.

James 1:5 If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all *men* liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him.

Heavenly Father, I lack wisdom to know how to answer this wrong teaching. You have said that if any man lacks wisdom, he must ask of You Who gives liberally to all men and does not upbraid; and it will be given him. Do as You have said and grant me the wisdom that I need to answer this wrong teaching.

Proverbs 26:4 Answer not a fool according to his folly, lest thou also be like unto him. ⁵ Answer a fool according to his folly, lest he be wise in his own conceit.

Father, please grant that I would not answer these people according to their folly, lest I would become like them and please grant that I would answer them according to their folly so that they would not be wise in their own conceits.

Titus 1:9 Holding fast the faithful word as he hath been taught, that he may be able by sound doctrine both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers.

Holy Spirit, please fill me now and grant me all manner of skillfulness in every skillful aspect of answering these supporters of contemporary worship music so that I would be able by sound doctrine both to exhort and to convince these gainsayers.

2 Timothy 2:7 Consider what I say; and the Lord give thee understanding in all things.

Lord, as I carefully consider what Thou hast said in this passage, please grant me understanding in all things that Thou hast said in Thy Word.

Psalm 119:18 Open thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of thy law.

Oh God, I know and believe that the answers to every important question about what music is acceptable to Thee in worship are in Thy Word. Open thou mine eyes that I may behold wondrous things out of Thy Law.

I praise, extol, and thank our Heavenly Father, the Lord Jesus Christ, and the Holy Spirit for answering my prayers richly and specifically for illumination and wisdom about these matters repeatedly over the years! To God be the glory, great things He hath done!

SCRIPTURE MEDITATION

“Do not be wise in your own eyes;
Fear the LORD and turn away from evil.
It will be healing to your body
And refreshment to your bones”

Proverbs 3:7-8

BOOK READING

Berrey, pp. 55-63

M’CHEYNE BIBLE READING SCHEDULE

Sept. 26	2 Sam. 22	Gal. 2	Eze. 29	Ps. 78:1-37
Sept. 27	2 Sam. 23	Gal. 3	Eze. 30	Ps. 78:38-72
Sept. 28	2 Sam. 24	Gal. 4	Eze. 31	Ps. 79
Sept. 29	1Kings 1	Gal. 5	Eze. 32	Ps. 80
Sept. 30	1Kings 2	Gal. 6	Eze. 33	Ps. 81,82
Oct. 1	1 Kings 3	Eph. 1	Eze. 34	Ps. 83,84
Oct. 2	1 Kings 4,5	Eph. 2	Eze. 35	Ps. 85

PERSONAL REFLECTION

THE WAR IN MY BACKYARD

PATRICK MCGARY

We are called to bear fruit in this life. So much so, that Jesus Himself told his disciples that branches that didn't bear fruit would be cut off and burned in the fire. "Fruit" in the New Testament could be good works, spiritual qualities of Christlikeness (i.e. the fruit of the Spirit), saved souls ("bringing their sheaves with them."), or even the fruit that people you have disciplined will bear for Christ's kingdom. All of these fruits are from the same root, Jesus Christ. He said, "I am the true vine...Abide in me...and ye shall bear much fruit." Christlike character produces good works. Kindness and truth rendered to a lost person along with the working of the Holy Spirit can result in the salvation of a soul. And when a newly saved person develops Christlike character, the cycle repeats itself. Satan does not want us to bear fruit. The World, the Devil, and even our own flesh are waging a war on each one of us to destroy any fruitfulness in us.

Many years ago, after realizing that tending a video game simulated garden consumed time with no real benefit, I decided to start a real garden. This would be a garden where the work resulted in things you and your whole family could taste. I remember the excitement of picking out the seeds and young plants, seeing pictures of the kind of fruit each was supposed to bear. I planted basil, chive, oregano, and carrot seeds. I also bought grape tomato and regular-sized tomatoes along with sweet pepper plants. I even bought a red seedless grape vine to plant. It was a lot of work breaking up the hard soil and adding sphagnum peat moss to the soil, laying out my plan, digging the holes for each plant, transferring the plants. I had carved out of the ground a neatly organized sunny spot for food to grow and felt very good about that hard, dirty, sweaty work. However, what came next was the work of watering regularly and weeding. What I hadn't realized that I had unwittingly entered a war against the forces of unfruitfulness.

I planted a red seedless grape vine in a sunny spot that was—in hindsight—too far away to water conveniently. In the bustle of the end of that school year, it suffered from too little water, partially withered, and bore no fruit. I noticed that the rest of the plants would start to droop in

this sunny South Carolina climate unless I watered frequently. This became a weekly or even daily task that had negative consequences on fruitfulness if I skipped it.

Then the war was really on. What started as neat rows of plants with nice churned up top soil was quickly covered with a mess of weeds who loved the tilled soil and water just as much as the plants did. With nothing to cover the dirt, any stray weed seed could find a lovely place to germinate. I didn't even have to try. I learned later that they were also starving the plants of water. When I first saw the tiniest of green weeds coming up out of the soil, I at first tried to pull them all up. However, work kept me from this daily task. Eventually they were bigger and, in some ways, a little easier to pull all at once coming up root and all. However, all too often, without much care, the weeds became a dense carpet so much that pulling out the weed disrupted the roots of my good plants.

What was worse, tiny little Aphids were climbing my tomato plants and attacking the very buds that needed to flower for tomatoes to grow. Asiatic beetles were eating the blossoms on the pepper plants. Finally, I declared war on the invaders, but killing one group of aphids or a number of beetles hiding in the soil was never enough. They just kept coming. Finally, I got clever and left the lights on at night on the back of the house. Many insects loved the light and would situate themselves in nice vulnerable positions on the siding or on the patio. Night after night I would wait until there was a large population hanging out in the artificial light and go on a killing spree. These populations got smaller and smaller and some of my peppers finally got flowers that weren't being eaten by beetles. After weeks of faithfulness in killing aphids and beetles, the grape tomatoes ripened first.

I remember watching those grape tomatoes grow. And I'll never forget picking them off the vine and popping one in my mouth. It was a delight to the senses. Could it be that our modern world had lost the glorious sweet taste of a garden tomato? I didn't remember ever having such a sweet and delicious tomato in my life. And they kept bearing fruit all the way through October.

So it is in our own lives. Sin can be like a weed. It starts small, a hardly noticeable attitude, an innocent activity. Rarely do we even realize that our flesh is sowing these seeds in our hearts. It can come from books we

read, television, movies, youtube, the radio, or even from demonic suggestion. It becomes a thought which lands on a fertile heart that has time on its hands. And if we aren't making use of the Sword of the Spirit each day, they grow. These thought roots start to spread, and these pre-occupations can start to choke out the Scripture that we do receive in sermons and Sunday school lessons. Before we know it, we find ourselves reacting very differently to situations than we used to. An outburst of anger here and a lustful thought there is followed by selfish choices, misplaced priorities, and other works of the flesh. Our internal peace that we once enjoyed seems unachievable. Our prayer life is reduced to occasional pleas. Our failure to recognize we are in a war for our own fruitfulness can sideline a Christian for years. Meanwhile, these spiritual weed roots are sucking away our resources from what truly matters, our own fruitfulness. The only approach is to treat this like war. Give up some of your secular or even relaxing activities (morning or evening) and do some war for your soul's fruitfulness. Memorize some truth to uproot those false thoughts. This is work that reoccurs in every season of life. Allowing these weeds to grow unchecked...allowing these harmful insects to breed unchecked will attack your fruitfulness, and in the worst case could shorten your life. Always be on the watch for these spiritual weeds and pests that seek to take up residence in your heart. Here are some weapons against the forces of spiritual unfruitfulness in your own life:

"Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable in Thy sight, my Lord and my redeemer."

"I have made a covenant with my eyes, why then should I look on a maid?"

"But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof."

"But God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that which ye are able, but will with the temptation also make a way of escape that ye may be able to bear it."

"Casting down imaginations and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ."

SCRIPTURE MEDITATION

“Make me walk in the path of Your commandments,
For I delight in it.

Incline my heart to Your testimonies

And not to *dishonest* gain.

Turn away my eyes from looking at vanity,

And revive me in Your ways.”

Psalm 119:35-37

BOOK READING

Berrey, pp.65-76

Oct. 3	1 Kings 6	Eph. 3	Eze. 36	Ps. 86
Oct. 4	1 Kings 7	Eph. 4	Eze. 37	Ps. 87,88
Oct. 5	1 Kings 8	Eph. 5	Eze. 38	Ps. 89
Oct. 6	1 Kings 9	Eph. 6	Eze. 39	Ps. 90
Oct. 7	1 Kings 10	Phil. 1	Eze. 40	Ps. 91
Oct. 8	1 Kings 11	Phil. 2	Eze. 41	Ps. 92,93
Oct. 9	1 Kings 12	Phil. 3	Eze. 42	Ps. 94

M'CHEYNE BIBLE READING SCHEDULE

PERSONAL REFLECTION

ARMING OURSELVES WITH TRUTH

JOHN BIXBY

As Christians we believe that as a result of the curse every person is born as a sinner with no concern for anything except our own selfish and sinful desires. We desperately need the Holy Spirit to open our minds to the significance of His truth found in the Scripture. However, even when we accept salvation, confess our sin, and surrender ourselves to God's will, we are still human beings with a sin nature and we daily walk in the flesh. We are constantly being bombarded with temptation and have to be aware of the snares of the Devil and his attacks on us to try to persuade us to depend on our own wisdom and turn from God's truth. All Christian men have felt the grief of battling against a temptation for a period of time only to give in to it. Something the Lord has taught me in my walk with Him is that often I am not using truth to fight sin in a very effective way, especially when it comes to the frustration of giving in to the same temptation over and over again. When temptation comes, I pray for the Lord's help and deliverance which is good and necessary to do. I need the Lord's help to have victory. I cannot win in my own strength. But even after seeking His help I still sin. What I so often fail to do is to arm myself with truth and use that truth in prayer as I run to the Lord in anticipation of being tempted. Psalm 119:9-12 teaches us the importance of this.

How can a young man keep his way pure? By keeping in
according to Your
word. With all my heart I have sought You do not let me
wonder from Your
commandments. Your word I have treasured in my heart that I
might not sin
against You. Blessed are You, oh Lord, teach me Your statutes.

Our Lord exemplified using truth against temptation when He responded with direct quotes from scripture to the Devil's temptation (Matt. 4:1-11). But how are we to do this if we do not have truth treasured in our hearts? A large portion of the battle against sin happens before we are even tempted. We must work diligently to hide the word of God in our hearts. This is essential for battling against

personal sin but also when it comes to responding to the wicked world we live in. There is increasing pressure to accept everything how it is and to not judge or force our convictions on other people. It is frightening to think of what we as Christians might be expected to accept or even take part in as the pressures increase.

Occasionally I will listen to the news on the radio as I am driving and some of the things I hear are very concerning. There is so much confusion and wickedness in this world. People are simply rejecting God and instead of seeking first the kingdom of God, they are seeking first their own desires, which are wicked and temporal. As the world becomes more wicked and pressures against the truth increase, we must be grounded in God's Word in order to stand for the truth that we believe. God's word is the only thing that will help us make the right decisions before the Lord and it is essential for us to be spending time feeding on it daily and hiding it in our hearts. May the Lord give us strength by His Word to succeed in our daily battle against the flesh.

SCRIPTURE MEDITATION

“But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for God’s own possession, so that you may proclaim the excellencies of Him who has called you out of darkness into His marvelous light.”

1 Peter 2:9

BOOK READING

Berrey, pp. 77-88

M’CHEYNE BIBLE READING SCHEDULE

Oct. 10	1 Kings 13	Phil. 4	Eze. 43	Ps. 95,96
Oct. 11	1 Kings 14	Col. 1	Eze. 44	Ps. 97,98
Oct. 12	1 Kings 15	Col. 2	Eze. 45	Ps. 99-101
Oct. 13	1 Kings 16	Col. 3	Eze. 46	Ps. 102
Oct. 14	1 Kings 17	Col. 4	Eze. 47	Ps. 103
Oct. 15	1 Kings 18	1 Thes. 1	Eze. 49	Ps. 104
Oct. 16	1 Kings 19	1 Thes. 2	Dan. 1	Ps. 105

PERSONAL REFLECTION

GOD'S WORD: THE BASIS OF MY HOPE FOR DELIVERANCE FROM SIN

PAUL LABADORF

We are destroying speculations and every lofty thing raised up against the knowledge of God 2Corinthians 10:5

I was asked, how has the Word of God helped me in my Christian walk? I think the most practical thing that God's Word has done for me is given me the only basis of my hope for deliverance from sin.

Being convinced that God is real and that He is good, the next thing I have come to be convinced of is that sin is very bad. My sin has caused damage. Consequently, this makes me very discouraged. That, by itself, does not stop me from wanting sinful pleasure. Rather, it entices me more in order to escape depression, which, in turn, led me to more depression.

In all this cycle, I was brought to a dilemma. Should I be a hypocrite and continue reading my Bible (after all, I'm not obeying it.) or should I free myself of that feeling of hypocrisy by giving up and quitting? Well, if I was going to have any deliverance from my sin and freedom from depression, it was not hypocritical to want to become better than I am. Inconsistency is not hypocrisy. Pretense is. That the word was not having the free course in my soul as it should, that should not mean that I should give up wanting to be free. Giving up God's Word was not going to make me better or freer.

So, I came to the conviction that if I was going to be free from my sin, I had to let God's Word change the way I was thinking. That's the only way that the "speculations" of my heart were going to be cast out. I spent daily time, and still do, memorizing Scripture with the help of The Bible Memory App. Certain verses are my daily companions such as Psalm 18:1 (I love you, O Lord, my strength), 73:28 (But as for me, the nearness of God is my good....) and 143:8-10 (Let me hear your loving-kindness in the morning for I trust in you....). Philippians 4:4-8 has also become my daily guide. I memorize verses that meet a specific need in my life. This is not all I do. I slowly progress reading through my Bible.

(I'm a very poor reader. I do not retain large portions of scripture) in order to understand the meaning, intent and application of each passage. And I have tried to speak of these tidbits to others to encourage them. (I'm afraid I may have sounded heady, not intentionally.)

I have now better success in striving against sin, though not as good as I wish. Much of the damage I created has been corrected. And I live a more happier life than if I gave up my Bible and walked my own way. God's Word has smoothed out the course of my life so that I'm not ashamed to belong to Him.

SCRIPTURE MEDITATION

“And this I pray, that your love may abound still more and more in real knowledge and all discernment, so that you may approve the things that are excellent, in order to be sincere and blameless until the day of Christ; having been filled with the fruit of righteousness which *comes* through Jesus Christ, to the glory and praise of God.”

Philippians 1:9-11

BOOK READING

Berrey, pp. 89-98

M’CHEYNE BIBLE READING SCHEDULE

Oct. 17	1 Kings 20	1 Thes. 3	Dan. 2	Ps. 106
Oct. 18	1 Kings 21	1 Thes. 4	Dan. 3	Ps. 107
Oct. 19	1 Kings 22	1 Thes. 5	Dan. 4	Ps. 108,109
Oct. 20	2 Kings 1	2 Thes. 1	Dan. 5	Ps. 110,111
Oct. 21	2 Kings 2	2 Thes. 2	Dan. 6	Ps. 112,113
Oct. 22	2 Kings 3	2 Thes. 3	Dan. 7	Ps. 114,115
Oct. 23	2 Kings 4	1 Tim. 1	Dan. 8	Ps. 116

PERSONAL REFLECTION

MAINTAINING OUR WEAPONS

JACOB NICHOLSON

One of my sons loves to play “battle”. He can go into the playroom and set up his battle and plan and strategize for a seemingly endless amount of time. He is intentionally placing each one of his “people” in places that they will be most useful, for the purpose of this battle. At times he will ask me to play with him and he will explain to me as we begin the battle the different purposes of each member and the usefulness of their different design. When he is building his battle, he is keenly aware of the different resources he has and he knows just how to distribute those resources to make an even and interesting battle in his play world.

God illustrates the Christian walk as a battleground. He often uses this picture in His word to show us the importance of his word. “The word of God is quick and powerful and sharper than any two-edged sword.” The words of 2 Corinthians 10:4 have especially stood out to me since Dr. Bradley suggested the theme and theme passage. “For the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh, but divinely powerful for the destruction of fortresses.” In reading scripture, we often see divine power at work on behalf of the nation Israel. When Joshua is leading the children of Israel into the promised land the Lord uses divine power to conquer literal fortified cities. This same divine power is the power that is available to us in our warfare.

God instructed Joshua, as he was to lead His nation into a campaign into an occupied land, to be strong and courageous. Then the LORD explains the reason that Joshua can take courage, it is because the Word. “Be careful to do according to all the law which Moses My servant commanded you; do not turn from it to the right or to the left, so that you may have success wherever you go. “This book of the law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do according to all that is written in it; for then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have success.” Joshua 1:7b-8. God’s instruction for Joshua was to meditate on the word, so often we feel that we need to make our own plan and solve our own issues and when we get busy and burdened we feel that we don’t have time to spend with the Lord because we need to complete the work before us, but that is the

time that we need Him most and God instructs us to be in His word to know him.

Warriors know their weapons. A knight in medieval times would keep his weapon sharp and ready for use. He would practice daily with his weapon, so he could have instinctual movement in the heat of battle, to defend himself and to attack the enemy. He would also spend time daily sharpening his weapon to make sure the blade was always ready for use.

God desires to empower his children with divine power, but we are forfeiting that power if we neglect His word. The daily communion with God in His word, listening to Him speak to us. Like Joshua, if we will not let His word depart from our mouth, and we are careful to do what is written in it, God will give us the power we need to complete the battle He has set before us.

The Lord's design is not for us to merely be ready to fight this battle, but He wants us to actually battle, we are not to wait to be challenged by the enemy. We need to be on offence. 2 Corinthians 3:5-6 "We are destroying speculations and every lofty thing raised up against the knowledge of God, and we are taking every thought captive to the obedience of Christ, and we are ready to punish all disobedience, whenever your obedience is complete.

SCRIPTURE MEDITATION

“So, as those who have been chosen of God, holy and beloved, put on a heart of compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience; bearing with one another, and forgiving each other, whoever has a complaint against anyone; just as the Lord forgave you, so also should you. Beyond all these things *put on* love, which is the perfect bond of unity.”

Colossians 3:12-14

BOOK READING

Berrey, pp. 99-108

Oct. 24	2 Kings 5	1Tim. 2	Dan. 9	Ps.117,118
Oct. 25	2 Kings 6	1Tim. 3	Dan. 10	Ps.119:1-24
Oct. 26	2 Kings 7	1Tim. 4	Dan. 11	Ps. --25-48
Oct. 27	2 Kings 8	1Tim. 5	Dan. 12	Ps. --49-72
Oct. 28	2 Kings 9	1Tim. 6	Hos. 1	Ps. --73-96
Oct. 29	2 Kings 10	2 Tim. 1	Hos. 2	Ps. --97-120
Oct. 30	2 Kings 11,12	2 Tim. 2	Hos. 3,4	Ps. --121-144

M'CHEYNE BIBLE READING SCHEDULE

PERSONAL REFLECTION

THE WORD OF GOD IS LIVING AND ACTIVE

Part 1

KEVIN CALVINO

About 40 years ago someone approached me at work and asked me what material thing I would like to own. He encouraged me to put a picture of it in a place I would see it often. I was to use the picture as a motivation that I could own that thing if only I would join him as part of his “side business” Although I declined his offer, he was right about one thing, what we put before our eyes, what we think about, and what we put our effort into will lead us somewhere. When we make God’s word our focus, we will realize things much more valuable than material things.

- It will help us not sin
 - Psalm 119:11 - Your word I have treasured in my heart, That I may not sin against You.
- It will help us be spiritually stable
 - Psalm 37:31 – The law of his God is in his heart; His steps do not slip.
- God will answer our prayers
 - John 15:7 - If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you.

Scripture memorization, however, is not an end in itself. We must labor diligently to realize the benefits God provides when we **memorize, meditate, pray for God’s leading,** and **obey** what He is showing us. This is an important reminder because as challenging as scripture memory may be for some of us, stopping to think about it, praying for God to use it in us, and finally obeying it are just as difficult. Meditating, praying, and obeying are spiritual disciplines that take a heart felt willingness and spiritual mindedness.

Memorizing

- **EXCUSES**

There is an endless list of excuses why we cannot memorize scripture. **“I don’t have time”** is one of my favorites. I like to combine that one with **“I am not a good memorizer”**. These are only excuses that will keep me from the good that God has for me. Something is better than nothing. I use what God has given me in terms of ability to do what I can do. I spend months on a single passage.

- **GOD’S LEADING**

- I ask God what I should memorize. I think/pray about the circumstances of my life and the needs that I have. I ask God to direct me.

- A few years ago I asked God to help me be more spiritually productive and lead me to a passage that would help me with that. A friend and I were at a nursing home visiting a church friend. When my friend read 2 Peter 1 the following verses caught my attention and were a direct answer to prayer:

- ⁵ Now for this very reason also, applying all diligence, in your faith supply moral excellence, and in *your* moral excellence, knowledge, ⁶ and in *your* knowledge, self-control, and in *your* self-control, perseverance, and in *your* perseverance, godliness, ⁷ and in *your* godliness, brotherly kindness, and in *your* brotherly kindness, love. ⁸ **For if these qualities are yours and are increasing, they do not make you useless nor unproductive** in the true knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.

SCRIPTURE MEDITATION

“Let the word of Christ richly dwell within you, with all wisdom teaching and admonishing one another with psalms *and* hymns *and* spiritual songs, singing with thankfulness in your hearts to God. Whatever you do in word or deed, *do* all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks through Him to God the Father.”

Colossians 3:16-17

BOOK READING

Leedy, pp. 109-120

M’CHEYNE BIBLE READING SCHEDULE

Oct. 31	2 Kings 13	2 Tim. 3	Hos. 5,6	Ps. 119:145-176
Nov. 1	2 Kings 14	2 Tim. 4	Hos. 7	Ps. 120-122
Nov. 2	2 Kings 15	Tit. 1	Hos. 8	Ps. 123-125
Nov. 3	2 Kings 16	Tit. 2	Hos. 9	Ps. 126-128
Nov. 4	2 Kings 17	Tit. 3	Hos. 10	Ps. 129-131
Nov. 5	2 Kings 18	Phm. 1	Hos. 11	Ps. 132-134
Nov. 6	2 Kings 19	Heb. 1	Hos. 12	Ps. 135,136

PERSONAL REFLECTION

THE WORD OF GOD IS LIVING AND ACTIVE

Part 2

KEVIN CALVINO

Meditating

- ***Study and Make Notes***
 - Everyone has different ways to prepare for meditating on Scripture. For me, I need to print the passage I am going to memorize and then make notes throughout the document. I write expanded definitions of key words directly above the words so that as I work to memorize I can also think about what the words mean. Some examples I have worked on include:
 - ***Spiritual Warfare*** - Ephesians 6: 10-19
 - ***Bearing Fruit*** - 2 Peter 1:1-11
 - ***Colossians 1:9-11*** – Pray especially for my children

Pray for God’s Prompting

- Pray that God will bring His Word to your mind throughout the day.
 - We all experience challenges throughout the day. God knows about them before they occur. However, we must remember that no temptation has overtaken us except what is common to mankind. And God is faithful; he will not let me be tempted beyond what I can bear. But when I am are tempted, He will also provide a way out so that I can endure it. God may bring a specific verse or a composite of verses I have memorized or meditated on, He may bring thoughts like –
 - “God is bringing this situation to me for a purpose – I must respond in a manner worth of the calling to which I have been called. Love and patience are what is called for in this situation, not anger. etc.”

Obey His promptings

- About 35 years ago I memorized Romans chapter 6 with the specific goal of quoting in when tempted to sin. One day a friend of mine needed some help with a work project at an Apartment Complex his dad managed. Our job was to paint the outside of a building and required us to be on high ladders. There was a swimming pool there but would have required that we turn to see it. It was a hot day and there were a lot of people at the pool. For me that was a tempting situation, I painted, and I quoted Romans 6 asking God to keep my mind on him and my eyes on the wall I was painting. He was faithful and he used his word to provide my escape.

It is a great encouragement to know that the word of God is living and active, and sharper than any two-edged sword, even penetrating as far as the division of soul and spirit, of both joints and marrow, and able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart. Therefore, let's approach the throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace for help at the time of *our* need as we Memorize, Meditate, and pray for and obey God's promptings.

SCRIPTURE MEDITATION

“Hear, O Israel! The Lord is our God, the Lord is one! You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might. These words, which I am commanding you today, shall be on your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your sons and shall talk of them when you sit in your house and when you walk by the way and when you lie down and when you rise up. You shall bind them as a sign on your hand and they shall be as frontals on your forehead. You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates.”

Deuteronomy 6:6-9

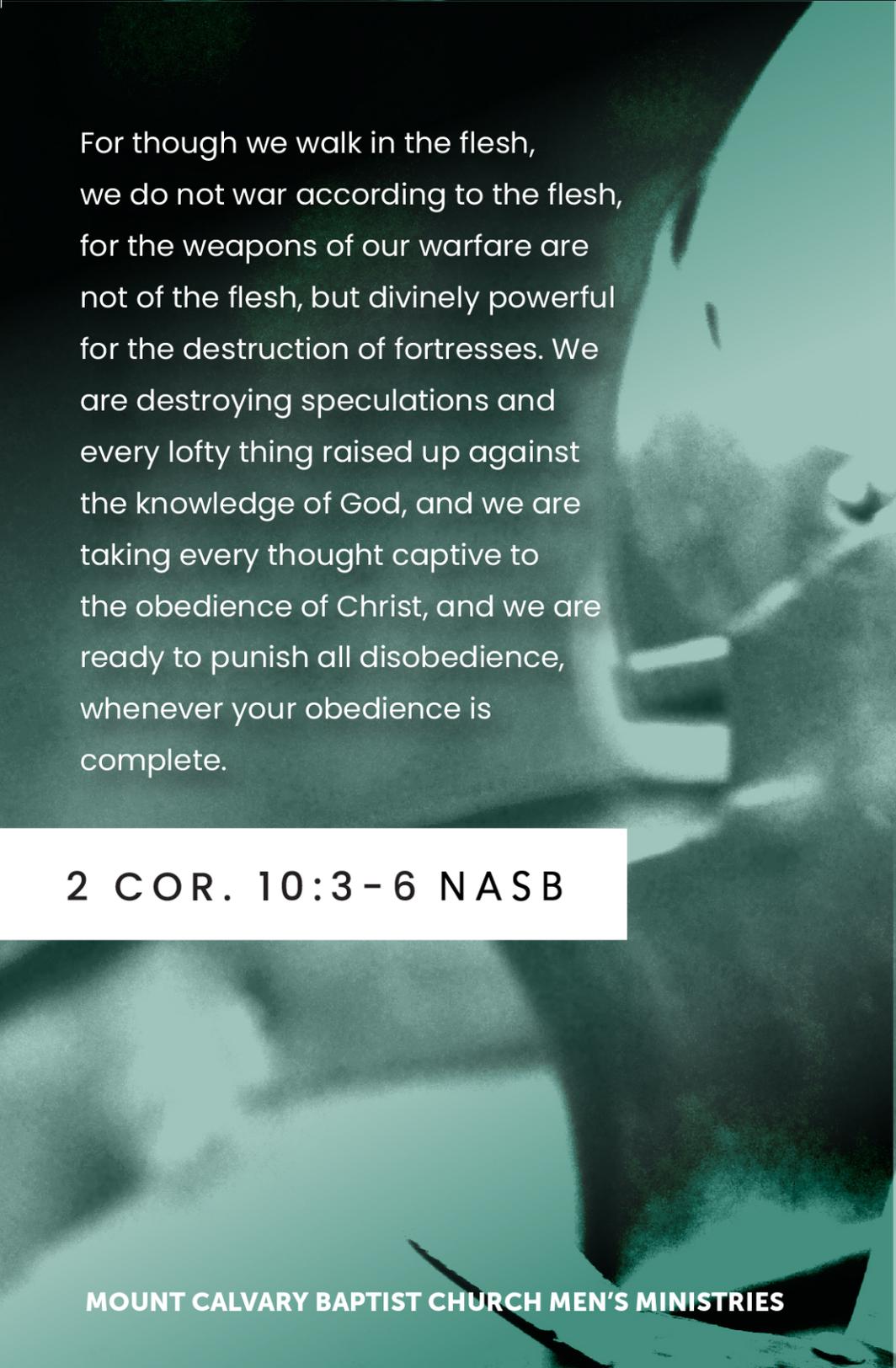
BOOK READING

Ryle, pp. 121-153

M’CHEYNE BIBLE READING SCHEDULE

Nov. 7	2 Kings 20	Heb. 2	Hos. 13	Ps. 137-138
Nov. 8	2 Kings 21	Heb. 3	Hos. 14	Ps. 139
Nov. 9	2 Kings 22	Heb. 4	Joel 1	Ps. 140,141
Nov. 10	2 Kings 23	Heb. 5	Joel 2	Ps. 142
Nov. 11	2 Kings 24	Heb. 6	Joel 3	Ps. 143
Nov. 12	2 Kings 25	Heb. 7	Amos 1	Ps. 144
Nov. 13	1 Chr. 1,2	Heb. 8	Amos 2	Ps. 145

PERSONAL REFLECTION



For though we walk in the flesh,
we do not war according to the flesh,
for the weapons of our warfare are
not of the flesh, but divinely powerful
for the destruction of fortresses. We
are destroying speculations and
every lofty thing raised up against
the knowledge of God, and we are
taking every thought captive to
the obedience of Christ, and we are
ready to punish all disobedience,
whenever your obedience is
complete.

2 COR. 10:3-6 NASB

MOUNT CALVARY BAPTIST CHURCH MEN'S MINISTRIES