

## Day 4: New habits = New you

Read it: Psalm 19:14; Isaiah 40:30-31; Romans 8:38-39

**Think about it:** One of the keys to becoming more effective in applying God's Word in your life is to develop new habits. You can have great intentions and even try real hard—but spiritual growth most often happens not from more trying, but from better training. Here are some ideas for spiritual training:

- After reading through a section of scripture, **write out the “key for me”**, to help you remember one point that you believe God chose for you to focus on throughout your day.
- **Memorize the Word**—by verse or location of chapter. Pick out key verses (on anxiety, courage, unwholesome talk, prayer, etc.) and memorize the entire verse. Or find an important verse and memorize what chapter it came from so you can locate it when needed in the future (ex. Isaiah 40 for strength or Romans 8 for how great God's love is, etc.).
- **Tell others what you are learning**—whether at church on Sunday or other places during the week you can share with others the things that God has revealed to you. This will reinforce those truths in your mind and also give others the chance to learn about God through you.

Like it says in Psalm 19:14, you should strive for the external stuff (“words of my mouth”) and internal stuff (“meditation of my heart”) to be pleasing to God...and positive habits will help you grow in a way that pleases God.

**Act on it:** Try out some of those habits above. An easy one is to tell other people what you are learning as you work through these HammerTime cards. Maybe you can start to write at the top of each day the “key for me”.



Or write down one of the verses every couple days and try to remember the theme of the verse and what chapter it came from. Try some of those different training methods and see what God does!

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Week 5  
May 24.  
2009

**Purpose:** To nail down this week's topic from Bethlehem's current series, “GPS”.

**How to use it:** Individuals can do it on their own 4 times a week to cultivate this habit of reading and applying the bible. Families: adults are encouraged to do HammerTime on their own & then meet with their whole family to go through it together.

**Example of time:** Read verses (3 min), Discuss/think about (5 min), Pray (2 min)

**For more tools:** check out Bethlehembc.com or BethlehemToolbox.com.



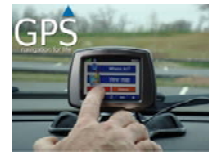
**HAMMERTIME**

Day 1: The bread of life      Read it: John 6:26-36

**Think about it:** Have you ever had a time in your life when it felt like someone was trying to take advantage of you? Maybe at first you thought they had good intentions, but they ended up being selfish and having a hidden agenda. This is what happened in the interaction between Jesus and the crowd in John 6. The crowds originally heard Jesus speak and His words spoke truth to them—in fact, they were so captivated that they stayed past mealtime and got very hungry. That was when Jesus generously (and miraculously) met their needs and fed them. But the reaction of the crowd was not what Jesus intended. They saw what He did to fill their stomachs and instead of being in awe of the power of God they viewed the situation more on a physical level—that Jesus had fed them and they wanted some more of that nourishment.

What is it like when you evaluate your perspective of God and His Word? Does your hunger for Him increase only when you have a physical need (lost job, cancer report, relationship tension, etc.)? Or do you truly see Jesus as the “bread of life” that will feed you spiritually? God wants you to see life from His perspective and that includes relying on His Word daily. He will sustain you every day in the journey of life as you open up His Word and allow Him to speak into your life. From you there can be no greediness, selfishness or pride involved—just a humble servant relying on the daily provision scripture can bring.

**Act on it:** Evaluate your view of God; do you have an accurate view of Him? Spend some time praying and thank Jesus for being the bread of life. Thank Him for meeting your spiritual needs—and realize that in His timing and in His way He will also meet your physical needs.



**Day 2: His ways are higher than your ways**

**Read it:** Isaiah 55:8-11

**Think about it:**

God clearly has a different & better perspective than we do. He, is after all, our Creator and Designer; He is All-Knowing and All-Powerful. Verses 8 & 9 talk about how God sees things differently and how we can trust Him to have a purpose behind what He does. In the world of nature, He sends rain and snow with great purpose—to water and allow things to grow and flourish. In our spiritual lives, it is the same way with His Word. All of His Word is useful, purposeful and valuable. When we invest time reading and studying it, He promises it will make an impact in our lives that will cause us to grow and we will flourish spiritually.

Just like the water that falls from the sky and nourishes the products of the ground, so also God’s Word flows from His mouth and meets us at our point of need. He promises that it “will not return empty”—literally that it is impossible for the Word of God to be read or preached and for it to have no impact. When we have the faith to spend time in the Word, God promises that it will benefit us. Look at verse 11: it “will accomplish what I desire”. God has a plan for what can take place in your life & when you look into His Word, with a heart of faith, it gives Him the opportunity to accomplish great things in you and through you.

**Act on it:**

Consistently spend time in God’s Word. That is a big part of what we have been focusing on throughout GPS. Now try something a little bit different. When you sit down to read the bible, take some time to ask God to help you see it through His eyes. Ask Him to show you what His “higher ways” are all about. Your step of faith (by asking) and teachability (by listening) will unlock great opportunities for God to teach you in amazing ways!



**Day 3: Let the paint out of the can**

**Read it:** James 1:22-25

**Think about it:**

Have you ever had a room in your house that really needed a fresh coat of paint? Maybe you were tired of looking at the scratched, finger-painted, food splashed walls in the kid’s room and went to Lowe’s to buy some paint. You brought home the 2 gallons of paint and set it down in their room. Things got busy and it was several weeks before you got back to the project—then it was several months. One day you stopped and realized again the situation had not changed at all for the better...because you had not followed through on application of the paint.

It is the same way with the bible. You can read through something that is wise, relevant, even life-changing. You get all fired up to make a change and yet the burdens of life stifle that excitement and keep that “paint” in the can. In fact, after a while you can’t even remember what all your excitement was about. Unless...you learn some habits and some discipline to better APPLY God’s Word into your daily life. We will look at this more in Day 4 as the first step toward that application is to have the desire to see God’s Word make a difference in your life. The bible talks many times about scripture changing us, transforming us, renewing us—just like that kid’s room needs to be transformed. The passage in James even says you “will be blessed in what you do”, if you do what the Word says.

**Act on it:**

It takes discipline to open that can and start painting—and it takes discipline to read something in the bible and start to apply it. Ask God to help you with that type of discipline & then look for opportunities everyday to build the habit of bible application in your life. Whether in your mind, your words, what you look at or how you act—like a fresh coat of paint coming out of the can, you can also be changed by applying God’s Word.