

Week 2: How to Silence Satan

OVERVIEW

In Genesis 3, when the the devil came to Adam and Eve, he did not come to them with a weapon or an army, he came to them with an idea. More specifically, he came with a deceptive idea (lie) that was meant to distort Adam and Eve's view of God, themselves and the good life.

Later, in Luke 4, we find Jesus being led out into the desert by the Holy Spirit after having fasted for 40 days. While in this wilderness, the devil tried to tempt Jesus just as he had Adam and Eve, with lies. Jesus responded to the devil's temptations by quoting Scripture. In doing so, Jesus was the man who silenced satan.

For the disciple of Jesus, some of the greatest warfare that we will experience takes place amongst the thoughts in our minds. What you think about will shape what you believe and, ultimately, that will shape what you live into. This is why, in the New Testament, Paul continually tells us to renew our minds" and to "take our thoughts captive".

With that being said, an important practice for each disciples is to read and memorize passages of Scripture. In doing so, we are not only following the commands found within them, but employing the deeper reality and power of those words to combat the lies of the enemy about ourselves, culture, God, political climates, and who our real enemy is. When we harness God's truth in our minds through memorization and meditation, it becomes a realized and embodied weapon against the enemy's schemes. So, just like Jesus, when we memorize the Scriptures and even speak them out loud, we are participating in one of the greatest forms of spiritual warfare.

DO THIS PRACTICE AS A MISSIONAL COMMUNITY (PUBLIC READING)

Throughout the story of the Scriptures, the people of God have immersed their minds in the story of God by reading the Scriptures publicly. Take a couple minutes with your Missional Community (MC) to watch this video from The Bible Project:

Public Reading of Scripture (<https://youtu.be/BO1Y9XyWKTw>)

Per Paul's encouragement to devote ourselves to the public reading of Scripture, spend some time reading Romans 8 out loud with your MC. To get started, try the following:

Encourage everyone to use the same bible translation (NIV & ESV are both great). Decide how much text each person is going to read. Depending on your MC's size, this can vary. Consider going around the circle as you read, having each person read 3-5 verses.

Try not to read too quickly. Encourage your MC to read slowly and to listen closely. People can choose to follow along in their Bible, or close their eyes while others read.

Once everyone is ready, tell them to pay special attention to words or phrases or ideas that stick out. Notice them, turn them over in your mind, and let God internalize truth into you.

When the MC is finished reading Romans 8, take a few minutes to share what you noticed.

THIS WEEK'S PRACTICE (SCRIPTURE MEMORIZATION)

As we talk about memorizing Scriptures, the temptation is to believe that we are not, or won't be, good at it. And the truth is, this is a journey and it will take time to develop the skill of memorization. But it doesn't mean that we shouldn't do it. In fact, it means the opposite. Without the Practice of memorizing Scripture, the enemy has

the ability to deceive us and thwart the truth and, in turn, the good things that God has for us. Memorizing Scripture helps us to learn what the voice of God sounds like. And for the disciples of Jesus, it is necessary for life in the Kingdom.

But the question remains, how do we do begin to put this into Practice? How do get God's words from the pages of the Scriptures into our hearts and our minds?

Together with your MC, take the next few minutes and talk through these practical suggestions. The goal is to have each person commit to which idea they want to try this week.

You can start with shorter passages you may already be familiar with (e.g John 3v16, Proverbs 4v5-6, or Psalm 23) or longer passages that are meaningful to you (John 15, Galatians 5, or Romans 8). Either way, keep it simple and start small. And if you learn best when you do something with your hands, it can be helpful to knit, shuffle a deck of cards, squeeze a stress ball, etc. while you quote. The repetitive motion will help you concentrate.

Index Card: Write the verse(s) on one side of an index card and the verse reference on the other side. Carry the card around with you so you can work on memorizing in your free time.

Record Yourself: Try recording yourself on your phone reading the verse(s). Listen back to the recording while you're driving, working out, cleaning your house, grocery shopping, etc.

Make It Visible: Tape the verse(s) to the bathroom mirror or to your car dashboard and work on it as you go about your day. You can also put it as your desktop or phone background. You'll honestly be surprised by how much that helps.

Repetitive Writing: transcribe the verse(s) by hand. Rewrite the verse(s) over and over or use hand-lettering or other creative illustrations or pictures as way of putting it in your mind.

Repetitive Recitation: Read the verse(s) out loud in 5 minute increments and repeat (while allowing some time for your mind to rest). Worked out as a discipline, this could look like:

- Reading/Reciting it out loud 4 times per day for a week

- Then, read/recite it out loud once a week for a month
- Then read/recite it once every three months for a year
- And then read/recite it once every year

Talk through which of the above Practices you want to try this week – which verse(s), when, where, how.

Then spend a few minutes praying for each other, asking God to help you make time and press into the Practice, remembering that the devil attacks that which God is after most. If we are in Christ, we have the mind of Christ, which is constantly being renewed and transformed. So as followers of Jesus, we want to be actively engaging our minds in ways that are worshipful and intentional. Consider inviting your DNA to help keep you accountable to your commitment.