

Evelyn Akwaa

Reflective essay.

I hope that the followers of Jesus will devote themselves to studying the Word of God. If we really want to know God and what it means to follow and obey him, then we must turn to the primary medium through which he was revealed to us, the Bible. Reading the Bible, however, is one thing. Thinking about it and applying it to our lives is something else.

When you read the Bible, there's a good chance you don't realize how much fruit reading will bring to your life. It's one thing to have the discipline to read the Bible. Developing and improving ways to meditate meaningfully on God's Word in order to hear and learn from what He is telling us is quite another matter. And the reality is that many times we can read our Bible, and by the time we get to the end of our reading for the day, we really don't even know what we've read, or we don't know how it applies to our Bible. To do this, we need to refocus on what it means to meditate on God's Word.

The reason your experienced of reading the Word of God is not what you expected is most likely because of your method. If we really want to hear and learn from God, we must develop the right methods to do so. When it comes to thinking and applying the Bible, there are countless avenues that people can use. We would like to highlight a few that Life Spring pastors and staff have found helpful as we attempt to meditate more on God's Word.

Before I get into the methods, I just want to preface this by adding that for any of these methods to be effective, we need to slow down first. Do not hurry. Don't think that you can meaningfully engage in God's Word in the same amount of time you previously devoted to reading the Bible. In the beginning, it would be a good idea to give yourself at least 10 more minutes than you gave or how much you think you need. Try to plan your Bible reading time in a way that gives you the opportunity to increase it if necessary. When we limit the time we dedicate to reading the Bible, we limit God's ability to speak to us, teach us, strengthen us, and grow us.

God wants our lives to overflow with grace, love, and compassion the signs of His kingdom. As followers of Jesus, we have a choice: respond to troubling realities with fear and step back, or follow Him in responding with love and hope to the greatest needs of our time. We know that salvation does not depend on works, but we also know that caring for those in need is a testament of life-changing faith. Together with our donors and supporters, we have used this belief in life. Thanks in part to their tireless generosity and dedication, poverty is shrinking and disappearing. Two decades ago, more than 30,000 children were dying every day from preventable causes. Now it's less than 15,000. Millions of children are saved every year.

However, the work is not finished yet. Poverty may be declining, but it is piling up in some of the world's most difficult places – areas plagued by violence, corruption and exploitation. Therefore, now is the time to come together and invite our brothers and sisters to the deep and profound purpose of building up the kingdom of God by serving the poor and downtrodden as Jesus did. It won't be easy, but as we unite as the body of Christ, we can make the lives of children and families in need more fulfilling. If we do that, something incredible will happen. We will meet the living God working through us to establish His kingdom of love and justice on earth. End exploitation. To restore life. Empower communities. And by serving them, we will serve Him.

Reflecting on the meaning of Matthew 25:35-36, 40 (NIV), join me in prayer.

35 For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, 36 I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me.'

40 "The King will reply, 'Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.'

In Matthew 25, Jesus calls us to feed the hungry. We've made great strides in the fight against hunger, but millions of children around the world still don't get enough nutritious food to lead healthy lives. It is time we came together as followers of Jesus, supporting families today and preparing them to prepare their own meals for tomorrow. Water is essential to life. Here Jesus, the fountain of living water, reminds us that we serve him as we quench the physical thirst of those in need. With almost 1,000 children still dying every day from dirty water and poor sanitation and hygiene, we are working hard to solve the global water crisis in our lifetime. In fact, we provide clean water to a new person every 10 seconds and our goal is to have clean water available to everyone, wherever we work, by 2030.

The Bible tells us that God loves those who are different from us and wants us to take care of them too. Today, many of the most needy "foreigners" are refugees and survivors of disasters. Together we can show them that they are not forgotten. Let's respond to the suggestion to treat "strangers" like neighbors, from sending out much-needed supplies to offering safe places in our communities for traumatized children. I realized that the best way to help people is to give them the opportunity to discover their own potential and talents. That's why some Non Governmental organizations (NGOs) are working to give some of the world's poorest people the tools they need to start or start a small business, save money, take responsibility, take care of their communities — and the break the cycle of poverty in their families forever.

With these words from Matthew 25, Jesus shows us that true faith does not remain locked within the walls of the church. It reaches the suffering and oppressed. And he cares for children who are the most vulnerable of all. Let's work together to protect boys and girls from evils like child labor, human trafficking and exploitation and to live by the faith brave enough to endure the hardest of times. These powerful words of Jesus are an urgent call to care for God's children who are at risk of a preventable disease. We are beating diseases like malaria and tuberculosis around the world, but millions of children continue to suffer needlessly from disease and malnutrition. Giving children and families what they need to grow up strong and healthy and participate in the work of the Great Physician. No matter what we possess, Jesus calls us to be poor—or humble—in spirit. In everything we do together, our work is driven by our shared desire for others to experience God's grace and experience the fullness of life He offers. Whether it's giving children a solid foundation in their faith or supporting parents and churches, we do it out of gratitude for Christ's saving love and a desire to shine His light into the world.