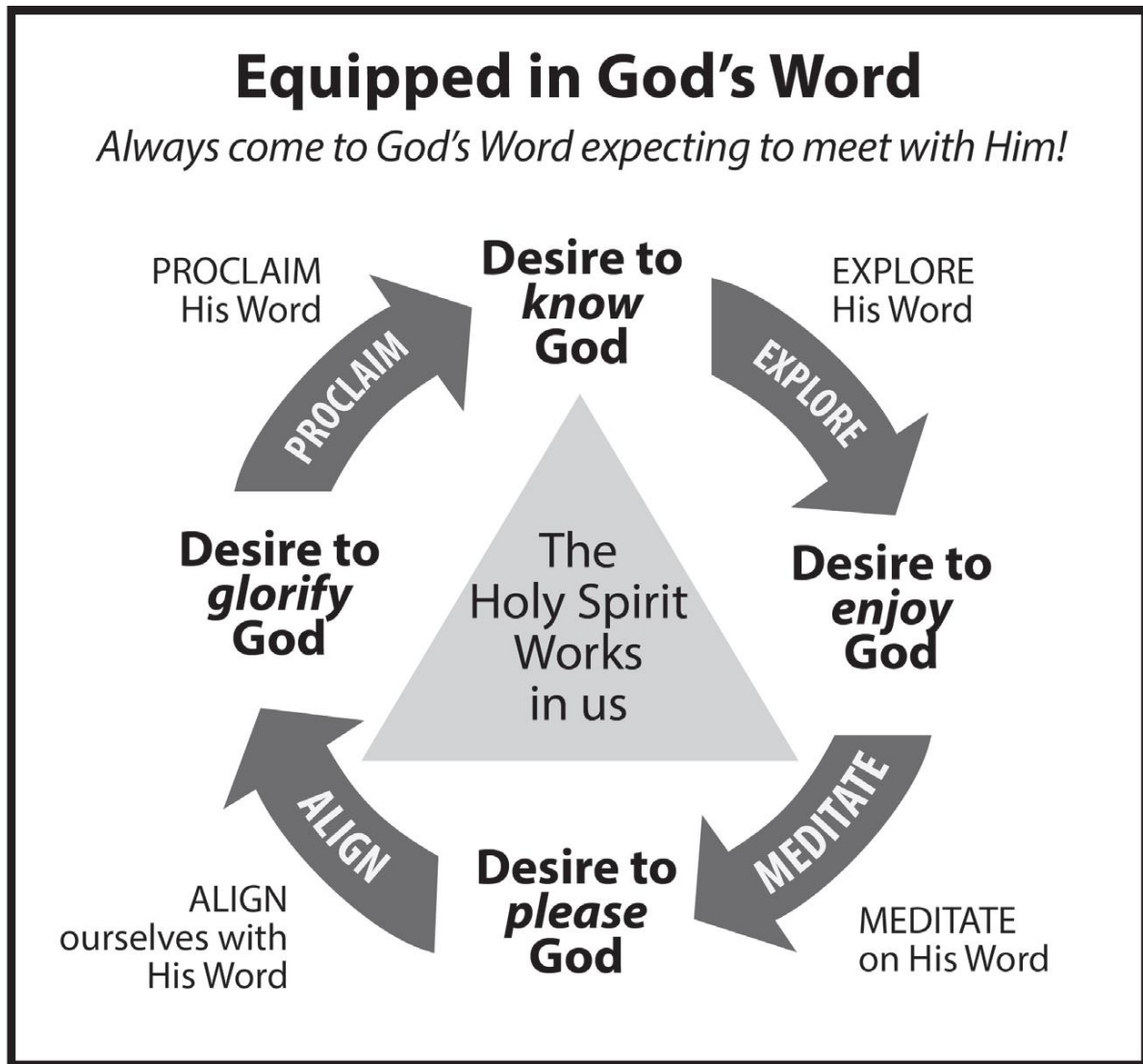


Equipped in God's Word



Assumptions

- The Bible, both Old and New Testaments are the inspired Word of God
- The Bible does not contradict itself (progressive revelation)
- We possess accurate and trustworthy translations of the Bible
- The Bible is written primarily in normal, literal (vs. allegorical) language
- God's Word is powerful to change lives

How to Read the Bible

- Dependent on the Holy Spirit's teaching
- Expectantly – with the intent to meet with and hear from God

- Humbly, prayerfully, and thoughtfully
- Patiently, reflectively, and meditatively
- Imaginatively
- Analytically

Explore His Word

Employ observation techniques. Study the context: grammatical, textual, historical, cultural and geographical. Discover the theme of the book or letter. Recognize and interpret parables and figures of speech.

Questions for Exploring the Word

- Who is writing and to whom? What do we know about them?
- What is the occasion/purpose for writing?
- What's going on in this passage?
- What questions do you have? What do you find difficult to understand in this passage?
- In your own words, summarize what the writer is saying.
- What other questions should I be asking in this regard?

Meditate on His Word

In order to meditate on a passage it helps to memorize it. To meditate also means to: ponder and “chew on” it; interact with God about it; and discuss it with other followers of Christ.

Questions for Meditating on the Word

- Why do you suppose the writer said: (fill in the blank)?
- What do you think the writer meant when he wrote: (fill in the blank)?
- What does _____ mean?
- What do I learn in this passage about God?
- What do I learn in this passage about what God desires from me?
- What do I learn in this passage about others or myself?
- In what ways do I encounter God in this passage?
- What other questions should I be asking in this regard?

Align Yourself with His Word

“Everything that was written in the past was written to teach us, so that through the endurance taught in the Scriptures and the encouragement they provide we might have hope.” (Romans 15:4) As Christ-followers we always want to do what He says (Luke 6:46). We desire to let the Word of Christ dwell in us richly (Colossians 3:16). And we want to live a life worthy of the Lord and please him in every way (Colossians 1:10).

Questions for Aligning Yourself with His Word

- As a result of reading and meditating on this passage, how should I be thinking differently?
- As a result of reading and meditating on this passage, how should I behave differently?
- What is God asking me to do?
- What is the gap between how I'm living and what God desires of me?
- What do I need to stop doing that I've been doing?
- What do I need to start doing that I haven't been doing?
- Knowing that I don't have the strength in my flesh to bring about any needed changes, how will I rely on the Lord for His strength?
- Where does abiding in Christ fit into this?
- Who else might be able to help me align myself with God's Word?
- What other questions should I be asking in this regard?

Proclaim His Word

Proclaiming God's Word completes this cycle. It helps us stay accountable and model Christlikeness before others. It also offers us opportunity to declare the praises of God and to urge others to follow Him. "Return home and tell how much God has done for you." (Luke 8:39) "As for us, we cannot help speaking about what we have seen and heard." (Acts 4:20)

"But in your hearts revere Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect." (1 Peter 3:15) And, "A servant of the Lord must not quarrel but must be kind to everyone, be able to teach, and be patient with difficult people." (2 Timothy 2:24 NLT)

Questions for Proclaiming His Word

- How can this passage help me declare the greatness of God to others?
- What other message can I give others from this passage?
- How might I use this passage to share Christ with a person who doesn't know Him?
- How can I use this passage to encourage another brother or sister in Christ?
- In what way does this passage express what God has done or is doing in my life?
- What other questions should I be asking in this regard?