

4. How have you related or not related to Jon Collins' experience with the Bible as it was shared in the sermon.

5. The Bible is designed for meditation—to be read slowly, repeatedly, and carefully over a lifetime. It doesn't easily or quickly divulge all of its meaning on one or even a few readings. And the primary reason for this is because almost everything is interconnected. How does this encourage and inspire you and/or discourage you?

6. What can you do to read the Bible in a more "meditative" manner?

SERMON APPLICATION GUIDE

The Fellowship of the Gospel (A Series on Romans 12-16)
 "3 Keys to Living Wisely" (Part 2)
 Romans 12:1-2

"The spirit of the age is...notoriously fickle. You might as well, walking in the mist, take a compass bearing on a mountain goat. ...the Church's foundation documents (to say nothing of its Founder himself) were notoriously on the wrong side of history. The Gospel was foolishness to the Greeks, said St Paul, and a scandal to Jews. The early Christians got a reputation for believing in all sorts of ridiculous things such as humility, chastity and resurrection, standing up for the poor and giving slaves equal status with the free. And for valuing women more highly than anyone else had ever done. People thought them crazy, but they stuck to their counter-cultural Gospel. If the Church had allowed prime ministers to tell them what the "programme" was, it would have sunk without trace in fifty years. If Jesus had allowed Caiaphas or Pontius Pilate to dictate their "programme" to him there wouldn't have been a Church in the first place. (N.T. Wright)

3 Keys to Living Wisely

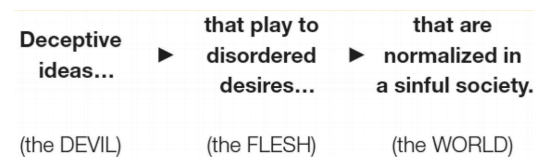
If our culture's "program" is fickle, how do we discern God's program. How do we align ourselves with God's purposes, plans, and _____?

1. _____ God by offering your entire self and life to God as a sacrifice.

From the surface of our _____ to the inner reaches of our minds and souls, we belong to God. So God cares about what we do with our bodies and how we think with your minds and what we feel in our hearts.

2. Do not conform to the _____ of this world.

Jesus repeatedly refers to Satan/the devil as the _____ of this age (John 12:31; 14:30; 16:11). Paul also calls "this age" "this present evil age" and we need to be rescued from it (Galatians 1:4). And Paul says our primary struggle is "against the powers of this dark world [= "age"] and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms" (Ephesians 6:12).



2. Be _____ by the renewing of your mind.
We are _____ by God. But it doesn't happen automatically. We cooperate with God by committing to the means he has provided to change us.

He [John Collins] had his first breakthrough when he shifted his thinking from "I have to get the lesson from this passage" and "God is going to be so frustrated with me if I miss the lesson or question it" to "I'm going to read, and God, my wise and patient mentor, will shape and form me in ways I don't even understand."

The Bible is designed for _____—to be read slowly, repeatedly, and carefully over a lifetime. It doesn't easily or quickly divulge all of its meaning on one or even a few readings. And the primary reason for this is because almost everything is interconnected.

The doctrine of the perspicuity of Scripture: God's Word is _____ about things that are necessary to be understood and obeyed in order for a person to be saved and to live a godward life. The Bible's teaching on salvation and wisdom can be understood by children (think Deuteronomy 6:7) and by what the Proverbs and Psalms call "the simple" (see Psalm 19:7).

What is the purpose of reading and rereading and study and meditation? A mind and life formed and shaped by the story of _____!

3 Deficient Bible Reading Approaches

- As a _____ Handbook
- As a _____ Dictionary
- As a _____ Grab Bag

Resources:

- The new BibleProject App or the website (bibleproject.com).
- [Live No Lies: Recognize and Resist the Three Enemies That Sabotage Your Peace](#) by John Mark Comer
- Subscribe to my blog at henry-williams.net.

Personal Reflection & Small Group Questions

Please complete this study on your own, then bring it to your small group for discussion.

1. Looking back over your notes from this week's sermon, what particularly caught your attention, challenged, or confused you?
2. Read Romans 12:1-2. In what ways is offering your body as living sacrifice an act of worship?
3. Read the blog post "Snippet: Buying into Lies in Our Hunger for Substance" at henry-williams.net. Why is it common for us, in our love for substance and truth, to latch onto deceptive or unbiblical ideas and embed them into our church subculture (see the John Mark Comer chart from point 2 in the sermon)? (Bonus: Identify what you believe to be some of the lies we buy into? Offer grace to each other if you don't agree.)