

Our Intention Regarding Scripture
Psalm 119

Introduction: There are plenty things in life that we know would be good for us to do and yet we don't do them. How many of us know that eating healthier, or getting our financial life in order, or doing a will would be great to do, and yet we don't do them? Just knowing that something is beneficial for us isn't enough. At some point we have to move past knowing something is good for us and we have to make it our intention to pursue that good thing. In this study we start looking at the second part of the VIM model (Vision, Intention, Means) for transformation that we have been talking about. We are going to look at Psalm 119, which is a psalm of devotion to God and His Word. One of the things that we see in this psalm is the psalmist's intention to engage God's Word.

Opening Question: What is something that you know would be good for you to do and yet you struggle to do it? Explain.

Read Psalm 119:9-11, 24, 93, 98-100, 105, 116, 165

1. What are some of the benefits of Scripture that the psalmist talks about in these verses?

2. Which of these benefits do you feel the greatest need for in your life right now? Why?

Read Psalm 119:9-16 and 41-48

3. How does the psalmist describe his relationship to God's Word in these passages?

4. What specific words does he use that are words of commitment regarding his intention to engage the Scriptures?

Brian said:

What is your intention? Will you decide to regularly engage the Scriptures? I want to caution you against just saying a quick, “yes.” Sometimes we make empty professions, but we really don’t decide . . . Dallas Willard says this: *If the genuine intention is there, the deed reliably follows. But if it is not there, the deed will most likely not be there either.*

5. In your experience how do you know if your intention is real as opposed to an empty profession?

6. What do you sense is your honest intention right now regarding engaging the Scriptures? Is it something that you want to go for or would you say that you are still unsure? Explain.

Brian said:

Let me offer a couple of thoughts on how you might get to real intention. First, **let your decision percolate**. Here are some other words that my thesaurus gives for “percolate”: “seep into, infiltrate, permeate, get into, infect.” Instead of just saying you want to do something, think and pray about it long enough to where it moves beyond a profession to a settled decision that has seeped into your heart and permeated your being. For me one of the best ways to do this is to get to a quiet place and go for a long slow walk. In moments and places like that I can pray and get my head clear about what is important and what I really want.

7. If you have a desire to engage the Scriptures, what do you sense you need to do to make firm your decision?

8. Brian encouraged us to think through a plan of what we will do (what, when, where). At this point, what do you sense would be the best plan for you to engage the Scriptures?

9. What are your intentions regarding the suggested reading plan that was handed out on Sunday?