

# Practicing Our Faith

Keys to Going

Deeper in Faith  
and  
Further in Mission

As Individuals  
and  
Members of Christ's Body

- ◆ God's Word as Text
- ◆ God's World as Context
- ◆ The Person You Are and Can Become
- ◆ The Body We Are and Can Become
- ◆ Kingdom Perspective
- ◆ Whole-life Stewardship





## The Faith:

substance to be taken in,  
digested and absorbed  
and

## our faith:

evidencing in our daily walk  
what we have digested and  
are absorbing



# Ingesting Scripture

*Eat This Book*

is what is called for in Eugene Peterson's new book by that title, drawn from Scripture

(Jer 15:16; Ezek 2:8-3:3; Rev 10:9-10)



‘The reading John is experiencing is not of the kind that equips us to pass an examination. Eating a book takes it all in, assimilating it into the tissues of our lives. Readers *become* what they read...

*(Eat This Book, pp. 20-21, italics mine)*



## Indeed! ‘Eat This Book’

‘If we have not entered this text as participants we aren’t going to understand what is going on.

This text cannot be understood by watching from the bleachers—or even from expensive box seats. We are in on it!’

*Eat This Book, p. 69*



Søren Kierkegaard calls us  
to a more passionate hunger  
in the reading of Scripture:

‘a restlessness oriented  
toward inward deepening’

*(For Self-Examination, p. 20)*

# What Is Required of Us?

‘Think of the Bible as a Mirror,’ S.K. writes:

- ◆ We must not look at the mirror, i.e. just observe the mirror, but must see ourselves in the mirror.
- ◆ We must remember to say to ourselves incessantly: *It is I to whom it is speaking; it is I about whom it is speaking.*
- ◆ We must not promptly forget how we looked, like those of whom the apostle says, *they look at themselves and, on going away, immediately forget what they were like* (James 1:24).



# Peterson suggests another image:

- ◆ The word of God is not my possession. The words printed on the pages of my Bible give witness to the living and active revelation of the God of creation and salvation, the God of love who became flesh in Jesus, and I had better not forget it. If in my Bible reading I lose touch with this livingness, if I fail to listen to this living Jesus, submit to this sovereignty, and respond to this love, I become arrogant in my knowing and impersonal in my behavior. An enormous amount of damage is done in the name of Christian living by bad Bible reading.... Let the reader beware.



# How Then to Read?

- ◆ In faith, believing--expecting God to speak to you..
- ◆ Regularly, and passionately
- ◆ Out loud, if possible, and with others.
- ◆ Prayerfully, asking God to reveal its meaning and make you receptive.
- ◆ Patiently, slowly enough to receive and ponder what it actually says. Don't be in a hurry.
- ◆ Discerningly, looking for connections throughout Scripture as a whole.
- ◆ Obediently, acting on its plain meaning for you, though not without seeking wisdom from others.





# Other Suggestions

- ◆ Versions? Use and carry with you the one of your choice, preferably by a panel of scholars .
- ◆ Make use of notes or commentaries only after doing your own reading.
- ◆ Reference other versions for fresh insights.
- ◆ Memorize helpful verses and passages.
- ◆ Prefer the Bible to books about it, however good.
- ◆ Share what you are ingesting with others.
- ◆ Don't be afraid of your questions. They are important to your growth in faith and the Faith.
- ◆ Share what you are experiencing with others.

Remember:

God's Word is his table,  
set for you!

‘Taste and see  
that the Lord is good!’

(Psalm 34:8)



# Next Session

- ◆ If God's Word must be our text if we are serious about going deeper in faith and further in mission, the God's world today must be our context.
- ◆ Is it my world that matters most—or yours?
- ◆ What, in fact, is “The Real World”?
- ◆ How in our daily rounds do we re-discover God's world which is ever “in with, and under” (quoting Luther) our worlds, calling us to go deeper in faith and further in mission with him??

