

The Word Hand Illustration

Topic: The Word

Purpose of this study:

To give students a visual illustration of how they can go about assimilating the Word of God into their lives.

Motivation for teaching this study:

Having covered some of the general characteristics of the Bible in our last study, we want to move on toward helping our students to assimilate the Word into their lives. Just like physical babies need to learn to walk, communicate and feed themselves, so spiritual babies must learn to feed themselves from the Word of God. The sooner you can teach them this the better off they will be. This Navigator illustration helps kids see that merely hearing and reading the Word are not enough. In order to really get fed they need to memorize and meditate upon the truths of scripture themselves.

Introducing the Lesson:

Begin with a game of trying to take away an object from a person (such as a small ball of some sort) with only two fingers. Then try three fingers, four fingers until you work up to two hands. Stress that it is important to hang onto a ball with your entire hand if you want to have a firm grip on it. Say, "Today we want to talk about having a firm grip on God's Word."

Teaching the Study

Begin by passing around blank sheets of paper to your students. Then have them do exactly as you do on their sheets. Trace your hand outline on your sheet of paper and draw a Bible in your hand's grasp. Then label each finger appropriately. Go through the fingers one by one and look up the Scripture verse that back up each method of grasping God's Word. Then explain that, if we want to get a strong grip on an object, we use all our fingers. If we try to hold on with only two or three fingers, the object is easily grabbed away (demonstrate this as you talk about it). In the same way, we should use each of these methods of biblical intake if we want to get a firm grasp on the Word of God. We need to hear, read, study, and memorize it.

Point out that just as our thumb opposes (and can easily touch) each of our fingers, meditation should touch each of the other activities: We should meditate on what we hear, meditate on what we read, meditate on what we study, and meditate on what we memorize. It does little good if God's Word goes in one ear and out the other. We need to let it sink down into our hearts through meditation. You may want to pick a short verse or passage to meditate upon with the group. Your students may not know how to meditate upon scripture.

You'll notice that, in the illustration, the bigger the finger, the harder its corresponding activity is. It's easier to listen than to read, easier to read than study, etc. However, it's also true that the bigger the finger, the more effective the activity is. Experts tell us that after a 24-hour period, we can recall only about 5 percent of what we hear, 15 percent of what we read, 35 percent of what we study, and 100 percent of what we memorize. Since this is true, we would be wise to give special attention to the more effective activities.

Then Ask: How firm of a grasp do you personally have on God's Word? What are some ways to meditate on what you hear, read, study, and memorize?

Closing the Lesson:

Encourage your students to have a set time everyday to get into the Bible for themselves. Maybe you could suggest or pick a passage of scripture to study or memorize together as a group.

Evaluation:

Here are some questions to ask to see if your students have really understood the study.

1. How much time do you think a Christian should spend reading the Bible? Every day? How long each day? Why?
2. Have you ever studied the Bible or tried to look up some verses on an important topic? What happened?
3. What does it mean to meditate upon God's Word?
4. What happens to Christians over time if they do not have a firm grasp on God's Word?
5. What does God promise to do in our lives if meditate and obey His Word?

* I purposely put the instructions on how to teach this illustration on the front of the study so students could take this home and practice this illustration on a friend or family member.

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