

The Hand Illustration: How to Grab Hold of the Word

Here is an activity you might be able to use in your small group. Have each person pick up their Bible. Try holding it with one finger – then try two fingers – How secure can you hold it? Keep going until you have a firm grip on your Bible with all five digits of the hand. Notice that it isn't until you grab your Bible with your whole hand that you get a firm grip.

The **Hand Illustration** is an easy to remember tool for showing someone how to get a working grasp on the Scriptures. Each finger represents one way to take in the Word of God. A balanced intake of the Bible comes through hearing, reading, studying, memorizing, and meditation. As we follow these activities, they become more personal and specific in helping us grow in becoming more like Christ.

Here is a detailed breakdown of the five methods of learning from the Bible.

- **Hearing** the Word of God from godly pastors and teachers provides insight from Bible study done by others. It also stimulates our own appetite for the Scriptures. The weakest finger represents hearing, because we retain the least through that method of intake.
- **Reading** gives an overall picture of the Bible and is also the foundation of daily quiet time.
- **Studying** the Scriptures deepens our convictions. It requires greater time and effort but results in increased Bible knowledge.
- **Memorizing** God's Word enables us to use the Sword of the Spirit to overcome temptations and to have verses readily available for ministering to both Christians and nonChristians. Scripture memory stimulates meaningful meditation. The index finger, your strongest finger, represents memorization. We remember 100 percent of what we memorize if we consistently review it.
- **Meditation** is the inward process that should accompany each of the other four methods of Scripture intake. This is why meditation is assigned to the thumb. Only the thumb can touch all the other fingers. By meditating on God's Word as we hear, read, study, and memorize, we discover its transforming power at work in us.

Now for the activity:

- Have each group member trace one hand on a blank sheet of paper.
- Write the word **hear** on the little finger.
- Read Romans 10:17 together.
- On the next finger write the word **read**.
- Read Revelation 1:3 together.
- The middle finger is labeled **study**.
- Read Acts 17:11 together.
- Label the index finger with the word **memorize**.
- Read Psalm 119:9-11 together.
- Last one, write the word **meditate** on the thumb.
- Read Psalm 1:2-3 together.

Discuss how meditation can strengthen each of the four methods for taking in God's Word. Brainstorm as a group ways to increase your intake of Scripture during the next week or month, your choice.

Materials needed:

Blank paper for each group member

Something sort of writing utensil – you might even consider using colors and white paper

A clipboard or hard back book to trace and write on the paper

Of course your individual Bibles