





Jesus said, “You too, **be ready**; for the Son of Man is coming at an hour that you do not expect.” Luke 12:40

We believe Jesus’ promise that He is coming for His Church. We need to be ready for His arrival. In what areas of life do you need to get ready?



“Get Ready my \_\_\_\_\_”

Last week... Heart

Today... Mind

In my experience, when people consider their own spiritual growth, they almost always emphasize their **hearts** and almost always disregard their **minds**.





# Get Ready My Mind

Exodus 19 and 20



# Shavuot

**began last night (sunset June 11 - nightfall June 13, 2016)**

- Shavuot (Hebrew שבועות), known as the Feast of Weeks in English and as Pentecost (Πεντηκοστή) in Ancient Greek, is a Jewish holiday that occurs on 6th day of Hebrew month of Sivan (14 May-15 June).
- **Celebrates the revelation of the Five Books of the Torah by God to Moses and the Israelites at Mount Sinai**, 49 days (7 weeks) after the Exodus from Egypt. Since Shavuot occurs 50 days after Passover, Hellenistic Jews gave it the name "Pentecost" (πεντηκοστή, "fiftieth day").
- Shavuot has a double significance. It also marks the all-important wheat harvest in the Land of Israel (Exodus 34:22).
- This holiday is one of the *Shalosh Regalim*, the three Biblical pilgrimage festivals – Pesach (*Passover*), Shavuot (*Weeks or Pentecost*), and Sukkot (*Tabernacles, Tents or Booths*)—when the ancient Israelites living in the Kingdom of Judah would make a pilgrimage to Temple in Jerusalem, as commanded by the Torah. In Jerusalem, they would participate in festivities and worship in conjunction with the services of the kohanim ("priests") at the Temple.

<https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Shavuot> & [https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Three\\_Pilgrimage\\_Festivals](https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Three_Pilgrimage_Festivals)



# Shavuot

In the third month after the sons of Israel had gone out of the land of Egypt, on that very day they came into the wilderness of Sinai. When they set out from Rephidim, they came to the wilderness of Sinai and camped in the wilderness; and there Israel camped in front of the mountain. Moses went up to God, and the Lord called to him from the mountain, saying, “Thus you shall say to the house of Jacob and tell the sons of Israel: ‘You yourselves have seen what I did to the Egyptians, and how I bore you on eagles’ wings, and brought you to Myself. Now then, if you will indeed obey My voice and keep My covenant, then you shall be My own possession among all the peoples, for all the earth is Mine; and you shall be to Me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.’ These are the words that you shall speak to the sons of Israel.” So Moses came and called the elders of the people, and set before them all these words which the Lord had commanded him. All the people answered together and said, “All that the Lord has spoken we will do!” And Moses brought back the words of the people to the Lord. Exodus 19:1-8





# Shavuot

Then God spoke all these words, saying, “I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery. You shall have no other gods before Me. You shall not make for yourself an idol, or any likeness of what is in heaven above or on the earth beneath or in the water under the earth. You shall not worship them or serve them; for I, the Lord your God, am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children, on the third and the fourth generations of those who hate Me, but showing lovingkindness to thousands, to those who love Me and keep My commandments. You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain, for the Lord will not leave him unpunished who takes His name in vain. Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days you shall labor and do all your work, but the seventh day is a sabbath of the Lord your God; in it you shall not do any work, you or your son or your daughter, your male or your female servant or your cattle or your sojourner who stays with you. For in six days the Lord made the heavens and the earth, the sea and all that is in them, and rested on the seventh day; therefore the Lord blessed the sabbath day and made it holy. Honor your father and your mother, that your days may be prolonged in the land which the Lord your God gives you. You shall not murder. You shall not commit adultery. You shall not steal. You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor. You shall not covet your neighbor’s house; you shall not covet your neighbor’s wife or his male servant or his female servant or his ox or his donkey or anything that belongs to your neighbor.” Exodus 20:1-17



# Lessons of Shavuot

- by Rabbi Shmuel Rabinowitz, the rabbi of the Western Wall and Holy Sites in Jerusalem
- “Receiving the Torah is not a onetime occurrence connected to a specific day. Though it did occur on a specific day, it is much greater than this. It is a comprehensive lifestyle, a complete way of thinking, a whole set of values. There is a tremendous difference between a person who lives life without the Torah and a person who lives life with the Torah. These are completely distinct lives.”
- “There is a misconception among many who believe the Torah is relevant only for specific days, specific places, specific people, or a specific generation. They believe it should be changed and adapted to different times and various constraints. Every day and at every hour, in every situation and for every generation, the Torah has something to teach people facing questions and problems.”
- “The Torah is not merely a book, but a unique worldview that ties morality together with faith, the goodness of holiness and the beauty in truth. The Torah guides a person in how to bequeath infinite significance to a single moment or individual person. The Torah teaches and guides the perplexed person who is debating how to choose from among different values and conceptions. The Torah is not just a book of mitzvot (commandments) and good deeds. It seeks to create a qualitative humane society that is not directed by power, respect and wealth but, rather, is based on grace, charity, justice, honesty and faith.”





# MORAL TRUTH: ABSOLUTE OR RELATIVE?

(% among U.S. adults, by generation and faith segment)



“The Torah is not merely a book, but a unique worldview that ties morality together with faith, the goodness of holiness and the beauty in truth.” - Rabbi Shmuel Rabinowitz



# General Information on the Bible

- 66 Books: 39 in Old Testament, 27 in New Testament
- Old Testament: 17 historical, 5 experiential, 17 prophetic
- New Testament: 4 Gospels, Acts, Christian Church Epistles, Pastoral Epistles, Hebrews, Christian Epistles
- Chapter divisions added in 1228 AD
- Verse divisions added in 1448 AD (Old Testament) and 1551 AD (New Testament)
- First hand-written translation into English by J. Wycliffe in 1380 AD
- First printed English Bible by W. Tyndale in 1526 AD



## **Written over a 1,500 year span by over 40 authors**

Moses – political leader

Amos – shepherd

Nehemiah – cupbearer to king

Daniel – prime minister

Luke – physician

Matthew – tax collector

David – shepherd, king

Paul – rabbi

## **Written in different locations**

- Moses – wilderness
- Daniel – on hillside and in palace
- Paul – in prison
- John – on island of Patmos in exile
- David – during war
- Solomon – during times of peace





## Written on 3 continents

- Asia, Europe, Africa

## Dates of Writing

- Job was earliest book written, ca. 2000-1800 BC
- Revelation was latest book written, ca. 94 AD
- Bible books are not in chronological order by date they were written

## Written in 3 languages

- Hebrew – major language of Old Testament
- Aramaic – common language of Ancient Near East until time of Alexander the Great; portions of Daniel written in Aramaic; probably Jesus' first language
- Greek – language of New Testament; international language of business and commerce at the time of Jesus



# Bible is the true, perfect Word of God

- Inerrant = having no errors
- Infallible = incapable of having errors
- Inspired = God-breathed     *theopneustos* θεοπνευστος
- The Old Testament has at least 2,600 claims of divine inspiration.
- Bible writers make 4,000 claims to be writing God's Word.



# Historicity of Bible

- Over 5,300 Greek manuscripts of New Testament extant today
- Over 10,000 copies of Latin Vulgate extant today (written ca. 400 AD)
- Over 9,300 copies of parts of New Testament extant today
- Over 24,000 manuscripts (part or whole) of New Testament extant today
- Some as old as 250 years after originally written
- Copies of writings of Sophocles only as far back as 1,200 years after its writing
- Homer's Iliad has 643 copies extant
- Bible is the most authenticated document in antiquity

## External Evidence

- There are 17 other historical, non-religious texts who speak about the life of Jesus; these sources mention some 110 different events in the life of Jesus (birth, miracles, death, resurrection, etc.).



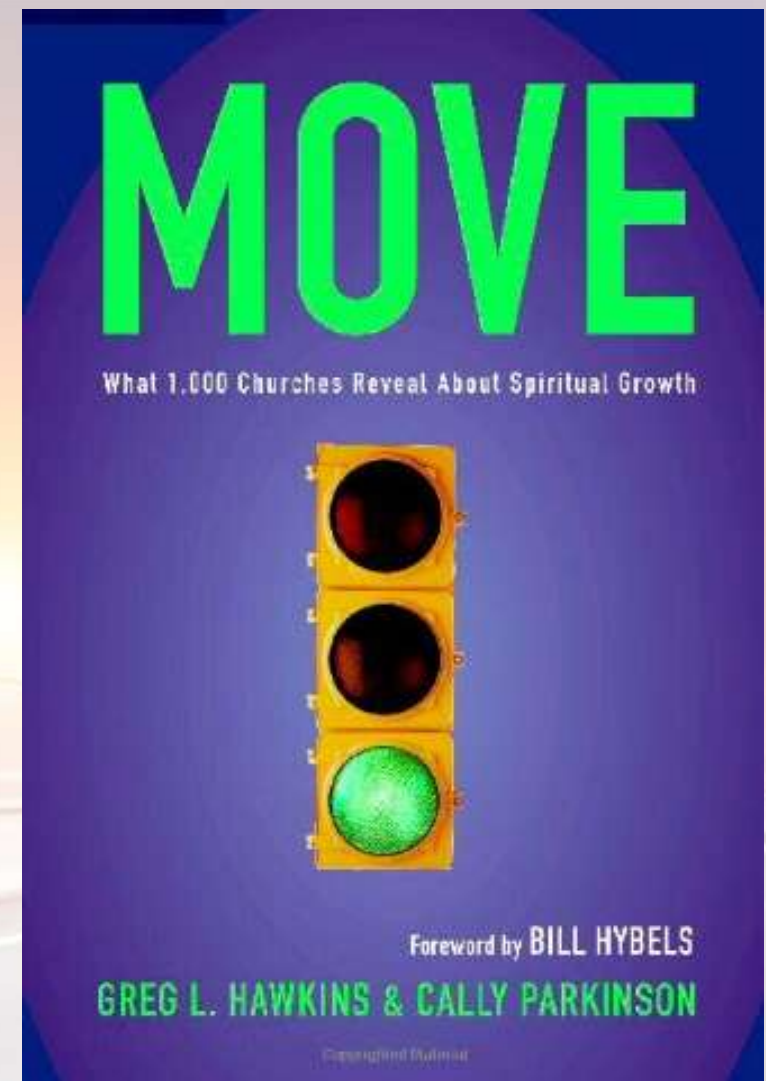


# Your Mind is vital to your Spiritual Growth as a Disciple of Jesus

- “like newborn babies, long for the pure milk of the word, so that by it you may grow in respect to salvation” 1 Peter 2:2
- “but grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.” 2 Peter 3:18



“Nothing has a greater impact on spiritual growth than reflection on Scripture. If churches could do only one thing to help people at all levels of spiritual maturity grow in their relationship with Christ, their choice is clear. They would inspire, encourage, and equip their people to read the Bible — specifically, to reflect on Scripture for meaning in their lives.”



## Ten Spiritual Disciplines

- Baptism
- Lord's Supper
- Worship
- Prayer
- Fasting
- **Bible Study**
- **Scripture Memory**
- Service
- Stewardship
- Sharing the Gospel





God intended for our **minds** to be engaged in serving Him, dedicated to His Word and His character.

Therefore, prepare your minds for action, keep sober in spirit...

## **HOW?**

fix your hope completely on the grace to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ.

1 Peter 1:13



# Bible Verses on the Mind

- And the peace of God, which surpasses all comprehension, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. Philippians 4:7
- “As for you, my son Solomon, know the God of your father, and serve Him with a whole heart and a willing mind; for the Lord searches all hearts, and understands every intent of the thoughts. If you seek Him, He will let you find Him; but if you forsake Him, He will reject you forever.” 1 Chronicles 28:9
- My mouth will speak wisdom, and the meditation of my heart will be understanding. Psalm 49:3
- So this I say, and affirm together with the Lord, that you walk no longer just as the Gentiles also walk, in the futility of their mind, being darkened in their understanding, excluded from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them, because of the hardness of their heart; and they, having become callous, have given themselves over to sensuality for the practice of every kind of impurity with greediness. Ephesians 4:17-19



Therefore I urge you, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service of worship. And do not be conformed to this world, but **be transformed by the renewing of your mind**, so that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect. For through the grace given to me I say to everyone among you not to think more highly of himself than he ought to think; but to think so as to have sound judgment, as God has allotted to each a measure of faith. For just as we have many members in one body and all the members do not have the same function, so we, who are many, are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another.

Romans 12:1-5





For those who are according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who are according to the Spirit, the things of the Spirit. For **the mind set on the flesh is death, but the mind set on the Spirit is life and peace**, because the mind set on the flesh is hostile toward God; for it does not subject itself to the law of God, for it is not even able to do so, and those who are in the flesh cannot please God.

Romans 8:5-8



# We need the Bible to help us serve Jesus

Indeed, all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will be persecuted. But evil men and impostors will proceed from bad to worse, deceiving and being deceived. You, however, continue in the things you have learned and become convinced of, knowing from whom you have learned them, and that from childhood you have known the sacred writings which are able to give you the wisdom that leads to salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness; so that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work. 2 Timothy 3:12-17

\*The goal of Bible study is not interpretation, but application.



# How do others study God's Word?

- Pastor Max Lucado: “You cannot eat all the meals you need for a week in one day. Just as the body needs regular portions of nourishment spread out over time, the Spirit needs regular bite-sized portions of Scripture.”
- Author Priscilla Shirer: “I’d pick a book of the Bible and look at one or two verses every day. I asked questions of the verses. I call them the five P’s of Bible study. I pore over the passage, paraphrase the passage, and pull out the spiritual principles from the passage. I pose a personal question to myself to help me begin a dialogue with the Holy Spirit as to whether or not I am living what that verse is teaching. And then I plan obedience in regard to what I think the Holy Spirit is saying.”
- Pastor Chuck Swindoll’s Bible study method is based on the process of observation, interpretation, correlation and application. He repeatedly reads the text aloud, checks the original languages, and then writes down observations on a notepad.





# How you can study God's Word

- Need a plan - random reading not recommended
- Use a modern, literal translation of the Bible (NASB, ESV, HCSB)
- Spend time reading every day, preferably in the morning, to start your day with God
- Use a study guide
- Begin with prayer, read the Word, pray again (thank God for what you have learned and ask Him to help you apply it today)



# Our Gifts To You

## Daily 10/10 Challenge Email

Sign up today by emailing [info@firstmelissa.com](mailto:info@firstmelissa.com) or turn in the tear-off slip with your email address.

## Your own copy of God's Word

We want you to study the Bible on your own, so we will give you a Bible today (English or Spanish) if you don't have one. Visit Connection Corner after the service ends.



# Does the Bible still matter?

“For the word of God is living and active and sharper than any two-edged sword, and piercing as far as the division of soul and spirit, of both joints and marrow, and able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart.” Hebrews 4:12

“Every day and at every hour, in every situation and for every generation, the Torah has something to teach people facing questions and problems.” - Rabbi Shmuel Rabinowitz





# Scripture Memory

“This book of the law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do according to all that is written in it; for then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have success. Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous! Do not tremble or be dismayed, for the Lord your God is with you wherever you go.” Joshua 1:8-9

“I delight to do Your will, O my God; Your Law is within my heart.” Psalm 40:8

“My son, give attention to my words; incline your ear to my sayings. Do not let them depart from your sight; keep them in the midst of your heart.”  
Proverbs 4:20-21



# Scripture Memory

“You shall therefore impress these words of mine on your heart and on your soul; and you shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontals on your forehead.” Deuteronomy 11:18

“Your words were found and I ate them, and Your words became for me a joy and the delight of my heart; for I have been called by Your name, O Lord God of hosts.” Jeremiah 15:16

“I have not departed from the command of His lips; I have treasured the words of His mouth more than my necessary food.”

Job 23:12



# The Blessings of Scripture Memory

How blessed are those whose way is blameless, who walk in the law of the Lord. How blessed are those who observe His testimonies, who seek Him with all their heart. They also do no unrighteousness; they walk in His ways. You have ordained Your precepts, that we should keep them diligently. Oh that my ways may be established to keep Your statutes! Then I shall not be ashamed when I look upon all Your commandments. I shall give thanks to You with uprightness of heart, when I learn Your righteous judgments. I shall keep Your statutes; do not forsake me utterly! How can a young man keep his way pure? By keeping it according to Your word. With all my heart I have sought You; do not let me wander from Your commandments. Your word I have treasured in my heart, that I may not sin against You. Blessed are You, O Lord; teach me Your statutes. With my lips I have told of all the ordinances of Your mouth. I have rejoiced in the way of Your testimonies, as much as in all riches. I will meditate on Your precepts and regard Your ways. I shall delight in Your statutes; I shall not forget Your word. Psalm 119:1-16





**Who is getting their mind ready for Jesus?**

Video testimony – Ron Duzenack



**“Get Ready my \_\_\_\_\_”**

**Last week... Heart**

**Today... Mind**

**Next week... Family**



# Expand your mind - Great Books to Read

- J. I. Packer, *Knowing God*
- C. S. Lewis, *Mere Christianity*
- Oswald Chambers, *My Utmost for His Highest*
- A.W. Tozer, *The Pursuit of God*
- Elisabeth Elliot, *Shadow of the Almighty*
- Charles Sheldon, *In His Steps*
- Steve Moore, *Who Is My Neighbor?*
- Lee Strobel, *The Case for Christ*





# Why should we study the Bible?

- The Bible equips us to serve God (2 Timothy 3:17; Ephesians 6:17; Hebrews 4:12).
- It helps us know how to be saved from our sin and its ultimate consequence (2 Timothy 3:15).
- Meditating on God's Word and obeying its teachings will bring success in life (Joshua 1:8; James 1:25).
- God's Word helps us see the sin in our lives and helps us repent and get rid of it (Psalm 119:9, 11).
- The Bible gives us guidance in life, making us wiser than our teachers (Psalm 32:8, 119:99; Proverbs 1:6).
- The Bible keeps us from wasting years of our lives on that which does not matter and will not last (Matthew 7:24-27).



How blessed is the man who does not walk in the counsel of the wicked, nor stand in the path of sinners, nor sit in the seat of scoffers! **But his delight is in the law of the Lord, and in His law he meditates day and night.** He will be like a tree firmly planted by streams of water, which yields its fruit in its season and its leaf does not wither; and in whatever he does, he prospers. The wicked are not so, but they are like chaff which the wind drives away. Therefore the wicked will not stand in the judgment, nor sinners in the assembly of the righteous. For the Lord knows the way of the righteous, but the way of the wicked will perish. Psalm 1:1-6

What is on your mind today?

