



# LOVE GOD

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## SELF-FEEDING

### **Spiritual Outcome Defined:**

Has moved from dependence to interdependence to feed on the truths of God's word, both on one's own and in partnership with the community of fellow Christ-followers.

### **Spiritual Outcome Described:**

Consider, briefly, the physical development of a person. At birth, an infant is entirely dependent upon an adult for sustenance. Babies look to their mothers for milk and a capable person must spoon feed their food. Slowly, over time, this changes. The child is able to hold a bottle, a piece of food, and then a spoon. He does not prepare the food, but is able to eat it himself.

*"Either the Bible will keep you away from sin,  
or sin will keep you away from the Bible."  
-- C.S. Lewis*

Before long, the child can prepare aspects of his own meals, although an adult worked for the money to purchase the food. In time, as an adult, that one-time infant is capable of engaging a job, purchasing their food, preparing it, and eating it without assistance. He will of course do this in relationship with others (meals are best when they are shared), but he has the skills needed to make his own meals. What's true in our physical development is also true in our spiritual development.

Yes, an authentic follower of Christ will always maintain community and benefit from the 'shared meals' that community provides, but maturity in Christ means a person takes responsibility for their daily sustenance and fully embraces this responsibility and opportunity. If a person fails to do this, his or her spiritual development will be stunted and impoverished. When fully embraced, a person will grow spiritually strong and then be capable of bearing the responsibility and opportunity of bringing up the next generation, spiritually speaking.

Hebrews speaks to this directly: *"In fact, though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you the elementary truths of God's word all over again. You need milk, not solid food! Anyone who lives on milk, being still an infant, is not acquainted with the teaching about righteousness. But solid food is for the mature, who by constant use have trained themselves to distinguish good from evil." (Hebrews 5:12-14).*

Authentic followers of Christ have *"trained themselves"* by *"constant use."* They are not independent from the body of Christ, but they have moved from dependence to interdependence, where they benefit greatly from the shared meals of church-life while daily engaging Scripture for their own moment-by-moment sustenance.

### **Evidence of this Spiritual Outcome in a Person's Life:**

- Engages Scripture daily, or nearly daily, on one's own.
- Has enough knowledge and insight into Scripture that they are able to cross reference other passages on their own as they read for depth of insight.
- Has a plan and works the plan for consistently reading from all genres of Scripture.
- Is able to teach others—from their own learnings—who are not yet self-feeders themselves.

### **Guidance**

Read each passage multiple times. Then write your observations about the passage and any thoughts you have from the discernment question. What do you notice in the passage, and what does this reveal about your life?

### **Deuteronomy 6:4-9**

Observations:

Discernment Question: To what extent is Scripture incorporated into your daily thoughts and conversations?



## **Joshua 1:6-9**

Observations:

Discernment Question: When your mind goes to neutral, what do you think about? To what extent do you meditate on God and God's truths?

## **Psalm 1:1-3**

Observations:

Discernment Question: Is engaging and meditating on Scripture a chore or a delight? Why?



**Psalm 119:9-16**

Observations:

Discernment Question: What do you feed your heart? To what extent is your heart fed the “junk food” of our day?

**Isaiah 66:2**

Observations:

Discernment Question: Does your current life resemble a life under the authority of God’s word? Why or why not?



**Mark 1:35**

Observations:

Discernment Question: What are your daily practices for solitude with God? Are your practices working?

**Acts 17:10-11**

Observations:

Discernment Question: When you hear teaching, to what extent are you able to filter it yourself through your own knowledge of Scripture?



## **Romans 15:4**

Observations:

Discernment Question: When have you recently leaned into a story of Scripture to give you hope and endurance? What was the story and how did it help you?

## **2 Timothy 2:15**

Observations:

Discernment Question: What could you do to increase your ability to interpret Scripture?



## Hebrews 5:12-14

Observations:

Discernment Question: How capable are you at explaining the basics of what it means to trust and follow Christ?

### Next Steps

What are practical next steps you will do from what you have discovered in this survey of Scripture on self-feeding? Include insights offered from others in your group that could be applied in your own life as well.



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