

# Discipleship Moment

**Sermon Text: Luke 24:13-35**

Growing up, my family would visit my grandparents at their RV by lake Marion in central Kansas for a week or more each summer. We had this mid-sized Shetland sheepdog when I was younger, too, and would sometimes bring her with us. Occasionally, as we were walking her on the rocky trails or on the rocky shore of the lake, she would find a bone—sometimes old deer bones, found by another dog (our family pet was not an explorer, and certainly wasn't wild enough to go find bones herself) who dropped it on the shore or along the trail. Or sometimes it would be a steak bone dropped off the grill by one of the overweight campers that speckled the campsites. Our dog would pick up these bones and carry it with her and when we came back to our campsite she would lay down by our chairs and get to work on the bone. Chewing, slobbering, crunching, and ripping the bone with delight. As she chewed, a low, guttural, satisfied growl would escape her mouth—it was pure joy. If you have a dog, you may have noticed the same thing. Some dogs will bury their bones, and then return the next day, with the same joy—chewing, biting, and growling over the bone.

This action is described in the Bible, too. In the book of Isaiah, Isaiah writes “When the lion growls, the young lion, over its prey, though a band of shepherds is summoned against it, it isn't scared off by their noise...” This lion is described as *growling over its prey*, this is the kind of satisfied, guttural, *moan-like* noise predators make as they eat. The Hebrew word is *hagah*, it describes (and sounds like) this kind of growl. It is also used of people who mutter and chant under their breath, and of a dove cooing over its nest.

But the most interesting use of this term, this satisfied growling, is when humans do this. Specifically, blessed humans. Psalm one described a blessed human, and this human, who is rooted and fruitful like a tree, is described as someone who *hagah* over the bible. The word in most of our English translations is *meditate*. “Blessed is the one who...meditates on the Law, day and night” the Psalm says. This Psalm describes someone who spends their life reading and re-reading the Scriptures out loud. It is almost as if we should like these dogs or lions, chewing on, slobbering over, burying and returning to a bone and enjoying the flavors and smell of it. This is re-iterated in the Revelation, when an angel gives St. John a bible (presumably) and says, “eat this book!” We should read Scripture the way a dog chews a bone, or the way a lion eats its prey—slowly and with satisfaction, we should search and meditate over the Bible, exploring every nook and cranny, letting the words, phrases, and stories roll around in our minds, and then go back the next day, and the next day, and the next day.

In the sermon yesterday, we saw how reading Scripture and eating meals with one another is the foundation of the Christian life. But now we can see that these two actions are more similar than initially thought, we should *eat Scripture* and eat our food. Food provides us sustenance for daily living physically; and Scripture provides us sustenance for daily living spiritually and emotionally. By listening to God's Word, we are sustained and become fruitful in our work and relationships, we grow in knowledge of God, and we grow closer to him by listening to his Word and speaking to him in prayer.

Jesus himself said, “Man does not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.”

## Going Deeper

1. Do you have meals with other Christians very often? When was the last time? What was it like?
2. When was the last time you read your Bible? Did you enjoy it? Why or why not?
3. Do you use a Bible reading plan or devotional (like the Daily Bread)? If you do, why do you use the one you do? Is it because it's the only one you have or that the church provides? Does it guide you through the whole Bible, or just a small part?
4. If you don't enjoy reading Scripture, try using an audio bible, look for a translation that is easier to understand, like the Common English Bible or New Living Translation. If you enjoy reading Scripture, research Bible reading plans that will increase your daily reading. Look at the Read Scripture app and Bible reading plan.
5. Make a list of people from the church, or other Christians that you could invite to your house for dinner. And have dinner with them!
6. Pray for opportunities to serve and study Scripture with other believers.