

## **Reformation Journals**

explore crucial topics in the Christian life and focus your attention on the Scriptures by pressing you to read, write, meditate, apply and pray God's Word.

### **When we say "meditating"**

we don't mean meditating in the sense of Eastern mysticism where meditation is an emptying of the mind in order to escape from the world. Biblical meditation is just the opposite. Biblical meditation is saturating the mind with God's word, thinking and praying deeply about it, and allowing it to settle within us in order that we can live a Spirit-filled life IN the world.

### **The Kind of Change We Need is not Natural, it is Supernatural.**

We can't just pull ourselves up by our own bootstraps and decide we are never going to be angry, depressed, or lazy again. We may be able to make some progress in our own strength, but apart from a deep transformation of our nature, we will fail. What we need is a renovation of our whole belief structure. A reshaping of our emotions, desires, thoughts, speech, habits, and actions around what is in Christ. *What theologians call sanctification.*

**This kind of change is only possible through the work of the Holy Spirit**, who helps us "put to death the deeds of the body" so that we might truly live (Romans 8:13). For only the Holy Spirit is able to: *search us* deeply (Romans 8:27, 1 Corinthians 2:10), *show us* where we are wrong (John 16:8), *teach us* God's word and help us remember it (John 14:26), *give us* power to overcome sin (Galatians 5:16-17), *comfort us* (Acts 9:31), constantly be *with us* and *in us* (John 14:16-17), pour God's love into our hearts (Romans 5:5), *assure us* that we belong to God (Romans 8:15), and *bring us* safely through all trials and temptations to salvation (Ephesians 1:13-14). The Holy Spirit does the impossible for us - He transforms every aspect of our nature.

**So what's our responsibility?** If the Holy Spirit does all these things, can't we just sit and wait for Him to remake us? He certainly can change us in the blink of an eye if He desires, and sometimes He does, though that seems rare. More common is for the Spirit to work this change in us over time, perhaps over a lifetime.

### **The Holy Spirit employs three key means to transform us: God's word, prayer, and God's people.**

Have you ever wondered why He does it this way?

- First, each of these means teach us to depend on Him and not ourselves. When we feel the power of His voice in the Scriptures, cry out to Him through prayer, and lean on His people, we get the help we need but He receives the glory.
- Next, as we use these means, He gives us a greater appreciation and experience of Himself. If He just "zapped" us with sanctification, we would not have the opportunity to see His lovingkindness over the course of time. As we grow, He reveals who we really are - where we need to change, and the evidence of the changes He is making.
- Finally, God's beautiful process of sanctification makes us into people that can encourage others. When we trust Him, and change, we have valuable insight and hope to share.

### **What About Professional Counseling?**

This material is about issues that cause many of us to seek professional counseling. What's the connection between this book and modern psychology? The We Fight Journal is not opposed to counselors, psychologists, psychiatrists, doctors, or medication. However, based on the Scriptures referenced above, I maintain that God's word, prayer, and His people should always be the primary means in our fight against troubles of the soul. When it is necessary to see a counselor or doctor for additional help, we need to have a mind filled with God's word in order to discern that a recommended treatment is in line with His will. Does this mean we need to only see counselors or doctors who are Christians? In my opinion, no. But we DO need to make sure that any counsel we receive is consistent with the word of God. Jesus makes the importance of His words clear when He says, "Everyone then who hears these words of mine and does them will be like a wise man who built his house on the rock." (Matthew 7:24). And He also makes it plain that if we don't fight our battles with His Word we are building a house on sand, "and great was the fall of it." (Matthew 7:27).