



## **FOREST RANCH BAPTIST CHURCH**

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As a preacher of the Bible, I am weekly dependent on the truth of Hebrews 4:12 - that God's Word is living and active and sharper than any two-edged sword. So often, we think God's Word is powerful as we preach and explain it. Indeed, God's Spirit is vibrant in the ministry of preaching. And yet, God's Word does not need explanation, 3 point alliterated outlines, or witty illustrations. As helpful as these can be, God's Word is living, active, and sharp all by itself.

Tom Meyer of Wordsower has the blessing of reminding Christians, even pastors, of how vitally true that is. Tom arrived at our church on Sunday, January 30, to do what seemed to us an impossibility. In our Sunday evenings for the last 3 years, we have studied Revelation. Tom proceeded to take about 50 minutes of Sunday school to recite the whole book from memory. We were also treated to Genesis 1-11 from heart in the morning service, plus passages from Hebrews 11, Genesis and Exodus in the evening service.

All who heard were impressed. Comments like 'amazing', 'fantastic', and 'a real blessing' abounded. Yet, the key to this ministry isn't to impress with memory or presentation skills, instead, it is to refresh God's people in the power of His Word and to rekindle their love to read, know, and keep it.

During the morning service, Tom spoke about his ministry, relating how difficult Scripture memorization is to him. It requires hard work, developing the discipline to carve out 30 to 40 minutes each day. But, the labor is very beneficial, as Tom spoke; Scripture memory 1) increased his love for God; 2) reminded him of who he is; 3) made him a better student, teacher, and evangelist; 4) made him keen to identify heresy, lies, and false teaching; and 5) strengthened his obedience to God's Word.

Several key lessons struck home with me that day. One was to give attention to the reading of Scripture, even long passages. Typically, I read the few verses to be studied before the sermon opens, but it would be much better to read the whole passage. This helps with the context of those verses, plus the repetition would add memory. Second was to memorize and so meditate myself. I need God's Word in the forefront of my thinking, especially in 'neutral times' - the moments when I'm not actively doing or thinking on something and my mind is most prone to wander. Encouraged by Tom, I have embarked on something completely new to me: memorizing a large portion of Scripture in the book of Titus (already, I have made progress on the whole first chapter). The final lesson is the humble confidence in my own ministry as a preacher. His Word is so very valuable and I have been entrusted with that stewardship.

By His Grace,

Pastor Chips Ross