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I have many times heard how singers “made something their own.” They took a song that had already been done before and put their own personal touch on it; they “made it their own.” At times you may hear Christians say that you have to “make the Word of God your own.” Let’s explore what it means to make the Word your own by seeing what it is not, what it is, and how we make the Word our own practically.

Let’s begin our exploration of what it means to make the Word our own by seeing what it is not. Making the Word our own is not about finding something new but rather taking personal ownership of the truths in the Word that we have received from teaching or study. It is not adapting the Word to us but rather understanding God’s Word in order to hold it fast and then adapting our life to what it says.

Now that we understand more clearly what it is not, let’s look at what it does mean to make the Word our own. There are two great verses from the parable of the sower and the seed that display the characteristics of someone who makes the Word their own. The first one is Luke 8:15.

Luke 8:15:

But that on the good ground are they, which in an honest and good heart, having heard the word, keep it, and bring forth fruit with patience.

In this verse we see that there are those who have an honest and good heart and, having heard the Word, keep it. The word “keep” in this verse means “to have and hold fast, to hold firmly.” We don’t let go of the Word we have received. We hold it fast. Like it says in I Thessalonians 5:21, “Prove all things; hold fast that which is good.”

The other verse that we will look at is in Matthew.

Matthew 13:23:

But he that received seed into the good ground is he that heareth the word, and understandeth it; which also beareth fruit, and bringeth forth, some an hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty.

“Understandeth” in this verse means “to comprehend, reflect morally, lay to heart, to be earnestly occupied with the object.”

In light of these verses, making the Word our own involves making the effort to comprehend, morally reflect upon, and lay to heart the truths we find in God’s Word so that we can hold them fast in our hearts and so that our lives will bear fruit as we act upon these truths. Making the Word our own involves doing what it takes to be fully persuaded of the truth.

So, what can we do practically to make the Word our own? A recent example of this in my own life happened after I heard one particular teaching from the Bible. The teacher had taught on some of the characteristics of someone who thinks on the things of others. I really wanted to see what was taught become a reality in my life. I felt that I hadn’t always done a good job at thinking on the things of others, and I was excited to see how God would work in me as I decided to make His Word my own in this category of my life. I went home and I studied the Word that had been taught at that meeting. I studied it with a desire to see how I could apply it in my own life. As I looked at the different places in the Word where this topic was to be found, I developed a larger appreciation for it, and I began to see how Jesus Christ and Paul and other disciples had applied this Word in their lives. As I went through my days at work deliberately thinking on the things of others and applying the things that I had been studying, I saw that I began to develop better relationships with my coworkers. Several weeks into doing this, my immediate supervisor, whom I had been building one of these relationships with, asked to see me in her office. She then opened her heart to me about a situation in her life and asked me to pray for her and her situation because she believed that it would make a difference. I was thrilled to see how making the Word my own in this category led to my being able to pray for my coworker and help her with a personal situation. Making the Word my own was helping me bear good fruit!

Now we have a clearer understanding of what it means to make the Word our own. We have seen what it is not, we went to the Word to see what it is, and then we saw an example of how to make the Word our own practically. We are ready to make the Word our own, so let’s take personal ownership of the truths in the Word and understand the Word in order to hold it fast and adapt our life to what it says.

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