

P S A L M 1

BE
HAPPY

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Scripture Passage

Psalm 1

Happy are those who do not follow the advice of the wicked, or take the path that sinners tread, or sit in the seat of scoffers; but their delight is in the law of the Lord, and on his law they meditate day and night. They are like trees planted by streams of water, which yield their fruit in its season, and their leaves do not wither. In all that they do, they prosper. The wicked are not so, but are like chaff that the wind drives away. Therefore the wicked will not stand in the judgment, nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous; for the Lord watches over the way of the righteous, but the way of the wicked will perish.

Sermon

Be Happy

Today is the church anniversary Sunday. On our anniversary, we are reading Psalm 1 and that is very meaningful for us.

Psalm 1

Psalm 1 is like a life principle. It teaches us how to live. It teaches us how to be happy. I want all of you to live a happy life. Of course, happy life does not mean to create happy circumstances. Real happiness is when you are happy even in bad circumstances. That's real happiness. It's all here (pointing my heart). It depends on our heart. That's what the Psalmist tells us.

There is a life that is like a tree planted by streams of water. And there is a life that is like a chaff that the wind drives away. Life that is like a tree planted by streams of water is a rooted life that is not shaky. Life like a chaff is a very shaky life. No root. Easily scattered. What kind of life should we live? Of course, we want to live a life like tree planted by streams of water. Then to do that, what should we do? There are three things y

shouldn't do. And there is one thing you should do.

Three Things You Shouldn't Do

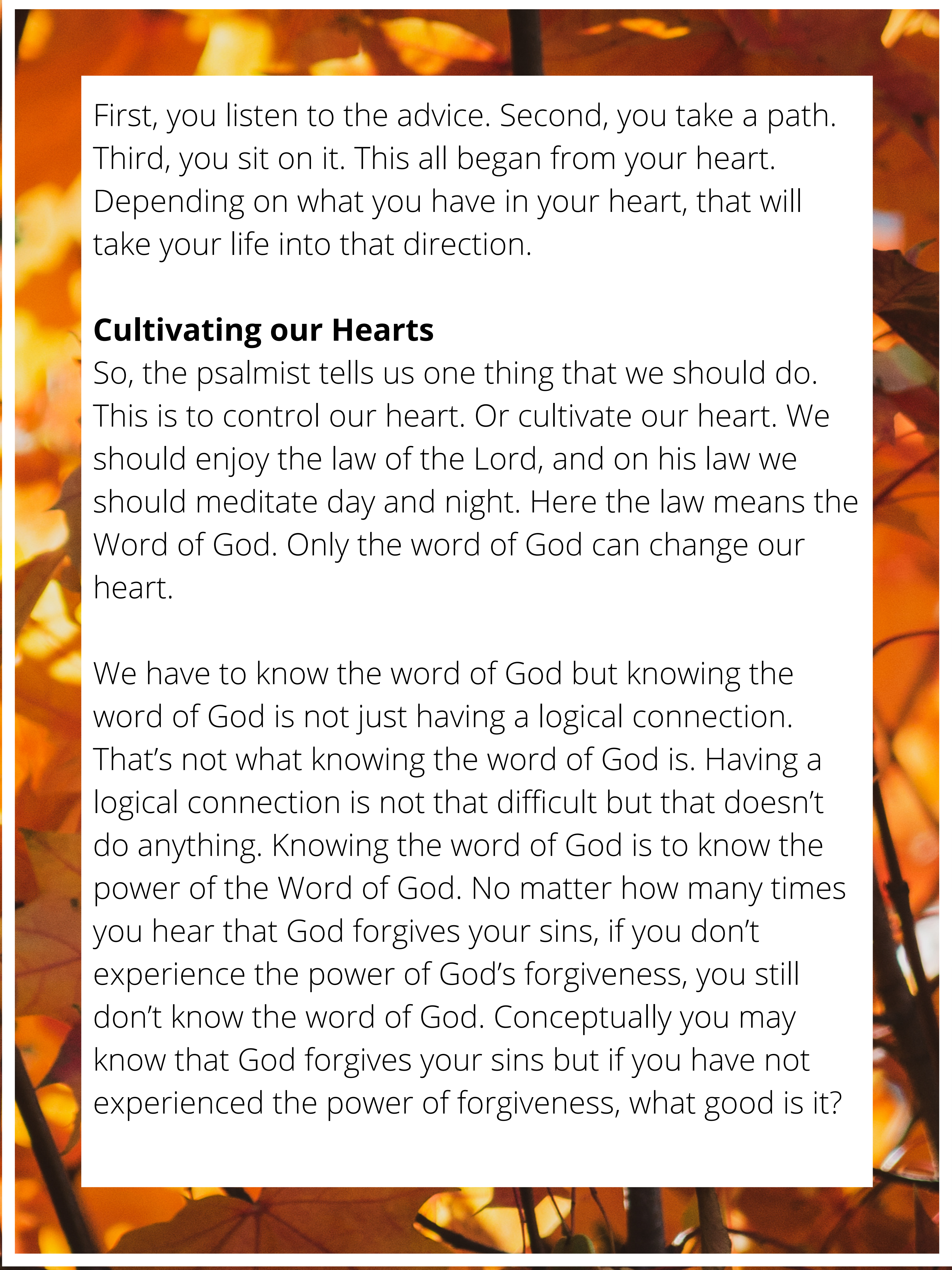
Let us first look at three things that you shouldn't do.

First, Do not follow the advice of the wicked. Why would people follow the advice of the wicked? Isn't it because they think their advice is helpful to them? People who are filled with greed, they will pay attention to the advice that satisfies their greed. People who are selfish will be pleased to hear selfish advice.

Second, do not take the path that sinners walk. Not only they will listen to the advice, but they will take a path and walk the path that leads to their greed and selfishness.

Third, do not sit in the seat of scoffers. Now they are so set in their minds, they will not even hear the good advices. They think they know the best and they will just follow the way of greed and selfishness.

These three things happen progressively. You become drifted into the pattern of greed and selfishness.

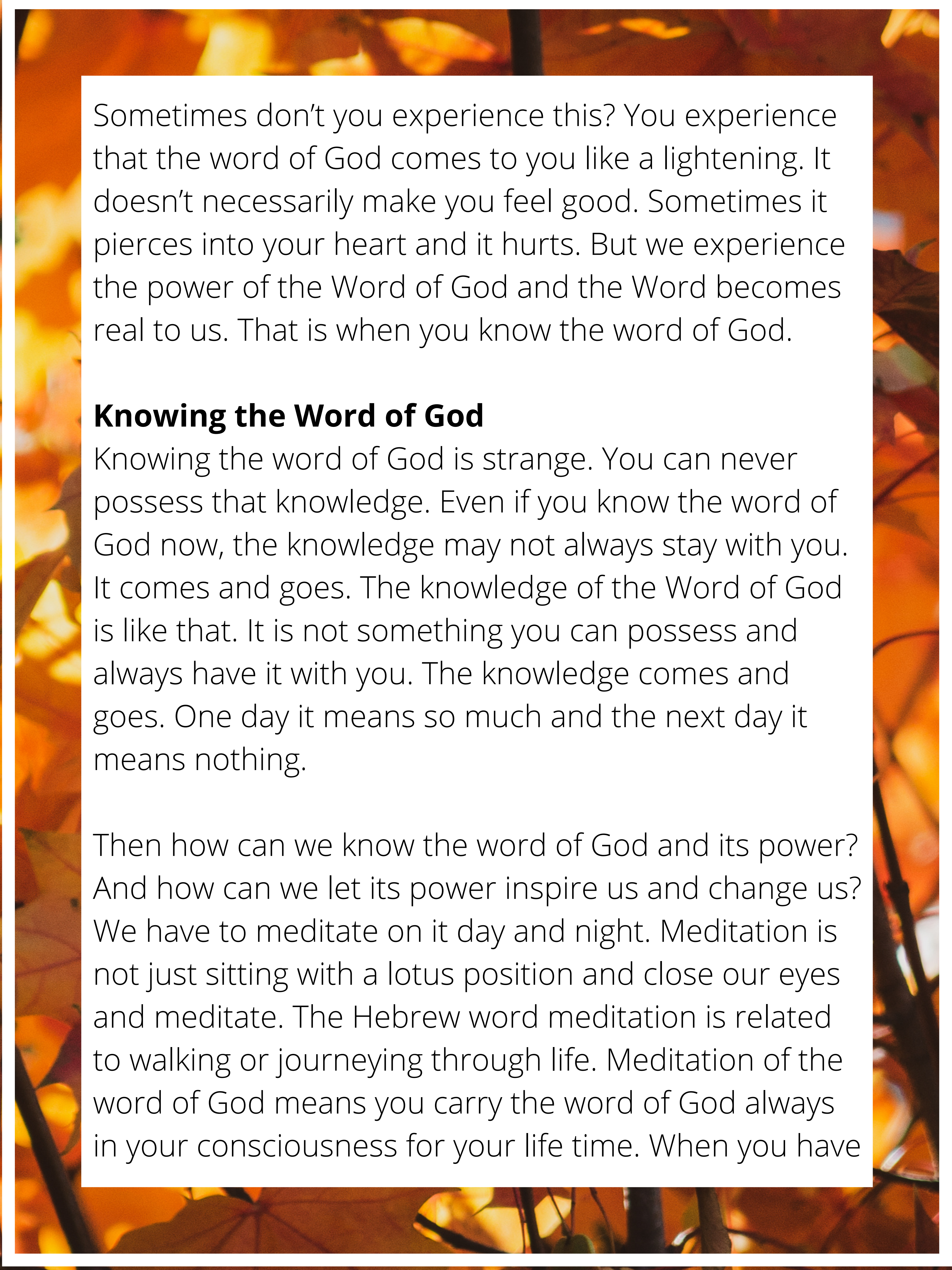


First, you listen to the advice. Second, you take a path. Third, you sit on it. This all began from your heart. Depending on what you have in your heart, that will take your life into that direction.

Cultivating our Hearts

So, the psalmist tells us one thing that we should do. This is to control our heart. Or cultivate our heart. We should enjoy the law of the Lord, and on his law we should meditate day and night. Here the law means the Word of God. Only the word of God can change our heart.

We have to know the word of God but knowing the word of God is not just having a logical connection. That's not what knowing the word of God is. Having a logical connection is not that difficult but that doesn't do anything. Knowing the word of God is to know the power of the Word of God. No matter how many times you hear that God forgives your sins, if you don't experience the power of God's forgiveness, you still don't know the word of God. Conceptually you may know that God forgives your sins but if you have not experienced the power of forgiveness, what good is it?

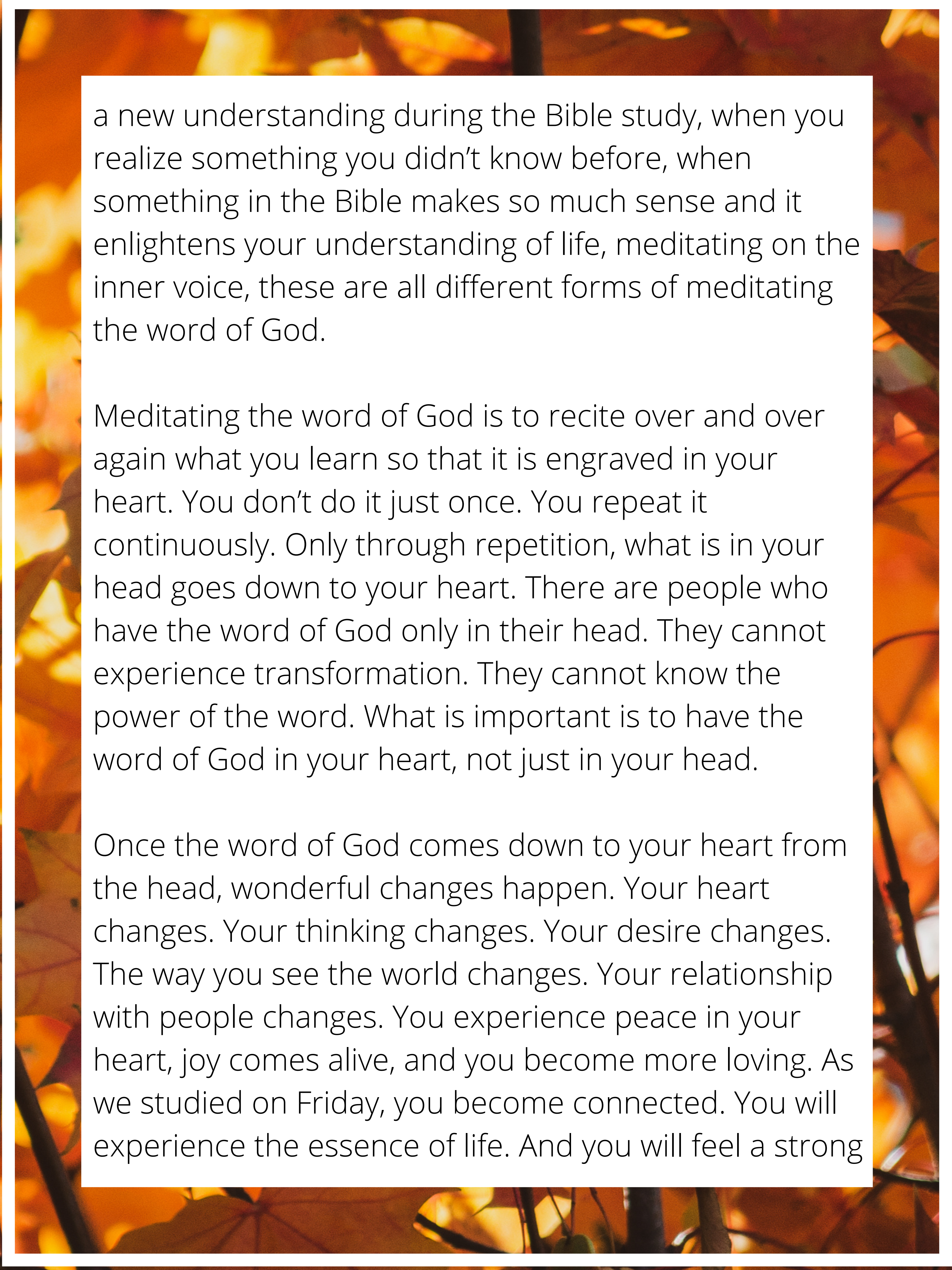


Sometimes don't you experience this? You experience that the word of God comes to you like a lightening. It doesn't necessarily make you feel good. Sometimes it pierces into your heart and it hurts. But we experience the power of the Word of God and the Word becomes real to us. That is when you know the word of God.

Knowing the Word of God

Knowing the word of God is strange. You can never possess that knowledge. Even if you know the word of God now, the knowledge may not always stay with you. It comes and goes. The knowledge of the Word of God is like that. It is not something you can possess and always have it with you. The knowledge comes and goes. One day it means so much and the next day it means nothing.

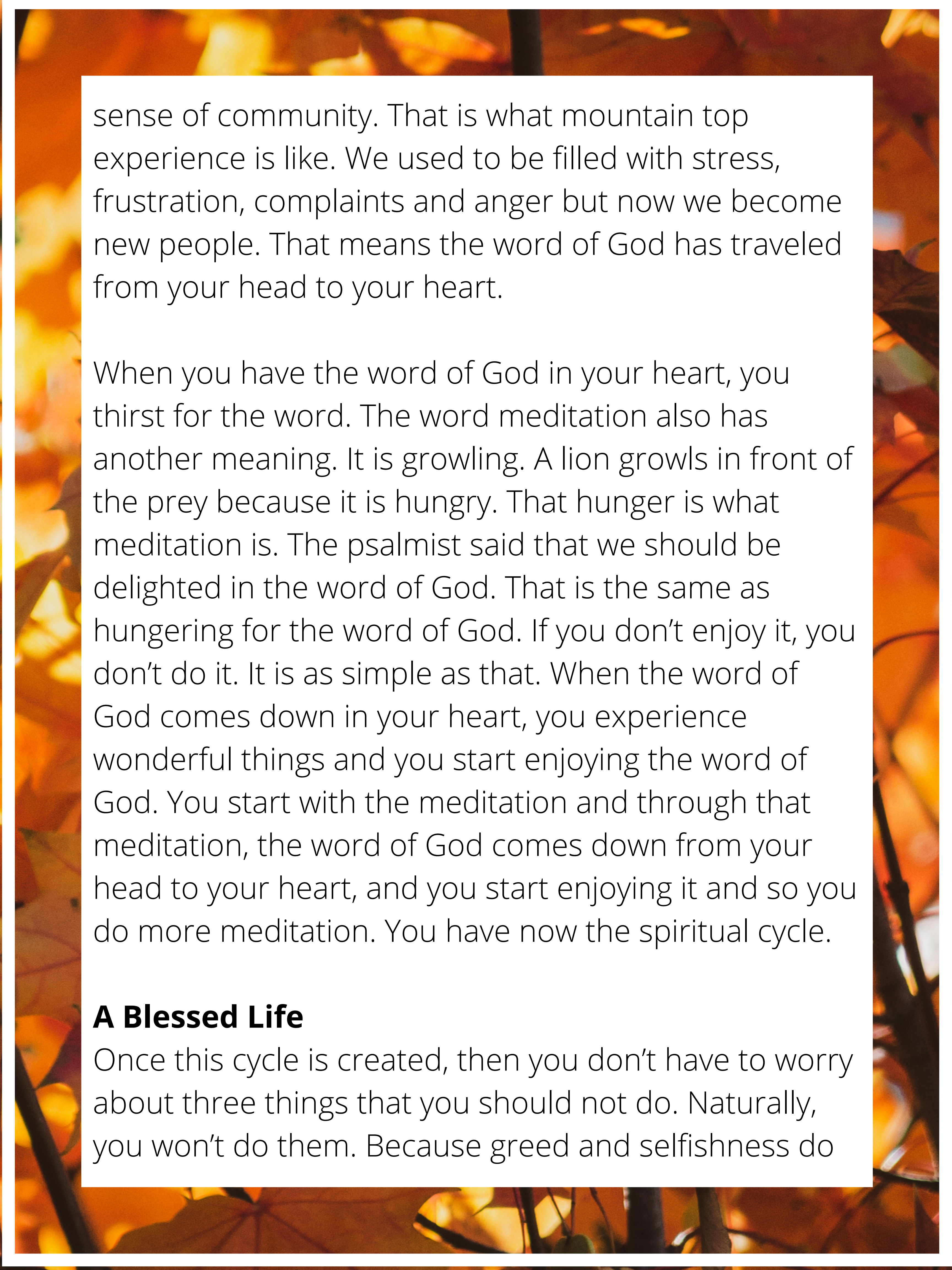
Then how can we know the word of God and its power? And how can we let its power inspire us and change us? We have to meditate on it day and night. Meditation is not just sitting with a lotus position and close our eyes and meditate. The Hebrew word meditation is related to walking or journeying through life. Meditation of the word of God means you carry the word of God always in your consciousness for your life time. When you have



a new understanding during the Bible study, when you realize something you didn't know before, when something in the Bible makes so much sense and it enlightens your understanding of life, meditating on the inner voice, these are all different forms of meditating the word of God.

Meditating the word of God is to recite over and over again what you learn so that it is engraved in your heart. You don't do it just once. You repeat it continuously. Only through repetition, what is in your head goes down to your heart. There are people who have the word of God only in their head. They cannot experience transformation. They cannot know the power of the word. What is important is to have the word of God in your heart, not just in your head.

Once the word of God comes down to your heart from the head, wonderful changes happen. Your heart changes. Your thinking changes. Your desire changes. The way you see the world changes. Your relationship with people changes. You experience peace in your heart, joy comes alive, and you become more loving. As we studied on Friday, you become connected. You will experience the essence of life. And you will feel a strong

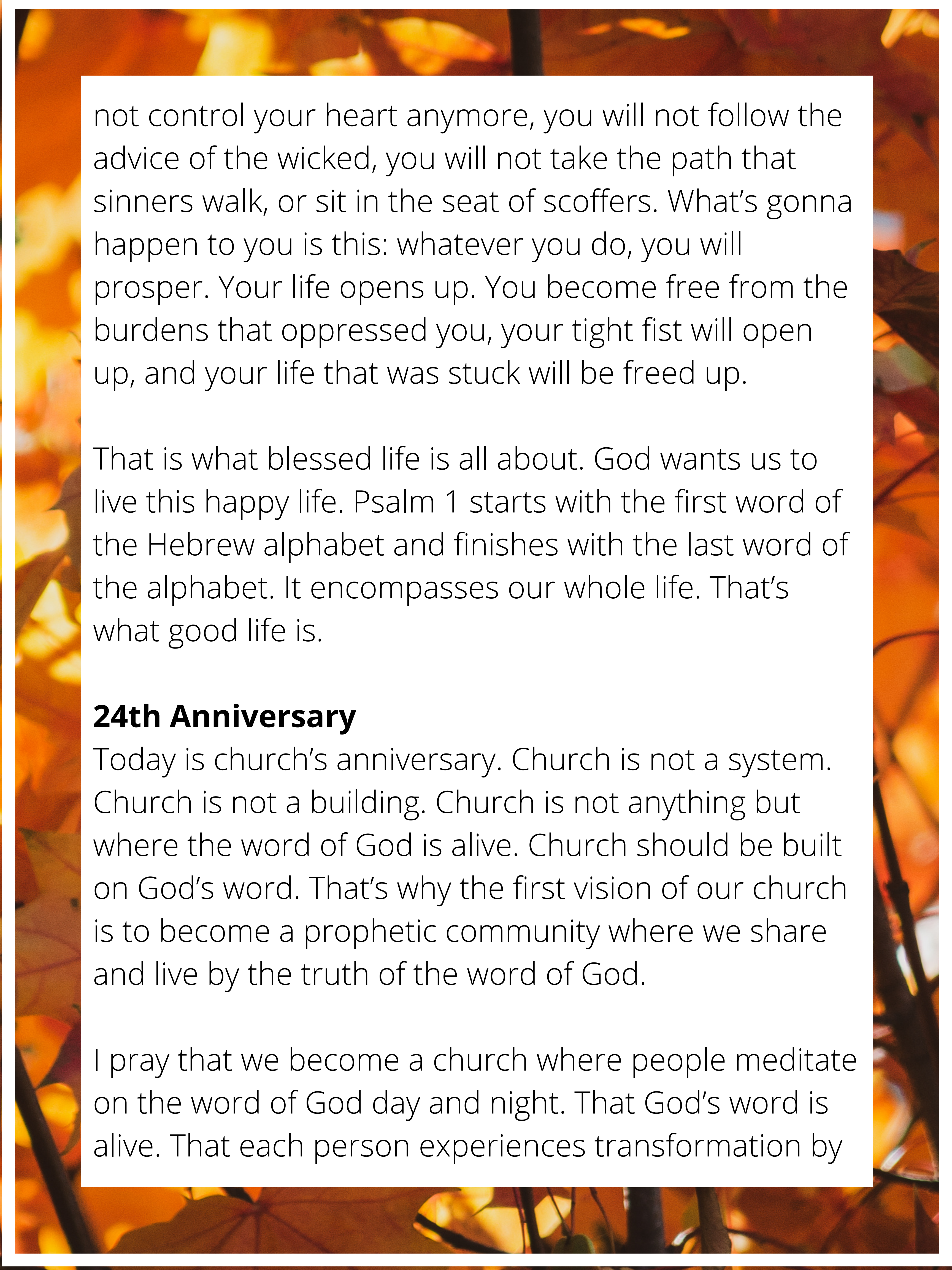


sense of community. That is what mountain top experience is like. We used to be filled with stress, frustration, complaints and anger but now we become new people. That means the word of God has traveled from your head to your heart.

When you have the word of God in your heart, you thirst for the word. The word meditation also has another meaning. It is growling. A lion growls in front of the prey because it is hungry. That hunger is what meditation is. The psalmist said that we should be delighted in the word of God. That is the same as hungering for the word of God. If you don't enjoy it, you don't do it. It is as simple as that. When the word of God comes down in your heart, you experience wonderful things and you start enjoying the word of God. You start with the meditation and through that meditation, the word of God comes down from your head to your heart, and you start enjoying it and so you do more meditation. You have now the spiritual cycle.

A Blessed Life

Once this cycle is created, then you don't have to worry about three things that you should not do. Naturally, you won't do them. Because greed and selfishness do



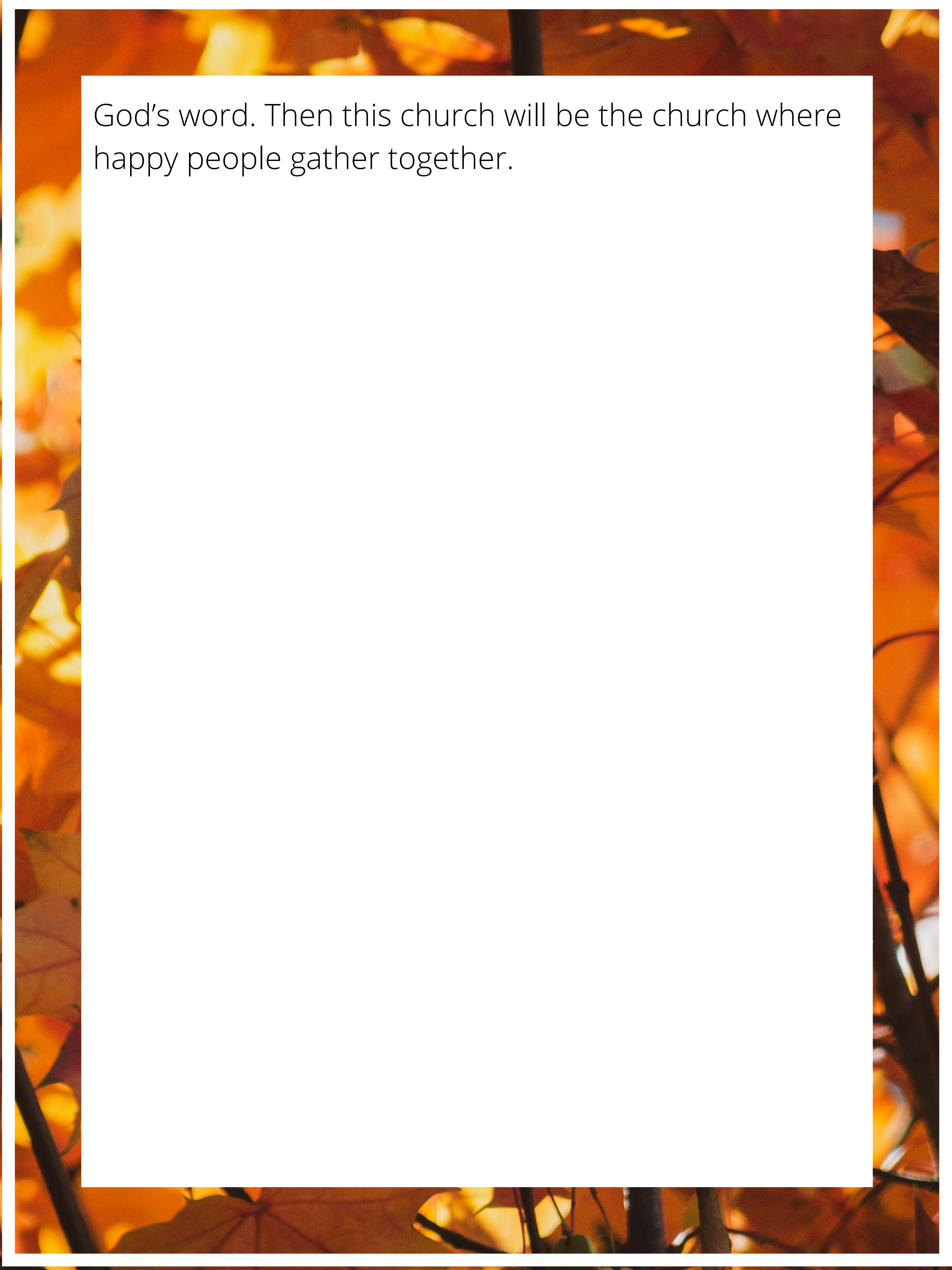
not control your heart anymore, you will not follow the advice of the wicked, you will not take the path that sinners walk, or sit in the seat of scoffers. What's gonna happen to you is this: whatever you do, you will prosper. Your life opens up. You become free from the burdens that oppressed you, your tight fist will open up, and your life that was stuck will be freed up.

That is what blessed life is all about. God wants us to live this happy life. Psalm 1 starts with the first word of the Hebrew alphabet and finishes with the last word of the alphabet. It encompasses our whole life. That's what good life is.

24th Anniversary

Today is church's anniversary. Church is not a system. Church is not a building. Church is not anything but where the word of God is alive. Church should be built on God's word. That's why the first vision of our church is to become a prophetic community where we share and live by the truth of the word of God.

I pray that we become a church where people meditate on the word of God day and night. That God's word is alive. That each person experiences transformation by



God's word. Then this church will be the church where happy people gather together.