



WOW: Word Of the Week

Cherry-Pick
March 5, 2025

I want to start with a clear, concise definition. Cherry-pick: to choose what is best or most desirable from a group.

A question. Do we cherry-pick Scripture? Do we focus on the verses we like best and pay less attention to other verses?

A little fun. I begin a Bible quotation; you fill in the blank to finish the Bible thought.

"You prove to be my disciples when you _____. I share anecdotal research.

The most common response is "love one another." Most people jump to John 13:35. "This is how people know you are my disciples." (I admit that my sample number is not large—nonetheless, I suspect it is accurate.)

The wording of the quotation I shared actually comes from John 15:8. "This is what glorifies God—that you bear much fruit and thus prove yourselves to be my disciples."

Why is one verse so much better known than the other? Short answer. We read the Bible through our own likes and dislikes, our heritage and backgrounds. We read selectively. We read to support what we believe.

We will not dwell on the two texts cited. They are merely illustrations. Our weekly WOW is the word "cherry-pick." Researchers are sometimes guilty of cherry-picking data to arrive at a predetermined hypothesis. The principle is true in scientific studies, also in the study of Scripture. Bible. We are called to let God's word dwell in us (Col. 3:16). We are to abide in that word (John 15). We must seek the whole counsel of God, to use Paul's phrasing in Acts 20.

All Scripture is profitable (2 Tim. 3:16). Yes, Paul was undoubtedly referencing the Old Testament in these words to Timothy, but the principle is true. God's inspired word equips us when we use it correctly for teaching, reproof, correction, and instruction. What happens if we do not read all of the instructions?

I have heard it said that most Christians do not have over 100 or so verses in their biblical repertoire. I do not know where you fit into that number. Maybe higher, maybe lower. Perhaps you are among those who have thousands of Bible verses at your ready command.

The point is still valid. I speak to myself. Let us be diligent students of the word of Christ—all of it! Let us not be guilty of cherry-picking God's Word! Memorable? I hope so. Tempted to cherry-pick the Bible? Don't!