

This month I want to look at the **basic discipline** of **reading God's Word**.

Reading God's Word is an essential basic to the Christian life. We live in an age where we have all sorts of different types of Bibles to encourage us to read scripture.

WHY do we need to read the Word of God daily?

Is it something we feel *we have to do*?

Is reading the Bible *a chore* that has to be done?

Is it something we do out of *a sense of guilt*?

The answer to all of these questions is a resounding no! If any of the above reasons are the motivation for reading the Word of God, then it will not last as part of your Christian walk, because it is not something motivated by the Spirit of God.

Actually, some of us can develop habits that are based in the strength of the soul/flesh life rather than the Spirit. Such reading will reap little or no value in a daily walk with God.

So what is the **main reason** for reading the Bible? The answer is simple and yet profoundly important to growth as Christians. We read God's Word for one purpose – that we might know God. D.L. Moody said; "The Word of God is not so much for our information, but rather for our transformation". We do not read God's Word to accrue a whole lot of facts but to meet God through His love letter to us.

In 2 Peter 3v18 Peter's desire for the church is summed up by declaring his passion that we, "*grow in the grace and knowledge of God*". What is the main way we get to know God? By reading the Word of God. This is a knowledge that comes from a constantly growing deep love relationship with God.

Some Christians I speak to say they are too busy to find time to spend with God. If that is true then I think it is fair to say that such people are just too busy. Recently, I was in conversation with a young Christian about this issue of time with the Lord. He said his walk was spasmodic at best because of busyness. My response was to say that the enemy, the flesh and the world, would always keep you busy. If Satan cannot stop you coming into a personal relationship with Jesus, then he will do all he can to render you ineffective in your Christian life.

We need to see that reading God's Word is integral to DEVELOPING OUR FAITH. Romans 10v17 says, "*So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God.*" Obviously, this verse has clear application in terms of a person responding to the gospel, but it also has a clear application to

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PRAISE

the Lord for:

- ★ Gifts towards our projects for Impact Africa mission trip [29 June - 19 July]. These monies are used to bless the ministries, and workers, of our partners in Africa, who generally operate "on a shoestring".
- ★ A fruitful trip to South Australia for Carl. Around 35 contacts made with orders being placed for the newspaper.
- ★ The purchase of a vehicle for our Malawi project. A vehicle is required for distribution of papers as the mail system is non-existent.

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PRAYER needed for:

- ★ Impact Africa team in South Africa [29 June - 19 July]. Pray for the Lord's protection and opportunities to share the gospel with people in the daily ministry areas.
- ★ Pray for the various ministries we work with in South Africa – Multi Ministries, World Hope Prison F/ship, Cheerful Care Givers and Vanderbijil Park Baptist Church.
- ★ New children's ministry with Vanderbijil Park Baptist Church. Pray for locals and the team as they work together for the first time, and pray many children will come to know Jesus.
- ★ The staff who will run the home office while a number of us are away for three weeks.

the Christian. If we do not read the Bible daily, we will not grow spiritually and will lack faith.

Reading God's Word brings GREAT PEACE to our heart, as David beautifully says in Psalm 119v165.

Reading God's Word is how God teaches us about Himself, ourselves, the world, and Satan to mention a few.

Again, David in Psalm 119 expresses his constant desire that God would teach him. Reading the Word of God is how we LEARN THE PROMISES of God and HOW TO APPLY THEM. This is especially so when going through tough times.

Reading God's Word helps us to MEDITATE on His Word: *"But his delight is in the law of the Lord, and in His Law He meditates days and night"* (Psalm 1v2). The Christian can only meditate on the Word that he or she has read. Meditation may involve marking, underlining, highlighting or making notes in your Bible. This meditation process can continue as we commit verses of scripture to memory. Reading the Word of God is a vital part of the process of knowing God's will for your life. Romans 12:1-2 gives us great direction on this matter.

Lastly reading God's Word gives us WISDOM AND DISCERNMENT in our daily walk. As we read the Bible, we are able to obtain the necessary wisdom and discernment required in our decision-making and choices. I firmly believe that because the Bible is not being read many Christians are making poor decisions, such as marrying a non-Christian or getting caught up with some form of immorality.

Therefore, we need to see that once we have found the Word of God we need to read it daily so it becomes an integral part of our growing, loving and serving relationship with God.

CARL CARMODY, EDITOR CHALLENGE



MY RESPONSE

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