



Why Read the Bible?

“People need more than bread for their life: they must feed on every word of God.”
(Matthew 4:4, NLT)

As food is to your physical body, so the Word of God is to your spiritual life. It is not mere words; it is life! It is a map to guide you, a light to inspire you. It is information that causes transformation. When you get into the Word and the Word gets into you, your thinking changes. New thinking brings new actions! Ignoring reading the Bible is ignoring God, leaving you susceptible to false teaching, enemy attack and despair.

Maybe you are thinking, “But I don’t like to read, especially a big thick book like the Bible. I prefer romance, mystery or action stories.” There is great news for you! In the New Testament, the action-packed stories of the early church and Paul’s missionary journeys will fascinate you. Do you want excitement? Read the Old Testament stories of how God rescued his people from Egypt or destroyed armies when his people marched out, not with weapons, but with faith, praising God! Do you want romance? Read the book of Ruth or Song of Solomon. (You won’t believe that the sexy Song of Solomon is in the Bible.) Do you want mystery? You will love the book of Esther. Murder, sexual immorality, idolatry, battles, romance, miracles and intrigue are all in the Bible. It is about real people, real problems and real solutions. However, God did not write the Bible to entertain you. Through men of old, the Holy Spirit wrote it that you might know Jesus as a Person, experience his great love for you, worship him and learn how to live to please him. The Apostle Paul said God recorded these stories for you as examples and warnings – that you might learn and obey him.

A personal love relationship

God did not forgive your sins and save you just so that you will go to heaven some day and be with him forever. He saved you because he wants to communicate and fellowship with you – beginning now! The first lesson you must learn as a Christian is that it is an absolute necessity to fellowship with Jesus each day – without exception! It is not a duty, but a privilege. When you fellowship with someone, you share your thoughts and feelings and get to know that person. In fellowship between friends and relatives, everything depends on your love for each other. Jesus said, *“I have loved you even as the Father has loved me. Remain in my love.”* (John 15:9, NLT) Do you believe that? Jesus wants you to drink in a fresh supply of his love, joy and faith each day. Then the Holy Spirit will teach you to love, obey and adore Jesus in return. You cannot do it in your own strength.

Getting to know God the Father, Jesus the Son and the Holy Spirit by reading his Word is the key to spiritual growth and power. It is the key to his filling you with his amazing love so that you might love others. It is the answer to living a life of power so that you might overcome sin through the Holy Spirit. What amazing grace (undeserved favor)!

A love letter

Before you were born, the King of the Universe prepared the Bible, a love letter to you. It is truth. It is his means of revealing himself to you that you might know him and fellowship with him. It is his primary way of changing you. He speaks to you through his Word; you speak to him through prayer. As you read, you will become aware that God is speaking. Because of his great love,

- He speaks to you by the power of his Holy Spirit.
- He replaces lies you have believed with truth.
- He forms you to become like Jesus.
- He shapes you for the tasks he has for you.

He does this by lovingly

- Pointing out any behavior that is displeasing to him,
- By correcting and pointing you to a whole new lifestyle, and
- By instructing you in right living and bringing you to maturity

Food for the soul

There is no other way to become like Jesus except to fill your life with his Word and obey it. As a plant needs water and fertilizer to grow and produce flowers, so his Word is an absolute necessity to fulfill God's plan for you. It is food for your soul – your meat, milk, bread and sweet dessert! It doesn't do any good to look at it or think about it. You must eat it, digest it and obey it. In *The Purpose Driven Life*, Rick Warren explains why you should read God's Word. He says:

God's Word generates life, creates faith, produces change, frightens the Devil, causes miracles, heals hurts, builds character, transforms circumstances, imparts joy, overcomes adversity, defeats temptation, infuses hope, releases power, cleanses our minds, brings things into being, and guarantees our future forever.

How do you fill your life with his Word so that the Holy Spirit can transform you with his truth? By choosing to read, study, memorize and meditate on his Word. God will not do for you what you can do yourself. Choose to make time each day, beginning today, to get away and be alone with God and read his Word (at least 15 minutes). Talk to God about your daily schedule. Have as your motto, NO BIBLE, NO BREAKFAST. How blessed you will be!

Attitude Check:

- How willing are you to get up a little earlier each day that you might communicate and fellowship with God, the Creator and King of the universe?

Explore:

- Read, “Studying the Bible Is Necessary for Spiritual Growth,” (2 Timothy 3:16-17) What changes in your schedule do you need to make to read the Bible and fellowship with Jesus each day?

Talking with God:

- Father, I thank you for your Word. Fill me with your love and give me a passion to fellowship with you daily by reading your Word, praying and obeying it.