



Christian Living: Bible Reading

Why Read the Bible Daily: Reason 5

Although Bible reading, like prayer, is not first about making me feel fulfilled, there *are* subjective benefits attached to Bible reading.

5. Bible Reading Leads to Spiritual, Mental and Emotional Well-Being

King David once wrote, “Your statutes are my delight; they are my counselors” (Psalm 119:24). Over the years, while regularly reading the Bible and responding in prayer, I’ve also taken counselling classes and participated in counselling-based courses. I’ve noticed something about the corrections and comforts counselling seeks to give us. The Great Counsellor does it all through Bible-based prayer. This is not to say that there is no place for human counselors. Far from it. But we have moved far from the Great Counselor when he is not our first resort for counselling. Very often, he is the only counselor we need. I have gone to the Great Counselor every day for decades. He talks to me through his word. I respond to what he says in prayer. And I can assure you, that conversation with him grounds me. Let me illustrate.

Do we need assurance of our value? Bible-based confession that **God** is our loving, attentive, and good Father will assure us of our value, no matter what others say or do. Are we anxious and fearful? Bible-based prayers acknowledging God’s in-heavenness -- his sovereignty, wisdom, power, goodness, and so on -- will give us peace and a sense of security. Is self-concern crippling us more than we recognize? Making the honor of God our first petition (and so first concern in life) will liberate us from unhappy self-concern. Praying for his kingdom to come gives us a sense of purpose and direction, if actions follow words. Praying for his revealed will to be done, and accepting his providential will (what he allows), leads to assurance that we are on the right path and helps us rest in the chaos and disappointments of life. Asking for, and receiving forgiveness comforts our consciences and liberates us from shame. Forgiving others as we wish to be forgiven frees us from bitterness. We could go on.

One need only read David’s heartfelt testimony to the subjective value of “the law” (his Bible) to get a sense of the benefits he received from reading and following God’s word. In Psalm 119 he says things like this:

“Blessed (favored/happy) are those whose ways are blameless, who walk according to the law of the LORD” (1).

“I rejoice in following your statutes as one rejoices in great riches” (14).

“I will walk about in freedom, for I have sought out your precepts” (45).

“I remember, LORD, your ancient laws, and I find comfort in them” (52).

“If your law had not been my delight, I would have perished in my affliction” (92).

“Your statutes... are the joy of my heart” (111).

“The unfolding of your words gives light; it gives understanding to the simple” (130).

“Great peace have those who love your law, and nothing can make them stumble” (165).

Bible reading, together with responsive prayer, will often transport us from fear to faith, anxiety to peace, gloom to joy, uncertainty to rest, confusion to clarity, and so on. Read your Bible responsively and you will be a more grounded person, spiritually, mentally, and emotionally.

