



Christian Living: Bible Reading

Why Read the Bible Daily: Reasons 6 and 7

We have so far considered that we ought to read our Bibles because God has commanded us to do so, Bible reading reveals God to us, nourishes us, guards our minds, and leads to spiritual, mental and emotional health. We can add to that list that we ought to read the Bible because...

6. Bible Reading Provides Instruction for Daily Living

The Bible is full of practical wisdom for daily living. God wants to help us be the person he created us to be and so get the most out of life. And so, he gives us instruction on things like love, marriage, parenting, noble character, how to approach work, how to manage money, what our goals should be, how to think of ourselves and others, how to handle failure and disappointment, what we should avoid, what he rewards, how to suffer well, truths that give us hope, how to use our tongues, and so on. God's word speaks to everything in our lives.

Learning and living by what God teaches us is very stabilizing. It is remarkably grounding to know, to simply *know* what is right, what is wrong, what is true and what is false. We can be swayed and moved by the changing winds of cultural opinions or those of the people around us, but God's word is a rock that helps us think, and so act, soundly. I recall one occasion when the chair of our elders surprised most, if not all of us, by beginning our elders' meeting with a prepared dressing down of me. As he angrily went over his criticisms of me his tone and facial expression conveyed contempt. I listened (perhaps because the Bible teaches us to listen before we answer) and as he spoke a thought occurred to me, which I shared when he was done. "(Name)," I said, "I spent some time with God just this morning and I can tell you, he does not feel *anything* like the way you feel about me." My time in God's word had made something very clear to me: flaws and all, I am a person he treasures. I am certain I have weaknesses and that God knows them, but the chairman's words and attitude were out of line and I *knew* it. Thankfully, others felt the same. God's word will ground you.

7. Bible Reading Helps Us Pray Well

God means for us to mature in our prayers. As we let Bible reading (God talking to us) inform and influence our talking to him we mature not only in prayer but in a friendship with God. Bible reading with prayer is a transforming friendship with God. If my four-year-old comes to me distraught that his blocks fell over and is begging for help, I am pleased to help him. If he comes to me with fears about a monster under the bed, I am, again, pleased to assuage his fear. But if my twenty-year-old son is still coming to me despairing of his fallen blocks and obsessed with monsters under the bed, I would be highly concerned with his lack of maturity. In the same way, God is pleased as our prayers increasingly reflect his concerns and his way of thinking as revealed in the Bible. Reading the Bible will mature our thinking, our priorities and our desires, and so also our conversations with God. Read, think, and live the Bible and his friendship will mature you.

