

“You and Your Bible”

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The written Word of God is an unprecedented privilege and treasure to possess. It is only within the last 100 years with modern technology that its availability is so wide-spread. I come from an evangelical tradition that saw daily Bible reading and personal spirituality or holiness as inseparably linked. Yet the idea of reading your Bible daily is, until recently, a novelty. Historically people did not have available to them the written Word of God. And its availability, although costly, did not guarantee that the individual was literate. Those who knew God knew Him through oral communication and visual images. I note this only to take the harsh edge off of daily Bible reading. Reading your Bible is not a Christian duty, but an unprecedented privilege.

My intent is to show you why you should take advantage of this incredibly unique opportunity to hear God’s Word and to avail yourself of it on a regular basis. I would like to begin by noting and correcting two erroneous presuppositions. First, let us correct the erroneous presupposition that “the Bible is so difficult to understand that only highly skilled theologians with technical training can deal with the Scriptures [p. 13]. And second, the erroneous presupposition that the Bible is boring.”¹ The primary hindrance to understanding the Scripture is not intelligence, but diligence. God reveals His Word to those who faithfully study its passages and depend upon the Spirit’s teaching ministry. Scripture will always be a closed book, not to the uneducated, but to the lazy and apathetic. Second, the Bible will always be a boring book to those who do not know the author or its content. For those who find its words like honey and thus sweet to their taste, such presuppositions are unfortunate.

God gave us His written Word so that we might know Him through it. His intent in communicating was to foster communion, not to cloud or prohibit. Although we do not have time to consider how the written Word came into existence, we should note the reasons as to why we should take advantage of this extraordinary opportunity to hear God’s Word on a regular basis.

The Bible not only contains the Story of God for us to ponder, its existence is a part of the one Story of God. God wrote a book about Himself and what He would do with what is His. The Bible is that Story. What makes this Story so unusual is the author behind it. It is important to remember how initially God spoke His intent to His people. From this initial communication came oral tradition. It wasn’t until well after the fact (about the 15th century BC) that the oral tradition was written down.

Not only is it important to remember that all revelation is from God, but equally so, all Scripture is from God. Second Timothy 3:16 speaks to this.

“All Scripture is **inspired** by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness” (2 Tim. 3:16).

God spoke through human instrumentation thus including in the process their individual abilities and personalities, but still guaranteeing the products continuity and solidarity. The Bible is the only one of its kind. There is no other book in the world that can correctly make this claim. This book is a love letter written by God about Himself for His creation. It tells the Story God wanted known. In noting 2 Timothy 3:16 there are two salient ideas.

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Paul used the word "Scripture." It is the Greek word **graphe**. The Greek word **graphe** is seen in our English language in such words as **graphic** (drawing or etching), **graphite** (pure carbon used as in pencils), and **graphology** (the study of handwriting). Inspiration deals with what is written. The second primary word used by Paul is "inspired." It comes from the Greek word **Theopneustos**. It means, "God breathed." It is used only here in the entire New Testament. Because the written record we hold in our hands is God-breathed, it is therefore profitable. This word given by God is useful. It is of value for the reader. It is to our advantage to read and know this book. Yet, not only is God the author of the Bible, but He is also the subject or content of the Bible. God is revealing Himself unmistakably through the written record. The Scripture is in many ways an autobiography of God. He is telling us of Himself. Listen to how John Flavel speaks to this idea.

Christ is the door that opens heaven, and knowledge is the key that opens Christ. It is profound; all other sciences are but shadows; this is a boundless, bottomless ocean; no creature has a line long enough to fathom its depths; there is height, length, depth, and breadth ascribed to it (Eph. 3:18), yea, it passes knowledge. Eternity itself cannot fully unfold him.²

Listen to how the doctrinal statement for Dallas Theological Seminary captures the centrality of Christ as the center piece of God's Story.

We believe that all the Scriptures center about the Lord Jesus Christ in His person and work in His first and second coming, and hence that no portion, even of the Old Testament, is properly read, or understood, until it leads to Him.³

As a community of faith we mark and celebrate Advent (Waiting for His Arrival), Lent (Reflecting on His Work) and Pentecost (Laboring toward His Legacy). All three elements encourage and enable us to go back to "The Story." This Story is told in the Bible. Creation is a shadow calling us to invisible and eternal truths. The Bible tells us the Story behind the shadow. There is nothing like the Story told.

It is difficult to adequately articulate the power behind the telling but there is an inherent and intrinsic power in putting yourself into the Story. God has spoken and speaks. Are you listening?

My encouragement for you is to read through your Bible this year. It is never too late to begin. I can pretty much guarantee that whatever effort you put into reading the Bible you will reap in return ten-fold. Friend, God has written **the** Story and He has written you into it; jump in and discover why.

¹ R.C. Sproul, *Knowing*, 13-15.

² *The Fountain of Life*, Sermon 1 - The Excellency of the Subject, 13-19.

³ <http://www.dts.edu/about/doctrinalstatement/>

Waukesha Bible Church is a family of families seeking to live in **the Storyline of the Bible**. She is determined by design to have a **God-centered, Christ-exalting worship; a Word-centered teaching** focused on personal **discipleship** through intentional and systematic instruction; a **Global-impacting mission** that resolves to be a **church planting church**; and a **Grace-based fellowship** where disciples are invited to live under a **reigning grace** characterized by a **Gospel-driven sanctification** that celebrates a divine **monergism** to the Christian life.