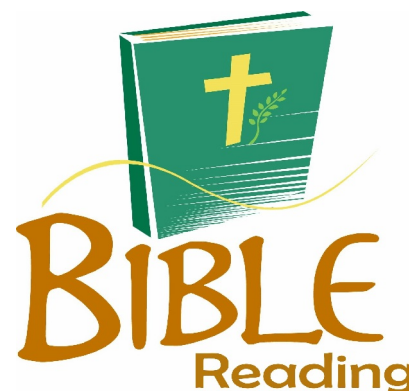


Church of God

Sunday School



THE BIBLE — WHY SHOULD I READ IT?

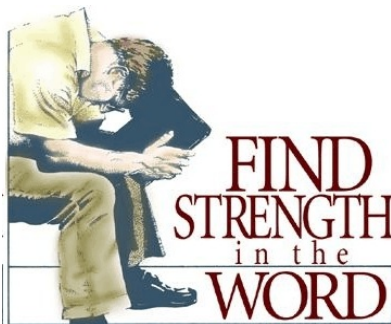
DAILY READINGS:

- ❑ **Monday:** God's Word is our guide (Psalm 119:105; Proverbs 3:6).
- ❑ **Tuesday:** God's Word is our spiritual food (Matthew 6:11; 1 Peter 2:2; Hebrews 5:13-14).
- ❑ **Wednesday:** Read God's Word so you can "give an answer" (1 Peter 3:15-16).
- ❑ **Thursday:** God commands His people to read and meditate on His Word (Joshua 1:7-8).
- ❑ **Friday:** Read of God's promises to those who obey His commandments (Psalm 1:1-3; 19:7).
- ❑ **Saturday:** Your faith in Jesus will grow by reading God's Word (John 20:30-31; Romans 10:17).

MEMORY VERSE: *"O how love I thy law! it is my meditation all the day. . . . Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path."*
—Psalm 119:97, 105

The Bible Gives Guidance and Understanding

Have you ever asked questions such as, "Why was I born?" "Why am I here?" or "What am I supposed to do with my life?" No doubt, since the beginning of time people have asked these same questions. Wouldn't it be wonderful if there was one book that held the answers to all your questions? There is! It is the Bible. It will give you understanding concerning every detail of your life. Psalm 119:105 promises that God's Word will shine a light on your path. In other words, it will show you the way you should be going. It is not in man "to direct his steps" (Jeremiah 10:23). If you will give God control of your life, "he shall direct thy paths" (Proverbs 3:6). When you make Bible reading an important part of your daily life, you will begin to hear God speaking to you about the decisions you need to make (Isaiah 30:21).



The Bible Is Your Spiritual Food

How long do you think you would survive if you quit eating and drinking? You would not live very long. It is the same spiritually. In fact, Job said, "I have esteemed the words of his mouth *more* than my necessary food" (Job 23:12). The Bible often compares God's Word to food, emphasizing the fact that spiritual food is as vital to the life of the soul as physical food is to the literal body. When teaching His disciples how to pray, Jesus said they should ask God for their "daily bread" (Matthew 6:11). In John 6:35, Jesus explained that He was the "bread of life." Peter wrote that we should desire the "milk of the word" (1 Peter 2:2). Just as newborn babies can only drink milk (simple food), so newborn Christians at first can only understand the simple, basic truths of the Bible. However, as one grows up (both physically and spiritually), he or she can begin to eat solid foods. The Bible describes this as "meat" (Hebrews 5:14). Another food that the Word is compared to is "honey" (Psalm 19:9-10). When you read something in the Bible that helps and encourages you, it is sweet!

Bible Reading Explains History, Culture, Laws, and Literature

Did you know that much of our culture has its basis in the Bible? As you become more familiar with the Bible, you will have a better understanding of historic landmarks and events, literary references, idioms (figures of speech),

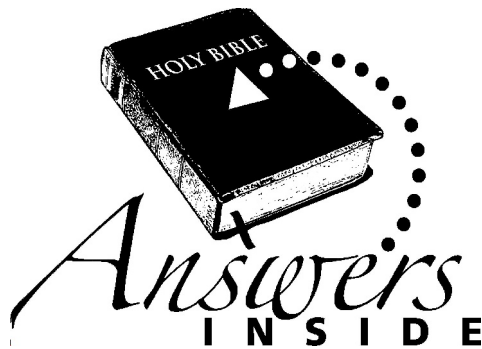
famous speeches, and many of America's laws. One famous landmark in the United States is the Liberty Bell, which is inscribed with the message of freedom found in Leviticus 25:10, "Proclaim liberty throughout all the land unto all the inhabitants thereof." In 1844 the first public message sent by telegraph in morse code (invented by Samuel Morse) was taken from Numbers 23:23—"What hath God wrought!" Many of Shakespeare's writings refer to Bible verses. Some say at least 1200 different times he referenced the Bible. It has been said that Shakespeare's plays refer to the opening chapters of Genesis so often that he must have had those chapters memorized.

Often we hear *idioms* used that come straight from the Bible. (An "idiom" is an expression that has a meaning separate from the individual word meanings; for example, "it is raining cats and dogs.") Perhaps you have heard many of these idioms without realizing their basis is in the Bible: "see the handwriting on the wall" (Daniel, Chapter 5); "at their wit's end" (Psalm 107:27); "a drop in the bucket" (Isaiah 40:15); "as old as the hills" (Job 15:7); and "by the skin of your teeth" (Job 19:20).

Many famous speeches have quoted directly from or referred to the Bible. Abraham Lincoln's famous words "A house divided against itself cannot stand" were spoken many centuries earlier by Jesus (Matthew 12:25). The well-known speech, *I Have a Dream*, given by Martin Luther King referred to the books of Amos and Isaiah (Isaiah 40:4-5; Amos 5:24). It is important you understand that many famous men and women were faithful Bible readers. Their faith in God and diligence to read His Word enabled them to become great leaders.

George Washington once said, "It is impossible to rightly govern the world without God and the Bible." The Bible is the foundation for many of the laws of the United States of America. Often people want to argue that this nation did not begin with Christian values and principles, but they are wrong. The Declaration of Independence tells us that all men are *created* (Genesis 1:1) *equal* (Galatians 3:28). It also speaks of "unalienable Rights" given by our "Creator," one of which is the right to "the pursuit of happiness" (Ecclesiastes 3:13). The three branches of our government (judicial, executive, legislative) are clearly described in Isaiah 33:22, which says, "For the LORD is our judge, the LORD is our lawgiver, the LORD is our king."

Bible Reading Prepares You to Give an Answer

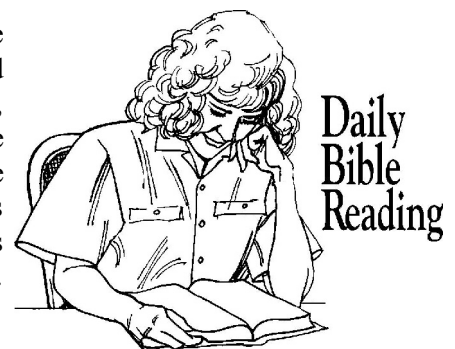


The Apostle Peter wrote in 1 Peter 3:15 of the importance to "be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you." Have you ever been asked questions about where you go to church, why you dress a certain way, or why you don't do some things? What was your answer? Did you say, "My church teaches it that way," or "My parents make me"? Are those the answers Peter was talking about? Will those answers cause your friends and classmates to want to know more? Probably not. Your answer should be personal—a reflection of your own beliefs. How do you prepare for those questions? Read your Bible. "The heart of the righteous studieth to answer" (Proverbs 15:28). Just as

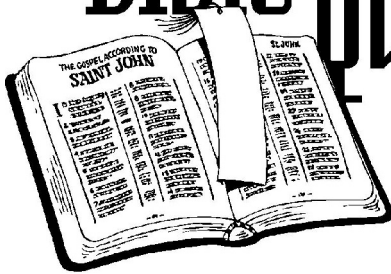
you must read and study for a test in school, so you must prepare for the spiritual questions and tests. There are many people in this world who are truly searching for a better way—are you prepared to "give an answer"?

Bible Reading Is Required

Possibly the most important reason you should read your Bible is because God says you should. There are many Scriptures that tell us of the value God places on reading, hearing, and mediating on the Bible (also called His words, laws, Holy Scriptures, precepts, and commandments). God commanded the Israelites to hear His words, keep them, teach them to their children, and write them on the doorposts of their houses and the posts of their gates. He told His people to think about His Word "day and night" (Joshua 1:8), and He has promised blessings to those who obey His commandments (Psalm 1:1-3; 19:7). God knows the importance of reading the Bible. Do you?



Bible Quiz



1. Many excuses are made for why people do not read the Bible. How would you answer the following "excuses"?

"I don't understand the Bible." _____

"The Bible is boring." _____

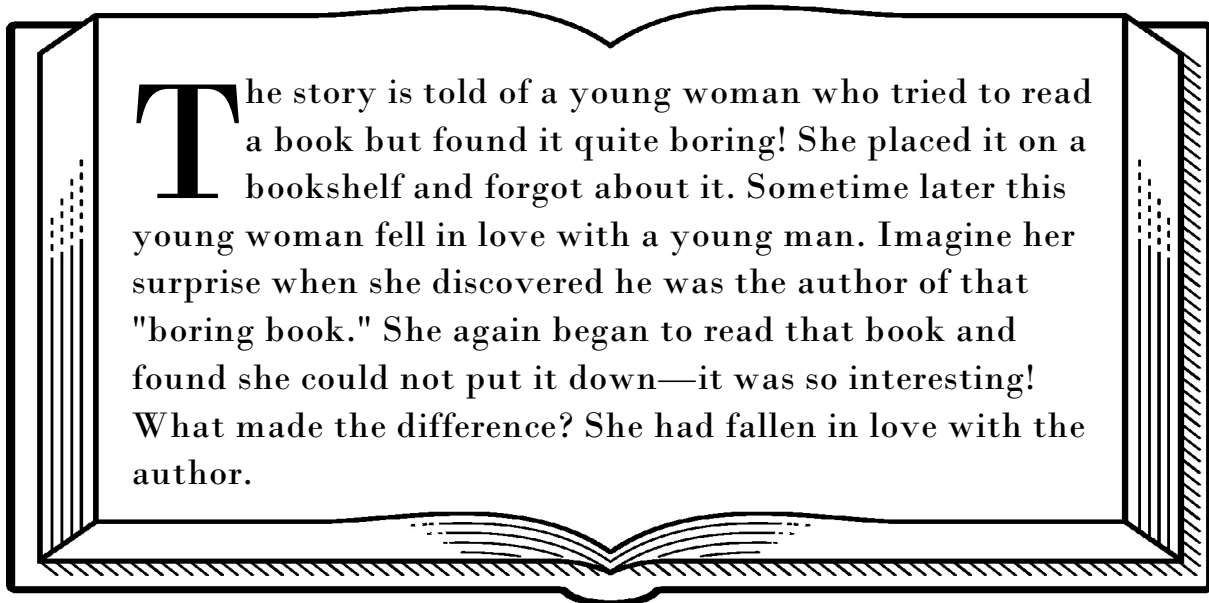
"I don't have time to read the Bible." _____

2. What is an "idiom"? _____

3. Using a concordance, find the Scripture reference for the following *idioms* (key words are underlined):

"Give up the ghost" _____ "The patience of Job" _____

"By the sweat of your brow" _____ "The apple of my eye." _____



The story is told of a young woman who tried to read a book but found it quite boring! She placed it on a bookshelf and forgot about it. Sometime later this young woman fell in love with a young man. Imagine her surprise when she discovered he was the author of that "boring book." She again began to read that book and found she could not put it down—it was so interesting! What made the difference? She had fallen in love with the author.

Quotes About

"My friend, if you are too busy to read the Bible every day, you are busier than Almighty God ever intended any human being should be, and you had better let some things go and take time to read the Bible."

(D. L. Moody)

"No one is saved by buying a Bible he does not read, nor is one saved by reading a Bible he does not obey."

(Truth Magazine)

"I am sorry for the men who do not read the Bible every day. I wonder why they deprive themselves of the strength and of the pleasure."

(Woodrow Wilson)

"Within the covers of the Bible are the answers for all the problems men face."

(Ronald Reagan)

"A thorough knowledge of the Bible is worth more than a college education."

(Theodore Roosevelt)

"A Bible that's falling apart usually belongs to someone who isn't."

(Charles H. Spurgeon)

"Hold fast to the Bible. To the influence of this Book we are indebted for all the progress made in true civilization and to this we must look as our guide in the future."

(Ulysses S. Grant)

"In all my perplexities and distresses, the Bible has never failed to give me light and strength."

(Robert E. Lee)

Bible Reading