

# Wherever you are, whenever you can.. Open up the Bible!

## 5 Reasons we don't:

1. I don't have time: life for many of us is increasingly frantic - particularly for those out at work with demanding jobs or at home with young children.

2. It's hard to understand: we prefer to have our teaching handed to us on a plate. Parts of the Bible seem difficult to relate to everyday life.

3. It's not important: In many churches the Bible is seen as less and less central to the Christian life. Other things have stepped in to take its place. I hear a talk once a week at church and go to a Bible study - so what's the big deal?

4. It's 'legalistic': Many people have grown up in churches where a daily quiet time is just one more box to tick in the Christian life - and react against it.

5. It's scary: This reason takes a lot of forms - it's 'uncool'; it doesn't fit with my freewheeling life; it's a bit extreme. Basically it boils down to this: "I'm happy with my Christian life like it is, and I'm secretly worried that starting to read the Bible will bring bigger changes into my life."

## I BIG reason we should

John is on the go from when the alarm goes off at 6:45 to when he drops into bed exhausted at midnight. It makes him dizzy even thinking about all the roles he has to fill: worker, husband, dad, friend. Oh... and being a Christian... Bible reading? There's just no time!

Sarah feels pretty much the same. She loves the talks at church on Sunday and the discussion at her Bible-study group mid week. But when she tries to open the Bible on her own, it somehow seems so much more complicated and difficult.

John and Sarah are typical of a growing trend among Christian believers, for whom the Bible remains a closed book from Monday to Saturday..

You may feel like John or Sarah. We sympathise - we really do! And we don't want to pile you up with guilt.

So here's the big reason you should think seriously about implementing this change. Are you ready for it?

## It's brilliant!

Or to put it another way, the Bible is such a stimulating, joyful, exquisite mind-and-soul-expanding gift to me, that I would quite simply be mad not to soak myself in it each day.

Maybe, like me, you have avoided daily Bible reading for a long time. I fell into the 'legalistic trap' early on in my Christian life. I then grew to think that Bible reading was old fashioned and 'just a bit dull', and convinced myself to avoid it. *How wrong could I be?*

I suspect that what was behind it was pride - that I didn't think I needed to listen to God at all. But I now see that this thinking has robbed me of one of the greatest joys imaginable.

David expresses this 'lost truth' in Psalm 19: "The testimony of the LORD is sure, making wise the simple; the precepts of the LORD are right, rejoicing the heart... more to be desired are they than gold, even much fine gold; sweeter also than honey and drippings of the honeycomb."

Where did we go so wrong that we have convinced ourselves that reading God's Word could be boring or painful, like some kind of nasty medicine? ...

## Difficulties

Reading the Bible can sometimes be difficult. That's why there are many brilliant resources to help you. Reading the Bible can sometimes be hard to fit into a busy day. That's why it's important to know that it is not about obeying a rule, but about growing in a relationship.

And that's why, just like marriage, we sometimes need to work at it for a time, before the healthy choices of regular communication become a habit and an instinct.

But I suspect the battle is won even before we open God's book. If we come to Scripture thinking of it as a love letter from God. If we pick it up knowing that it is God's gold to

make us wealthy. If we flick to our place expecting that we will read truth that will make sense of the world. If we open the page knowing that we are arming ourselves to fight against our enemies in this world. If we find where to start knowing that the Holy Spirit will help us understand.

And if we start to read knowing that our happiness depends on it, then just maybe we'll begin to look forward to, and treasure, our daily time with God.

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