**The Need to Read**

**Introduction:**

A recent study was conducted of two thousand churchgoers with adult children ages eighteen to thirty. The researchers wanted to know what parenting practices pay off over the long haul when it came to the faithfulness of their children. About forty factors were considered that could affect a child’s moral and spiritual development. The top factor which predicted the greatest faith- fullness was whether the child regularly read the Bible while growing up. What can we learn? God’s Word truly changes lives.

Since we know reading the Bible on a regular basis is helpful in keeping us and our children faithful, what about memorizing God’s Word? Are there also benefits from memorizing Scripture? The following is a partial list I have put together from a variety of sources over the years.

**Body:**

1. **It Helps Us See Detail**
* Read Matthew 4:4. “But He answered and said, ‘It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God.’ ” NKJV Jesus emphasized that “every word” is of great value to us. Scripture is God’s communication to humanity. That should motivate each of us to both read and memorize God’s Word. It’s all important down to the smallest detail. (Matthew 5:17-18) “Do not think that I came to destroy the Law or the Prophets. I did not come to destroy but to fulfill. For assuredly, I say to you, till heaven and earth pass away, one jot or one tittle will by no means pass from the law till all is fulfilled.” NKJV
1. **It Honors God**
* Recalling what someone said honors that person. Quoting something that was meaningful to you shows respect since the Bible comes from the mind of God; then memorizing it honors Him. (II Timothy 3:16-17) “All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.” NKJV
1. **It Helps Us Triumph over Sin**
* Read Psalm 119:9, 11. “How can a young man cleanse his way? By taking heed according to Your word. 11 Your word I have hidden in my heart, That I might not sin against You.” NKJV As the temptation to sin lures us into sinful action, we call to mind a word of Scripture and slay the temptation.
* It is much easier to resist temptation if you have an applicable passage committed to memory.
* Jesus used this method to defeat Satan in the wilderness. (Matthew 4:8-10) “Again, the devil took Him up on an exceedingly high mountain, and showed Him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory. And he said to Him, ‘All these things I will give You if You will fall down and worship me.’ Then Jesus said to him, ‘Away with you, Satan! For it is written: You shall worship the Lord your God and Him only you shall serve.’ Then the devil left Him, and behold, angels came and ministered to Him.” NKJV
1. **It Helps Us Be Conformed in Christ**
* Read II Corinthians 3:18. “But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory just as by the Spirit of the Lord.” NKJV If we are to be changed into true Christlikeness, we must steadily see our Lord. This happens as we come to see Him through the Word. (I Samuel 3:21) “Then the Lord appeared again in Shiloh. For the Lord revealed Himself to Samuel in Shiloh by the word of the Lord.” NKJV
1. **It Helps Us in Sharing the Gospel**
* Opportunities to share the gospel often come when we don’t have the Bible in hand. The more of God’s Word you have memorized, the better equipped you will be to have a conversation with one who asks. (I Peter 3:15) “But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts, and always be ready to give a defense to everyone who asks you a reason for the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear;” NKJV
1. **It Helps Us through Difficult Times**
* During stressful times, it calms us to recall this passage. (Psalm 46:10-11) “Be still, and know that I am God; I will be exalted among the nations, I will be exalted in the earth! The Lord of hosts is with us; The God of Jacob is our refuge.” NKJV
* When we are afflicted, the Bible gives us hope. (Psalm 119:49-50) “Remember the word to Your servant, Upon which You have caused me to hope. This is my comfort in my affliction, For Your word has given me life.” NKJV
* We can bear up through tragedy by reciting Lamentations 3:22-24. “Through the Lord’s mercies we are not consumed, Because His compassions fail not. They are new every morning; Great is Your faithfulness. The Lord is my portion, says my soul, Therefore I hope in Him!” NKJV
1. **It Brings God’s Blessings**
* Read Joshua 1:8. “This Book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate in it day and night, that you may observe to do according to all that is written in it. For then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have good success.” NKJV By letting God’s Word dwell in us richly, God blesses us with spiritual strength, profound hope, and a closer communion with God. (Psalm 1) “Blessed is the man Who walks not in the counsel of the ungodly, Nor stands in the path of sinners, Nor sits in the seat of the scornful; But his delight is in the law of the Lord, And in His law he meditates day and night. He shall be like a tree Planted by the rivers of water, That brings forth its fruit in its season, Whose leaf also shall not wither; And whatever he does shall prosper. The ungodly are not so, But are like the chaff which the wind drives away. Therefore the ungodly shall not stand in the judgment, Nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous. For the Lord knows the way of the righteous, But the way of the ungodly shall perish.” NKJV

**Conclusion:**

* We have seen how vitally important memorizing God’s Word is.
* As seen in both the Old and New Testaments, God’s Word brings life. (Proverbs 7:1-2) “My son, keep my words, And treasure my commands within you. Keep my commands and live, And my law as the apple of your eye.” NKJV (John 6:63) “It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh profits nothing. The words that I speak to you are spirit, and they are life.” NKJV

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