

Banner

"You have set up a banner for those who fear you, that it may be displayed because of truth." Psalm 60:4



*"Pleasing God,
Making Disciples
of
Jesus Christ"*

A COMMUNICATION MINISTRY OF QUIDNESSETT BAPTIST CHURCH

Books, books, books, and more books! They line the walls of my office. Please spare me and don't ask, "How many of these have you not read?" I will confess ahead of time. Yes, unread books occupy some space on the shelves. I don't feel too badly for I know some of you have libraries where unread book long for attention or unfinished books dwell begging to be finished.

The reading of good books suffers in the lives of many believers today. Discipline of time, discipline of the heart and mind, and the mere discipline of staying at it lacks in many Christians. Evidence to this truth is the failure of the church to impact effectively the culture with the Gospel. And the greatest evidence may be found in the lack

of Bible knowledge in professing followers of Jesus Christ. This further gives way to negligence in the discipline and delight of reading the scriptures consistently.

What lies behind this root problem of a lack of reading both good books and the best book, the

"What lies behind this root problem of a lack of reading?"

Bible? Many excuses or causes exist. I certainly don't have the time or space to detail everything under the sun which drives us away from reading. However, it is worth our limited space and time in the Banner to investigate the topic and hopefully, by God's grace, to generate a little discipline and delight in reading good books and the scriptures more faithfully.

So, sit back and be challenged by this issue of your Banner!

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The Quidnessett BANNER

GOSPEL GLIMPSES

Since this portion of the Banner centers on the Gospels, let me ask you some Gospel-oriented questions. How do you read them? As other books in the Bible? True. Do you read them to see examples both from Jesus and His disciples? Good. What about reading them to see the works of Jesus? Excellent, but what about this approach? Have you ever considered reading the Gospels to draw Jesus into your life in a personal way?

I guess what I am hinting at is simply this—try reading the Gospels with a single desire to simply sit at the feet of Jesus and know Him. After all, Jesus said the scriptures witness of Him (JOHN 5:39). You may ask, “How do I do that?” Let me offer a few suggestions and I

will begin with a very simple one.

First and foremost, take your time! It is quite all right to spend an hour in John 1:1-14. The quality of the reading far outweighs the quantity. Remember, the goal that keeps us looking for Jesus and finding Him demands a quality search.

Secondly, realize the Bible is God’s Word to you. Sure it is “the” Bible, but also it is “your” Bible. Read the Gospels to encounter your Savior, your Lord, your Master.

Thirdly, strive to see how Jesus dealt with people. He will deal with you in like manner. The writer of Hebrews tells us Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today, and forever (HEBREWS 13:8). Now God certainly has the prerogative to deal with us out of His character as He chooses both collectively and individually. In the Gospels, the Jesus

who said to the woman caught in adultery, “Neither do I condemn you, go and sin no more” (JOHN 8:11) will meet you with the same type of compassion and acceptance.

A fourth suggestion—don’t give up. The precious experience of the grace and knowledge found in intimacy with Jesus Christ makes the labor, and it will be labor, worth all the effort. Solomon tells us in PROVERBS 2:1-5 to understand the fear of the Lord and find the knowledge of God demands a miner of precious metals approach. Hard toil, but oh the obtaining of the goal!

Finally, pray, pray, and pray through your reading of the Gospel. Ask the Lord Jesus to reveal Himself to you through the power and understanding given by His Spirit in the Word.

THE PASTOR’S PEN

Books, books, books and more books! Sound familiar? Repetitive? Yes. I opened the Banner with the very same words. Why so?

One of the keys to good reading is repetition. J. Oswald Sanders in his classic book *Spiritual Leadership* cited Canon Yates who advised that every good book needs three readings. The first should be rapid and continuous, to give your mind an overview. The second reading should be careful and paced. Take notes and think. Then after an interval of time, a third reading should be like the first.

You may be thinking just as I am—“There are so many good books to read. If I donate each book to three readings, I won’t get much read.” Really? The key to our understanding of reading good books in a repetitive and prosperous manner

is to determine what constitutes a good book. A. W. Tozer said, “Why does today’s Christian find the reading of great books always beyond him? The major cause of decline in the quality of current Christian literature is not intellectual but spiritual.” Christian publishers flood the

“The definition of a good book is one that includes serious thinking.”

market with their offerings as fast as heavy rain deluges streets. The question is, “Is everything with the label Christian worth reading?”

Tozer’s statement penetrates the soul with deep examination of not only how I read, but what I read. So what really determines if a book is worthy of the time to mine its worth?

Though J. Oswald Sanders’ book on spiritual leadership is geared toward leaders particularly, its princi-

ples toward reading apply to all. The definition of a good book, according to Sanders, is basically one that includes serious thinking and equipping one for higher service in the kingdom of God. Now don’t be quick to grab a “how to book”. This definition of a good book extends to great biographies, classics, and not just those of a Christian perspective. For instance, reading history is both enjoyable, challenging, and should be a part of the reading staple in all of us.

Back to the beginning as we close. If we reduce the amount of reading for the quality of reading to include repetition, our profit would be far greater. Daniel Webster preferred to master a few books rather than read widely. It’s been said, “a man *or woman* is known by the company he *or she* keeps and his *or her* character reflected by the books read.” (italics mine)



THE DISCIPLINE OF GRACE

Jerry Bridges
NAVPRESS

Paperback, 242 pages

How much do you need grace? In a tough jam and cry out, “Father, I need grace!” Or perhaps things are going smoothly—still need grace?

Author Jerry Bridges puts forth an excellent and practical book showing us we need grace all the time.

Looking at the issue of God’s role and our role in the pursuit of holiness, Bridges clearly reveals everything is about God’s grace. God is the provider and sustainer for the Christian in all areas and at all times in life. If you are looking for help in the pursuit of Godly living, let this Biblically-sound book teach you the wonder and availability of amazing grace.

QUOTABLE QUOTE

“Your worse days are never so bad that you are beyond the reach of God’s grace.”

JERRY BRIDGES

Life was coming to an end. The race nearly finished. The battle close to complete victory. In the ebbing of his life, he thinks of others first and then self. He writes a farewell testimony to his mentoree and one who would carry the torch of the Gospel.

The Apostle Paul pours out his heart to young Timothy, “As I remember your tears, I long to see you, that I may be filled with joy” (2 TIMOTHY 1:4). He encouraged the young pastor and toward the end of the letter Paul gives some personal instructions. One of them dealt with books; “When you come, bring the cloak that I left with Carpus at Troas, also the books, and above all the parchments (2 TIMOTHY 4:13).

Why is this significant? This was Paul’s second imprisonment and there was no chance of release.

WALKING WITH THE MASTER

The apostle entered the path of the martyr. And one of his last requests consisted of reading material.

What does this indicate about reading? It was a priority in the Apostle Paul’s life. Reading must be a priority in our lives or the unread books or unfinished books will continue to line the shelves of our libraries.

How do we make reading a priority? Not difficult. Simply schedule it in the day. J. Oswald Sanders recommends a minimum of half an hour a day reading books that feed the soul and stimulate the mind. Don’t be discouraged. Think about “dead time” throughout the day. Maybe less television? We can prioritize our reading just like the Apostle Paul!

DID YOU KNOW?



Christianity played a vital, but little known role in the American Revolution. Did you know?

- During the war, the pulpit played a key role in encouraging dissent. The political activism of these black-robed ministers earned them the name “the black regiment.”
- At the bottom of the original Declaration of Independence, the Continental Congress ordered copies of the Declaration first be sent not to town clerks, but to parish ministers, who were “required to read the same to their respective congregations after the morning service on the Lord’s Day”.
- The war was supported by most Baptist men and one Baptist woman. In 1782 Massachusetts Baptist Deborah Sampson donned a soldier’s uniform and successfully enlisted in the Continental Army as Private Robert Shurtliff. Her identity was undetected for over a year and she was wounded twice.
- English Bibles were not printed in America until a year after the Declaration of Independence, when an edition of the King James Version New Testament was published.
- The 1783 Treaty of Paris begins in the “In the name of the most Holy and undivided Trinity.”

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The Recovery of Reading

QBC HAPPENINGS

NOVEMBER 2006

- Young at Heart Fellowship will be held on *Tuesday, November 14th*
- Evangelical Minister's Fellowship combined church Thanksgiving service will be held on *Sunday at 6:00 p.m. November 19th*
- QBC Family Thanksgiving Day service will be held at *8:30 a.m. Thursday, November 23rd*
- Part 2 of the DVD series DOES THE TRUTH MATTER ANY-MORE? will be shown on *Sunday evening, November 26th*
- Men's Ministry Fellowship will be held *Tuesday, November 28th*.

DECEMBER 2006

- Young at Heart Christmas Program will be held on *Tuesday, December 12th beginning with dinner at 5:45 p.m.*
- Part 3 of the DVD series DOES THE TRUTH MATTER ANY-MORE? will be shown on *Sunday evening, December 17th*
- Men's Ministry Fellowship will be held *Tuesday, December 28th*.

THE QUIDNESSETT

Banner

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The Quidnessett Banner is the bi-monthly newsletter of Quidnessett Baptist Church. It is free of charge and readily available for all who would like to be placed on our mailing list. If you desire to receive The Quidnessett Banner in your home, simply contact the church office.

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