

## BIBLICAL WATERSHED ISSUES: Reading the Entire Bible as a Habit

### *There Is No Command to Read the Bible – Or Is There?*

*“And yet, it’s nowhere suggested or commanded in Scripture for average Christ-followers who in most ages in most places have not been able to read the Word regularly. Instead meditation or spending time thinking about the Word of God is. Just an observation that I think cuts to the heart of why there is no such law/command.”*

#### **Is there an expectation by God for Christians to be reading the entire Bible?**

*I understand what you say, but I would argue that the Bible implicitly expects “average Christ-followers” to be familiar with the entire Bible. While I agree that there is no command to “read through your Bible every year” or regularly, we do know the following:*

- (1) \_\_\_\_\_ **Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable** [for four listed functions, beyond making one wise unto salvation]. This fact declares the value of all of Scripture, which seems to implicitly expect believers to be accessing all of Scripture.
- (2) **Believers are commanded to** \_\_\_\_\_, but one cannot meditate upon “the Law” without being aware of it in some sense of its entirety. Psalm 1:2 (“in the Law”), Joshua 1:8-9 (meditate “in it”) would expect the reader to meditate on the fullness of the Law, not just an “Our Daily Bread” verse out of context. One cannot meditate upon what one has not been adequately exposed to. I in no way expect to cover all of the Bible in sermons and studies in my lifetime. The only way believers will get all of God’s Word is to read it.
- (3) **Believers are pointed to meditate** \_\_\_\_\_ **on God and His works** by David in the Psalms. David says that he would meditate:
  - “on all Your work” (77:12) and “works” (143:5)
  - “on Your precepts” and “contemplate Your ways” (119:15)
  - “on Your wondrous works” (119:27)
  - “on Your statutes” (119:48)
  - “on Your word” (119:148)
  - “on the glorious splendor of Your majesty” (145:5)We know these things not by a cheat sheet but by reading God’s Word.
- (4) **Believers are to meditate** \_\_\_\_\_ (“day and night,” Ps. 1:2; Josh 1:8-9). It implies that, in part, the quantity of Scripture requires life-long, all-the-time focus. It is not a small thing, but the foundation for all of life.
- (5) **Believers are commanded to think and meditate on** \_\_\_\_\_. What is true, noble just, pure, lovely, of good report, virtuous, and praiseworthy (Phil 4:8). These can only be identified in the Word.

- (6) **Believers are to let the Word of Christ** \_\_\_\_\_ **in them richly.** (Col 3:16). This presents an expectation of knowledge of “average followers” being exposed to the entire Word. The accompanying practices for letting the Word of Christ dwell in one richly includes teaching and admonishing one another (which requires Biblical knowledge) and singing with Biblical content (psalms, hymns, spiritual songs).
- (7) **Believers need the** \_\_\_\_\_ **that come from reading the Bible every day.** I would argue that there are no average Christ-followers. In the OT, kings were required to write a copy of Scripture which existed at the time they ruled. Each king was to read it “all the days of his life” in order to learn to fear the LORD, to be careful to observe all the words of this law and these statutes, to remain humble, and to prevent turning aside from God’s commands (Deut 17:14-20). Every one of those benefits of reading daily for kings applies to us today. Believers are also called kings and priests (Rev 1:6), so this may directly apply.
- (8) **Believers are promised** \_\_\_\_\_ **for reading the Book of Revelation.** The promised blessing may also relate to the entire Bible. **Rev. 1:3** *Blessed [is] he who reads and those who hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written in it...*
- (9) **Believers as disciples are, by definition,** \_\_\_\_\_, **required to know and grow in the knowledge of the Lord.** Listening is limited means that requires more than even listening to multiple teaching sessions each week. (Matt 28:20; Col 2:6-8)  
**Col. 2:7** *rooted and built up in Him and established in the faith, as you have been taught, abounding in it with thanksgiving.*
- (10) **Believers today have** \_\_\_\_\_ **to the Scriptures** where others throughout history did not. The translation, transmission, the invention of the printing press, the availability of paper, the invention of digital storage and transmission, enabling the Word on audio and mobile devices, and the educating of people who can read all give to us both the opportunity and the responsibility that others did not have. To whom much is given, much is required (Luke 12:48).
- (11) **We have** \_\_\_\_\_ **to read like no other culture or generation.** The average American watches 5 hours of TV a day, and spends over 3 hours a day online (a total of 11 hours a day with screen time/digital media). *How is this even possible?* We no longer grow our own food or raise our own meat. We no longer have to walk places, or to prepare and ride a beast that we feed and care for. We have appliances that speed up almost any task, and allow us to avoid going to the store for our daily needs. We no longer are required to bake bread, cook from scratch, pump or heat water, or cut firewood. We must redeem the time, because the days are evil. (Eph 5:16)