

Did You Know Reading the Bible Can Increase Your IQ?

I've been helped by a lot of books in my lifetime. The Bible has helped me more than any other book—by several orders of magnitude.

Here is what the Bible claims it can do for you:

1. It will inspire you. When I read the story of David killing his giant enemy with nothing but five stones and a sling, I start to think that maybe I can conquer the giants in my life. When I read the story of Daniel rising to become prime minister of a large foreign country, I think maybe I can do a little more than I am right now.

When I read about Moses delivering 2 million people from slavery, Esther preventing the genocide of her people, Elijah calling out the prophets of Baal, Ruth's unswerving loyalty to her mother-in-law, Stephen standing up to the Sanhedrin, Paul facing beatings and imprisonment and Jesus going to the cross on behalf of the sin of the world, I'm inspired. My dreams get bigger, my determination gets stronger and my adrenaline flows like Rocky Balboa yelling, "Yo, Adrian!"

2. It will speak the truth to you and about you. Hebrews 4:12 says, "For the word of God is alive and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart" (NIV).

Sometimes when I read the Bible, God's Spirit whispers, "The truth about you is, you're shallow." Or, "You're lazy." Or, "You like to take shortcuts." The Spirit convicts me that I can be better.

3. It will teach you. Paul says, "All Scripture is God-

breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the servant of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work”(2 Tim. 3:16-17). I call this passage “The 2 Timothy Road” because it follows the pattern of a person getting onto a road and then running off it and getting steered back onto it again.

The Bible *teaches* me the way to live. In effect, it says, “This is the road. Walk on it.”

4. It will rebuke you. Inevitably, when I wander off the road, the Bible *rebukes* me. It says, “Hey! You’re off the road.”

5. It will correct you. Once it has my attention, the Bible lovingly *corrects* me, whispering, “This is the way to get back on the road.”

6. It will train you. And once I’m back on the road, the Bible *trains* me in how to stay on the road.

7. It will increase your I.Q. Psalm 119:98-99 promises that reading the Bible will make you wiser than your enemies and give you more insight than your teachers. That’s worth the investment of a few minutes a day, isn’t it?

8. It will prolong your life. Deuteronomy 32:47 says that by taking God’s words into my heart I will “live long.” That’s definitely worth the investment of a few minutes a day!

9. It will transform you. Romans 12:2 says, “Be transformed by the renewing of your mind.” The Greek word “transform” is our word “metamorphosis.” Caterpillars metamorphose into butterflies. When I read the Bible, it changes me from one thing into something better.

The average American is exposed to around 5,000 messages per day. Most of those are designed to make you a better consumer. God’s will is that we become increasingly good givers and lovers, not buyers and wearers. Every message I hear, see or

experience changes me in some small way. I want to expose myself to messages that change me for the better. That means messages from the Bible!

10. It will make you prosperous and successful. The promise of Joshua 1:8 is prosperity and success to those who read, think about, talk about and do what the Bible says: “Do not let this Book of the Law depart from your mouth; meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do everything written in it. Then you will be prosperous and successful.” People spend a lot of time trying to get ahead in this world. The Bible indicates that the best (and maybe the *easiest*) way to get ahead is to read the Bible day and night.

Thomas Jefferson once said, “The studious perusal of the sacred volume will make better homes, better citizens, better fathers and better husbands.”

If that’s true, then why don’t we “studiously peruse the sacred volume” more?

Here are four reasons why we don’t read the Bible more:

1. We think we’re too busy. Somehow we think there are better ways to invest our time than learning from what God has to say to us in His Word.

2. We’re proud. We think we don’t need God’s advice and perspective. We shelve the Bible and relegate it to religious times, rather than absorbing it in our everyday lives.

3. We don’t really want to change. Change can be stretching. Sometimes we’d rather stay in the muckhole we’re in than climb to better, safer, more pleasant heights.

4. The devil doesn’t want us to. The devil knows that the Bible can do all the things we’ve listed here, and he’d rather *anything* happen to you than you experience the growth and blessings of God. The minute you determine to sit down

with your Bible, he will distract you, woo you away, make you false promises and do anything else to keep you from reading God's Word.

Jesus said, "Man does not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God" (Matt. 4:4). If we want to be fed in a healthy way, we've got to be absorbing the words of God. The more often we read, the more steadily we grow. Period.

That pretty much settles it, don't you agree?

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