

Why You Need God's Word Every Day

I have never been accosted by the devil after 40 days of fasting in the desert. Not once. Not a single time. So, when I read the account of Jesus' temptation in the wilderness (Matt. 4:1–11; Mark 1:12–13; Luke 4:1–13), my brain wants to make me a mere spectator, filing the passage away as a story that applies only to Jesus.

In a certain sense, that's right. Jesus's confrontation with Satan in the desert of Judea was a unique event in salvation history, a pivotal moment when Christ believed God and resisted the devil where Adam failed to do so. But each time Jesus answered the enemy, He did so with Scripture, applying the truths of God's Word to all of us.

"Do not test the Lord your God" (Matt. 4:7b, CSB). Yup, that includes me.

"Worship the Lord your God, and serve only him" (v. 10b). Count me in. I'm totally on board.

"Man must not live on bread alone but on every word that comes from the mouth of God" (v. 4b). I've heard these words a thousand times, and they always stop me in my tracks. Do I really live as though I need words from God as much as I need my next meal?

I'm the dad of three small boys, so when I'm not at the office, you can usually find me changing a diaper, tackling a toddler before he smears grape jelly on the wall or gluing together the latest casualty of a toy-car demolition derby. Most evenings, my wife and I fall into bed, exhausted by the three spirited arrows God has graciously placed in our quiver (Ps. 127:3–5).

I understand the need for bread—for sustenance, for nourishment, for something to remove the ache of hunger in the midst of a busy day—but the idea of finding a comfortable chair in a quiet place, opening up my Bible and hearing from the Lord seems reserved for those lucky few with more time on their hands than they know what to do with. That's why Jesus' words hit me across my brow like a two-by-four. In the same way I need food to survive, He says, I need the Word of God.

Each of the Scriptures Jesus used to thwart the devil comes from the book of Deuteronomy. Here's the fuller context of His statement about bread and the words of the Lord:

You must remember that the Lord your God led you all the way these forty years in the wilderness, to humble you, and to prove you, to know what was in your heart, whether you would keep His commandments or not. He humbled you and let you suffer hunger, and fed you with manna, which you did not know, nor did your fathers know, that He might make you know that man does not live by bread alone; but man lives by every word that proceeds out of the mouth of the Lord (Deut. 8:2-3).

It can be easy to forget that God's Word is just as necessary to our well-being as three square meals a day. Our flesh has a built-in timer to let us know when we should stop for a bite, but there is no such alarm for a regular intake of Scripture. God used the natural sensation of hunger, coupled with the miraculous gift of manna, to remind the Israelites in the wilderness that their need for His Word was just as great as their need for lunch.

It's been roughly 3,500 years since the wilderness wanderings, but nothing has changed. Like those early Israelites, we, too, need "every word that proceeds out of the mouth of the LORD" in order to live.

Aside from those who suffer from severe mental or physical

infirmities, people don't stop eating. No one ever says, "I'm just too busy. I'm going to have cut out this pesky three-meals-a-day eating habit. Think of what I'll be able to accomplish if I don't ever stop to eat." Busy people keep right on eating, though they tend to snack more, eating whatever is convenient or happens to satisfy a craving in the moment. Over the course of years, this can lead to severe health problems. The same is true of our spiritual diets. We never really stop eating, but if we're not feasting on God's Word, we're feasting on something else—whatever messages the world plates up for us. That sort of regimen leads to spiritual health problems, and can make us sluggish and ineffective for the kingdom.

Like healthful eating, partaking of God's Word daily can become something we no longer want to live without. That's why, even when the crowds began to desert Jesus, His 12 disciples clung to Him. Peter spoke for the group, "Lord, to whom will we go? You have the words of eternal life" (John 6:68). A daily habit in the Bible can be just like that. There's nothing quite like the Bible—nothing so living and active, powerful and effective (Heb. 4:12), nothing else with the power to renew our minds (Rom. 12:2), and nothing quite so critical to a life of godliness (2 Tim. 3:16–17). After I began spending time in the Bible every day, I started to wonder how I ever survived without it.

At He Reads Truth—the aforementioned office where I spend my non-toddler-chasing hours—we are cultivating a community of "men in the Word of God every day." That's why we made the *He Reads Truth Bible*, a Bible designed for daily reading.

The typeface and single-column setting combine to create pages that read like a novel, while the theological extras and book introductions help connect individual passages to the larger story the Bible is telling. And with daily reading plans for every day of the year and every book of the Bible, there is no shortage of ways to feast on God's Word.

You can find out more about the *He Reads Truth Bible*, as well as our community reading plans, apps and legacy books at .

*As the content director for She Reads Truth, He Reads Truth and Kids Read Truth, **John Greco** has the best job in the world. He wakes up every morning hardly believing he actually gets paid to study Scripture and write about it. John and his wife, Laurin, live south of Nashville, where they daily wrangle their three small boys and dream of someday being the ones who get to take all the naps.*