

The Bible: Using It in Our Home

My earliest recollections of the Bible were taught to me by my mother. I don't remember specifically reading the Bible with her, but I have always understood it to be the most precious book ever written. It is God's Word. It is where we can understand and learn about the walk of a believer, a child of God. The psalmist wrote, "Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path" (Ps. 119:105).

The Bible—A Book of Faith

In today's world, the Bible is not looked at as God's Word. It is thought of by many as a book of fables. The guidance that the Bible gives us, as believers, is thought of as old fashioned. Man, in his own mind, feels that he can decide what is best for himself. This kind of reasoning is dangerous to the faith-life of a believer. When we replace faith and trust in God's Word with reasoning of our own minds, we lose sight of what is sin. The Bible and its teachings no longer has authority. Reasoning replaces living faith. The Word ceases to be a "light unto my path."

Teach with God's Word

It is so important to teach our children that the Bible is at the center of the life of a child of God. Through God's Word, we come into living faith. God gives His own the gift to preach the gospel one to another. Because our sins are forgiven in Jesus' name and blood, we receive the Holy Spirit. This Holy Spirit is what allows the believers to understand the Bible in the same way. It is the common understanding that binds us together as one congregation.

Take time with your children around God's Word. The Bible is where God reveals himself to His own. The *Illustrated Home Bible*, available at the LLC bookstore, is a good source for introducing the Bible to your little ones. When we go to church, we can listen to a sermon based on God's Word and revealed by the Holy Spirit. We can visit with our family about faith matters in our home congregation, and the Holy Spirit guides our thoughts. We can talk with a friend about the way and the journey, and God will bless that conversation of His own children. We can search the Bible when we are troubled or need comfort and God, through His Spirit, feeds us. We grow up with the assurance that we are precious cared for in God's flock by the gospel. We only need to trust and look to God's Word for guidance.

When trials come and we become burdened by sin, it becomes harder to see the guidance of the Holy Spirit. When we put away our sins and have them forgiven in Jesus' name and blood, the light of the Holy Spirit burns brightly again.

God Will Guide

Although I spent some of my teenage years in unbelief, I always knew this: if we put away our sins in Jesus' name and blood, and believe, God will guide us through His Word and His Spirit, and we will reach heaven one day. That was a simple truth taught to me by my mother. She believed and she shared her simple faith with her children. She did not have a great knowledge of the Bible, but she taught us what was needed from God's Word, guided by the Holy Spirit.

When I think back to the time of the spiritual schism in the 1970s, I remember the confusion surrounding God's flock. We could see the differences in the understanding of people in the church. I remember praying to the Heavenly Father to lead us in the truth. It was shown so clearly to the believers to trust that God would guide us through His Word. There is only one doctrine, one way of repentance, that is spoken of in the Bible. Our faith could only be based on the Bible. I didn't know where to look in the Scriptures, but I knew God would guide His own through the Spirit and His Word.

This time of my life was my first experience in reading the Bible, totally having to trust that He would show me the way. I didn't have to bring anything of myself. I needed only to believe that even my greatest failings were forgiven in Jesus' name and blood. Thus believing, we could be confident that God's Word would guide His own. It was amazing how clear the needed portions of Scripture were! What a joy to sit in church and have God feed His flock! Visits with God's children were so precious. It was as though we were taken by the hand and led through this storm.

Trust in God

This lesson in trust has come back to us many times as we have raised our family. When we came upon trials, the memory of God guiding us with His Word through those times, moved us to trust that He will show us every day what we need in our little home congregations. I know I didn't read the Bible as often as I should. Many times we had to turn to God with the prayer, "Please, God, help me to guide these little ones in Your way, not my way." We often used a topical index to locate Scripture portions. Many visits with our elder escorts in faith guided our understanding. Talking over the trials of the day with other parents was a help.

Teaching in the Home Congregation

Dad used the bedtime "tucking in" as a time where prayers were said and time was set aside to discuss the events of the day. Sometimes the discussion was of every day matters; sometimes it was the trials of the journey in faith. God blessed these visits. The gospel was preached. We have many precious memories where God blessed these "tucking in" visits.

Often I stayed up after the little ones were in bed, with the prayer that God would inspire one of my teenage kids to join me for a visit. Some, more than others, would come in and sit down. These visits had no structure, but often one teenager or another would bring up things in their lives. Sometimes they would be everyday matters, other times we would discuss issues pertaining to our walk in faith. During these spiritual visits, it was comforting when God helped us back our conversation with Scripture. It felt good to part for the night with the assurance that all sins were washed away in that cleansing gospel.

Faith First, Then Understanding

As I look back on life, I can clearly see that it never has been about what I knew, or how I understood, but rather how graciously God guided through His Word. He has freely given wisdom and understanding when we need it. The gospel has healed the tired traveler over and over again. Please God, grant us a willing heart to serve in this precious home congregation as we travel on our way to heaven. Help us to remember that "Thy Word is a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path."

Edna Kesti

Questions to Discuss:

1. Why is it so important to use the Bible, God's Word, in our daily walk of faith? How can we teach this to our children?
2. Discuss using faith and the Bible as our guide, versus reasoning and our mind as our guide.
3. Why is putting sins away as they attach so important to faith?
4. God gives us what we need, and He gives it when we need it. Can you think of examples in your life when this has happened?