

5: WHEN BIBLE READING FEELS MORE LIKE A CHORE THAN A LIFELINE

By John
In Discipline, Faith, Mindset

4 Min Read

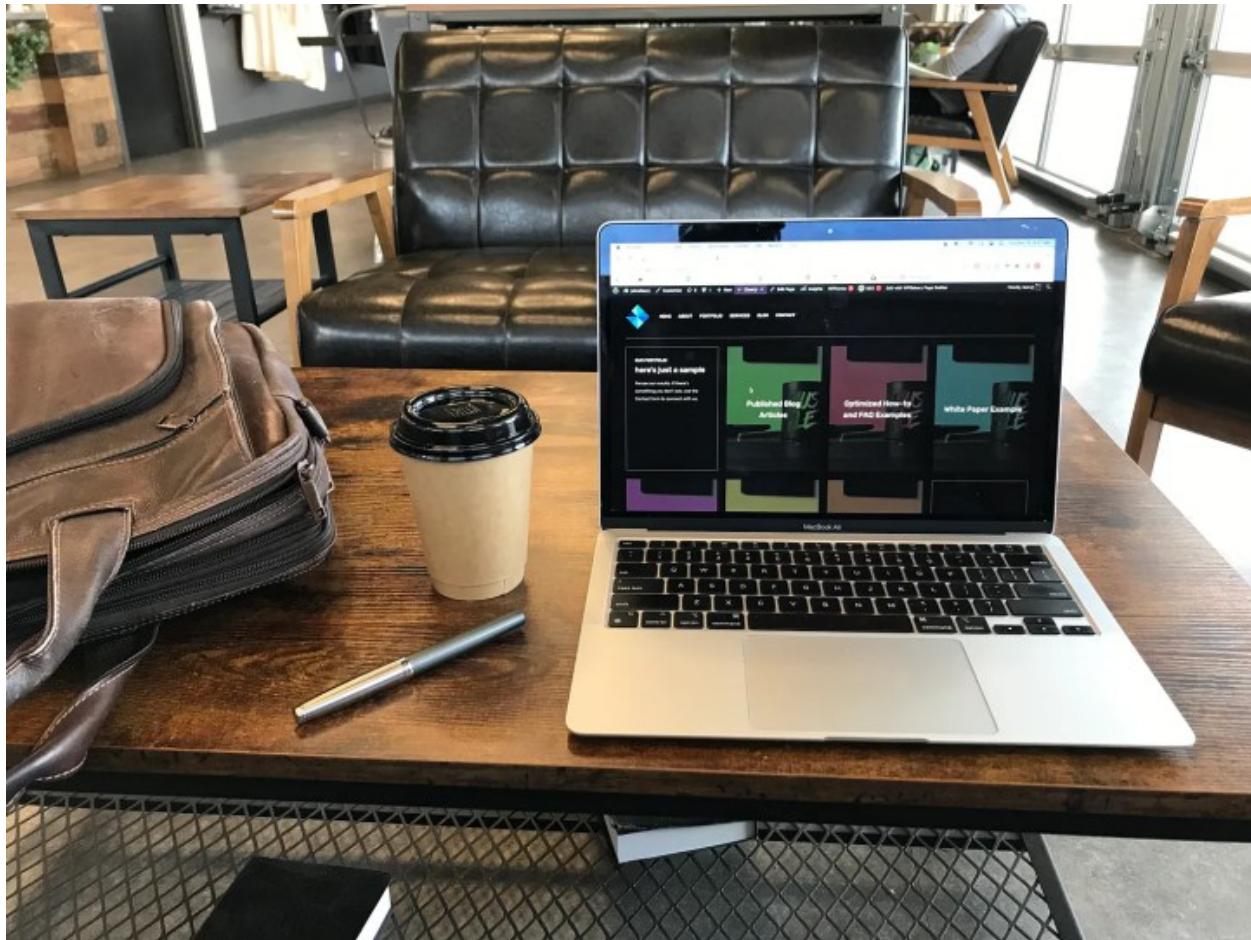


Photo: Courtesy of John Leavy

Unsaid Things Series: Filling the Gaps in a Man's Walk with God.

OPENING THOUGHT

I love routines, okay, my wife calls them ruts. Routines can be so predictable. I spent many wonderful mornings writing at Pneuma Coffee House — a ministry of our church. I arrived at the same time. Sat on the same couch. And had the same 12-ounce, decaf latte with almond milk. Daily habits are good. They help us point our day in a good direction.

The truth is, most of us know we “should” read our Bibles more, but there are times when we don’t feel there’s a payoff to that investment. Or we convince ourselves that getting a head start on a project at work is more important. Or if we leave home now, we’ll beat the traffic on the way to our place of work. But research — and more importantly, God’s Word — says reading the Bible absolutely does have a payoff.

We live in this fast-paced world that has us convinced there’s no way we can put 10 minutes aside to spend with our Lord. Have you ever opened the pages of your Bible and felt like there nothing was happening? There have been times when I’ve wondered if this is making a difference? Am I just going through the motions? Maybe you’ve been in the same place.

Here’s the thing: good habits are the hardest ones to build. Even though the habit of daily Bible reading is one of our most powerful tools against this troubled world, we try to survive without it. Being in God’s Word is not about obligation, it’s about feeding our soul, shaping our perspective, and connecting with our Heavenly Father. God knows what’s best. Should we be listening? If we desire to be “a man with God’s own heart,” like King David, it starts with making God’s Word part of our daily routine.

SCRIPTURE

“Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path.”

— Psalm 119:105

“Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly...”

— Colossians 3:16

To restart your Bible reading, try what’s called the inductive study method. As you read God’s Word, **Observe**: What is the author saying? **Interpret**: What does it mean, and **Application**: How can you apply this to your life?

I’ve found that the Bible text really comes alive once I take notice of the cultural context, political undercurrents, social dynamics, human drama, and its contemporary relevance. Don’t just skip over words or situations you don’t understand. Tap into one of the many online aids. There is that adage — the more you put in, the more you get out.

TODAY’S CHALLENGE: MAKE IT STICK

If you want to grow, you need to put in some mental energy. Here’s how to make daily Bible reading a habit that lasts:

1. **Pick a time and place:** Morning, lunch break, or before bed — choose a slot you can stick with.
2. **Start small:** Even 5–10 minutes a day can make a difference. Don’t take on more than you can handle.
3. **Use a plan:** Try a reading plan or devotional that fits your life and interests.

4. **Reflect and respond:** Don't just read — ask, "What is God saying to me? How will I respond?"
5. **Invite accountability:** Share your goal with a friend and check in weekly. Research from Dominican University indicates that 70% of individuals who shared their goals with friends or family ultimately accomplished them.

FINAL THOUGHT

Even though there are seven days in a week, start small. Commit to reading God's Word at least four days in the coming week. If you end up doing more days, terrific. When God speaks to you, write down what stands out. Check your notes, what caught your attention — a verse, a character, what was taking place? At the end of the week, review what you've written down.

"What's God been saying to you?"

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