

Strategies for Slaying Bible Apathy
Media Interview Questions
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Q: Soccer practice. Dinner. Church meetings. Shopping. Paying Bills. Overtime hours at work. Car problems. Classes. Keeping up is hard. In today's world it's become increasingly hard to find time to breathe, let alone, spend time with God. Seth, how do you think this has impacted the Christian's relationship with God?

A: It's like a husband and wife constantly working, never stopping to go on walks, hold hands, or be alone. In time, that relationship suffers. I believe the same thing happens with Christians' walks with God. Even though there is nothing wrong with the items you mentioned, an overly busy life can crowd out time alone spent with God.

Q: It's been said that across the US a serious case of Bible apathy has struck the church at large. And this is the same Bible that men and women of past centuries gave their own blood for so that we could have it today. What would you say is the cause behind this dilemma?

A: I think your question nails the heart of a great amount of suffering, confusion, and disappointment in Christian homes across the US and in other parts of the world. And I don't think the problem is lack of availability. Today we have more Bibles and Bible-related books and Christian literature than any age has every experienced before. And though availability can be good, I think it can also be the cause of apathy.

Q: How so?

A: Well, the first time I heard there was such a thing as organic jam, I bought some and tried it. It was wonderful. Because it was new and expensive, I craved the stuff. But now that almost every grocery store stockpiles this jam in heaps, it doesn't seem so precious anymore.

Q: So like the old marketing principle, great quantity diminishes value.

A: Exactly. More than 250 million Americans own a Bible. With national sales of 20 million Bibles every year, one would think that an unstoppable passion for God's Word floods the US. But the opposite is true. Across the states and around the globe, believers find their love for God's Word choked by hard questions: "Why can I never find enough time to study God's Word? Why is the Bible so hard to understand? Why does my Bible reading feel dead and cold? How can I integrate the Word into my prayer life?"

Q: So what kind of solution would you suggest? What can Christians today do to re-stoke this passion for God's Word?

A: More than anything else I believe we need to return to the Book itself: the Holy Word of God. We've been sated with Bible versions, Bible-zines, topical Bibles, and inherently there is nothing wrong with these kinds of literature. But Christianity has

been marketed with the “newer look is better” drive so heavily that people are purchasing materials to feed felt needs, but not the deepest need: fellowship with God Himself. That only comes through fervent time in God’s Word. It’s not about doing devotions. It’s about loving God so much that you can’t wait to learn what He has to say through His Word and letting it permeate your heart and life.

Q: What are some of your favorite verses in Scripture?

A: There are a lot, but lately it’s been Psalm 119.

Q: What can you tell me about this chapter’s relevance to our topic today?

A: Over 100 years ago Charles Spurgeon said of Psalm 119: “This sacred ode is a little Bible, the Scriptures condensed, a mass of Bibline, Holy Writ rewritten in holy emotions and actions.” I believe that this single chapter of the Bible can re-flame the furnace of love for God’s Word in the heart of every Christian. With the exception of two verses, every verse of this 176 verse chapter communicates the author’s intense love for God’s Word. In this chapter you encounter a psalmist who loves God so much you’d think his heart was about to explode with passion.

Q: In late years, some have questioned the relevance of the Bible. How does a three thousand year old chapter help the believer of the 21st century?

A: That’s a very important question. In just the last century and a half, technology has changed so much you’d think we were living on a different planet. But one thing has not changed: humanity’s need to fellowship with his Creator. We still struggle with the same kinds of sins that people did who lived in caves or rode horse-driven buggies. And the way to God through Jesus Christ has not changed either. The Bible goes deeper than the ever-fluctuating styles and inventions culture. It cuts to the heart; it drives to universal principles that apply to every human in every age and culture.

Q: Some believers find it hard just to read their Bibles each day. How can someone make God’s Word his daily food?

A: I like the question because it implies exactly what we are supposed to do: make God’s Word our daily food! I once did a 40 hour famine with a team of believers to pray for children in another country. After the first eight hours my hunger disappeared. The same can happen with God’s Word. If we aren’t tasting it daily, we lose an appetite for it. It takes self-discipline. But it’s more than that. I believe the Bible becomes our daily food most when we apply it daily. Reading and meditating is wonderful. But when you’re out in the workplace, at school, or with friends and a temptation or trial hits like a meteor from space, suddenly what you studied in the Word that morning gives you strength and endurance to carry on through the day.

Q: What about the complaint of some that Scripture can be boring? I mean, it’s true, some days we open the Bible and the words don’t jump off the page and amaze us. What are your thoughts on this?

A: Rarely did miners of the 1800’s just walk along some beach and pick up nuggets of gold. They had to work for it. It wasn’t easy, but it sure was worth it. The harder

we dig the more treasure we find. All of God's Word is living and active and all of it applies to the believer's daily living. Instead of asking, "What can I get out of this?" I think the believer will grow far more by asking, "What is God trying to say in this text?" Suddenly, the believer is now searching the heart of God, and consequently he will enjoy a feast of truth to live upon. That's not boring; that's an adventure.