



# Basking in His Word

A FEW YEARS AGO, my walk with God was transformed. Not only did this transformation impact my life personally but also the lives of my husband and my three children in unexpected, incredible ways. I pray that this message changes your life as well.

As a busy mom and a new pastor's wife, I've always had much to juggle. Although I've always desired to spend quality daily time with God in His Word, it hasn't always been easy. Sometimes obligation has driven me to read a chapter in my Bible each day, just to appease my conscience. Other times I've simply left my Bible beside my bed, knowing I should open it but not really knowing where to start. I've felt the distractions, the tiredness, and the busyness of motherhood—hoping that a quick prayer on the run would sustain me. I've gone through the motions but still felt as if I was in a spiritual desert.

I know God has never left my side, but when I took time to slowly and humbly search His Word, I realized just how depleted my walk with the Lord had become.

## LIFE-CHANGING WORDS

God's words are incredibly powerful, and we hold them in our hands in the form of the Bible. These words are alive and relevant (Hebrews 4:12; John 6:63; Psalm 119:50). They help both the mind and heart (Jeremiah 15:16; Matthew 4:4; 1 Peter 2:2). They are pure, solid truth in a postmodern, changing world (John 17:17; 1 Thessalonians 2:13; Proverbs 30:5, 6; Psalm 12:6; Psalm 33:4, 5).

God's Word works in our hearts to change and save us (James 1:21). It will stand forever (Isaiah 40:8; Psalm 119:89) and ultimately lead us to Jesus Christ.

These ancient words tell us where we are in our walk with God and how we can improve and deepen this relationship. But do you ever wonder how to move beyond a hasty reading of the Bible to a deeper, more personal understanding of God's messages and how they relate to you?

## BEGIN BY ASKING

Although I grew up in a nurturing Adventist home, some years ago I found myself longing for more in my Bible study time. I talked with God about this one evening as I lay in bed, tired from being a full-time mom with young children as well as working in the evenings. "Lord, I want to spend more time with You! Help me to find ways to do this!"

The next morning I woke very early from a deep sleep, wondering if all was OK in the house. After staring into the darkness for a few moments, I rolled over and tried to go back to sleep. Then I remembered my prayer. I swung my legs over the edge of my bed; took my Bible, journal, and pen; and started to pray. As I spent time talking to the Lord and reading His words to me, the time slipped away. Finally, as the sun rose and light began to shimmer on the grass outside, I thought about how truly wonderful it was to bring His light (His Word) into my life. I wanted His Word to linger with me all day!

I believe God waits for us, like a patient Father, wanting to sit down and talk with us through His Word. Psalm 27:8, 9 says, "When You said, 'Seek My face,' my heart said to You, 'Your face, Lord, I will seek'" (NKJV). When we seek Him first and direct our freshest thoughts toward Him each morning, it is truly life-changing. I believe the Bible speaks to us

in very real, tangible, and often unexpected ways. Ultimately, our relationship with God will deepen beyond what we ever thought possible when we bask in His Word.

### DEEPENING YOUR BIBLE STUDY EXPERIENCE

Here are a few gems I've discovered that have helped me in my Bible study time. Hopefully, they will encourage you too:

- The devil will do all he can to keep our Bibles closed. Ellen White tells us that "Satan employs every possible device to prevent [people] from obtaining a knowledge of the Bible; for its plain utterances reveal his deceptions" (*The Great Controversy*, p. 593). This is why so many of us keep our Bibles closed, even though we may have good intentions.
- Pray that God will speak a message to you through His Word that you need for the day ahead. Come to Him in humility and ask for this, and He will answer.
- If we read our Bibles only when we feel like it, we will probably read it rarely. Ask God to plant a desire in your heart to know Him better, to seek Him more fully in His Word. Pray about this, and make a commitment to spend time more with Him. Then just do it!
- I believe the difference between simply reading our Bible and studying it comes down to *writing*. When we write, God's message to us moves from the page to our minds, then to our pens, and then into our hearts. We are much more likely to remember something we've written down, and also more likely to share it and encourage someone else during the day.
- Sometimes we need to dig deeply, really deeply, and read a passage more than once before God speaks to us. There's always something there, but sometimes we have to search for it. Don't give up after a quick read!
- The way we approach God's Word makes all the difference in how God can speak into our lives. If we come in prayerful humility, with open hearts and minds, seeking a daily message, God *will* speak. If we come in haste or with a know-it-all attitude, we will usually walk away empty.

### CHANGES IN THE FAMILY

The change in the life of my family has been incredible. My husband and I love sharing with each other what we've discovered in our personal devotions, which brings an amazing closeness unlike anything else can do. We pour into each other's lives the words that have changed our own hearts in our personal reading. We've also been teaching

our children how to meaningfully and simply study their own Bibles. We've seen the effects of this flow into other areas of their lives as well, from changes in character to unprompted witnessing and sharing what they've discovered in their Bibles.

For pastoral families, one of the unspoken assumptions is that you will be abiding in God's Word. Perhaps your spouse (the church leader) is actually just going through the motions of keeping the ministry afloat. He or she loves God but at times is just stretched, rushing through the days, troubleshooting the urgent but sometimes forgetting the important. If this is true of your spouse today, I encourage you to make time with God a central part of *your* day. Your spouse will see this, and it will speak to him or her of what may be lacking in their life. Time with God will impact your countenance like nothing else can, and by spending quality time with God, you are choosing to invite Him into your home and your marriage.

The Lord patiently waits for us to come to Him, to spend time with Him, to be with Him (Revelation 3:20). He is ready and willing to give good things to His children (Matthew 7:11). And He promises that "My word . . . that goes forth from My mouth; it shall not return to Me void, but it shall accomplish what I please, and it shall prosper in the thing for which I sent it" (Isaiah 55:11).

When we abide in Christ through His Word daily, we'll naturally and passionately live from the overflow of our time with Him. This is a relationship I simply can't live without. It's the lifeblood of my days and the sustenance of my being.

God longs to have a deeper walk with you and me. How will we respond?

*For more on this topic, including practical examples and bookmarks for adults and children, see the book As Light Lingers: Basking in the Word of God (available at all Adventist Book Centers and Amazon) by Nina Atcheson. Also see [www.aslightlingers.com](http://www.aslightlingers.com).* ■

---

*Nina Atcheson is a passionate follower of Jesus Christ and an educator, curriculum writer, international speaker, and mother who lives to inspire her family and others to live in a close relationship with Christ through His Word daily. She is currently the Adventist Identity Officer for Adventist Schools Australia. She is author of the high school Encounter Bible curriculum and the book As Light Lingers: Basking in the Word of God. Her family brings her the greatest joy, and she particularly loves hiking and traveling with her husband, Matt, and their three children.*