



10 Reason's Why God's Word Is Essential

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Day 1 -- God's Word Answers the Big Questions

By Kathy Marson, prayer ministry coordinator for Upper Columbia Conference

Without God's Word we would have no standard for answering the big questions in life.

Reading God's Word and spending time in prayer creates a full-circle conversation with our Father in Heaven. We, His children, need this guidance and direction especially at this time in earth's history.

Reading God's Word answers all of the big questions in life. Not only does it answer existential questions, but it meets our temporal needs as well. Who am I? Why am I here? Where did I come from? What is my purpose in life? Where am I going? How do I navigate life? For all who ask these questions and more, God's Word feeds us with exactly what we are hungry for. It quenches our thirst. Reading scripture prayerfully becomes a conversation with Him. It is powerful. It opens our eyes. God's Word saves us. It shows us truth. It is relevant and priceless.

And the icing on the cake is that as we, his followers, read the Bible, we will develop that same love in our hearts that Jesus has. This radiating love will tell the world that we are his disciples. Jesus says that the world will see we are his disciples by how we have love for one another. (John 13:35). This, in turn, will solve controversy and arguments.

We have everything to gain as we read God's Word and pray together during the first 10 days of 2024. We do well to remember the story Jesus told about the foolish man who build his house on the sand. The wind and the rain washed the house away because there was no firm foundation. The wise man built his house upon the rock. The wind and the rain could not wash the house away (Matthew 7:24). God's Word is the solid rock. When we build our life upon these truths of scripture, we will be successful in following Jesus. And meeting him in heaven is worth all of heaven's treasures!

God's word is a lamp to our feet and a light to our path (Psalm 119:105). It is breathed out by God and is profitable for teaching, reproof, correction, and training in righteousness (2 Timothy 3:16). It should live in our hearts through memorization, songs, and sharing wisdom with friends (Colossians 3:16).

As we pray for God's Holy Spirit to lead us through the word, let us pray for open minds. *"Then he opened their minds to understand the Scriptures"* Luke 24:45.

Let us look for the answers to our big questions, knowing that God will give them. *"You will seek me and find me, when you seek me with all your heart"* Jeremiah 29:13.

It warms my heart that we are the object of all of scripture. It was written for us, so that we might understand this most basic truth, *"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life"*. John 3:16.

Dear God in Heaven,

It is our prayer that you will help each one of us in Upper Columbia Conference and beyond make a commitment to read your word daily and hide it in our hearts. Help us to be like the wise man who built his house on the rock. Please lead us to find time each day to read your word and have a conversation with you about how you can teach us, reach us, and change us to be more like you. Please open our minds to understand your word and how it applies each day to our life. In Jesus Name, Amen.

Day 2 -- God's Word Feeds and Nourishes

by Stephanie Brimacombe, prayer ministry coordinator for the Grangeville Seventh-day Adventist Church

The Bible invites us to a daily feast, encouraging us to seek God's Word regularly throughout the day.

As we embark on this second day of our devotional journey, we again turn our hearts and minds to God's Word. Just as we require daily nourishment for our bodies, the Bible provides daily sustenance for our intellectual and spiritual needs. Today, we explore the profound impact of God's Holy Word in feeding and nourishing our souls.

The Word is a powerful, discerning force. It digs deep into our core, shining a light on our hidden thoughts and calling us to lay ourselves aside and serve others. It is a trusted guide and a mirror that reflects Christ's redeeming love and God the Father's merciful heart. Nothing is as effective in transforming our lives than a prayerful study and life application of what we learn in Scripture! *"For the Word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the division of soul and of spirit, of joints and of marrow, and discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart"* Hebrews 4:12 (ESV).

Imagine attempting to sustain your physical body with just one meal a week. Picture the weariness, the lack of energy, and the inevitable decline in health. This mental exercise highlights the importance of consistent nourishment for our bodies. Similarly, our spiritual selves require regular sustenance to thrive, and God's Word stands as the divine feast our souls crave. Consider the meal of the week. It may have been a magnificent and satisfying experience, providing energy and sustenance for that particular moment. Yet, as time passes, the effects wane, and we find ourselves needing another meal to meet the demands of a new day. Trying to get through the week on one encounter with God's Word, no matter how impactful is insufficient to carry us through the challenges and opportunities of today.

The Bible invites us to a daily feast, encouraging us to seek God's Word regularly throughout the day. In Matthew 4:4, Jesus declares, *"Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God."* This verse echoes the sentiment that just as physical food is vital for our bodies, the spiritual nourishment derived from God's Word is indispensable for our souls.

We can incorporate daily Bible reading into our routines in many practical ways. Using a Bible app is a convenient way to stay on track with daily reading, and it offers various reading plans, devotions, and tools to help us dive deeper into God's Word. Committing a verse or passage to memory is an excellent way to internalize the Word and have it readily available for meditation and reflection throughout the day. Comparing writing styles among different Bible versions can also help us gain a richer and more nuanced understanding of the text, especially when encountering challenging or complex passages.

The psalmist beautifully captures the essence of God's Word when he describes it as *"sweeter than honey dripping from a honeycomb"* Psalm 19:10. The imagery evokes not only sweetness but also richness and abundance. Just as honey provides sweetness and sustenance, God's Word offers a profound and multifaceted nourishment for our spiritual well-being.

In 1 Peter 2:2, we are urged to *"crave pure spiritual milk, so that by it you may grow up in your salvation."* This metaphor of milk underscores the essential nature of God's Word in the developmental stages of our faith. It's not a one-time feast. Instead, it provides a continual spiritual nourishment that enables us to grow and mature in our relationship with Christ.

We may struggle with motivation to eat healthy foods, and we may also encounter challenges in prioritizing daily spiritual nourishment. Yet, just as we reap the benefits of a healthy diet in our physical health, we can experience the transformative power of God's Word in our spiritual lives when we make it a daily priority. The concept of daily nourishment is deeply ingrained in the Lord's Prayer, where Jesus teaches us to pray, *"Give us this day our daily bread"* Matthew 6:11. This goes beyond a plea for physical sustenance; it encompasses a profound acknowledgment of our dependence on God's provision, guidance, and wisdom every day.

It's easy to underestimate the significance of daily spiritual nourishment. Yet, just as our bodies require consistent and balanced nutrition, our souls crave the sustenance found only in God's Word. It is not a mere religious ritual but a lifeline, a source of strength, wisdom, and divine connection that empowers us to face the challenges and uncertainties of each day.

As we reflect on the vital role of God's Word in nourishing our souls, let us approach it with a sense of anticipation and reverence. Let us recognize that, just as a single meal does not sustain us for a week, a sporadic encounter with the Scriptures cannot fully sustain our spiritual journey. May we be intentional about partaking in the daily feast that God graciously provides through His Word, seeking not just information but transformation, and allowing the richness of His truth to shape and sustain us in every season of life.

Dear Heavenly Father,

We thank You for the living and active Word that nourishes our souls. Please help each one of us to approach it with open hearts, ready to receive the wisdom and guidance it offers. May Your Word be a lamp to our feet and a light to our path each day. In Jesus' name, we pray.
Amen.

Day 3 – God’s Word Brings Salvation

by Jim Kilmer, a member of the UCC Prayer Team, retired Sabbath School and Personal Ministries leader in Upper Columbia Conference

It is His word that declares you clean not your feelings. God’s word is essential for assurance of Salvation.

The chaos and confusion of the times in which we are living are designed by the enemy to engender doubt and discouragement. Not only does the devil try to destroy our faith, but he directs his efforts against our assurance of salvation. You might think: “I know it is not my feelings that indicate my spiritual condition, but obedience is required, and I know I have not been victorious over sinful habits.”

The enemy may try to use this conviction to convince you that you are outside God’s grace. However, it is the presence of the Holy Spirit that brings true conviction of sin, and with that conviction, the word convinces us that the greatest of all sin is unbelief. *“And when He has come, He will convict the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment”* John 16:8. The Word of God will refute Satan’s attacks, for it is *“quick and powerful, sharper than any two-edged sword”* Hebrews 4:12.

God says: *“A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh.”* Ezekiel 36:26
It is essential to fasten powerful Bible texts in our hearts and minds in order to ride upon the high places of faith and victory during times of trial. *“For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds”* 2 Corinthians. 10:4. Jesus said: *“the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life”* John. 6:63.

Remember how Jesus touched the leper and his leprosy was healed. When the enemy tries to make you think that you are unclean through the leprosy of sin, you may claim the healing words of Jesus, *“be thou clean”*. It is His word that declares you clean not your feelings. No wonder Jeremiah says: *“Thy words were found, and I did eat them; and thy word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of mine heart: for I am called by thy name, O Lord God of host”* Jeremiah 15:16.

Dear Heavenly Father,

Thank you that your word promises that we can claim your name, and that you will give us a new heart. Thank you that salvation is not something that can be removed by Satan, but that your word to us is life itself. Your words are a sweet salve to our hearts! Thank you that when we seek you, we will find you because we seek you with all our hearts (Jeremiah 29:13). Please plant the desire for reading scripture in each heart in UCC so that all may have a full grasp of your power in scripture. In Jesus Name Amen.

Day 4 -- God's Word is Powerful

by Janel Turkington, a prayer warrior from Spokane Valley Seventh-day Adventist Church

God's word is essential in our life because it is only through scripture that we have God's Power.

Through Scripture we defeat the devil. Reading the Bible frees us from Satan *"Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free"* John 8:32. Defeating the enemy is possible by putting on the armor of God.

"Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might. Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places.

"Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. Stand therefore, having girded your waist with truth, having put on the breastplate of righteousness, and having shod your feet with the preparation of the gospel of peace; above all, taking the shield of faith with which you will be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked one.

"And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God; praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, being watchful to this end with all perseverance and supplication for all the saints" Eph 6:10-18.

Temptation often hits us unexpectedly, and we're seldom thinking about reading the Bible at that moment. This is why we need to read the Bible and put on the full armor of God every day so that we can meet Satan's temptations.

So put: Truth around your waist; Righteousness as your breastplate; The peace of preparation of the gospel for your shoes; Shield of faith to quench the fiery darts of the wicked ones; Salvation as a helmet; and the Holy Spirit as your sword. This will help us to be like Jesus. When Satan tempted Him three times in the desert, Jesus spoke to him from the Word of God thereby defeating him. Jesus spent time each day in the Word, praying and spending time with his Father. With prayer and reading the Word we are putting on the armor. We are not to stop spending time with our Father.

One of the temptations that Satan throws at me is: telling me that I'm not ready to help spread that Gospel to those around me. But by being in the Word and praying, I can put on my shoes of the peace of preparation of the gospel. By taking God at his word and believing the power of his word, I can overcome Satan.

Dear God in Heaven,

Give each one in every church in UCC the desire to read your Word so that we may put on your armor to help us fight Satan. We also need your help to spread your love, grace, and salvation to those around us. We thank you for the opportunity to help You bring more of your children home. In Jesus Name, Amen.

Day 5 -- God's Word & Prayer Is a Vertical Conversation With God

by Kathy, prayer warrior and UCC prayer ministry coordinator

God's Word is essential because through it we can have meaningful, come-to-Jesus conversations.

Have you ever had a conversation that went south? When I was a child, one of my jobs was to wash and dry the dishes when I came home from school. My brother also had this job depending on which day mom assigned the task. One day I came home from school and wanted to do something else. I wrote a note to my brother that said, "Mom says you are supposed to do the dishes today." Signed Mom. Needless to say, when my brother read the note, he knew mom had not written it. After a short conversation, I ended up washing the dishes. My brother knew mom would not write a note to him that way. He also recognized it was not her handwriting.

When listening for the voice of God, we need to realize that His voice will always agree with the truth in his word (John 16:13). *"All scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching"* 2 Timothy 3:16. God will not tell us to fear (1 John 4:18). He tells us to be quick to hear and slow to speak, (James 1:19).

"God's word is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the division of soul and of spirit, of joints and of marrow, and discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart" Hebrews 4:12. There are voices in the world that pretend to know how to have a conversation with God, but if they speak not according to what is in the Bible, they are false. We are to be on guard against the devil who tries to deceive us (1 Peter 5:8).

We are safe listening for God's voice when we pray through the Bible. We can have a full-circle communication with God through scripture and prayer. As we ask him for directions, we can have complete confidence that he will answer and lead us. God's word is God's voice. The Ten Commandments were spoken out loud and written with God's finger. We can know these are given for our direction, our protection to keep us safe from evil.

The more we converse with friends, the more we understand them and appreciate their friendship. It is the same with God. *"The Lord is near to all who call on him, ...He fulfills the desire of those who fear him; he also hears their cry and saves them,"* Psalm 145:18-19. God wants to listen and answer us.

The more we read God's word, the more ...

- We understand the mind of the Lord (1 Corinthians 2:16)
- We know he delights in love, justice and righteousness (Jeremiah 9:24)
- We, His children, will be united (1 Corinthians 1:10)
- We know God appointed us to bear fruit and whatever we ask He will do (John 15:16)

It is clear through scripture that God wants to get personal with us and speak to our hearts. His words are true and protective (Proverbs 30:5-6) and will never pass away (Matthew 5:18).

As we pray for all men, women, boys and girls in Upper Columbia Conference to develop a deep connection with the Holy Spirit, and a conversation with God, let us pray through John 10:27-30. *"My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me. I give them eternal life, and they will never perish, and no one will snatch them out of my hand. My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all, and no one is able to snatch them out of the Father's hand. I and the Father are one."*

Dear God in Heaven,

We are thankful you have called us your children. Metaphorically you have called us sheep that hear your voice. You know each one of us like a shepherd knows his sheep and you want us to listen to you and follow you. You have given us eternal life through Jesus so that we will not perish. Thank you that you love and care for us. Help us to listen and talk to you each day; and trust that your promises are true and sure. May all in UCC be drawn to your word, just like a sheep is hungry for good grass. In Jesus Name Amen.

https://www.openbible.info/topics/promises_of_god_answering_prayer

Day 6 -- God's Word Is Truth

by Shuree Torgerson, prayer leader for the Lewiston Seventh-day Adventist Church and prayer warrior

Jesus answered, *"I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me"* John 14:6.

"What is truth?" It was the question Pilate asked Jesus at His trial and the question every philosopher has asked since the Greeks revolutionized the discipline. Currently, there are multiple answers on the market and you are invited to pick the one you like best. "There is no absolute truth," one says. Another theorizes, "Truth is what is real for you; it is what you want it to be". Many voices scream, "My truth is the only truth." So, what is Truth? Perhaps the question is better asked, "Who is Truth?" For that answer we look to John the apostle who wrote much on this theme. In John 14:6, Christ declares Himself to be the truth. The first

chapter of the Gospel of John declares Jesus to be full of grace and truth. *“The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the one and only Son, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth”* John 1:14.

“For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ” John 1:17.

In John 17:17, Christ asks the Father to sanctify or clean His followers with the Truth. He then states that God’s word is truth. If we follow the reasoning, we find ourselves back at the first chapter of John where we discover that Christ is the Word made flesh.

So, to recap: God’s Word is Truth, Christ is God’s Word, and so, therefore, Christ is Truth. The Holy Scriptures are the character of Christ in written form, for *“all Scripture is God-breathed”* 2 Timothy 3:16*, and the character of Christ is love (1 John 4:8). The Bible, as a full revelation of God to the world, particularly in Christ, is reliable as our source of truth, the measure by which we can measure all else. As confusion in our world continues to exponentially increase, it is imperative to have a solid foundation upon which to rest. And that foundation is the Eternal Word, found in Christ and the Holy Scriptures. *“For man shall live... by every Word that proceeds from the mouth of God.”* Deuteronomy 8:3

Dear Father God,

As I search for truth, guide me first to Your Word. Help me to hide your Word in my heart that I might have a solid foundation in a time of upheaval and shaking. I invite Christ Your Living Word into my heart that I might know Him better and reflect your precept of love to the corner of the world you have planted me in. And help me to develop a habit of conversing with You daily, O LORD, through prayer and Bible reading, that as I behold Your character I might become ‘conformed to the image of Your Son’ (Romans 8:29). May all in Upper Columbia Conference and beyond be hungry for your word and for the truth that it brings to life. Amen.

*2 Timothy 3:16 - All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting, and training in righteousness.

1 John 4:8 -Whoever does not love does not know God, because God is love.