

Select Page



Transformed by the Bible

Apr 20, 2020 | Arkansas United Methodist



By Elizabeth Fink

General Conference Lay Delegate

“The Bible is just a book.” “The Bible is a historical document.” “The Bible is just a self-help guide and a collection of nice moral teachings.” Have you ever heard someone use those descriptions? In contrast, I have seen pictures and videos of believers in countries where it is illegal or very difficult to find a Bible (China, North Korea, Somalia, etc.) who are weeping and shouting because they have just received their first Bible in their own language! Would they be weeping if the Bible was just a book or moral code? In their eyes, that Bible is beautiful, powerful, and alive!

I remembered thinking to myself, "I want to love the Word of God like that!" I began to question what I truly believed about the Bible. I had grown up reading the Bible, memorizing verses, and trying to glean some lesson or nugget of wisdom from the stories. What I realized was that I had all the wrong motivations. I was self-seeking in my reading and studying of scripture. Without even realizing it, my Bible reading had become all about what Elizabeth could get out of it.

When I was a senior in high school, I was blessed with the opportunity to go on a Holy Land tour in Israel. The geography, history, and fascination of being able to stand where Jesus stood brought me to a whole new level of joy in reading the Bible. It brought it all to life as I have never felt before. Upon returning to the States, I could not stop reading my Bible. I even took it to school with me and read it every break I got. It was no longer a chore or obligation, but a hunger and yearning.

I was now reading and hungering, not for the Bible itself, but for Jesus. I had experienced Jesus in new ways through His Word. I knew that if I wanted to know God, the best way for me to do that is through the Bible. The Bible isn't just a book about God, but it leads us to the very heart of God. It shows us His faithfulness, love, grace, mercy, etc. When we read it, we should not just read it for information, but for transformation. It is living and active (Hebrews 4:12). If the Bible is living and active, that means you can interact with it. It has power and can speak to you. I don't know about you, but I have yet to come across any other book that can transform lives as the Bible can.

Without the Bible we can learn some things about God by just observing our world, but not the salvation story. How else are we to know about the detailed working of God throughout history to redeem His people?

I read just the other day a Facebook status of a friend who said she no longer finds inspiration in the Bible and just doesn't get anything out of it. I know there are lots of individuals who find themselves in the same spot I once did and my friend now does. If we go into it thinking about how much we can get out of it for ourselves, then we won't get much. God is the central story. We read it and study it to find God, not for the purpose of self-help. People are reading the Bible, but completely missing the point: Jesus. Can the Bible alone give us salvation? No. We read the Bible to know Jesus more, and how to be like Him.

The Bible can be complicated, it can be confusing, it can also be beautiful. It makes me laugh and cry, but best of all it allows me to see into the heart of God. How has the Bible shaped my life? By giving me a foundation on which I build my life, a vision in which to see the greatness of the God I serve, and the courage to become a woman of one Book.

I pray that our love for the Word of God would increase to the point of weeping every time we hold it in our hands or hear it and that it would transform us in ways that this world cannot explain!