

Why the Bible Still Matters

Earlier this week, I read a blog post by Michael Hyatt entitled “Why Books Still Matter.”¹ He interviewed Dr. Ben Carson, “world-renowned Professor of Neurosurgery, Oncology, Plastic Surgery, and Pediatrics at Johns Hopkins University.” According to the post, Dr. Carson was raised in Detroit in poverty by a single mother who had divorced her husband when she found out he was a bigamist. As a youngster, Dr. Carson was the worst in his class. He described himself as being the safety net for the other children because they all knew they would never get a worse grade than him. This bothered his mother who was a domestic helper in the homes of some very wealthy people. She began to notice that these wealthy people didn’t watch much television, but they seemed to read a lot. So, she got rid of their TV and required her sons to read two library books every week and do a book report on them. That decision changed Dr. Carson’s life. As he developed his reading, he began to believe he was smart and could learn anything. Within two years, he had moved from the bottom of his class to the top. Now he is a renowned author, speaker, doctor, and professor.

Mr. Hyatt’s conclusion from this is that books still matter. He says, “Books do for people what movies, television, magazines, newspapers, blogs, and social media will never do—fundamentally alter their worldview and inspire them to greatness. I rarely meet a person who says, ‘that movie changed my life.’ Or, ‘your blog post transformed me.’ I’m not diminishing either of these. Both of [sic] their place in inspiring, educating, and entertaining others. But there is just something about a book that *changes everything*. I have met thousands of people through the years who have reported, ‘That book changed my life.’ I can certainly point to the books that have shaped my own life. In fact, we can point to specific books throughout history that have changed entire civilizations.”

I think Hyatt is right. And what I can’t help but think is God gave us a book. And not just any book. He gave us the ultimate of books, the book of books, THE BOOK. He did not give us a video. He didn’t write out a blog. He didn’t provide us with tweets or posts. He did not publish a magazine. He gave us a book. He gave us the one thing throughout history that has changed more lives than anything else.

According to Paul, “All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be competent, equipped for every good work” (**II Timothy 3:16-17**). No wonder he also told Timothy to “Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a worker who has no need to be ashamed, rightly handling the word of truth” (**II Timothy 2:15**). We’ve got to do our best to be in God’s Word and rightly handle it. This book can change our lives like no other book does. We must not let it sit on our book shelves collecting dust or simply allow it to be an arm decoration on our way into the church building.

The psalmist shows that God’s book is a life-saver, a soul-saver. “I have stored up your word in my heart, that I might not sin against you” (**Psalms 119:11**). Jesus’ memory of it saved Him from the tempter in **Matthew 4:1-11**. Examine more closely the armor of God in **Ephesians 6:14-17** and learn that every piece of the armor is connected to God’s book in one way or another.

When Paul was talking to the Ephesian elders for what he thought was going to be the last time, he said, “And now I commend you to God and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up and to give you the inheritance among all those who are sanctified” (**Acts 20:32**). I understand that when he said this they didn’t have the Scriptures in book form as we do and much of it was still to be written. But that doesn’t take away from my point at all. Rather, it demonstrates how fortunate we are. God has taken that Word of His Grace and handed it to us in a book. How powerful. How amazing.

With such a powerhouse handed to us in one volume, what should we do with it? We should read it. Keep reading it. Start reading it, if you must. But read it. The more you read it, the more you will be amazed at how much you learn and can learn. Don’t let the preacher or Bible class teacher read it for you. Read it. I’m not saying you have to sell your television as Ms. Carson did. But, wealthy people don’t watch as much TV as they read books. I imagine people who are spiritually rich in the Lord don’t watch as much TV as they read God’s book. Let’s remember what can truly change our lives for the better and let’s spend more time in it, letting it change us.

--Edwin L. Crozier

¹ <http://michaelhyatt.com/why-books-matter.html>