

McCabe United Methodist Church
Family Link (Part 3): Scripture and What It Says to Me
II Timothy 3:14-17 * Luke 24:25-27: September 22 & 23, 2012
Pastor Rick Fossum

“And beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, he (Jesus) explained to them what was said in all the Scriptures concerning himself.”

You kind of get the idea that Scripture was important to Jesus, don't you? It was important to the Apostle Paul as well. Listen again to what Paul said to Timothy in II Timothy, chapter 3:

“From infancy you have known the holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that all of God's people may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.”
-2 Timothy 3:15-17 (NIV)

The Bible is an important part of our faith. By the way, how many of you brought your Bibles to church today? Did you know, that at one time, almost everyone brought their Bibles to church. Do you remember those days? I know my Grandma Fossum did. She might have forgotten her purse at home or even my grandpa, but she'd never forget her Bible on a Sunday morning.

John Wesley said this about the Bible, **“I am a man of one Book.”** He meant his Bible. Our 7th President, Andrew Jackson, said, **“That book, sir (meaning the Bible), is the rock on which our republic rests.”** And our first president, George Washington, had this to say about the Bible: **“It is impossible to righteously govern the world without God and the Bible.”** Are you sensing a pattern here?

Ronald Reagan, president number forty, said, **“Within the covers of one single book, the Bible, are all the answers to all the problems that face us today . . . if only we would read and believe.”**

Pastor Ray said last week that every year the Bible is the number one best selling book in the world. It's been number one for 100s of years. And yet, most people seldom read it even though it's in plain sight in most of our homes.

Maybe you heard about the young man who went to college? His parents gave him a Bible before he left and told him it would help him in school. Later, he started sending letters home to his parents asking them for money. They would write back telling him to read his Bible suggesting certain chapters to read. He said he has been reading it, but he still needed money.

When he came home for semester break, he complained to his parents about not sending him money. His parents replied, **“Son, you haven't been reading your Bible, have you?”**

“How did you know,” he asked?

“Because,” they said, **“we slipped five, one hundred bills in the chapters we asked you to read.”**

You probably won't find any money in your Bible today, but you will find something just as important. You will find the words of God instructing you, teaching you, correcting you, rebuking you and training you.

Today, we continue our series Ray and I are calling *The Family Link*. This is more than just a series of messages. *The Family Link* is a program or ministry we believe is needed in many of today's homes and churches. Do you want a healthy and happy family? Do you want God to be a part of your family? Do you want to build your family on the solid rock of Jesus Christ?

If you do, we're asking you to participate in the *Family Link*. By the way, for us, the family includes traditional families, blended families, single folks and widows. Wherever you lay your head at night is your family. If you are single or widowed, we encourage you call a friend or neighbor or son or daughter and create a *Family Link* with them. Or, call the church office and we'll try to help you find someone.

This is how it works. We're asking you to invest fifteen minutes a day to help your family grow stronger, healthier and more spiritual. Fifteen minutes! Turn off the TV, shut down the computer, put away the cell phones and spend fifteen minutes with your family. We believe it will be fifteen minutes well spent.

The program has five steps: First, share with each other. How was your day? What went right? What didn't? Whom did you meet? Don't settle for "I'm OK." Or, "I'm fine." Share.

Second, read the Bible. In your bulletin today, you'll find Scripture passages to read for every day of the week. You'll also find these passages in our monthly newsletter and on our website.

President Jimmy Carter and his wife read the Bible daily. President Carter said, "**When I was president, Rosalyn and I would read the Bible every night. I have to say that I really read it with much more deep attention and thoughtfulness when I was president, because I felt such a great responsibility on me.**"

Third, discuss the Bible. This is the point of today's message. What does this passage mean? How does it relate to me and my family? What is this passage telling me to do or who is it calling me to be?

Fourth, pray. Pray for your family. Pray for your community, your church, your world. If you don't know how to pray, learn. We have many *'prayer warriors'* in this church and they'll be glad to help you. If you're not in the habit of praying, get into the habit.

Last, bless each other. My wife and I end our *Family Link* each night by simply saying to each other, "*bless you.*" You can be more elaborate. Just bless each other.

So, how do we discuss the Bible? This is step three. What do we do with the words we read?

Did you hear about the pastor whose car broke down one night? He walked to the nearest phone . . . it was in a bar. He called someone for help and then he looked around the bar and spotted his old friend Frank. Frank wasn't doing so well. He'd had a little bit too much to drink if you know what I mean.

"**What happened to you, Frank,**" the pastor asked? "**You never used to drink.**"

"**Pastor,**" Frank said, "**I've lost everything. I made some bad investments and now I don't have a cent to my name. My wife is threatening to leave me. I don't know what to do.**"

"Go home," the pastor said. "Find your Bible and open it to a random page, stick your finger on the page and underneath your finger will be God's answer."

A few months later, the pastor bumped into Frank again. He was wearing an expensive suit, driving an expensive car, and wearing an expensive watch and his wife was with him.

The pastor said, **"Frank, I'm glad to see things have turned around for you."**

"Yes," Frank said, "and I owe it all to you," I went home that night and opened my Bible and put my finger on the page and sure enough, there was my answer. It said, 'Chapter 11!'"

That's not how we should read our Bibles. First of all, you need to know that the Bible was written for all of us. You don't have to be a scholar, a minister, or a priest, to read the Bible. I repeat, you don't have to be a scholar, a minister, or a priest, to read the Bible. It's written for all of us.

How many of you take a multi-vitamin every day? Great. I'm a big fan of vitamins. I take vitamins because of their long-term benefits. Over the long haul, I believe they will help me.

We read the Bible for the same reason. The more we read and discuss the words of Scripture, the closer we'll get to God and the closer we'll grow into the persons God created us be.

If you don't understand a passage, it's OK. Ask someone else to explain it or move onto another passage. The Bible is amazing. Two different people can read the same passage and find two different meanings or lessons.

Two weeks ago, during our *McCabe Family Link* on Wednesday night, my table was reading from I Thessalonians chapter five. One person, at our table, pointed out verse 16, **"Rejoice always, pray continually, give thanks in all circumstances."** Another person highlighted verse 19, **"do not put out the Spirit's fire."** And for another person, it was verse 24, **"The one who calls you is faithful, and he will do it."**

Do you see what I mean? It was the same passage, but each person saw or heard something different that night. But first, you have to get into the habit of reading the Bible and talking about it.

Someone once said, **"A Bible in your hand is worth two in your bookcase."** It's true!

The Bible is like having our very own library. It has something for everyone. There's poetry, history, romance, action and a lot more.

Would you do me a favor and grab a pew Bible? Turn to Galatians chapter 6, verse 9. **"Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up."** This is a Biblical principle. We can use it to guide our living. **"Let us not become weary doing good."**

Turn to chapter 3, verse 28 of the same book: **"There is neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus."** This is another Biblical principle. In the eyes of Christ, it doesn't matter who we are, we're all equal. Can you see how important this verse is in our daily living?

One more, turn to James 3:8-10: **"With the tongue we praise our Lord and Father, and with it we curse men, who have been made in God's likeness. Out of the same mouth come praise and cursing. My brothers, this should not be."**

This is another great principle. My grandma paraphrased this verse, **“If you don’t have anything good to say about someone, keep your mouth shut.”**

The Bible is also a roadmap to our salvation. In John 14, Jesus tells us about a place called heaven. And then he gives us directions to get there. He said, **“I am the way and the truth and life. Believe in me and you’ll find your way to heaven.”**

I could go on and on, verse after verse. The Bible is full of wise sayings and Biblical principles that will help us live life. The Bible also tells about God and salvation in Jesus Christ and much, much more.

Fifteen minutes a day is all we're asking. Share. Read the Bible. Discuss the Bible. Pray. And bless each other.

Investing fifteen minutes a day in your family is a wise investment. It will be good for you and your family, your church and your community.

What are you waiting for?