

Becoming...
Treasuring God's Word in Your Heart
Kevin Canterbury
Psalm 1:1-2

1. The Power of Bible Intake

More Than Just Reading

- It is a Spiritual Discipline: actively receiving God's Word.
- Methods of Intake: Reading, Listening, Studying, Meditating, and Memorizing.
- It is the daily habit of actively **feasting upon and digesting** the Word.

Matthew 4:4 NET

...It is written, 'Man does not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God.' ”

Romans 10:17 NET

Consequently faith comes from what is heard, and what is heard comes through the preached word of Christ.

Psalm 119:11

I have stored up your word in my heart, that I might not sin against you.

- It is storing up the Word in your heart to recall when needed.

Psalm 1:1-2 ESV

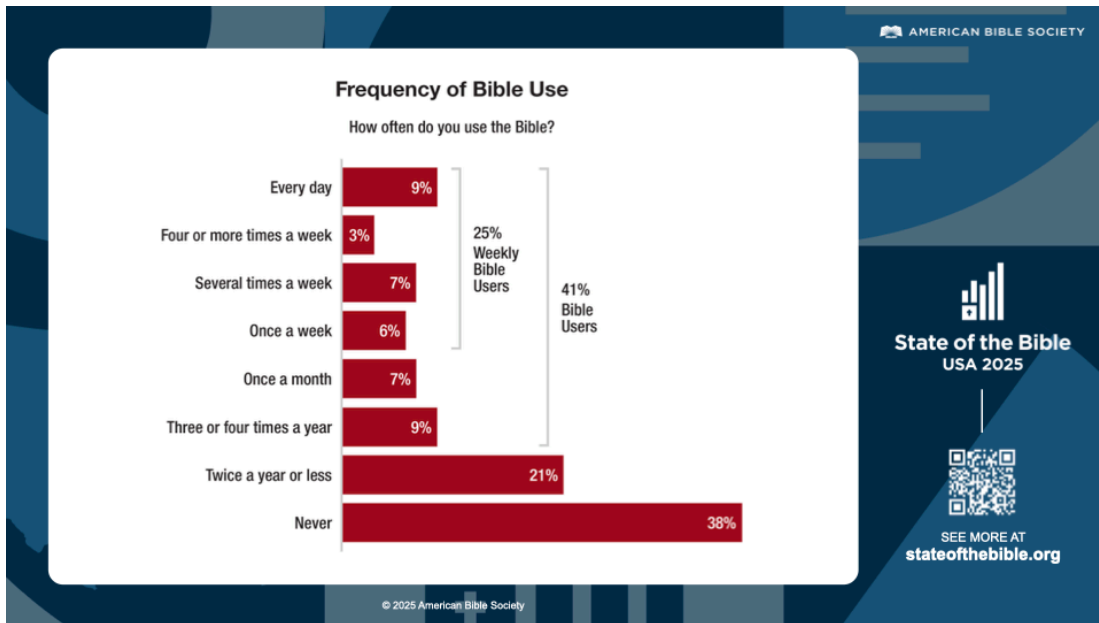
Blessed is the man who walks not in the counsel of the wicked, nor stands in the way of sinners, nor sits in the seat of scoffers; but his delight is in the law of the **Lord**, and on his law he meditates day and night.

2. The State of the Bible in America

Statistics from the American Bible Society's "The State of the Bible" Report

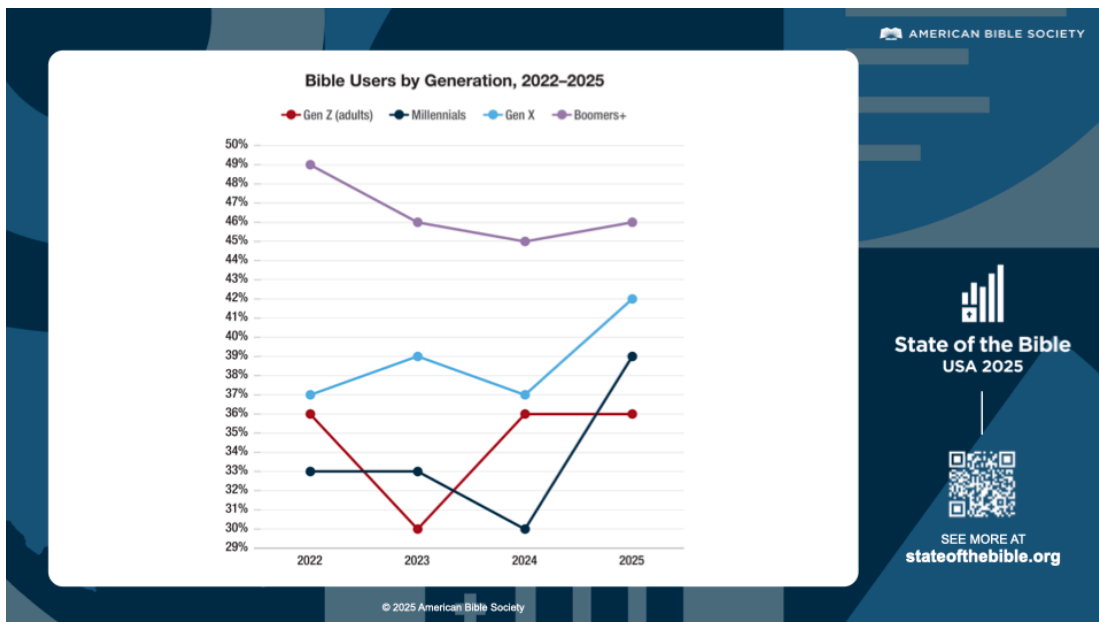
- Provides a realistic picture of current Bible usage.

Chart 1: Frequency of Use (Outside of Church Activity)

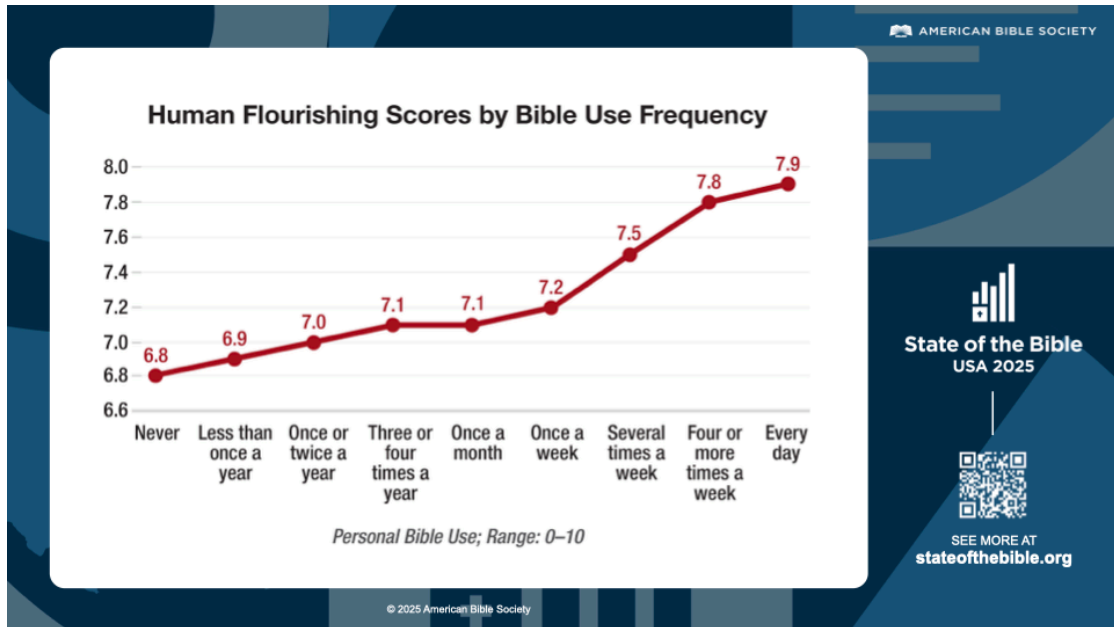


- Only about **25%** claim to read the Bible on their own at least once a week.
- Only **9%** are in the Word every single day.

Chart 2: Generational Bible Usage



- Boomers currently hold the lead in Bible activity.
- Significant increase in use across **all** generations, with the sharpest growth among **Millennials**.
- **Chart 3: Human Flourishing**



- Data integrated from Harvard's **Human Flourishing Index**.
- Key Areas Tracked:
 - Mental and Physical Health
 - Meaning and Purpose
 - Character and Virtue
 - Close Social Relationships
 - Financial and Material Stability

3. The Real Payoff

The Evidence is Clear: The more you take in God's Word, the more flourishing you will experience.

Proper Worldview: Daily Bible intake provides the correct lens to view life, especially in suffering and hardship.

Present Benefits: We experience the benefits of the Kingdom of God right here on earth.

The Critical Question: Why does the Bible matter?

4. Why The Bible Matters

Source of Truth: Scripture is the source for all Truth concerning God and His plan for redemption through Jesus Christ.

Essential Doctrines About the Bible

- It is **Inerrant**: It is the infallible Word of God and contains no errors (in its original manuscripts).
- It is **Sufficient**: It is all we need to know God, His character, and His plan of redemption through Christ.

Resource for Further Study

- *The Chicago Statement on Biblical Inerrancy.*

5. Belief Leads to Desire

Belief in the Bible is Essential: If you don't believe in the Bible's authority and power, you won't have the desire for daily intake.

You Cannot Know Christ apart from the Bible: The Bible is God's specific revelation concerning redemption through Christ

The Flawed Alternative: You can't find Christ through self-enlightenment or by searching deep within yourself (Jeremiah 17:9)

The Testimonies to Validity

- **Personal Testimony:** When we **apply** God's Word, we **experience** what it promises: peace, joy, and life in abundance.
- **Testimony of History:** It is the foundation for civilized society (social care, freedom to flourish) and civil institutions such as hospitals and charitable organizations.

The Bible is our manual for life, equipping us for the things we face.

6. Our Authority and Foundation

- The Bible is our **authority** and our **foundation** (both Old and New Testaments).

2 Timothy 3:16-17

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 complete, equipped for every good work.

Psalm 19:7-8

The law of the Lord is perfect and preserves one's life. The rules set down by the Lord are reliable and impart wisdom to the inexperienced. The Lord's precepts are fair and make one joyful. The Lord's commands are pure and give insight for life.

The Problem: Lack of Effort/Interest

- We let our flesh determine what we focus on.
- **Spiritual Entropy:** You never wander *toward* spiritual maturity; you always move **away** from it.
- We have unprecedented access to God's Word, but often lack the **discipline** and **interest**.

Making Excuses: Poor Memory or lack of Formal Training

- Memory is not the problem; **discipline** is.
- The Holy Spirit helps us understand the text; formal training is not required for insight.

"Many Christians consider the Spiritual Discipline of memorizing God's Word as something tantamount to modern-day martyrdom."

Donald S. Whitney, *Spiritual Disciplines for the Christian Life*, pg. 39

The Conclusion

- If we believe the Bible is the only source of **Truth** with **authority** and **sufficiency**, and we see the data on **flourishing**, Bible Intake must be a **top priority**.

7. Where Do We Start?

1. Set aside time

- Goal: **15 minutes** a day (5 minutes is a start).
- Benefit: Reading 15 minutes a day completes the Bible in about 284 days (5+ days a week for a year).
- Read to start the day!

2. Find a translation that is accessible

- Accessible, not watered-down or overly technical.

- Translations fall on a spectrum: Word-for-Word vs. Thought-for-Thought.
- Digital version such as The Bible App provide 'all in one' resources.
- Study Bibles (e.g., ESV Study Bible) are great for depth, but shouldn't replace the actual Scripture.

3. Actively engage your Mind and Body

- If listening to audio, do light exercise (e.g., walking).
- Use a pen to underline key words and phrases in the text
 - *Tip: Use colors to underline different parts of speech (names, verbs, places) to see patterns.*
- Use a journaling Bible to write thoughts, prayers, or draw pictures.

4. Pick one passage from your reading to meditate on throughout the day

- Read the passage 4 or 5 times, emphasizing different parts.
- *Biblical meditation is **filling your mind** with God's Word, not emptying it.*

5. Pick one passage a week and commit to memorizing it the following week

- Use different mediums (3x5 cards, melodies, Bible memorization apps).
- Review old passages to keep them fresh in your mind!

Resources (Not for Slides)

Bible Translation Continuum (Lifeway Publishing)

<https://www.lifeway.com/en/shop/bibles/translations>

The Best Bible Translations: All You Need to Know and How to Choose (Logos)

<https://www.logos.com/grow/best-bible-translation/>

How to Start Reading the Bible Everyday and Stick With It (Lifeway Publishing)

<https://www.lifeway.com/en/articles/7-ways-to-stick-with-your-daily-bible-reading>

The Chicago Statement on Biblical Inerrancy

<https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/themelios/article/the-chicago-statement-on-biblical-inerrancy/>

American Bible Society: State of the Bible Report (free, but must provide email address to access)

<https://sotb.americanbible.org/>