

Let's Get Into Reading

Summer is almost here! As parents look forward to vacation time or family time, our children are anticipating a break from the regimen of school and a reprieve from scholastic endeavors.

How important it is for us all to set aside time to refresh and refocus ourselves in the midst of a busy life. I know of no better way to relax the mind and still benefit from "down time" than by spending some time in the classics.

As we kick off our summer reading program again this year, it may be beneficial to take some time for those of you who are new to acquaint you with the program. We are encouraging all of our youth to carefully choose three classics that you have never read and to read those three books this summer. The wise young people who accept this challenge will be rewarded at the end of the summer with an activity planned exclusively for them.

Although this tangible reward will be worth the time invested, there are intangibles you will encounter from taking time to read the classic that are priceless.

Keeping this in mind, I would challenge everyone, especially our youth, too:

1. Read the Bible every day.

William Lyon Phelps said, "I believe a knowledge of the Bible without a college course is more valuable than a college course without the Bible." If you read four chapters of the Bible per day you will have the Bible read through in less than a year.

Horace Greeley said, "It is impossible to mentally or socially enslave a Bible-reading people. The principles of the Bible are the ground-work of human freedom."

2. Read the best books first.

A professor of mine gave us this challenge when we were in college. He then added, "If you don't read the best books first, your life will slip away and you'll never get it accomplished."

Dr. Warren Weirsbe challenged me years ago to read the classics. He said, "Classics are classics for a reason!" He made the point that classics usually hit upon truths applicable to all the basic human needs and problems.

For the young people who read at least three classics this summer, we will be planning a special activity for you. On the main lobby Welcome Booth there is a list of some approved books.

3. Visit the library frequently.

Many of you may be saying, "Pastor, I appreciate the suggestions, but my funds are limited." I am quite aware, but don't forget our taxes have financed the best library system in the world, so take advantage of this in your neighborhood. They will have a fine selection of the classics and often an area devoted to Christian authors. (Just be discreet enough to stay away from the liberals.)

4. Making reading a matter of prayer.

Ask the Lord to guide you to the right books, and once this is determined, ask Him to bless what you read. Remember the words of the great Apostle Paul to his student Timothy, "...*give attendance to reading....*" (I Timothy 4:13).

- Pastor Pope -

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