

Biblical Literacy causes Biblical Transformation

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Biblical Literacy is a precursor to Biblical Transformation(My brief review on Article ?Why Johnny can?t read the Bible?)

Word of God is life. It produces God?s kind of life. This in other words is called as new life, born again life, transformed life etc. But how is this possible? What are the elements involved in the process? How people change to this extent. In my counseling studies I have observed that, we human beings are ?meaning makers? we constantly try make sense of things...What is the point? What the purpose? What does it all mean? What should I do now? Etc. However we seldom seek Bible as a point of reference while making meanings or decisions. Why is it so? It is simply because of a blind spot caused by our Biblical illiteracy.

By Biblical illiteracy, I mean insufficient Knowledge of the Bible including the basic story-line from the creation to the founding of the church, being able to correlate this story line with world history, knowledge of key figures and where they were in the large story line and what they did, knowledge of the composition of the Bible, the authorship (both the traditional assignments and the current critical estimates). This had a huge impact on church going believers turning them into conceptual (random) learners rather than as sequential learners.

It is indispensable when you want to train a person to accomplish a process or to understand any logical points build on one another. Sequential learning requires the learner to embrace concepts in a given order, to learn the first concept before the second, the second before the third and so on. Hence the imminent need to address this, raising crisis of biblical illiteracy is to come up with intentional, effective chronological Bible study lesson plans. This alone would help church goers to perceive and understand the Bible as a single story of redemption, rather than struggling to trace & connect together the names and places.

?The Christian body in America is immersed in a crisis of biblical illiteracy,? warns researcher George Barna. ?How else can you describe matters when most churchgoing adults reject the accuracy of the Bible, reject the existence of Satan, claim that Jesus sinned, see no need to evangelize, believe that good works are one of the keys to persuading God to forgive their sins, and describe their commitment to Christianity as moderate or even less firm??[1]

Other disturbing findings that document an overall lack of knowledge among churchgoing Christians include the following:The most widely known Bible verse among adult and teen believers is ?God helps those who help themselves??;which is not actually in the Bible and actually conflicts with the basic message of Scripture.

Less than one out of every ten believers possess a biblical worldview as the basis for his or her decision-making or behavior.

When given thirteen basic teachings from the Bible, only 1% of adult believers firmly embraced all thirteen as being biblical perspectives.[2]

v 58% US high school grads?;no more books.

v 42% US college grads?;no more books.

v 80% US families?;no books last year.

v 70% US adults not in bookstore in last 5 years.

v 57% of new books--not read to completion (Most readers don?t get past page 18)

Daily, Americans spend:

4 hours watching TV

3 hours listening to the radio

14 minutes reading magazines. [3]

From the Experts point of view, this alarming crisis can be dealt through the following suggestive steps

- 1) First, church leaders need to be aware of the crisis.
- 2) Pastors and church leaders need to evaluate what their people know and believe
- 3) Church leaders must use powerful ways to instruct their people in the truth.
- 4) Church leaders, including pastors, must alert their members to the unbiblical worldviews and philosophies that have crept into the church
- 5) Finally, we must encourage diligent and gifted teachers in the church

It is a matter of pleasure and joy to hear that, Lord has burdened some of his chosen saints to come up with innovative tools and strategies that would literally make Bible study a fun and informative while taking us through the amazing God's story of redemption and love. People like Kampouris, Tim teller, Greg Thornbury are working forces behind BibleMesh, while Krish Kandiah, a director of the Evangelical Alliance UK is working on Biblefresh.

Finally it is our prayer that ?Lord blesses their efforts; Let them bring your people back to basics?.

My special thanks to Dr.Jim & Dan (My mentors in reaching Oral Cultures).

[1] Barna Research Online, ?Religious Beliefs Vary Widely by Denomination,? www.barna.org/cgi-bin/PagePressRelease.asp?PressReleaseID=92&Reference=B, June 25, 2001.

[2] Barna Research Online, ?Discipleship Insights Revealed in New Book by George Barna,? www.barna.org/cgi-bin/PagePressRelease.asp?PressReleaseID=76&Reference=E&Key=bible%20knowledge November 28, 2000.

[3]Source: Dan Poynter: www.parapub.com