

So WHAT? *By Randy Loescher*



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With four children living at home, I hear the question “why?” frequently. Walking into Office Depot recently, Samuel, age four at the time, asked, “Daddy, when I was in Mommy’s tummy, why didn’t I fall out?”

“Why?” questions come in various forms – inquisitive, interrogatory, self-defeating, humorous, despairing, etc. But at times, answering the “why?” question can be very empowering. Motivational speaker Anthony Robbins notes that people rarely follow through on their commitments without having a strong enough “why” to motivate them.

Biblical illiteracy among believers today illustrates that believers have not discovered a powerful enough “why” to sufficiently motivate them to immerse themselves in God’s Word. For most, getting back to basics will require more than just a new curriculum, program, or innovative method. Feasting upon God’s Word will need to pass

the “so what” test and become a core value.

People make time for what they deem important. They spend hours playing sports, watching television, shopping, going to movies, hanging out with friends and family. But few make time to meet God in His Word.

We claim passion for God and a love of God’s Word, family, and God’s kingdom as core values; however, our behaviors reveal the truth. Passion for God gets buried in the tyranny of the urgent. Family takes a back seat to work and overcrowded schedules. Our checkbooks may show that tithing and generosity have been subverted by desires for better cell phones, bigger plasma TVs, excessive eating out, and mounting credit card debt.

We rarely get honest about how carnal our values really are. Where do we get our core values? They often sneak up on us, being more caught than taught. Almost by osmosis, we absorb the values of the people and culture around us. Thus, our core values tend to reflect the values of those in our lives closest to us.

Classes, programs, or innovative methods may help people value the Word of God for the short term, but what keeps that value burning for the long haul? How did a profound devotion to God’s Word become a core value for the early apostles and other early believers?

By hanging out and doing life together with the Master Disciple, the Apostles “caught it” from the example of Jesus who quoted the Word frequently and was Himself the incarnate Word of God. After pouring Himself into the Twelve for three years, the lives of Jesus and the Twelve became so intertwined they grew to value what Jesus valued. They not only heard what Jesus taught them, the Twelve caught what He taught them.

They valued the Word because *He valued the Word*.

Arguably, the early believers caught it from the Apostles who “devoted themselves to the Word of God and prayer.”

We have all heard the adage, “As the shepherd goes, so goes the sheep.” Assuming this is often true, what values are people catching from their pastors, leaders, parents, friends, and mentors? Generosity? Busyness? Materialism? Passion for God? Passion for God’s Word?

Asking people to have zeal for God’s Word when we do not model that in our own lives will bear little fruit. Legalism, guilt, shame, nagging, and “shoulds” are poor motivators. So let’s start by looking inward.

Personal Evaluation/Action Points:

- 1) **WHAT ROLE** does the Bible play in my personal spiritual journey and daily life?
- 2) **IF CORE VALUES** are more caught than taught, what will people catch from me? What behaviors in my life reveal a value for God’s Word?
- 3) **WHAT ACTIONS** will I take to increase the role of God’s Word in my own life?
- 4) **WHAT ACTIONS** will I take to model this increasing passion for God’s Word to the people I influence?

For Pastors/Leaders:

- 5) **WHAT ROLE** does the Bible play in my messages and mentoring? The core? Prooftexts? Add ons? Little?
- 6) **HOW DOES** my teaching/mentoring help people learn to study God’s Word for themselves? What am I teaching them about how to read, understand, and apply a biblical text?
- 7) **HOW DOES** my teaching/mentoring illustrate the key role the Bible plays in my own spiritual pilgrimage? Or am I treating the Bible more like a school text book?

