

An aerial photograph of a desert landscape. A red dirt road runs horizontally across the middle of the frame. A blue line is drawn vertically on the right side of the image. The terrain is sandy and sparsely vegetated. The sky is a clear, deep blue.

Prioritising Scripture

Is the writing on the wall for
the Bible?

Your help and advice is requested

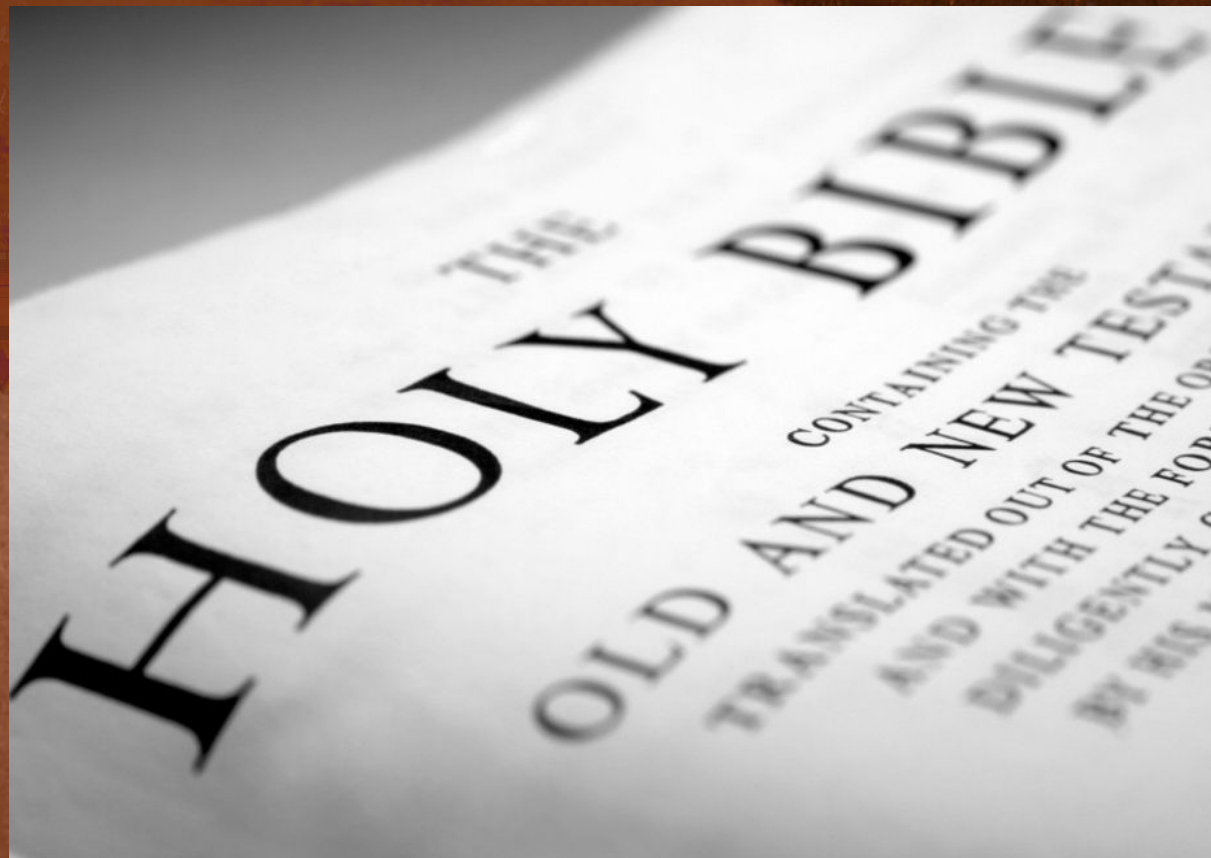


The Committee for Ministry has been working on how its work might better promote the use of the Bible.

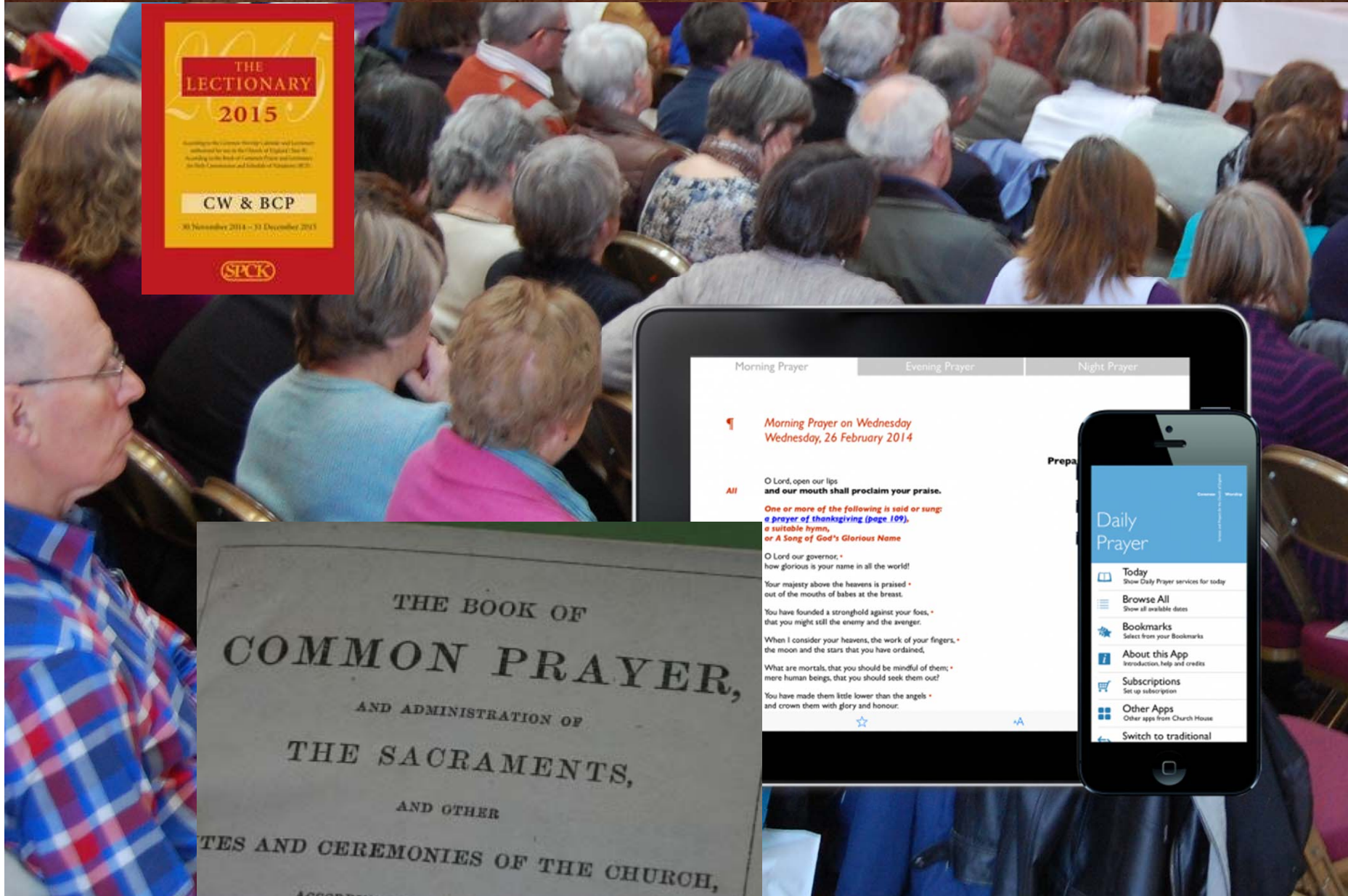
The decline in Bible literacy has surfaced as a major concern.

The committee asks whether you share this concern and how you would go about increasing Bible literacy?

Holy Scripture containeth all things necessary to salvation



The bedrock of our worship



The frame of much of our speech

As you sow, so shall you reap

As you sow, so shall you reap

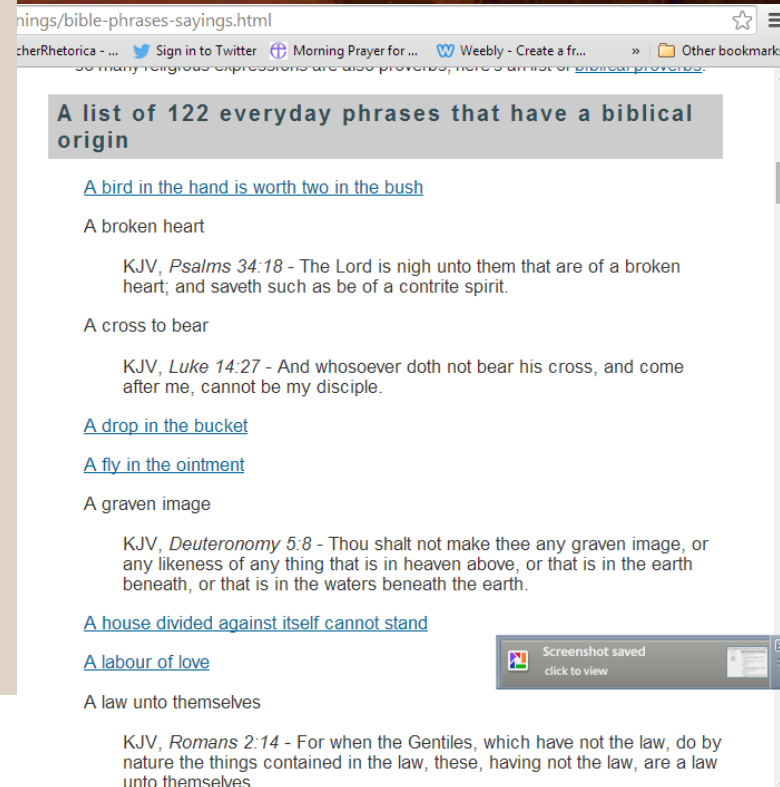
Meaning:

Your deeds, good or bad, will repay you in kind.

Origin:

Galatians 6 KJV

'Whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap.'



The screenshot shows a webpage with the following content:

- Page title: **A list of 122 everyday phrases that have a biblical origin**
- Phrase: [A bird in the hand is worth two in the bush](#)
- Phrase: A broken heart
 - Source: KJV, *Psalms 34:18* - The Lord is nigh unto them that are of a broken heart; and saveth such as be of a contrite spirit.
- Phrase: A cross to bear
 - Source: KJV, *Luke 14:27* - And whosoever doth not bear his cross, and come after me, cannot be my disciple.
- Phrase: [A drop in the bucket](#)
- Phrase: [A fly in the ointment](#)
- Phrase: A graven image
 - Source: KJV, *Deuteronomy 5:8* - Thou shalt not make thee any graven image, or any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the waters beneath the earth.
- Phrase: [A house divided against itself cannot stand](#)
- Phrase: [A labour of love](#)
- Phrase: A law unto themselves
 - Source: KJV, *Romans 2:14* - For when the Gentiles, which have not the law, do by nature the things contained in the law, these, having not the law, are a law unto themselves.

<http://www.phrases.org.uk/>

A lens on our world

Reflections on 'Give us this day our daily bread'



As part of the ENOUGH FOOD FOR EVERYONE IF campaign Christian Aid, with CAFOD and Tearfund, have asked writers to reflect on the text 'Give us this day our daily bread' to form a series of weekly prayers and reflections...

<http://www.christianaid.org.uk/resources/churches>

What Does the Bible Say About Poverty?

Motivated by our faith in Jesus Christ, we serve alongside the poor and oppressed as a demonstration of God's unconditional love for all people...

<http://www.worldvision.org/news-stories-videos>



The Inspiration of our art



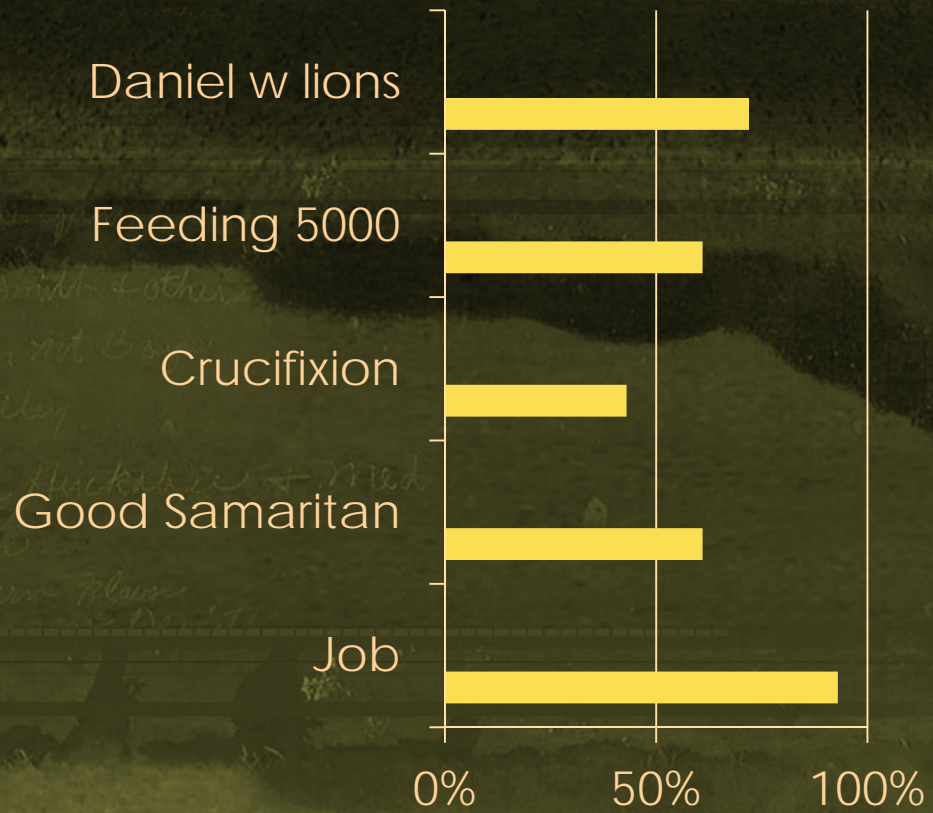
At the heart of our culture





Fewer and fewer people pick up the biblical references in famous artistic works

BIBLICAL LITERACY - A THREATENED WAY OF KNOWING



Percentage of children asked who had never heard of these Bible stories

BIBLE SOCIETY

PASS-IT-ON RESEARCH 2014

30%



Of secondary school
children **DIDN'T**
IDENTIFY
that The Nativity
was a Bible story

BIBLE SOCIETY
PASS-IT-ON RESEARCH 2014

David & Goliath

Good Samaritan

Adam & Eve

Noah

0%

50%

Percentage of parents who did not recognize these stories as Bible stories

BIBLE SOCIETY

PASS-IT-ON RESEARCH 2014



A systematic review of some 160 sample surveys of Bible ownership, readership, knowledge, literalism, beliefs and attitudes since World War II demonstrates a progressive decrease in 'Bible-centricism' during the past 60 years.

British Religion in Numbers, February 2014

Study by Clive Field to be published later in 2014.

BIBLE LITERACY

83% had nothing to say about the parable of The Sower. (80% The Stilling of the Storm; 62% the parable of The Prodigal Son; 60% the parable of The Good Samaritan)

89% could say nothing accurate about Jacob and Esau (85% Daniel in the Lion's Den; 79% Abraham and Isaac; 76% The Destruction of Jericho)

CODEC Biblical Literacy research 2009

Interviews with randomly selected people from the streets.

BIBLE LITERACY

Put in chronological order:

- a) Pentecost. b) Old Testament prophets.
- c) Death of Christ. d) Abraham.

- a) Saul's death. b) Moses in Egypt.
- c) Judah's exile. d) Isaac's birth.

Look in which book of the Bible for
Paul's travels?

The Passover story?

The wise men visiting the baby Jesus?

Wheaton College Freshers' Test

(as reported in Christianity Today).

BIBLE LITERACY

Put in chronological order: d) Abraham.
b) Old Testament prophets. c) Death of Christ.
a) Pentecost. 50% could not.

b) Moses in Egypt. d) Isaac's birth. a) Saul's death. c) Judah's exile. 50% could not.

Look in which book of the Bible for Paul's travels? 33% could not.

The Passover story? 50% could not.

The wise men visiting the baby Jesus?
50% could not.

Wheaton College Freshers' Test

(as reported in Christianity Today).

BIBLE LITERACY

Is it really that bad?

Perhaps we
define biblical
literacy
too narrowly



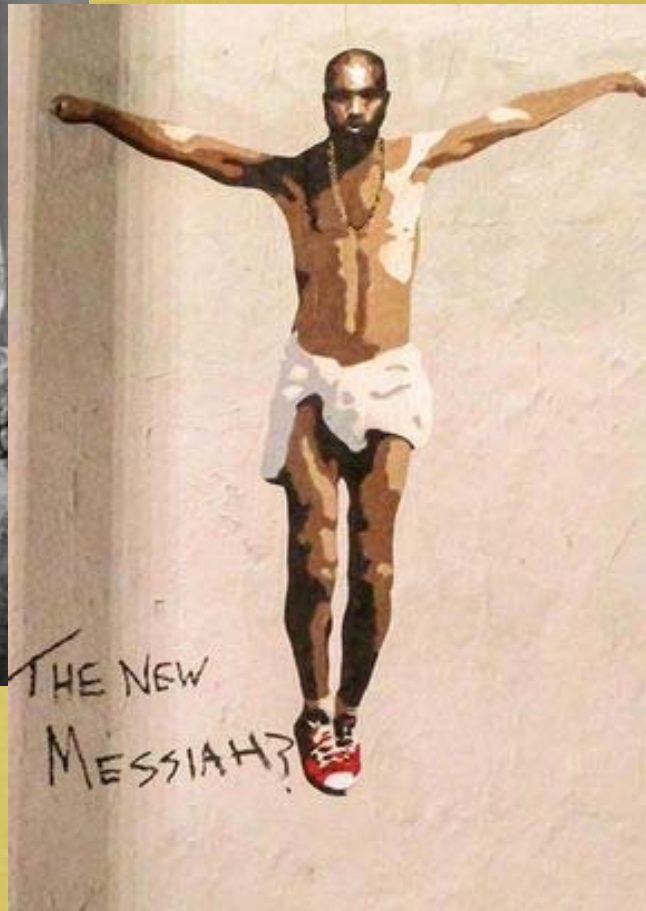
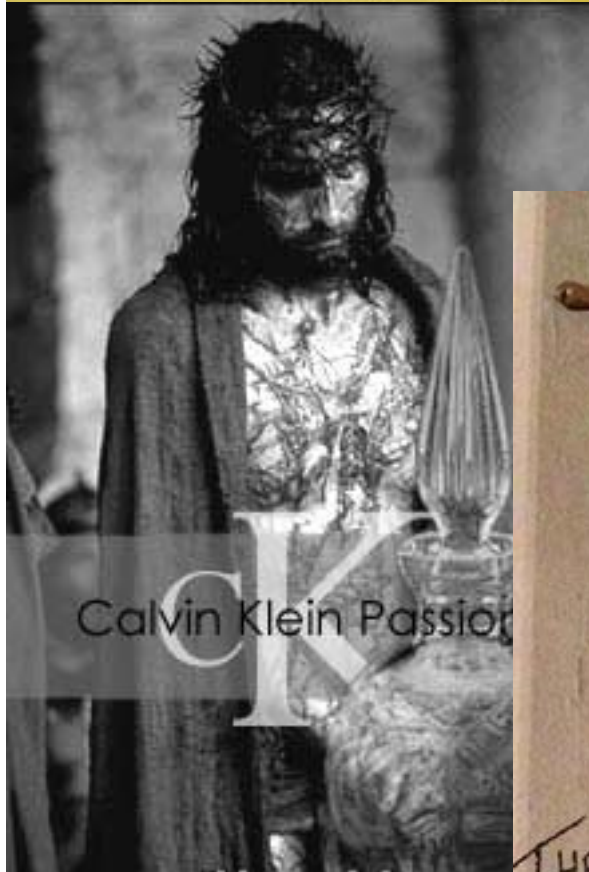
**'Bible literacy is going up, not down
– thanks, Lady Gaga.'**

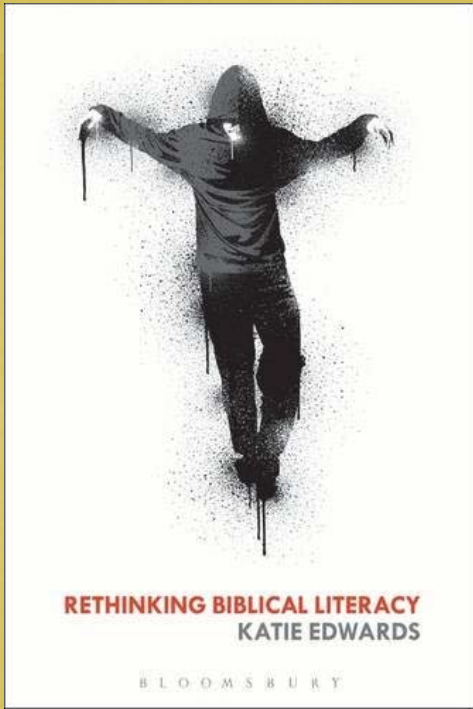
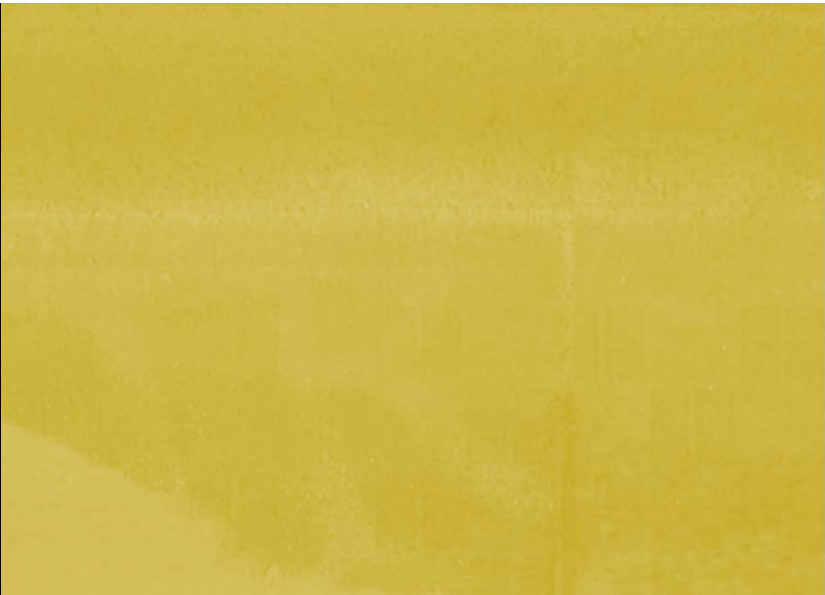
Dr Katie Edwards, University of Sheffield

May 2014



Popular culture is saturated with biblical images





What do you think?

Is Bible literacy sharply declining?
Should we explicitly work to re-assert
biblical memory?



Are there things we could do?

What should that memory work look like?



What are the guiding principles for such work?

1. Make it memorable



2. Do something everyday

Composer Debbie Wiseman (scores for Land Girls, Judge John Deed, Haunted, etc)

Advice to would be composers:



'Write something everyday, even if it's rubbish and you throw it out afterwards. Write everyday because it keeps your compositional juices flowing and you'll never run out of ideas.'

3. Make it visual

The human brain can

read a printed page at a rate of 100 bits per second

see a picture at a rate of 1,000,000,000 bits per second

i.e. Text/Picture ratio 100/1,000,000,000

A picture = 10,000,000 words

Metaphors worth even more!

They are new ways of seeing

research by Larry Smarr

Other principles?



Some current responses:

*A hashtag on Twitter
#cLectio is a tweet of
thoughts prompted
by the continuous
lectionary in Morning
Prayer*



isn't what abusive power decrees. #cLectio

All people

typd

Weebly - Create a fr... » Other bookmarks

Daniel5: the selfish & foolish are so short-
to help #cLectio

Daniel 5. God mocked in misuse of things -
after all. #cLectio

Jenny Bridgman @jcb9984 · Nov 11
Silence reigns between #Daniel4 & 5. Has Neb's knowledge of God not been
passed to the impulsive, unwise and gluttonous Belshazzar? #cLectio

dallasaying @revddal · Nov 10
Neb loses his mind and grip on power. God restores and Neb experiences the
power of God. #cLectio

Jenny Bridgman @jcb9984 · Nov 10
Another step on Nebuchadnezzar's journey of transformation seems to have
produced real fruit. Majesty and splendor begin&end w/ God #cLectio

David Herbert @davidherb · Nov 10
Self righteousness & self made majesty is sham. There is more to righteousness
and majesty than we can ever dream of. #Daniel4 #cLectio

Christopher Burkett @theosoc · Nov 13
Whatever else #Daniel 6 is, it's a memorable sp
or do we need to shape something new in its like

David Herbert and 1 other favored
dallasaying @revddal · Nov 12
The word was spoken. No immediate repentance
repentance given. Judgement. Consequences. #

Richard Burton @RichardBurton · Nov 12
The message in Daniel 5 that God makes all king
as enlightenment Christians don't know what to c

Christopher Burkett @theosoc · Nov 12
#Daniel (5.29) rewarded for terrifying interpretati
think he can worm his way out of it? #cLectio

Jenny Bridgman favored
David Herbert @davidherb · Nov 12
Wisdom deciphers writing on the wall #Daniel5: t
sighted that they can't read the truth w/o help #c

Google

08:27

PsalterMark

Tweets and Blog


A daily reflection on the Psalms in their canonical order. Weekly(ish) reflection on a key aspect of the Psalter.

The screenshot shows a computer monitor with a Windows taskbar at the bottom. The main content is a browser window displaying a WordPress blog post and a Twitter feed. The blog post is titled "An A-Z of Praise: Psalm 111" and includes an introduction and a list of acrostic verses. The Twitter feed shows tweets from @PsalterMark, including one about the Psalms of Ascents and another about reaching Psalm 120.

PsalterMark

A psalm a day helps you work, rest and pray

HOME ABOUT



An A-Z of Praise: Psalm 111

Posted on November 8, 2014 | [Leave a comment](#)

In looking at this specific psalm we shall see how the idea of an acrostic works and at the same time consider how this specific psalm raises some broader issues that any A-Z of the psalms must address. Here is this psalm laid out so that the acrostic device can be seen:

1. **Praise Yah!**
Aleph – **I will give thanks to Yahweh with my whole heart,**
Beth – **in the company of the upright, in the congregation.**
2. Gimel – **Great are the works of Yahweh,**
Daleth – **studied by all who delight in them.**
3. He – **Full of honour and majesty is his work,**
Waw – **and his righteousness endures forever.**

RECENT POSTS

- [An A-Z of Praise: Psalm 111](#)
- [On Singing New Songs](#)
- [In Store Now: "Psalms" by Tremper Longman III](#)
- [Reading the Psalms: An Appeal for Help and Information](#)
- [From Whom No Secrets Are Hid: Introducing the Psalms](#)

FOLLOW ME ON TWITTER

Tweets

ing @PsalterMark · Nov 11
called the Psalms the Bible within the
Psalms of Ascents are the Bible
he Bible within the Bible.

2 ★ 6

ing @PsalterMark · Nov 11
Tomorrow I reach psalm 120 again. So glad
to return to the Psalms of Ascents. Please
see
psaltermark.wordpress.com/2013/08/11/psa

Bible Society Bedtime Bible app

Sign up for future updates

Bible Bedtime is part of Bible Society's [Pass It On](#) campaign – encouraging people to 'pass on' Bible stories, because we believe every child should have opportunity to experience the Bible. [Sign up here](#) for more news and updates.



Alternatively search the Play store for 'Bible Bedtime'.



Get the story print-outs



Easter part 1

Download

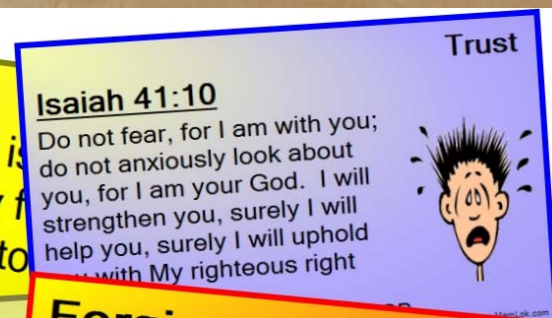
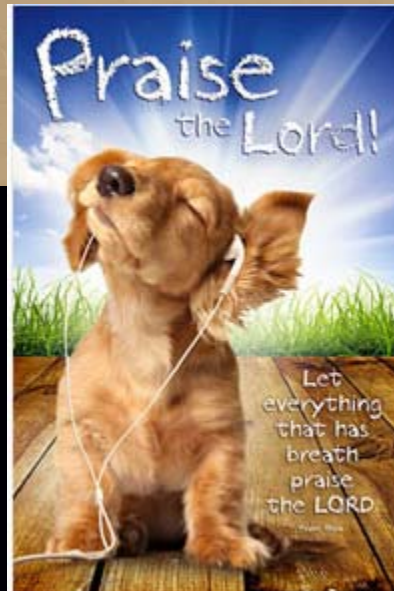


Easter part 2

Download

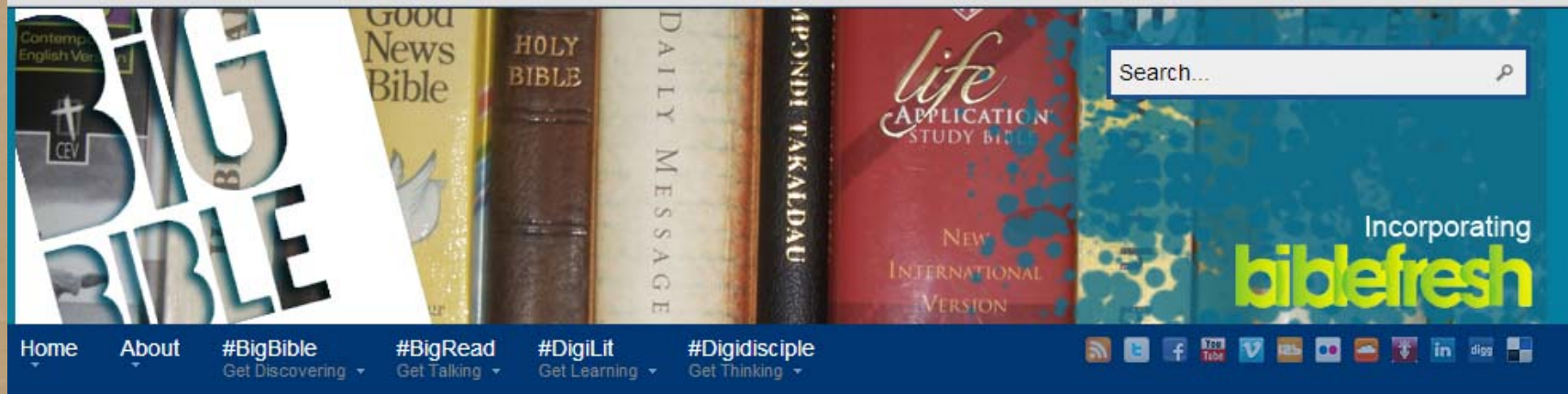


*Memorization Helps
e.g. Flash cards – Group meditation
verse – Repeated motto verse –
Symbols and posters*



<http://www.lifeposters.org/bible-posters>

Offering engagement possibilities across a range of platforms e.g. Big Bible



About The Big Bible Project



The #BigBible Project seeks to draw Christians from all churches & none into deeper engagement with the Bible through local reading groups & online conversations, including

[Biblefresh](#).

See [site map](#) and [archives](#).

Sign up for: [Daily email](#); [Monthly email](#)

September 2014

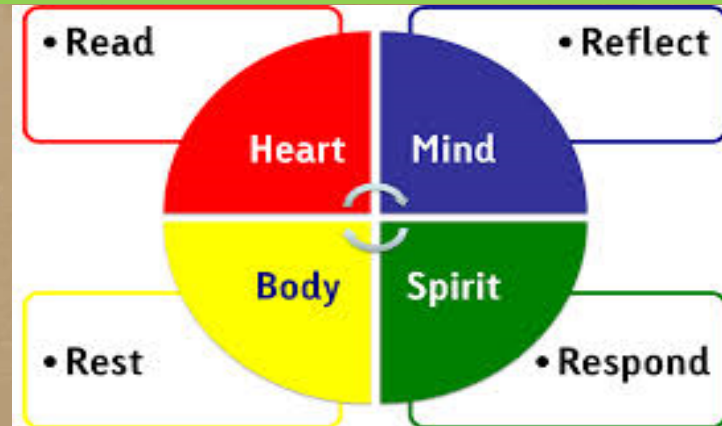
#Digidisciple(s) being inspired by [Ecclesiastes](#)

[Latest](#) [Comments](#) [Tags](#) [Featured](#)

#BigRead14



Recovering Christian practices e.g. lectio divina



'People will need the freedom to develop their own patterns. In Roman Catholic circles lectio divina is making a comeback, and I find an increasing interest in its simple approach among Evangelicals.'

JOHN GRAYSTON *The Bible and Spirituality: the Decline in Biblical Literacy among Evangelicals and the Future of the Quiet Time*, ANVIL Volume 19 No 2 2002

And more ...

What good practice have you seen?

Can we emulate it?



Do you recognize the problem?

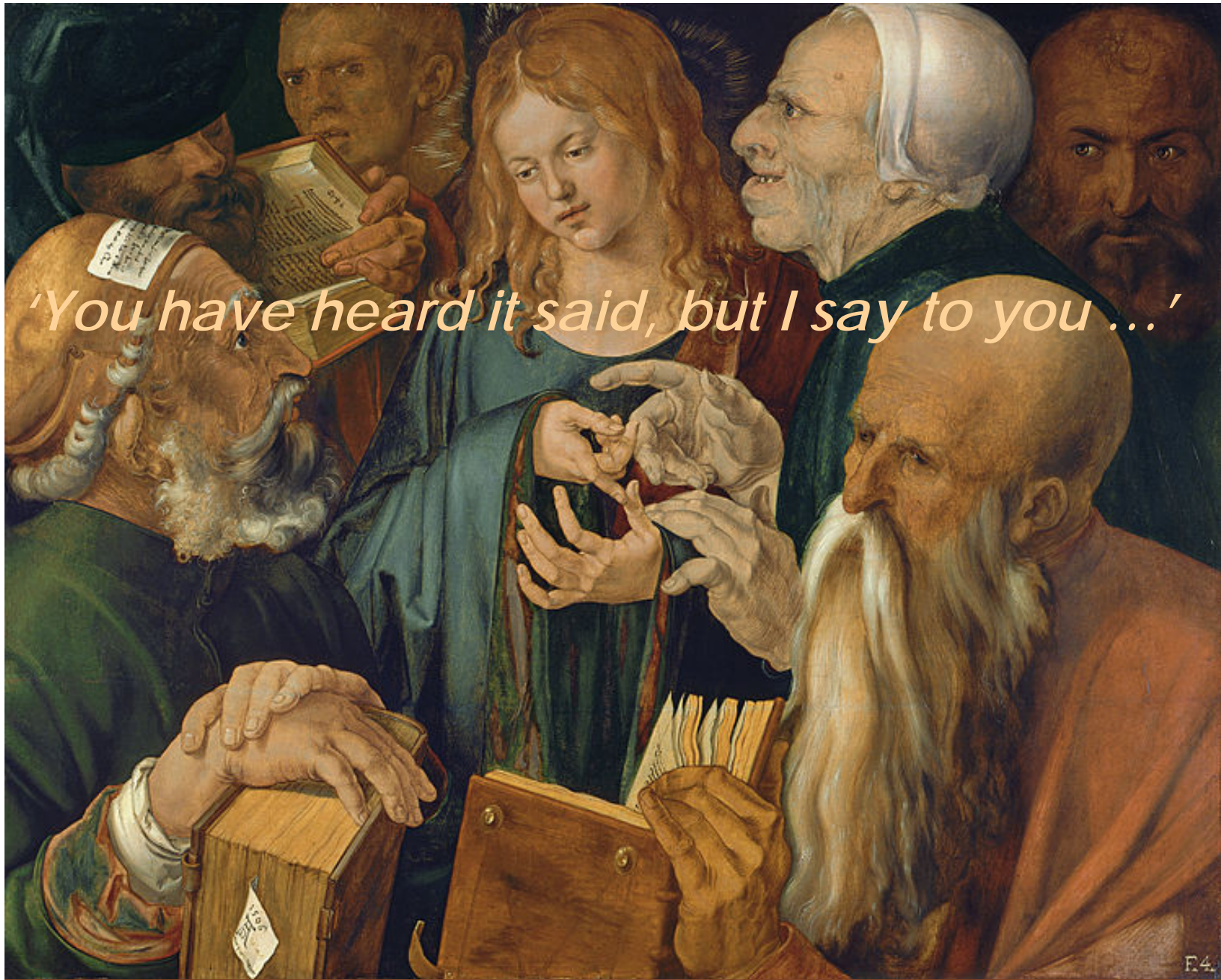
Is this work we should prioritise?

If yes, how?

Jesus the parabolist



53 parables that changed the world



'You have heard it said, but I say to you ...'

It is time we were all reminded that, to keep this classic book alive for future generations, there is only one solution. We must use it or lose it. That's why we hope you will join with us to protect its future by remembering the need to

***Pass It On.** (Bible Society Report)*





Prioritising Scripture

The law of the Lord is perfect,
reviving the soul; The decrees
of the Lord are sure, making
wise the simple.

Psalm 19.7