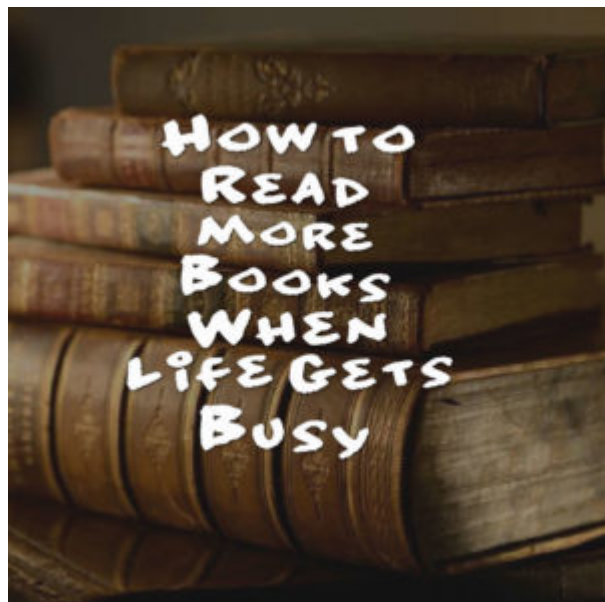


How to Read More Books When Life Gets Busy



For Christians it's important to read. It's important to read the Bible, books on the Bible, books about Christian living, and books to know more about God. But sometimes one's life gets very busy. How can the busy Christian find time to read? This post is meant to be a pastoral, practical and encouraging answer to that question.

First, pray to God about it. Seek Him for help. Don't feel like reading, but you know you should? Pray to God to move your heart so that you want to read His Word and want to study things related to His Word. Don't forget to ask with faith.

If James 1:5 tells us to pray asking for wisdom, I think a corollary to that would be pray for God to give you the heart to seek wisdom from His Word and books based upon His Words to get wisdom!

Second, just pick something to read. If you haven't read a spiritual book or the Bible in a while, just pick something to read! Picking isn't everything, but don't downplay the fact that it is something. You have to start somewhere. But don't spend too long thinking about what to pick if you haven't read something in a while. Some people can spend too long wondering what they should read; just pick something to start. That doesn't mean your first few books are the only ones you will ever read for life! You can pick something you like, or something you

have recently bought, or you can pick something that perks your spiritual interests. Finish it so you can move on to read other things you have in mind. Again don't think too hard about what you will read or you may end up never reading anything.

Third, it's okay to read a little bit over the long haul. Be the turtle in the race, not the rabbit who burns out. Don't set false expectations upon yourself if you haven't read in a while. You say you're busy and don't have two hours to read. Fine, read for 5-10 minutes when you can as a starting point. You would be surprised to see how after reading a little bit every day for a few months you will be flying through books. Have you always wanted to complete that systematic theology? You may not be there yet, but for once you're halfway through it and you didn't think you'd ever get to that point.

Fourth, always have something to read with you. I go everywhere with my Kindle. It's what I use to take notes. It's what I use as an organizer. This is intentional. Why? Because I often have down time. And this down time is often best spent not just on Facebook...it's time to read something edifying! I meet with people as part of my role in the ministry. People are always late. Redeem that time. Read while you wait. You'll be much more sanctified than annoyed. You'll be surprised at how much time is wasted with just waiting (e.g., waiting in a restaurant, waiting in line at the store, waiting inside the car pumping gas, etc.). In a year you'll finish many books from those times you are waiting.

Fifth, have multiple reading plans. Read like you are going to war...spiritual war. This is very important for those who are busy or whose life is unpredictable. I mean unpredictable in the sense that there are things in your life that are contingent upon factors beyond your control (I'm not thinking about life being unpredictable because of lack of self-discipline). If your plan is just one, then already you have none. If your plan has a backup or two, then hopefully one of them will do. Again, I try to redeem the time when I wait by bringing along my Kindle. To ensure this happens I even have a charger in my car for my Kindle just in case my power runs out over a long stretch of the day. Sometimes I meet with someone then someone afterwards wants to meet in an hour. I'm ready. I'm waiting and reading. Just in case Murphy's Law kicks in and my battery dies and my charger doesn't work, or I don't want to look at a screen anymore, there is always a physical book in my car as a backup.

Sixth, read when others are asleep. If you are really busy, you also don't want to neglect your family. So read when they are asleep. Do you know if you are an owl or a early bird? That is, are you wired to stay up or wake up early? If you're an owl, stay up a little later after your loved ones are asleep to enjoy your devotional time. If you are a morning person, be up before others to enjoy time with God's Word. Of course if you're an owl and an early bird then praise the Lord! But what if you are neither a morning person or a late night guy? Read during work breaks. Work breaks not long enough? Again, read a little bit at a time. It goes a long way over time.

Seventh, read with variety. Here I want to be cautious. Some people never finish anything they read because they go on to something else. That's not something we want to cultivate. At the same time, learning by reading is like exercising the muscles. We all know the proverbial gym rat who skips leg days. So whatever you are inclined to read, make sure that's not your only staple. Make sure to have variety so you will continue reading even when you're busy. If you're a one-subject reader and life gets busy, you have less reasons to keep on reading. Say you only read apologetics books. Well what happens when life gets busy? You think you know it all already in the areas of apologetics so you stop reading altogether because you don't see the need for reading in other areas of theology or life. Or if you read doctrinal and theological works only for head knowledge, then soon it is not practical given the daily grind of a busy life—you drop your readings. So read practical books. Read books on Christian theology or sanctification at the work place. Don't forget practical doesn't mean shallow in content. I like to dip into biblical counseling booklets and books at times because it is very practical and beautiful in showing how the Gospel and theology matters!

Lastly, read to enjoy the Lord. All the advice above would be nothing if one doesn't read to enjoy the Lord. If you read without love for God and a growing love for others, it means nothing and you gain nothing. If you read to enjoy the Lord you'll find it's less about method (though it has its place) and more about where your heart is.

([Source](#))