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TRUTH TRACTOR

Did you know the Bible is like a tractor? Infinitely more powerful than a tractor? Yet fits in the palm of your hand? Sounds like an ad for a new gadget for someone's Christmas tree. Better than that, the Bible is God's written Word, His unchanging truth, and we can experience its transforming power. It's still the perennial best-seller, the most unique book ever. You should gift someone a Bible this Christmas.

Recent research shows the average cellphone user spends 145 minutes per day, touching it 2,617 times. **How does this compare with using your Bible?** A recent survey shows 18 percent of average Protestant churchgoers rarely or never read the Bible, 22 percent read once a month, 14 percent once a week, 25 percent a few times a week. Only 19 percent read every day. Yet, you can read the entire Bible in a year in only about ten minutes a day. You have no excuses. Printed versions abound. Electronic versions proliferate. The Bible is available 24/7 - in your phone, computer, desk, briefcase or pocket. How are YOU reading God's Word? And what difference does it make?

2 Timothy 3:16-17 puts it this way: "**All scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, reproof, correction, and training in righteousness, that the man of God may be competent, equipped for every good work.**" Not dry old words on dusty pages. But living words from the one true living God. Profitable words - from which you get great return on investment. A good way to remember this is the acronym TRCTR. Scripture is God's "truth tractor" that works up the ground of your soul and plants God's truth so you can bear His crop. It's a working, transforming tool. How so?

1- Teaches - the Bible instructs you in what is true, according to what God has said and written, about His unchanging holy character, about yourself, and about others. He reveals and explains all we need to know, to know Him, both temporally and eternally. 2 Timothy 2:15 says we should study hard to achieve the degree "AUG" approved unto God, "*rightly handling the word of truth.*" It's a teaching tool.

2- Reproves - Scripture plainly points it out when you're wrong and go against God's character. It's part of the convicting work of the Holy Spirit, as He lays bare your conscience, separating your thoughts from your intents (Hebrews 4:12). It shows where you deviate from His truth, and what you need to stop believing or doing that is contrary to what He reveals. So you can be intentional about truth.

3- Corrects - God's Word shows you what to do when you get off track from following lies of the world, the flesh and the devil instead of God's way. His Word lights His way. In the Greek, correct is related to orthodontic and points toward restoring, healing, turning, changing your attitudes, actions, and words.

4- Trains - The Bible guides you in specific steps you must take for right living. A personal coach tells you what to do, but the Holy Spirit not only enables your understanding but empowers your actions. Your conscience signals right from wrong, but you don't naturally know God's truth. You must be born again by the Holy Spirit, then grow up and be trained in His truth. Left to yourself you deceive yourself.

5- Righteousness - Specifically, Scripture shows you how to become more like the Lord Jesus Christ. That's the goal of the Christian life, and the purpose the Spirit's work of sanctification. He puts you in perfect order, completely equipped for every good work. Scripture shows you specific SPECS - Sin to confess, Promises to claim, Examples to follow, Commands to obey, and So much more, including Scripture to memorize, prayers to repeat, errors to avoid, conditions to meet, challenges to face.

TRCTR. God wrote it all down because it's what you need. For right living. Empowered by the indwelling Holy Spirit. He equips you to understand it and put it into practice. The Bible is spiritual food for your soul, spiritual tools for your training, and spiritual power for your life. Not to just read, but to do. Intentionally.

God's truth transforms you. It takes you from darkness to light, from slavery to freedom, from feeding your flesh to walking in the Spirit. The Holy Spirit makes you a new creation, being renewed in the Creator's image, to become more like Him. The operative principle is "*the Spirit of God works the Word of God so the people of God become like the Son of God.*" It's not about what you know, but how you grow.

But it ain't agonna happen if you don't do nothin. You gotta get in the Word. Every day. Fire up that Truth Tractor daily - and put it to work in your heart and mind and will - all by the Lord's power within you!