

Sharing Books

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by Lori Bridges

"Time is precious and talk is cheap." That old saying rings true to our busy ears. So why would we waste time on books that are full of cheap talk? I would say that because time is precious good words should be treated as treasures. Of course, the greatest treasure is the word of God and since that word points us to Christ and teaches us truth we should spend most of our time seeking to fully grasp that truth. All truth is God's truth, and therefore all that is in this world that teaches us truth can be celebrated and enjoyed. This is why we should read books and share books.

First, seek to read good books because reading produces joy. My heart wants to jump when I have mountains in my view, or when I get to sit and soak in a sunset over the ocean. I also love when my mind is filled up by the beauty of well-written words in a book, or the inspiration found in a great story. When my emotions are awakened by a book, I start telling my friends about my current "new book love affair." My friends are awesome and at least listen kindly, but when a friend has also read the same book and we can talk about it, I find myself hoping the conversation never ends.

Even when a friend doesn't share a love for one of my favorites, the fact that we can discuss differing opinions over a book and remain friends provides hope for other differing opinions over things that are more important. In a world where it is hard to find topics of conversation that are positive and uplifting, should we not be looking for common ground to have deep and meaningful conversations without a divisive starting point?

We know not to judge a book by its cover, but through analysis we can learn things about the books, the author, one another and even ourselves. These are the ingredients to great conversation that presses one another on towards love and good deeds. I would rather spend my time in this manner with the people God has made than to waste it on many of the other empty pleasures in our world.

What does this look like? First, read. Read God's word first and then read other good books through that paradigm of truth and beauty. Then, talk to people about the books you read. Just ask what those around you are reading, and you will be surprised at how that one question can lead to some very meaningful connections. Share what books you are reading and why you love them or why you hate them. Most of the time, people would rather hear about a book than the current news cycle. Organize or be a part of book clubs. Book clubs have all of my favorite things in one place: coffee, food, books, friends, and great discussions. When you bring people together who have the same experience of reading the same book, people will often open their hearts and minds in that place. New friendships can begin, old friends can learn new things about each other, and we can all be encouraged to befriend those we do not yet know.

Finally, I would encourage you to use books in your home and with your family. Read about the heroes of history, the stories of nobility, and fantasy to your children. Give them a taste for all things beautiful, good and true, and the ugly things of this world will be less appealing.

There are so many beautiful books available, and good things in this world to discuss — so why not combine the two?