



Second Sunday of Advent, December 9, 2018

Scripture Reading: Philippians 1:3-11

THOUGHT: The fullness of joy is to see Christ in everything. —Julian of Norwich

A major national publication recently set off a storm of protest when it published an article that declared that people didn't really need to read the Bible.

"21 books you don't have to read" identifies 21 books that are either considered classics or show up on "must read" lists and declares them to be overrated. Other books were suggested that had more reading value. The Bible was one of the over-rated books that falls into the "don't have to read" category.

In dismissing the Bible, novelist and poet Jesse Ball, wrote, "The Holy Bible is rated very highly by all the people who supposedly live by it but who in actuality have not read it. Those who have read it know there are some good parts, but overall it is certainly not the finest thing that man has ever produced. It is repetitive, self-contradictory, sententious, foolish, and even at times ill-intentioned."

Not surprisingly, a few prominent Christians challenged the claim that the Bible is unnecessary reading, as did some columnists in secular media and many people on social media.

One commentator said, "I've been amazed by people I've met around the world who make incredible sacrifices to help others in distress because they've been inspired by the Bible."

Of course, it's a moot point on a personal level if we, ourselves, seldom read the Bible. The Bible itself declares that it is a "lamp unto our feet, and a light unto our path" (Psalm 119:105). It also reminds us that "all Scripture is inspired by God and is useful for teaching, for reproof, for correction and for training in righteousness" (2 Timothy 3:16).

Do we believe the Bible is essential reading?

If we don't read it too often, then we probably don't think it is important reading material and we agree with the authors of the article.

But, to be fair, perhaps we do believe it is essential reading material, but we're just a little lazy. This happens to all of us, doesn't it?

Let's fix this bad habit, and resolve to read God's Word every day!

—Timothy Merrill, but heavily based on an article in *The Wired Word* written, by Stan Purdum.

Prayer: O God, you speak to us through your Word. Forgive me for ignoring your voice. In Jesus' name. Amen.