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A Best Seller

It was Friday afternoon. Driving home from a fact-filled day of journalism, dreams of curling up into my worn overstuffed chair with a good fiction book danced across my mind.

Unfortunately, it wasn't going to happen. I spent my days writing and researching nonfiction, and it had been months since I'd purchased a fiction book. For months, I'd been searching for a book club to satisfy the craving, but finding a proper fit isn't easy. Things like time of day, compatibility, and style had to be considered. My time would allow for only a few hours to be spent on this project, so it was necessary to select the perfect club. I had narrowed the field between a group that stressed the classics, and another that targeted the best seller list. I was leaning toward the best seller club, thinking why not read the top publications on the market.

God must have decided differently, because my decision took a curve when a friend invited me to lunch and asked if I'd be interested in joining her Bible Study group.

“I don’t know,” I replied. “I have so little time and fiction is what I really what to explore.”

“Give it some thought and get back to me,” she said.

As a long-standing Christian, I was familiar with the Scriptures and Bible stories, but the task of actual studying it...well that was something I’d never done.

I brushed the idea off knowing that the world of make-believe was what I wanted. And yikes, even though the Bible would be an interesting study, the thought of studying the same book every month could really be boring, not to mention that they met every week instead of once a month like most book clubs.

Weeks later, after I’d decided to join the best seller club but hadn’t made the phone call, the same friend called and invited me to go with her the next morning to the Bible Study class.

I hesitated, but decided I had nothing to lose. Might as well get this issue out of the way and off the table. Tuesday morning, I walked into the church and a woman was leading the group in song. The light that surrounded her infectious smile as the words

spilled from her mouth into song was magnetic. Immediately, my heart was warmed like never before. Why this woman really believes what, she's singing, I thought. She's not pretending.

Later, in the small introduction class, I was told that study would focus on a specific book of the Bible, dissecting each chapter and verse with discussion as to the meaning. Sounded a bit laborious and complicated to me.

Even so, that evening, it hit me. I'd made a decision to join the best seller club, but why not an organization that studies the book that's *been* the best seller of all time. Even though it wasn't fiction, the thought of studying the greatest book ever written was intriguing.

It's been two years and I can't begin to tell you the impact studying the Bible, chapter by chapter and verse by verse has made on my life. Some verses are challenging, others simple, but through it all I'm gaining a new understanding of the writers intent.

I always thought I knew the Bible, but realize now it was superficial knowledge. Comparing Old Testament prophecies with their fulfillment in the New Testament, studying Genesis and realizing how all generations and tribes came from the faith of Noah and Abraham, and traveling with Paul who overcame so many obstacles to share the message of eternal life, has brought a new maturity and growth to my Christian life.

I'm quite aware that I'm still on the nonfiction side of my book choices, but I'm okay with that. It is boring? Never! After all, the Bible contains sixty-six books written by more than forty different authors, who all have a different writing style that embrace history, poetry, short story, mystery and memoir.

