

## The book that reads you.



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In the months leading up to my decision to become a Christian I read the Bible intensely. I remember being impressed that an ancient book could be so relevant in a modern world. Yet, two things stood out most of all for me.

Firstly, the sense I had that God was present as I read. I had never felt this before with any other book. It seemed as though how I responded mattered to God. And the Bible exposed me. It read me accurately. It knew the wrong things I had done - the selfish thinking and pretending to be somebody that I wasn't. As I read I struggled with the knowledge that experiences can be manufactured by the mind. Did I want there to be a God? Or was God revealing himself to me? Over time, my struggle with skepticism decreased.

The second thing that stood out was how impressive Jesus was in the four gospel accounts of his life. At the end of Jesus's famous, Sermon On The Mount, Matthew, the author of the gospel reports that, '... crowds were amazed at his teaching, because he taught as one who had authority.' I can appreciate this sentiment. Jesus really does teach with wisdom and authority. Elsewhere in the gospels people are in awe at his power over the physical world - demonstrated repeatedly with various, extraordinary miracles. Given the integrity of Jesus's words, it didn't seem reasonable that those events were clever deceptions.

So, despite the age of the Bible, it read my need and provided a solution - Jesus. It was Jesus who spoke of

the possibility of knowing God and it was Jesus who died on the cross to make the hope of a fresh start with God possible.

In the Bible, the book of Hebrews describes what I, and many others have experienced. It says:

*For the word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the division of soul and of spirit, of joints and of marrow, and discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart. And no creature is hidden from his sight, but all are naked and exposed to the eyes of him to whom we must give account.*

So, if you've never read the Bible, then my encouragement to you is... find a copy and begin by reading the shortest biography of Jesus - Mark's gospel.

Malcolm Williams, Director of Outreach Media

**Prayer:** Dear God, thank you for speaking to us through the Bible in ways that soften our hearts and move us to you.

**Bible:** *For the word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the division of soul and of spirit, of joints and of marrow, and discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart. (Hebrews 4:12)*