

# **First United Methodist Church**

**310 North Rowley, Mitchell, SD 57301**

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If you want to see this grown man cry and feel totally useless, send me to the grocery store to get something. Just the other evening Nancy and I were at the grocery store. She told me to get one specific item. Tomato Puree. Sounds easy enough. We happened to be close to the right aisle and even the right section. So, I'm standing in front of the "tomato" section and I see...Tomato Sauce, Stewed Tomatoes, Peeled Tomatoes, Tomato Paste, Whole Tomatoes, etc. I'm scanning the shelves...my eyes are glazing over. For the life of me I cannot find Tomato Puree. I hear a chuckle from beside me. It's Nancy. "It's right here, silly" she says. And she reaches up and pulls the can off the shelf. Aauuggggg!!! I mumble to her, "I'll get the chips..." And I head off to another part of the store where I'll know what I'm looking for.

Actually, this scene has played itself out multiple times over the course of our marriage in multiple grocery stores. There's so many options and I can't find what is needed. Yet Nancy knows right where the desired item is. Each time she says something like, "Honey, it's because I do most of the grocery shopping. I'm familiar with the layout of the store and where things are." She's right, she does do the majority of the grocery shopping, but it still makes me feel totally useless when I try to be helpful and find something when we're shopping together. 😊

This brought to mind several occasions in which I was able to come up with a passage or Bible verse that was needed for a specific situation. Sometimes there have been others in the group who said they hunted and hunted for that passage but couldn't come up with it. (I know the feeling.) At times those conversations end with the person saying they feel totally useless when it comes to finding something in the Bible.

Some have said, "Well of course you know where things are in the Bible. You're a pastor." I have to break the news to them that there is no "Bible" chip that gets installed in one's brain when you graduate from seminary or get ordained. It's all about familiarity with the Bible, its stories and themes, which mainly comes through regular reading and use of the Good Book.

As followers of Jesus it is important and helpful for us to be connected with God's Word. I'm currently on a plan to read through the Bible in one year. I realize this type of reading plan isn't for everyone, but I hope that each of us do have some type of intentional way of making the Bible a part of our life. So, how familiar are you with the Bible? How often are you including it in your life? Once a day, once a week, one a month? I know life is busy, crazy, and rushed...but as followers of Jesus, making God's Word a part of our faith journey is pretty important and really can be helpful, encouraging, and useful in our daily lives.

Here's what I suggest to people to become more familiar with the Bible. If you don't have regular plan, start out reading one chapter a week. If you already do that, make it twice a week. Start where you are and take one step more. A good goal is to get to the point where you're including the Bible in your life once a day. And of course, if people don't know where to start reading, I always suggest starting with one of the Gospels; Matthew, Mark, Luke, or John.

John Wesley said he was a "man of one book." The Bible. He got to know it quite well, but it was only through making it a regular part of his life. May we strive for that type of familiarity with God's Word in each of our lives.  
Serving Together,  
Pastor Keith

P.S. This Sunday is Gratitude and Commitment Sunday. Come join us for worship at 8:30 or 11:00 am. It's going to be a great morning. And YES...Rowley Street is now totally open and usable. Hope to see you Sunday!!