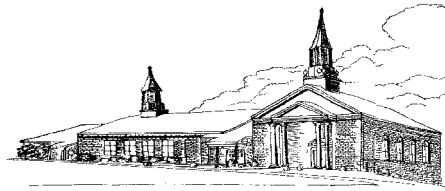


The Olivet Observer



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"The little church with a big heart"

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The 165th Letter of Lee to the Olivet Church

Happy September! This has certainly been an unusual and busy summer season for many of us. One night last week, I found myself oddly alone and in the quiet. Amy had gone to bed, so it was just the dogs and me hanging out in the den. An opportunity that I hadn't had in quite a while was before me. Taking advantage of said opportunity, I went over to a shelf and picked up a book that I haven't read in years and began reading- not for sermon prep, but just because I could.

The light in the room wasn't quite as bright as I needed which caused me to remember a floor reading lamp that I once really loved. However, not everyone in my family thought the lamp was aesthetically pleasing, so it found a new home. I was missing that lamp on this night but grateful for my LED book light. I really do like my book lights. And I really do enjoy holding a copy of the book I'm reading when I read. While I very much appreciate the opportunities that come with this digital age, there is just something special about holding a copy of an actual book versus reading on a device. I have heard a few of you make similar comments.

Most of us are probably aware that reading is really good for our brains - especially as we get older. It's been proven time and again that babies who have parents who read to them through childhood enter school with an advantage that children who are not read to do not have. And the effects of those advantages often show up through all of life. Recently I read a couple of articles about reading. One stated that reading, and writing by hand have the potential to keep our brains healthier for longer because the actions involved with them cause different parts of the brain to be stimulated. Another report I read addressed the issue of reading from a book verses on an electronic device. It also suggests that because of the way our brains process information, reading from a physical book promotes deeper comprehension and retention. It was written "as pages are turned spatial awareness is increased by holding a book and that helps to create a mental map of the material, leading to better memory retention!" (Ironically, I read that online.) Amy reports that Augusta County Schools is making a concerted effort to reduce student screen time for similar reasons. Maybe that's why this topic was on my mind.

There's no better time than the present to read more books. Psalm 119:105 "Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path". With that in mind, reading your Bible more would be a great place to start. You might also read the work of a historical or contemporary reformed theologian. Read other things that are wholesome and entertaining. Think of it as being a good steward of your brain. In doing so, you will develop (or strengthen) a healthy habit and reduce the amount of time spent on mindless activities that fail to improve your mind or your body. (By the way, I'm preaching to myself here too!)

Grace and Peace,