

# My Faith Story

Hi, I am Mike and I would like to share what I learned from my grandfather's Bible.

**Since I was 12-years old, I have loved to hold and read the Bible.** I received my first Bible for my 12<sup>th</sup> birthday. I really wanted a Bible, but since I never asked for one, I was very happy and felt blessed.

I must tell you, even though I carried or read from the Bible, I did not understand much of it for years, until college.

When I started going to church at the age of 20-years, I attended the Covenant Church and being a part of Campus Crusade for Christ, it was then that I started to really learn how to read and understand the Bible. From 12-years to 45-years, I used the Revised Standard Version Bible, until I moved to Pennsylvania. Then I started collecting different translations of the Bible for my use and for assisting the congregation in knowing the differences between the versions. This allowed me to better understand certain passages.

**I became familiar with all the major translations by reading a month in each of the different versions,** until I centered on my preferred five: Revised Standard Version (RSV); The New International Version (NIV); The English Standard Version (ESV); Good News Translation (GNT) and The Amplified Bible (AMP). Each day, I read primarily from the Amplified version and use the NIV, Good News or ESV for preaching at different churches, depending upon which translation the congregation uses.

Now why focus on "My Grandfather's Bible"? After seminary, I received two of my grandfather's Bibles: Phillips New Testament and the Scofield King James Version. When I read from his Phillips version, I realized even though I never knew my grandfather very well, I wrote in my Bibles the same as he did over the years. My grandfather and I wrote notes and phrases at the side of the pages such as "King David's Sin" or "Famine of the World" in Amos Chapter 8. I underline sometimes, but if there is room in the margin, I write notes more often. These notes helped me and my grandfather to quickly locate reference passages during discussions or when preparing a message. **For my grandfather and me, these notes personalized our Bible and the different translations made the words "come alive" and exciting to read.**

I have been led over the last forty-five years to always bring my Bible with me to meetings, church services, and even when serving in a liberal denomination, when other clergy did not. I believe, and have always felt, each church member should bring his or her own personal Bible, perhaps with notes, to church or to study sessions and not rely on pew Bibles. That is one way to treasure your Bible and make it a part of you.

*But Jesus replied, "It is written and forever remains written, 'Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes out of the mouth of God.'" Matthew 4:4 (AMP)*