

## READING IS AN ART

*by:*

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People who do not enjoy reading should be pitied. They are missing out on one of life's most rewarding experiences. However, some people who read a lot read too little for no reason. This could be for one of two causes, or both. They could be reading the wrong books or reading the right books incorrectly. The art of reading is concerned with the selection of books and the proper reading of those works.

When we evaluate what we read and how we read, we begin to see reading as an art form. Simple decoding is required for informational reading and internet skimming. Complex thought is required in imaginative literature. However, artistic reading entails more than just this basic distinction.

Reading a novel, memoir, or poem attentively and thoughtfully makes us an active partner in its creation. Between the printed words and the mind's vision, an imagined river runs. A work of literature is created by an author. It is received and responded to by the reader, allowing for active engagement in the art.

Dorothy Sayers identifies a book's threefold aspect in her book *The Mind of the Maker*. The book as Thought (the writer's idea), Written (the representation of the idea), and Read (its power on the responsive mind). By pondering the author's idea, receiving the energy in the words, and responding to the work's power, we engage in literature's aesthetic experience. Reading is elevated to the level of art by such participation.

We find the power of creation in the context of a biblical aesthetic, which is described as a perspective influenced by artistic awareness and rooted in scriptural knowledge.

Looking for the genuine, good, and beautiful is a fundamental notion in building a biblical aesthetic.

A book worth reading deserves to be read with attention and consideration. The art of reading is to think while you read in order to fully absorb the ideas expressed. If you don't understand the whole meaning of a passage right away, go back and read it again until you do. Also, read critically; do not swallow everything you read without chewing it first, turning it over in your head, and thinking about it from all sides. A light book of the hour can be skimmed quickly; nevertheless, a true and great book should be studied and read repeatedly.

*References:*

Sayers, Dorothy L. (1941). *The Mind of the Maker* (1st ed.). London: Methuen.