



Letters of John Quincy Adams to His Son on the Bible and Its Teachings

John Quincy Adams

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John Quincy Adams served America for nearly seven decades of public service. During America's early years, as we were struggling to become an established nation, he spent years overseas as a leading American diplomat to key nations, securing their support and cooperation for our fledgling nation. He dearly loved his family, and regretted being separated from them for such long periods. So to make sure that his children were fully equipped for life, John Quincy took an active hand in their education, including regarding their religious faith.

In 1811 while residing in St. Petersburg as President James Madison's diplomat to Russia, he wrote nine lengthy letters to his son George Washington Adams (named for John Quincy's close friend and mentor), instructing him not only in how to read through the Bible from cover to cover once each year but also how to get the most out of that reading.

This was not an unusual topic for Adams, for throughout his life he maintained a strong love of the Bible. He not only read and studied it in numerous languages (including Greek, French, Russian, German, and others), but was also an officer and leader of the infant American Bible Society, which continues today as the largest distributor of Bibles in the world.

When John Quincy Adams died in 1848 after seven decades of public service to his country, there was a high demand for his nine letters to his son on the Bible to be printed and distributed nationally so that all of America's youth would benefit from his wise counsel. When that work was released, in speaking of Adams, the Editors noted that: "It is no slight testimonial to the verity and worth of Christianity that in all ages since its promulgation, the great mass of those who have risen to eminence by their profound wisdom, integrity, and philanthropy, have recognized and reverenced in Jesus of Nazareth, the Son of the Living God."

That 1848 book, titled The Letters of John Quincy Adams to His Son on the Bible and its Teachings, became an instant best-seller. It went through several reprints over subsequent years and its public popularity remained very high. This modern reprint makes the wisdom of John Quincy Adams available to this generation, and its wisdom is perfect for both youth and adults.

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