

## A Bible for All Seasons

*By Donna Bishop*

I am accepting the following definition for the word “bible”: Any book that is considered a reliable guide to some activity.

My earliest recollection would be the much loved “Raggedy Ann and Andy” story books which mother read at bedtime. These books taught the values of love, friendship, honesty, and compassion as well as the joy of play, laughter, and make believe.

A first grade friend introduced me to Sunday school which started me on a sixty year journey with the Christian Holy Bible as one of my spiritual guides. The early years of unquestioning acceptance of the teachings, followed by years of intense study and prayer, and then intellectual questioning provided me with internal self-guidance that has served me well as I matured.

I turned to other “bibles” as the need presented itself. I would not have been comfortable raising my children without the much worn copy of Dr. Spock’s “Baby and Child Care” book. As young parents we puzzled over the definition of projectile vomiting. It all seemed pretty projectile! We closely watched our offspring’s behavior to meet the good doctor’s definition of normal. About the time of the birth of our second child that became an effort in futility! The book did remain on the shelf for occasional reference for many years.

A small series of books on “Your Children’s Questions on Sex” I would put in the category of a “bible.” I do recall finding my adolescent son and three of his friends deep in a serious study group session with the books. I was pleased to see them focus on such quality material and that they were not uncomfortable with my brief interruption.

My mid-life crisis complete with a divorce and single parenthood was filled with the most current “bibles” on surviving a divorce, building self-esteem, coloring a parachute, following the road less traveled, living in the moment and thinking positive thoughts!

Now that I’m in the more contemplative years of my life, I have turned to more metaphysical “bibles” which address the nature of being. I can now doze peacefully in my chair with my book in my lap as the seasons come and go through my window.