

Growing in a Relationship With God

How to Study the Bible

Lesson #5 for May 2, 2026

Scriptures: John 15:1-8; Mark 1:35; 1 Chronicles 16:11; Psalms 119:105-112; Isaiah 50:4; 55:1-13.

1. **How should we read and study the Bible?** See the 25-part series on “Bible Origins” with handouts and MP3 audios: <https://www.theox.org/index.cfm/pageid/812/index.html>.
2. For someone who is almost ignorant of the Bible, it would be very good to start with the Gospel of John. Next, read the New Testament, starting with Matthew. Third, go back to the Old Testament, starting with Genesis. Ideally, one should read Revelation at the end because it has so many inferences from the Old Testament as well as the New Testament. An ideal introduction would be to read *Patriarchs and Prophets* pages 33-70 (<https://egwwritings.org/read?panels=p84.68&index=0>) for background information.
3. Some scholars such as Martin Luther have read the whole Bible once or twice every year.
4. The more often we read the Bible, searching for new truths, the better acquainted we will become with it. One may be a person who studies the Bible regularly; or, one may be the kind of person who has the Bible sitting on the shelf.

[From the *Adult Teachers Sabbath School Bible Study Guide*=T-BSG:] In this lesson, we shall endeavor to walk with the psalmist in his search for a deeper understanding of the Word of God. Our sojourn is a continuation of our [prior] study ... in which we discussed the importance of studying the Scriptures.

As we move forward in our sojourn, we shall reflect upon principles for best approaching the Scriptures. The image of the lamp lighting a dark path at night suggests a slow, cautious walk in which we cannot see much beyond the single step we are taking. Such a walk takes time, for it is a step-by-step progression. At the same time, such a walk is also an adventure, containing an element of the unknown: we do not know exactly where we may end up or to what exalted heights our journey may take us.

To get the most out of our study, any text under consideration should be read candidly, with no presuppositions or biases. Rather, we must read with an open mind; and to continue the metaphor of walking, we need to step out in faith and go wherever the [Holy] Spirit may take us. A candid reading of the biblical text will help us to hear and receive the voice of God speaking to us from His Word. In this way, we will encounter Scripture as meaningful, beautiful, inspired, engaging, and moral.—*T-BSG** 65.†‡

5. ***Is it really possible to study the Bible without any “presuppositions or biases”?***

[T-BSG:] **Introduction.** Six principles of reading the Scriptures are suggested for our consideration in the commentary that follows. The first few (1–3) concern the reader’s attention to the text. The final three (4–6) relate to the reader’s response.

Section 1: Attention to the Text

The Text as Meaningful. Over the course of Psalm 119, it could be said

that the psalmist meditates on God's Word (*Ps. 119:15, 48*) only twice: "all the day" (*Ps. 119:97*) and through the night (*Ps. 119:148*), which is to say, the psalmist is continually meditating upon the Scriptures because they are his delight (*Ps. 119:44, 47*). Love for God's Word is the motivation for the psalmist's study (*Ps. 119:97, 113, 127*). Indeed, God's holy words are like a love letter to be read and reread, inspiring the psalmist to search for its deepest thoughts and intentions.—*T-BSG** 65-66.†§

Psalm 119:15: I study your instructions;

I examine your teachings.—American Bible Society. (©1992). *The Holy Bible: The Good News Translation*®* [GNT] (*Today's English Version*) [TEV], Second Edition (Psalm 119:15). Philadelphia: American Bible Society [abbreviated as *Good News Bible-TEV** or *GNB-TEV**].‡

Psalm 119:48: I respect and love your commandments;

I will meditate on your instructions.—*Good News Bible-TEV.**

Psalm 119:97: How I love your law!

I think about it **all day long**.—*Good News Bible-TEV.*†*

Psalm 119:148: All night long I lie awake,

to meditate on your instructions.—*Good News Bible-TEV.*†*

Psalm 119:44-47: ⁴⁴ I will always obey your law,
forever and ever.

⁴⁵ I will live in perfect freedom,
because I try to obey your teachings.

⁴⁶ I will announce your commands to kings
and I will not be ashamed.

⁴⁷ I find pleasure in obeying your commands,
because I love them.—*Good News Bible-TEV.**

Psalm 119:113: I hate those who are not completely loyal to you,
but I love your law.—*Good News Bible-TEV.**

Psalm 119:127: I love your commands more than gold,

more than the finest gold.—*Good News Bible-TEV.** [Is this true for you?][‡]

[T-BSG:] The psalmist is practicing the method that recent scholarship identifies as the **close reading approach**. This method consists of reading the text carefully, word by word, with the assumption that every word, every syntactical feature, and every grammatical form is meaningful. In this approach, one reads the text several times. Such a reading is always meaningful and enjoyable, as the psalmist testifies (*Ps. 119:14, 111*). This approach ensures that there are always more riches to be found.

The Text as Beautiful. Before being meaningful, however, the biblical text is beautiful. Its music and imagery often are appreciated before its meaning is fully comprehended by the mind. For this reason, the first exercise of the reader is to pay close attention to the text's poetic expression. **The literary structure that organizes the whole passage will orient the reader in its meaning, enabling him or her to grasp the general intention of the biblical author. The parallelisms and linguistic**

echoes that relate words and phrases with one another will help the reader to better understand their respective meanings.

Components of Beauty. Psalm 119 is an alphabetic psalm (acrostic).

This psalm has 22 stanzas, one for each letter of the Hebrew alphabet. Each of the 22 stanzas has eight verses, which make for a total of 176 verses. The intention of this literary device is to instruct us in the perfection of the Word of God, which is referred to everywhere in the psalm.

In the stanza of the letter **NUN** (*Ps. 119:105–112*), every verse refers to the law of God with a different term: **“Your word”** (*Ps. 119:105, 107, NKJV*), **“Your judgments”** (*Ps. 119:108, NKJV*), **“Your Law”** (*Ps. 119:109, NKJV*), **“Your precepts”** (*Ps. 119:110, NKJV*), **“Your testimonies”** (*Ps. 119:111, NKJV*), and **“Your statutes”** (*Ps. 119:112, NKJV*). **This literary feature points to all the various aspects of the Law of God, thereby suggesting its perfection.** [To best understand this, you need to read it in Hebrew.]

The Text as Scriptural. We will focus here only on the literary context of stanza *NUN* (*Ps. 119:105–112*). The *NUN* stanza is preceded by stanza *MEM* (*Ps. 119:97–104*) and is followed by stanza *SAMEK* (*Ps. 119:113–120*). **The main motif of stanza MEM is the love of the law, the right way that God has taught (*Ps. 119:102*), in contrast to hatred of the false way (*Ps. 119:101, 104*).** The same line of thinking reappears in stanza *SAMEK*, which reconnects with the same motifs that we saw in the *MEM* stanza (*Ps. 119:113, 119*). Stanza *NUN* should, therefore, be analyzed in light of this context.

The contextual consideration of stanza NUN also includes the larger framework of the Scriptures (inter-textual connection), as well as the immediate and narrow context of Psalm 119 (intra-textual connection), insofar as allusions can be established. It is this approach to the biblical text that Ellen G. White promotes when she says.... [Then, Ellen G. White is quoted; that is expanded below.]—*T-BSG** 66-67.^{†‡§}

[From the writings of Ellen G. White=EGW:] **The Bible is its own expositor. Scripture is to be compared with scripture. The student should learn to view the word as a whole and to see the relation of its parts. He should gain a knowledge of its grand central theme—of God’s original purpose for the world, of the rise of the great controversy, and of the work of redemption.** He should understand the nature of the two principles that are contending for the supremacy, and should learn to trace their working through the records of history and prophecy to the great consummation. **He should see how this controversy enters into every phase of human experience;** how in every act of life he himself reveals the one or the other of the two antagonistic **motives**; and how, whether he will or not, he is even now deciding upon which side of the controversy [s/]he will be found.—Ellen G. White, *Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students** [CT] 462.1.^{†‡} [Starting right in heaven!][‡] [<https://egwwritings.org/read?panels=p23.2275&index=0>][‡]

[EGW:] Now from the light given me of God, I know that as a people we have not improved our opportunities for educating and training the youth.

We should teach them how to read and understand the Scriptures. Wherever there is a Biblical [sic] institute for ministers and people, we should, in connection with it, **organize a class for the youth**. Their names should be registered. All should feel the importance of the scheme of educating the youth to understand the Scriptures. Let the work be taken hold of in the very simplicity of the truth itself. **Lead the minds of the youth from truth to truth, up higher and higher, showing them how scripture interprets scripture, one passage being the key to other passages. Thus the Scripture itself will be the educating power, holding the thoughts in captivity to Christ.**—Letter 27a, 1892.—Ellen G. White, *Evangelism** 581.1.†‡ [Underlining of text is added for emphasis.]‡ [Carefully keep reading!][‡] [<https://egwwritings.org/read?panels=p30.3231&index=0>][‡]

6. There is a very interesting suggestion repeated many times in the book of Revelation: “If you have ears to hear, listen to what the Spirit says to the churches!” God is telling us that we must read the Scriptures with our minds open and searching to discover many hidden truths in addition to what is obvious on the surface.
7. How should we respond to the inspired record? The word *inspiration* comes from ordinary breathing, including when you take a deep breath. That is an inspiration. The Bible is described as being “God-breathed.” Thus, we should read the Bible as a true case of God speaking to us. It may be difficult to set aside our preconceived opinions; however, this is what we must do. We must adjust our ideas to match Scripture and not *vice versa*!

1 Corinthians 2:13-14: ¹³ So then, we do not speak in words taught by human wisdom, but in words taught by the Spirit, as we explain spiritual truths to those who have the Spirit. ¹⁴Whoever does not have the Spirit cannot receive the gifts that come from God’s Spirit. Such a person really does not understand them, and they seem to be nonsense, because their value can be judged only on a spiritual basis.—*Good News Bible-TEV*.*
8. Ideally, we may be able to **compare other passages in Scripture with a single similar message**. That often helps. It may be helpful to compare what you are reading and learning with others. Consider using a concordance.
9. To see one example of a surprising response to the Scripture, read Jeremiah 28!
10. Another important way to cooperate with God’s Spirit is by **studying together with other Christians of like mind**. This may prove challenging. However, it is helpful.
11. An important thing to remember as we have suggested in the past is to do our best to **understand: (1) The situation in which the original writer gave his message; (2) The audience to whom it was given; and (3) The situation taking place at that time**. When we think we have some idea of that original context, we then need to take the principles that we are learning and see how they might apply to our everyday lives. What can we learn about how to relate with family, friends, or colleagues in our job or at home?
12. The Bible needs to be studied in conjunction with prayer. We need to pray for God to guide us in our understanding. We may find it to be a real challenge to apply the biblical principles to our lives today. But it is a wonderful opportunity to grow our Christianity.
13. **Read Psalm 119:105-112**. Consider those words.
14. **The Bible text has important moral implications. We should not be surprised to**

discover that the Bible recommends certain things that are not easy for us to accept. It may even challenge some of our long-cherished errors.

15. We need to recognize also that the Bible has been used in inappropriate ways to brutalize and batter others. The Bible is intended to uplift and redeem. Many crimes have been committed in the name of God and the Bible! Some historians have suggested that more wars have been fought in the name of religion than for any other reason! “Holy wars”?
16. We should not be surprised if we run across suggestions that do not harmonize with our natural tendencies! How often have you felt a sense of rebellion when reading some pointed message in Scripture?
17. It is very important to have a regular schedule for prayer and Bible study. Many people find it useful to do this as the first thing in the morning. Unfortunately, it is also often true that as soon as we wake up, we think of all sorts of things we need to do in preparation for our day! We need to consider the time for Bible study and prayer as sacred.
18. Rushing through Bible study and prayer is not the way to grow our relationship with God.

[EGW:] **There is nothing more calculated to strengthen the intellect than the study of the Scriptures.** No other book is so potent to elevate the thoughts, to give vigor to the faculties, as the broad, ennobling truths of the Bible. **If God’s word [the Bible] were studied as it should be, men would have a breadth of mind, a nobility of character, and a stability of purpose rarely seen in these times.**

But there is but little benefit derived from a hasty reading of the Scriptures. One may read the whole Bible through and yet fail to see its beauty or comprehend its deep and hidden meaning. **One passage studied until its significance is clear to the mind and its relation to the plan of salvation is evident, is of more value than the perusal of many chapters with no definite purpose in view and no positive instruction gained.** Keep your Bible with you. As you have opportunity, read it; fix the texts in your memory. Even while you are walking the streets you may read a passage and meditate upon it, thus fixing it in the mind.—Ellen G. White, *Steps to Christ** 90.1-2.†

[\[https://egwwritings.org/read?panels=p108.358&index=0\]](https://egwwritings.org/read?panels=p108.358&index=0)†

19. William Miller launched the advent movement in North America by studying one verse at a time until he was thought he understood it and its implications! When he reached Daniel 8:14, he did the homework to discover that the prophecy of 2300-days/years was about to be fulfilled. He was sure that the verse pointed to the second coming of Christ. Thus, he arrived at the startling conclusion that Jesus would return in 1843 or 1844. Others in Europe and South America were coming to the same conclusions.
20. We need to claim certain promises which are repeated in different contexts.

[From the *Adult Sabbath School Bible Study Guide*=BSG:] While there are indeed blessings that come from reading the Bible—like drinking from a fire hydrant (lots and fast)—it is possible to read the Bible through quickly and miss so much. **God gave us His inspired, precious Word so that we would come to know more about Him (and, in the process, more about ourselves, too). When we take time to see the indescribable, beautiful**

character of God and the ways He has interacted with humanity throughout history, we can only love Him more. The record of His interactions is right there in our hands—but we must find time, and take time, to know God through reading His Word (Acts 17:11).—BSG* for Sunday, April 26.†§ [Signs in the sun, moon, and stars were occurring!]†

Acts 17:11: The people there [at Berea] were more open-minded than the people in Thessalonica. They listened to the message with great eagerness, and every day they studied the Scriptures [They had what we call the Old Testament.] to see if what Paul said was really true.—*GNB-TEV*.*‡

[BSG:] **Consider the following suggestions. Ask God to place a desire in your heart for Him.** Claim the promises in Jeremiah 29:13 and Psalm 37:4. Invite Him to wake you up earlier than usual or to free up some time in your day to do so.—*BSG** for Sunday, April 26.†‡

Jeremiah 29:13: “You will seek me, and you will find me because you will seek me with all your heart.”—*Good News Bible-TEV*.*

Psalm 37:4: Seek your happiness in the LORD,
and he will give you your heart’s desire.—*Good News Bible-TEV*.*

21. Go to a quiet place where you can be by yourself for your Bible study.

22. It is important to spend time with God. Even at times when you may not feel like it. Bible study and prayer must be a conscious choice just as exercise and eating well are a conscious choice if you want to be healthy or stay healthy. It has been shown by behavioral scientists that it takes 21 days to form a new habit.

[BSG:] **Read again John 15:1–8** [The parable of the Vine and branches]. **What is Jesus telling us about abiding in Him, and why is this so crucial to our faith?**—*BSG** for Sunday, April 26.‡

[BSG:] **Jesus is our perfect example in all things, and when it comes to personal devotions, it is no different. What does Mark 1:35 tell us about Jesus’ time with His Father?**—*BSG** for Monday, April 27.‡

Mark 1:35: Very early the next morning, long before daylight, Jesus got up and left the house. He went out of the town to a lonely place, where he prayed.—*Good News Bible-TEV*.*† [Compare Luke 6:12.]‡

[BSG:] Although Mark 1:35 is just one verse, we can learn so much here from Jesus’ example. Long before the sun came up, He removed Himself to a solitary place of quiet so He could be with His Father. **Can you imagine the scene—Jesus, sitting by the Sea of Galilee or on the side of a hill, praying and communing with His Father before the world around Him woke up?** Although this verse describes Jesus’ commitment to prayer, we clearly see that it was a priority for Him. No doubt this time was what gave Him strength to face all that He endured. If Jesus needed this to start every day, how much more do we?—*BSG** for Monday, April 27.†‡

23. **I am sure that Jesus talked with His Father every evening and/or morning to discuss what He should do in the coming day and what challenges He might face.**

[BSG:] Do you have a place you can go each morning to be with God? Perhaps you can find a chair by a window, a quiet spot outside, or even the

kitchen table, where you can come daily to sit at the feet of Jesus to learn from God's Word. **Sitting at the feet of Jesus is the best place to be** (Luke 10:39–42).—BSG* for Monday, April 27.†§

Luke 10:39-42: ³⁹She had a sister named Mary, who sat down at the feet of the Lord and listened to his teaching. ⁴⁰Martha was upset over all the work she had to do, so she came and said, “Lord, don't you care that my sister has left me to do all the work by myself? Tell her to come and help me!”

⁴¹ The Lord answered her, “Martha, Martha! You are worried and troubled over so many things, ⁴²but just one is needed. **Mary has chosen the right thing**, and it will not be taken away from her.”—*Good News Bible-TEV*.*†

[BSG:] By forming a daily habit of going to a certain place to spend time with God, you'll be more likely to return there each day. Don't become discouraged when you miss a day here or there, because emergencies arise [and setbacks occur], and you may not be able to spend time with God. But try not to let too much time pass without spending time with God. **Remember that having an abiding relationship with God is a daily decision, one that you can start again, today, if you choose to.**—BSG* for Monday, April 27.†‡

24. To really gain an insight into the Bible, **we need the help of the angels and the Holy Spirit. We should always begin with prayer, asking for God's guidance.**

[BSG:] **Pray:** It's impossible to overstate the importance of prayer as bookends to (and bookmarks throughout) your Bible study time. Ellen G. White tells us that when we come to read the Bible, we are not alone. By inviting the Holy Spirit to be our guide, we reject all other distractions, and the enemy flees.—BSG* for Tuesday, April 28.‡

[EGW:] **The Bible should never be studied without prayer. The Holy Spirit alone can cause us to feel the importance of those things easy to be understood, or prevent us from wresting [forcibly pulling] truths difficult of comprehension.** It is the office of heavenly angels to prepare the heart so to comprehend God's word that we shall be charmed with its beauty, admonished by its warnings, or animated and strengthened by its promises. We should make the psalmist's petition our own: “Open Thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of Thy law.” Psalm 119:18. **Temptations often appear irresistible because, through neglect of prayer and the study of the Bible, the tempted one cannot readily remember God's promises and meet Satan with the Scripture weapons.** But angels are round about those who are willing to be taught in divine things; and in the time of great necessity they will bring to their remembrance the very truths which are needed. Thus “when the enemy shall come in like a flood, the Spirit of the Lord shall lift up a standard against him.” Isaiah 59:19.—Ellen G. White, *The Great Controversy** 599.3-600.1.†‡
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[BSG:] **Read and Write:** It could be said that a main difference between merely reading the Bible and studying it comes down to one key act: **writing.** Writing helps us **slow down our thoughts, reflect** on God's Word,

and **work through** it at a pace where observation, interpretation, application, and commitment can occur. It also helps our initial scattered ideas to work themselves out—from our head, to our pen, and then into our hearts for the day. **We are also more likely to remember something that we've written down** (Ps. 119:15, 16). If you're unable to write your thoughts down, try reading the Bible aloud (or listening to it), followed by your thoughts as a prayer to God.—BSG* for Tuesday, April 28.†‡§

25. After doing some deep Bible study, it is very useful to tell someone else what you have learned. Here is a simple outline for dealing with each passage that you read.

[BSG:] Select a short book of the Bible to begin with (such as Jonah, Mark, Philippians, or 1 John), and slowly work your way through it. Here is a simple approach you can apply to one verse (the verse-by-verse method), a passage, or an entire chapter:

1. **Pray that the Holy Spirit will guide your mind and soften your heart as you read.**
2. **Choose a Bible verse or passage.**
3. **Write the passage in a journal or portions of the passage that stand out as you read.**
4. **Prayerfully read the passage again and underline the key ideas.**
5. **Write down what the underlined ideas tell you.**
6. **Pray over these ideas and how they impact your relationship with God.** [Do this by trying to reword the passage, putting it in your words.]
7. **Consider whom you might share this with today.**—BSG* for Tuesday, April 28.‡

[EGW:] Whenever the people of God are growing in grace, they will be constantly obtaining a clearer understanding of His word. They will discern new light and beauty in its sacred truths. This has been true in the history of the church in all ages, and thus it will continue to the end. **But as real spiritual life declines, it has ever been the tendency to cease to advance in the knowledge of the truth. Men rest satisfied with the light already received from God's word, and discourage any further investigation of the Scriptures. They become conservative, and seek to avoid discussion.**—Ellen G. White, *Counsels to Writers and Editors** 38.3-39.0.†‡ [\[https://egwwritings.org/read?panels=p24.141&index=0\]](https://egwwritings.org/read?panels=p24.141&index=0)†

26. You probably have heard others talk about various ways to read and study the Bible. We have suggested a verse-by-verse method here. There is also a chapter-by-chapter study or theme study; A word study; book study; or even studying your Bible with your concordance. If we want our relationships with God to expand and grow, contact with Him through the Bible has to be meaningful and frequent.
27. One of the most important ways to determine if you have understood something that you have studied is to **try to explain it to someone else!** You may find out that you need to go back and study again!

[BSG:] **Something that will help keep your Bible study time vibrant is sharing with others what you've discovered.** When we explain what

we've learned, the summarizing, synthesizing process consolidates our thoughts. This helps us retain knowledge. The double blessing is that when we share and discuss with others, the spiritual conversation will often challenge and strengthen both of you. **It's often when we share or teach others that the deepest learning occurs in our own minds.**—BSG* for Wednesday, April 29.†‡

28. **This is why it is so helpful to try to teach truths to someone who is unfamiliar with them. That cements the ideas into our own brains.**

Isaiah 50:4: The Sovereign LORD has taught me what to say,
so that I can strengthen the weary.

Every morning he makes me eager

to hear what he is going to teach me.—*Good News Bible-TEV*.*

[BSG:] Our personal Bible study time not only strengthens us, but it enables us to encourage others we may meet during the day. It can become a double blessing.

Our spiritual lives are a marathon. Ask the Lord to keep you running your race with constancy, keeping your eyes on the goal (*Phil. 3:14*). Don't feel discouraged if you've gone a bit slack for a while, but make any necessary changes in your life to keep your relationship, and specifically your Bible study and prayer time, vibrant. For truly, this is eternal life, that we may know God today (*John 17:3*). Our daily commitment to abide in Him and in His Word is life-changing.—BSG* for Wednesday, April 29.†‡§

Philippians 3:14: So I run straight toward the goal in order to win the prize, which is God's call through Christ Jesus to the life above.—*GNB-TEV*.*

John 17:3: "And eternal life means to know you, the only true God, and to know Jesus Christ, whom you sent."—*Good News Bible-TEV*.*

29. It is really exciting. **If one finds something in the Bible that really helps him/her, the next step is to share with someone.** David described his reading of Scripture as like tasting honey!

Psalms 119:103-104: ¹⁰³How sweet is the taste of your instructions—
sweeter even than honey!

¹⁰⁴I gain wisdom from your laws,

and so I hate all bad conduct.—*Good News Bible-TEV*.*

30. Read **Isaiah 55**. What is God asking us to do in this chapter? Are we listening?
31. As you can see, this lesson has suggested that we use the three keys to a growing Christian relationship **Bible study, prayer, and witnessing** that is sharing with others.

[BSG:] **The purpose of Bible study is to know God and to grow in your relationship with Him**, for this is what life eternal is—to be forever with the God we love (*John 5:39, John 17:3*).—BSG* for Friday, May 1.†‡§

John 5:39: "You study the Scriptures, because you think that in them you will find eternal life. And these very Scriptures speak about me!"—*GNB-TEV*.*

[BSG:] Part of any relationship is mutual engagement. We read in Revelation 3:20 that Jesus seeks to have this with us, yet we must realize

that, as created beings, we can always learn more about our Creator. Like a miner digging for precious jewels, we should be constantly searching in the Bible. There is always more to glean, no matter how many times we've read certain stories or Bible passages.—BSG* for Friday, May 1.‡

[EGW:] Whatever may be man's intellectual advancement, let him not for a moment think that there is no need of thorough and continuous searching of the Scriptures for greater light. As a people we are called individually to be students of prophecy. We must watch with earnestness that we may discern any ray of light which God shall present to us. We are to catch the first gleamings of truth; and **through prayerful study clearer light may be obtained**, which can be brought before others.—Ellen G. White, *Testimonies for the Church*,* vol. 5, 708.2 [1889]; *Gospel Workers**¶ 300.1 [1915]; *Counsels to Writers and Editors**¶ 41.1 [1946].†‡

[\[https://egwwritings.org/read?panels=p113.3446&index=0\]](https://egwwritings.org/read?panels=p113.3446&index=0)‡

32. We also should not try to make the Bible fit into our own human opinions or thoughts.

[EGW:] **How shall we search the Scriptures? Shall we drive our stakes of doctrine one after another, and then try to make all Scripture meet our established opinions, or shall we take our ideas and views to the Scriptures, and measure our theories on every side by the Scriptures of truth? Many who read and even teach the Bible, do not comprehend the precious truth they are teaching or studying.** Men entertain errors, when the truth is clearly marked out, and **if they would but bring their doctrines to the word of God, and not read the word of God in the light of their doctrines, to prove their ideas right, they would not walk in darkness and blindness, or cherish error. Many give the words of Scripture a meaning that suits their own opinions, and they mislead themselves and deceive others by their misinterpretations of God's word.**—Ellen G. White, *The Review and Herald*,* July 26, 1892, par. 3; *Counsels to Writers and Editors**¶ 36.2-3.†‡

[\[https://egwwritings.org/read?panels=p821.12114&index=0\]](https://egwwritings.org/read?panels=p821.12114&index=0)‡

33. Do you find it easy to come to Scriptures with no preconceived opinions and biases? Do you have any favorite ideas that might need to be set aside?

[BSG:] **Summary: Personal Bible study is at the heart of having a vibrant and enduring relationship with God.** God's Word speaks into our twenty-first-century lives in meaningful ways, just as it has during past centuries. In a similar way to keeping any friendship alive, we should look for ways to keep our devotional lives vivid as we abide in Jesus, trusting His promise that His Word “ ‘shall not return to Me void, but it shall accomplish what I please, and it shall prosper in the thing for which I sent it’ ” (*Isa. 55:11, NKJV*).—BSG* for Friday, May 1.†‡§

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