

Inductive Bible Study

Related Resources

- [Inductive Bible Study - Observation](#)
- Inductive Bible Study - Interpretation
- [Inductive Bible Study - Application](#)
- Simple Study on the Power of God's Word
- Authority of God's Word - study on 2Timothy 3:16-17
- Ezra 7:10 - Exposition of the "Ezra 7:10 Principle"
- Job's "Secret" of perseverance?
- A Primer on the Lost Art of Biblical Meditation
- Memorizing God's Word - Why? How? Resource links...
- Memory Verses by Topic
- [How to Perform A Greek Word Study on the Web](#)
- Greek Tense, Voice, Mood Reference Guide
- Greek Word Studies - in depth
- [Bible Interpretation - Figures of speech](#)
- Multiple resources on Biblical Interpretation (Hermeneutics)
- Is Your Interpretation Supernaturalistic, Naturalistic, Existentialistic, Dogmatic?
- Typology - Study of Biblical types
- [Overview of Inductive Study with Observation Worksheet and example of how to mark a page](#)
- Click for Introduction to Inductive Bible Study using PowerPoint (2002)- Hint: View in "Slide Show" mode [see icons at bottom of the Power Point frame - click the one that says "Slide Show" - you can hit your "Escape" key at any time to revert back to the normal screen] - each mouse click will progressively give more information on each slide and make your viewing more "interactive".
- Jensen's Survey of the New Testament and Jensen's Survey of the Old Testament (over 2500 pages) [available in one Pdf download online](#).

THE THREE COMPONENTS OF INDUCTIVE BIBLE STUDY

- **OBSERVATION:** What does it say?
- **INTERPRETATION:** What does it mean?
- **APPLICATION:** How do I respond?
- [BIBLE VERSIONS](#) How Literal is your translation?

INTRODUCTION TO INDUCTIVE BIBLE STUDY WHAT IS IT?

(Click to skip the intro and go directly to OBSERVATION)

Do you long for a relationship with God, but feel lost when you open your Bible, not even knowing where to begin?

Or perhaps you begin each year with a resolution to read through the Bible, only to give up in frustration, wandering about somewhere in the "*wilderness*" of the book of Numbers?

Or do you read passages of Scripture and find that only moments later you can't even remember what you just read?

Are you frustrated that there are so many different opinions about what the Bible says on a given subject and you wonder which one is true?

Or do you doubt whether it's even possible for you to understand God's Word, since you're not a pastor, an elder or a degreed theologian?

If any or all of these questions describe you, then take heart, beloved, for you are about to embark on a journey called **Inductive Bible Study** (IBS), one that has the potential to radically transform your life as you study God's Word in a way you heretofore never thought possible. **Inductive Bible Study** will expose you to an approach that can be applied to any Scripture, any time, any place, by any one. All that is required is the Holy Book, the Holy Spirit and a humble, teachable heart.

As you begin this journey, remember that the Bible will be your primary resource "for no (spoken) [word](#) from God (is) [void of power](#) (a more [literal](#) rendering of Luke 1:37ASV+ then other translations) and "His divine power has granted to us **everything** pertaining to life and godliness (read that phrase again - do you believe this is true?), through the true knowledge of Him (found in His Word) Who called us by His own glory and excellence. For by these (His "glory and excellence") He has granted to us His precious and magnificent promises, in order that by them (we) might become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world by lust." (2Pe 1:3,4+)

*"The Bible is the Word of God in such a way
that when the Bible speaks, God speaks."*

-- B. B. Warfield
(see Isaiah 55:11)

Beloved, if you are not convinced on the sufficiency and power of the Bible as your guidebook for abundant, supernatural life, you might consider performing a simple study on the inherent **Power of God's Word**. You must understand and believe that the Word of God not only is sufficient for every need but that it is a "love letter" from God, because it is! "God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish, but have eternal life." (John 3:16+) Your objective is to learn to read the Bible as if God were personally speaking to you. Why? Because He is!

Allow the Author to speak directly, personally and powerfully to your mind but also to your heart. Remember that the Bible is the only book whose Author is always present when it is read.

*Knowing the Incarnate Word
is the key to understanding the written Word
And in growing in grace and knowledge of the Incarnate Word*

Beloved, many saints are sitting **under** the Word today in Bible believing churches, but they are not **in** the Word for themselves. As a corollary, many saints **read** the Word but fail to **study** the Word, a malady about which Oscar Feucht once quipped "The difference between **reading** and **study** is like the difference between drifting in a boat and rowing toward a destination."

The psalmist writes that the blessed man or woman who flourishes like a tree by water is the one who delights not **under** but **"in** the law of the LORD, and **in** His law meditates (see **Primer On Biblical Meditation**) day and night." (Ps 1:2, 3+). The great need for most believers is to "get into" the Word for themselves ([See diagram comparing deductive vs inductive study](#)). Instead many are sitting in pews growing **older**, but not growing "in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ" (2Pe 3:18+).

Inductive Bible Study is profitable...
not just that we should **know**
but that we might **grow**!

Inductive Bible Study is not a method to fill our head with Biblical facts and make us "*smarter sinners*". The ultimate goal of all IBS is the transformation of our lives from glory to glory, daily becoming more like our Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ.

J C Ryle wisely said that "We must read our Bibles like men digging for hidden treasure."

*Every time we consider or study the Bible
we are, of necessity, worshipping.*

-- B. B. Warfield

Are you ready to get *into* the Word so that the Word can get *into* you in a way you never previously thought possible?
Then, my friend, get ready for the joy and adventure of **Inductive Bible Study**.

YOUR PRIMARY SOURCE

THE BIBLE

GOD SPEAKS

V

THROUGH HIS WORD

V

DIRECTLY TO YOU

V

NOW YOU ARE EQUIPPED

TO STUDY OTHER RESOURCES

After observing the schematic, you still may not appreciate the basic premise of **Inductive Bible Study** so let's illustrate two different approaches to Bible study using the life of a frog as our subject of study.

If you wanted to learn about frogs, you could go to the library and check out a book entitled "The Life of Frogs" (or in today's web savvy world you might "*Google*" the term "frog's life"). But how would you know that the so-called frog expert had really given you an accurate interpretation of a frog's life? You wouldn't if you relied solely upon that one source. On the other hand you could go to a nearby pond, sit by the water's edge and begin to observe and write down what you observed about the local frogs - **how** they gathered food, **what** they liked to eat and not eat, **where** they liked to sit, **how** they mated, **where**, **when** and **how** they laid their eggs, **what** transpired when the eggs hatched, and **how** long it took tadpoles to grow into adult frogs. Then you could take one of the slimy green creatures back home (not to your kitchen though), dissect him and observe how he was constructed in great detail, even observing the interrelationships of the innermost parts under a dissecting microscope. (cf. **interrogation of the Bible with the 5W/H questions**)

Now, let's be honest. Reading a reference by a "frog expert" is easier and more aesthetically pleasing than sitting by a pond and (heaven forbid) even touching one of the little green critters. And besides, you could glean the salient frog facts in a fraction of the time it would take you to perform your own **observations** of the frog's life cycle. So what's the point? In the first method, you might remember what you read for a few days, but with the second method you would likely be able to recall your observations months, even years later. And which method provides the potential for the joy of self discovery? Which method "costs" the most (in time and effort)? I'm sure you can see the clear distinctions between these two methods.

In Bible study, you can study someone's else's study or you can study the Scripture for yourself. The inductive method provides you with the skills and familiarity with the tools which make it possible for even beginning students (as well as children) to confidently study the Scriptures without being forced to depend on secondary sources.

"CUT YOUR OWN FIREWOOD!"

As **Henry Ford** is reported to have said "Cut your own wood and warm yourself twice". In other words, as you chop your own firewood, you enjoy not only the heat from the logs glowing in the fireplace but you also enjoy the physical warmth produced by the exercise of chopping your own firewood. In a similar way, as you "take the ax (the "tools" of inductive study) in your hand" and begin to learn how to "chop the wood" of God's Word for yourself, you will experience a supernatural "warmth" of your soul that is beyond description and in so doing you will keep the flame of devotion alive as you provide fuel for the Spirit to renew your mind and transform you more and more into the image of God's Son (2Cor 3:18+). "Cutting your own firewood" so to speak will provide the fuel to let your light shine before men in such a way that they begin to see your good (God) works and **glorify** (give a proper opinion) of your Father, the otherwise unseen God Who is in Heaven (cp Mt 5:16+).

A T Pierson said that "Human literature requires a lexicon and often a library of reference books to disclose its meaning. For the most part the Word of God is its own dictionary and library of reference. Within its own compass may be found either the direct or indirect definition of its own terms, **making the careful student in a large measure independent of outside help** and so enabling even the poor and simple to learn its meaning, and bringing it within universal reach."

A. B. Simpson famed Canadian preacher and theologian put it this way - "God has hidden every precious thing in such a way that it is a reward to the diligent, a prize to the earnest, but a disappointment to the slothful soul. All nature is arrayed against the loungeur and the idler. The nut is hidden in its thorny case; the pearl is buried beneath the ocean waves; the gold is imprisoned in the rocky bosom of the mountains; the gem is found only after you crush the rock which encloses it; the very soil gives its harvest as a reward to the laboring farmer. So truth and God must be earnestly sought.

Dr Howard Hendricks eloquently sums up the differences in the two contrasting approaches to Bible study writing that "Knowledge that is self-discovered is stored in the deepest part of the mind and remains the longest in the memory. There is no jewel more precious than that which you have mined yourself."

From the frog illustration, you can easily see that the key difference in the inductive approach is personal, active involvement in the process. As someone has said...

"I hear and I forget"
"I see and I remember"
"I do and I understand"

Instead of studying resources **about** the Bible, inductive study focuses first **upon** the Bible. You need to be willing to lay aside your preconceived notions, "pet" interpretations, ready references, study notes (yes, you heard correctly - even your study Bible - at least avoid looking at the notes on the Word prior to looking at the Word yourself!), sermon tapes or mp3's, etc, coming to the Scriptures as for the first time. Your primary resource is to be God's Word, and then other secondary resources. The tendency for many Bible students at the beginning of a study is to rally secondary resources that will do the "observing" and "interpreting" for the reader. It's quick but is it correct? How can you know if you don't make your own independent **observations** and arrive at your own interpretation based on those **observations**? And why even go to the Scriptures if you almost immediately forget what you've just read? Research show that we learn more and retain more, the more actively we are involved in the learning process.

PERCENTAGE REMEMBERED COMPARED to METHOD of LEARNING		
1	10%	Of what we read
2	20%	Of what we hear
3	30%	By watching a demonstration
4	50%	Combining #2 and #3
5	70%	Combine #4 with writing out what you learn
6	90%	All of the above plus application or practice

The key to effective, fruitful inductive Bible study is personal involvement and learning how **to carefully, prayerfully observe...** not sitting by a pond, but sitting at the feet of Jesus, allowing the Spirit of Christ to lead you into all truth (cp Lk 10:38-42).

Give me the insight, Lord,
As I read Your Word today,
So I will truly understand
Your message and Your way.
—Monroe

Inductive Bible study has as one of its major goals to give the student the knowledge and tools to allow them to *fish for themselves* so to speak. The Bible is a remarkable book. Millions of copies are bought each year. It has been the number-one bestseller for decades. But the tragic paradox is that the Bible is the **least-read bestseller** of all time!

J. I. Packer is surely correct when says that "If I were the devil, one of my first aims would be to stop folk from digging into the Bible." (cp "Hath God said... " Ge 3:1+, cp Mk 4:15+, 2Co 2:11+, 2Co 4:3-4+, 1Pe 5:8)

We do well to remember that Satan's initial attack was to undermine the truth of the Word of God by creating doubt "Now the serpent was more crafty (don't miss this detail!) than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made. And he said to the woman, "Indeed, **has God said**, 'You shall not eat from any tree of the garden?'" (Ge 3:1-5+) To create **doubt** about the value and veracity of the Word of God is still one of Satan's most effective weapons in his incessant war against God and His children. Therefore it behooves us to know the Word, lest we fall for the lie.

Alan Redpath (past pastor at Moody Bible Church) once advised the members of his congregation to *wreck* their Bible every 10 years! Do you use your Bible every day until it eventually falls apart? If you've never studied your Bible inductively, then you are about to experience that it is a wonderful "tool" by which you can wear out your Bible! Remember -- a well-worn Bible is a sign of a

well-fed soul, and a Bible that's falling apart usually belongs to someone whose life isn't!

The treasures of the Word of God
Are great beyond compare;
But if we do not search them out,
We cannot use what's there.
—Sper

Although he does not use the term, the following quote by **Martin Luther** appears to allude to the basic practice of inductive Bible study - "I study my Bible as I gather apples. First, I shake the whole tree that the ripest may fall. Then I shake each limb, and when I have shaken each limb I shake each branch and every twig. Then I look under every leaf."

The godly missionary [Amy Carmichael](#) indirectly alluded to the value of inductive Bible study warning all saints to "Never let good books take the place of the Bible. Drink from the Well, not from the streams that flow from the Well." (cp "pure milk" in 1Pe 2:2+)

[R A Torrey](#) may have been exaggerating somewhat but there is some truth in his declaration that "Ninety-nine Christians in every hundred are merely playing at Bible study; and therefore ninety-nine Christians in every hundred are merely weaklings when they might be giants."

Bible Study No Greater Privilege or Joy

I love how **Grant Osborne** introduces the second edition of his excellent text [The Hermeneutical Spiral: A Comprehensive Introduction to Biblical Interpretation](#)...

There is no greater privilege or joy than studying the Word of God. When we realize that God loved us enough not only to send His Son to be the atoning sacrifice for our sins, but also cared enough for us to give us His revealed truths to challenge and guide our lives, we are amazed at how little we deserve and yet how much He has done for us! There is only one set of final truths in this world, not mathematics or science (for all physical laws are invalid in a quasar or a black hole), but only the Word of God. In this the eternal principles intended to direct us through this life are truly found. Therefore it is both a **privilege** and a **responsibility** to study God's Word **as carefully as possible**. To fail as a Christian to study God's inspired revelation is tantamount to refusing to know the laws of the country we live in and breaking those laws with impunity. It is a failure that can and will have catastrophic results, for it means we do not care about the rules we have promised to obey by virtue of being citizens of our country—whether that be the USA or Britain or heaven (cf. Php 3:20, 21+). (See [The Hermeneutical Spiral: A Comprehensive Introduction to ... - Page 15](#)) (Bolding added for emphasis)

May the Spirit of the Living God give all of His children a burning desire to diligently study His Living Word inductively that He might make each of us into **"oaks of righteousness, the planting of the LORD,** (Why? What should be the final goal of all serious Bible study? Smarter sinners? No! Sinners more like their Savior...) **that He may be glorified."** (Isaiah 61:3) (cp Ps 1:1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 -notes Ps 1:1; 1:2; 1:3; 1:4; 1:5; 1:6)

Dr. John Piper affirms the importance of inductive Bible study when he says that "You can learn more from a book if you stop and ask it questions than if you just read it passively. That includes the Bible too. One of the great problems in Bible reading is that we move our eyes over the words and come to the end of a column and don't know what we've read; we don't feel our minds or spirits expanded because we saw nothing fresh. It was purely mechanical. There was no discovery, no life, no breakthroughs to new insight. One of the best ways to change that is to train yourself to ask questions of the text. Often the posing of the question itself will already carry its answer with it and will open your mind to new things. This fairly prosaic, historical text in Luke 3:21–38 gives me an opportunity to show you what I mean. I'll simply take you with me through this text, pointing out the questions I asked and the answers I came up with. My guess is that as you follow me, questions of your own will arise. Good questions usually beget other questions, and that's how insight grows and grows. ([Introductory comments to his sermon on The Baptism and the Genealogy of Jesus](#) - Now click the link to see actual examples of questions Dr Piper asked to actually preach this text! Now begin to incorporate this valuable discipline into your Bible reading. Beware of the danger of a "through the Bible in a year" reading program - it is tempting to "just get through" the daily reading, but come to the end of the day and not even remember what you have read. That's "passive" reading. Interrogation of the text is "active" reading--your Teacher God's Spirit will richly reward you for your "labor of love!")

**INDUCTIVE BIBLE STUDY
IS IT "BIBLICAL"?**

You may be asking "Did anyone in Scripture study inductively?" This is a fair and relevant question.

In the book of Acts we encounter a group of saints often referred to as the *Bereans*" who seem to approach the Scriptures with an inductive mindset.

Luke records that as a result of jealousy, the Jews stirred the city of Thessalonica into an uproar which prompted "the brethren (to) immediately (send) Paul and Silas away by night to Berea and when they arrived, they went into the synagogue of the Jews. Now these (Jews at Berea) were more noble-minded than those (Jews) in Thessalonica, for they **received** the **word** with **great eagerness**, **examining** ("searched" KJV) the Scriptures daily to see whether these things were so. **Therefore many of them believed.** (Acts 17:10-12+)

The New Living Translation has a good paraphrase of this verse writing that "the people of Berea were more open-minded than those in Thessalonica, and they listened eagerly to Paul's message. They searched the Scriptures day after day to check up on Paul and Silas, to see if they were really teaching the truth."

The Bereans were open to the Truth, but as any good inductive student would do, they searched the scrolls **for themselves** which may explain why Dr. Luke referred to them as **noble-minded**. This Greek word (eugenes from **eu** = good, well + **génos** = race, family) can mean "of noble birth", but in context conveys the idea that these men and women were open-minded, unbiased and characterized by a willingness to learn and evaluate something fairly. This is the attitude we should have as we begin to explore a passage inductively. The moment we come to a passage and say "I know what this one means", we are in "trouble".

Needed:
Men and Women
Boys and Girls with...
A Berean Mindset!

To experience the most fruitful inductive study, we need a "Berean mindset". We need to approach the Word of God "as if for the first time" and avoid approaching it with our mind already made up. We also need to approach the precious Word with teachable hearts that continually exhibit a willingness to allow the truth of the text to transform and renew our thinking if such a change needs to transpire. This supernatural transformation of one's thinking upon confrontation with the Word of truth is at the very heart of **Application**, the third aspect of inductive study.

As you have noted in the above passage two key verbs are highlighted in **blue** and merit further analysis by looking briefly at the original Greek words. As you will learn later **Greek word studies** can be a valuable, illuminating component of inductive Bible study.

Receive
The Word

The first verb is **received**. **What** did they receive? **Who** did they receive it from? (Begin to practice the habit of "bombarding" the Scripture with these **5 W's and H type of questions**) In the context of (Acts 17) clearly the Bereans received the spoken word from Paul and Silas. The verb **received** (dechomai, Strong's [#1209](#)) describes a deliberate and ready acceptance. It means to receive kindly and to take to oneself what is presented or brought by another. It means to welcome as one would welcome a teacher, a friend, or a guest into one's house. In modern day terms, you get the picture - the Bereans "put out the welcome mat" for Paul's teaching!

What was their attitude? **How** did they receive Paul's message? Luke says with "great eagerness" which is literally "all eagerness". **How** much? Not just "some" or "partial" but **"all** eagerness", which the **NAS** translates ([see Bible Versions](#)) as **"great** eagerness". **Eagerness** is the Greek word **prothumia** (from **pro** = forward and **thumos** = heart or spirit) which conveys the picture of a ready and willing mind, a forward spirit (forwardness), or an eager mindset (such a person is moved by a strong and urgent desire or interest, with the implication of ardor and enthusiasm). In short, they didn't approach study with a sense of drudgery but with a wholehearted sense of excitement and anticipation.

THOUGHT - Dear saint, does this attitude describe the way in which you approach the Word of Life? If not, keep reading and then begin practicing the inductive technique. If you persevere you will be pleasantly, profitably surprised by the joy of self-discovery and the spiritual growth which you experience! Remember that God feeds the birds, but He doesn't throw the food into their nests!

Examine
The Word

The Bereans were not content with simply hearing Paul, but continually sought to check out what he said by daily (**How** often?) personally **examining** ("scrutinizing", Wuest) the Scriptures. The Greek verb (anakrino from **ana** = up and down, again + **krino** = judge) (Strong's # [350](#)) paints an interesting picture as it literally describes a process of "judging up and down". One can almost picture the Bereans "carefully sifting" the Scriptural scrolls, their eyes going up and down the pages, prospecting as it were for the truth as one would for pure gold and then (on the basis of the truth gleaned) forming an opinion regarding Paul's message. The Bereans had discovered the timeless principle that it is amazing how much light personal study of the Scriptures will shed on the commentaries on the Scriptures.

*"As we search the Scriptures, we must allow them to search us,
to sit in judgment upon our character and conduct."*

-- Jerry Bridges

Anakrino has an interesting secular association in that it was used of one who meticulously examined legal evidence. In a related use **anakrino** also described an investigation for the purpose of passing sentence in a judicial setting. These secular uses emphasize the careful, exacting nature of the Berean's approach to the Scriptures. For the Bereans, God's Spirit along with God's Word was their final "judge" which enabled them to assess the authenticity and accuracy of Paul's "commentary". As good **"IBS"** students the primary goal of the Bereans was to know what "saith the LORD", a goal they achieved by practicing the art and skill of careful **observation**.

Although the Berean approach is not specifically called "*inductive Bible study*", I think you will agree that their approach to the Scriptures closely parallels the approach described in this section.

*Let no man think or maintain that a man can search too far or be too well studied
in the book of God's word or in the book of God's works."*

-- Francis Bacon

Paul also used the verb **anakrino** in writing to the saints at Corinth explaining that as believers we have each received "not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit Who is from God, that we might know the things freely given to us by God, which things we also speak, not in words taught by human wisdom, but in those taught by the Spirit, combining spiritual thoughts with spiritual words." --and this is in contrast to -- "a natural (*psychikos* from *psyche* = soul; that part of immaterial life in common with the animals; Latin Vulgate translates it "*animalis*" - in context the contrast is between the "spiritual" and the unregenerate natural) man (who) does not (absolutely does not) accept (dechomai - accept readily, welcome as a teacher, "put out the welcome mat for") the things of the Spirit of God (why not?) for they are foolishness (moria ~ "moronic") to him and he cannot (does not have the inherent ability to) understand them, because they are spiritually appraised (anakrino) (1Cor 2:13-14+)

Horatio Bonar - We must study the Bible more. We must not only lay it up within us, but transfuse it through the whole texture of the soul.

INDUCTIVE BIBLE STUDY CALLS FOR CONTINUAL DEPENDENCE ON THE SPIRIT OF THE LORD

Always begin your time in God's Word with prayer...

Psalm 119:12

Blessed art Thou, O LORD.

Teach me Thy statutes.

Spurgeon's comments on this verse are relevant to inductive Bible study: Teach me thy statutes; for thus only can I learn the way to be blessed. Thou art so blessed that I am sure thou wilt delight in blessing others, and this boon I crave of Thee that. I may be instructed in Thy commands. Happy men usually rejoice to make others happy, and surely the happy God will willingly impart the holiness which is the fountain of happiness. Faith prompted this prayer and based it, not upon anything in the praying man, but solely upon the perfection of the God to Whom he made supplication.

**Lord, thou art blessed,
therefore bless me by teaching me.**

We need to be disciples or learners -- "teach me;" but what an honour to have God Himself for a Teacher: how bold is David to

beg the blessed God to teach him! Yet the Lord put the desire into his heart when the sacred word was hidden there, and so we may be sure that he was not too bold in expressing it. Who would not wish to enter the school of such a Master to learn of Him the art of holy living? To this Instructor we must submit ourselves if we would practically keep the statutes of righteousness. The King Who ordained the statutes knows best their meaning, and as they are the outcome of His own nature He can best inspire us with their spirit. The petition commends itself to all who wish to cleanse their way, since it is most practical, and asks for teaching, not upon recondite (secret, hidden) lore, but upon statute law. If we know the Lord's statutes we have the most essential education.

Let us each one say, "**Teach me Thy statutes.**" This is a sweet prayer for everyday use. It is a step above that of Psalms 119:10, "O let me not wander," as that was a rise beyond that of Psalms 119:8, "O forsake me not utterly." It finds its answer in Psalms 119:98, 99, 100: "Thou through Thy commandments hast made me wiser than mine enemies," etc.: but not till it had been repeated even to the third time in the "Teach me" of Psalms 119:33,66, all of which I beg my reader to peruse. Even after this third pleading the prayer occurs again in so many words in Psalms 119:124,139, and the same longing comes out near the close of the Psalm in Psalms 119:171 -- "My lips shall utter praise when thou hast taught me thy statutes."

*To summarize inductive Bible study -
the Bible is our primary Source and
God's Spirit is our primary Teacher.*

A. T. Pierson - If you want to understand the Bible, get on your knees... You will learn more in one hour of prayerful communion with the Spirit than in a thousand years in all the schools of human culture."

*He who has the Holy Spirit in his heart and
the Scriptures in his hands has all he needs."*

Alexander Maclaren

Thomas Manton a Puritan writer said "God's mind is revealed in Scripture, but we can see nothing without the spectacles of the Holy Ghost."

William Law - Without the present illumination of the Holy Spirit, the Word of God must remain a dead letter to every man, no matter how intelligent or well-educated he may be... It is just as essential for the Holy Spirit to reveal the truth of Scripture to the reader today as it was necessary for him to inspire the writers in their day.

Paul while not specifically mentioning the Spirit, did allude to His ministry when he told Timothy that he would not have to understand the truths of Scripture on his own...

Consider (carefully consider, perceive with your mind upon seeing) what I say, for the Lord will give you understanding in everything. (2Ti 2:7+)

Comment: Notice that Timothy was to continually make careful consideration of Paul's writings. God would give the understanding.

*The Bible is a supernatural book
and can be understood only by supernatural aid.*

-- A W Tozer

And we have that supernatural aid always available! As the apostle John teaches the Spirit continually abides in and with us enabling us to distinguish truth from error - "And as for you, **the anointing** which you received from Him (in context referring to the Holy Spirit each believer receives from the Father at the moment of initial salvation - cp 1Jn 2:20+, Jn 14:17) abides in you, and you have no need to have anyone teach you; but as His anointing teaches you about all things, and is true and is not a lie, and just as it has taught you, you abide in Him (our responsibility if we truly seek to hear from God's holy Word)" (1Jn 2:27+).

And so the apostle John teaches that the Spirit of God, Who lives in each believer, is readily accessible as our personal Tutor. To be sure, God has given us pastors and teachers for our edification (1Co 12:28, Ep 4:11, 12-notes Ep 4:11; 12), but remember that they are in addition to and not a substitute for the Teacher, the Holy Spirit. What a wonderful truth that even the humblest believer in Christ, even if he or she is but a newborn babe, may be taught by God's Spirit through His Word, even when human teachers are lacking.

The **Lord Jesus** made it abundantly clear to His disciples declaring that "When the Spirit of truth comes, He will guide you into all the truth for He will not speak on His own authority, but whatever He hears He will speak and He will declare to you the things that are to come. He will glorify Me (Jesus), for He will take what is Mine and declare it to you" (John 16:13,14).

The apostle **John** quoted Isaiah 54:13 recording Jesus' promise that "'THEY SHALL ALL BE TAUGHT OF GOD.' Everyone who has

heard and learned from the Father, comes to Me." (Jn 6:45).

Jesus went on to add that "It is the Spirit Who gives life; the flesh profits nothing. The words that I have spoken to you are spirit and are life." (Jn 6:63)

J C Ryle (1816-1900 - [short biography](#)) wisely wrote that "A humble and prayerful spirit will find a thousand things in the Bible which the proud, self-conceited student will utterly fail to discern."

Dear reader, may the testimony of the psalmist be your testimony as you seek to know God through His Word of Truth and Life (Jn 17:3, 2Ti 2:15+; Jas 1:18+; Php 2:16+)...

I have not turned aside from Thine ordinances, for Thou Thyself hast taught me. Ps 119:102 ([4](#))

Spurgeon commenting on this verse says: "They are well taught whom God teaches. What we learn from the Lord we never forget. God's instruction has a practical effect -- we follow his way when he teaches us; and it has an abiding effect, -- we do not depart from holiness."

The Living God teaching His Living Word

How wonderful is this truth for all of us who seek to be His students using His Scripture!

INDUCTIVE BIBLE STUDY CALLS FOR A PROPER ATTITUDE

J I Packer rightly reminds us that "One of the many divine qualities of the Bible is this: that it does not yield its secrets to the irreverent and censorious."

And so, as you begin this journey, inductive Bible study may seem somewhat labor intensive or academic, but if you desire to learn how to rightly divide the Word of Truth, you will need to persevere and exert effort ([click incredible illustration](#) of desire and effort). Bob Smith in his practical book [Basics of Bible Interpretation](#) writes that...

God wants everyone to be able to understand the Bible, for its message is essentially how we can have and enjoy the greatest kind of life, free from the futility of pointlessness, free from the limitations of our human, earthly thought patterns, free from the fear of death and dying. Not everyone understands it this way. In fact, many are so convinced they can't understand the Bible that they never give it a second look. It's strange how we will study most any other subject with diligence only to have the acquired knowledge perish with us. But the words of the Bible are words of life!

You too may have approached the Bible as "snack food" out of fear that deeper study was only for the "professionals", but in inductive study you will come to learn that you too can experience a veritable feast at the King's banqueting table (because you are!).

Grant Osborne is correct when he says that "The big problem with Bible study today is that we think it should be easier than other things we do. We study recipes for quality meals, how-to books for all kinds of things—carpentry, plumbing, automobile maintenance and so on—and read vociferously for our hobbies (**Ed:** Or we Google hundreds of articles!). **Why do we think the Bible is the only subject we should not have to study?**" (Osborne, G. R. The hermeneutical spiral: A comprehensive introduction to biblical interpretation. Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity Press)

As **Oliver Wendell Holmes** once said "What you bring away from the Bible depends to some extent on what you carry to it."

And so in order to experience effective, profitable inductive Bible study we need the **right attitude** as emphasized by the following Scripture. The apostle Peter writes...

Therefore (term of conclusion), [putting aside](#) all malice and all guile and hypocrisy and envy and all slander, 2 like newborn babes, [long for](#) the [pure](#) milk of the word, that by it you may grow in respect to salvation, 3 if you have tasted the kindness of the Lord." (1Pe 2:1-3-notes 1Pe 2:1; 2:2; 2:3)

Did you notice the order? [Putting aside](#) the perverse precedes practice of the positive. The Greek verb for [putting aside](#) was used

to describe taking off one's old dirty clothes! Sin in one's life will destroy one's appetite for the Word and needs to be cast off by confession and repentance (cf 1John 1:9). So first seek a "clean slate" as did David who prayed "Search me, O God, and know my heart. Try me and know my anxious thoughts and see if there be any hurtful way in me and lead me in the everlasting way." (Ps 139:23-24⁺)

Peter uses a figure of speech ("newborn babies") to draw a poignant comparison between the appetite of a baby for its mother's milk and the appetite the believer should have for God's Word. He commands us to [long for](#) pure milk, to desire it earnestly, to long for it greatly, to intensely crave possession of it and to have great affection for it. David wrote "As the deer [pants](#) for the water brooks, so my soul [pants](#) for Thee, O God." (Ps 42:1 - [Spurgeon's note](#)) where the word for [pants](#) is the same word translated [long for](#) in 1st Peter.

Spurgeon explains the idea of **panting** "As after a long drought the poor fainting hind longs for the streams, or rather as the hunted hart instinctively seeks after the river to lave its smoking flanks and to escape the dogs, even so my weary, persecuted soul pants after the Lord my God. ([Spurgeon](#))

The meaning of this word picture is obvious. Sinners bought with the precious blood and made into new babes in Christ are to crave the spiritual milk of God's Word just like babies crave the bottle.

And just as the Bible is to be our primary source in inductive study, Peter instructs us to make sure the "milk" we partake of is [pure](#), genuine, without guile or deceit, unadulterated and not mixed with anything else. When you "eat" the Bible inductively, you want to do so without any "additives". (See related messages by John Piper - [Long for the Pure Milk](#); [Sweeter than honey](#); [Meditate on the Word](#); [Open My Eyes That I May See](#); [Thank God for an Inspired Bible](#); [Wonderful Things From Your Word](#))

Why does Peter insist on a healthy diet of pure milk? What is his goal? It is nothing short of growth! Spiritual growth, which is only possible when one takes in pure milk. No intake of God's Word will result in stunted spiritual growth and the offshoot, spiritual maturity. Test yourself -- How long have you been a Christian? How would you grade your spiritual growth over the months, years? Are you growing up in Christ or simply growing older? Remember the principle - No regular intake of the Word = No spiritual growth!

Howard Hendricks adds that (1 Peter 2:1; 2:2; 2:3) "tells us: in order that you might grow. Please note, it is not that you may know. Certainly you can't grow without knowing. But you can know and not grow. The Bible was written not to satisfy your curiosity but to help you conform to Christ's image. Not to make you a smarter sinner but to make you like the Savior. Not to fill your head with a collection of biblical facts but to transform your life." ([Ibid](#))

Search the Scripture's precious store

As a miner digs for ore;

Search, and you will surely find

Treasures to enrich your mind.

—Anonymous

Francis Bacon once remarked that "some books are to be tasted, others to be swallowed, and some few to be chewed and digested."

Will H. Houghton encourages us to "Lay hold on the Bible until the Bible lays hold on you."

When you open your Bible, ask the Author to open your heart. (Ps 119:18, Luke 24:45, Ep 1:17, [18 notes](#))

Surely the Word of Truth and Life is to be "chewed and digested" so that it becomes part of our innermost being, not merely informing us but transforming us. Such was the approach of the weeping, downcast prophet Jeremiah who declared

Thy words were found and I ate them, and Thy words became for me a joy and the delight of my heart; for I have been called by Thy name, O LORD God of hosts. ([Jeremiah 15:16](#)) (Read the entire chapter to see the **context** in which the "weeping prophet" proclaimed this powerful principle testifying to the hope and assurance found in God's Word.)

German theologian **Johann Bengel** (1687-1752) said, "Be like a maker of a well who brings no water to his source but allows the water he finds there to flow freely without stoppage, diversion, or defilement."

David Shepherd sums up the importance of our attitude toward Bible study by observing that you can "Blame none but yourself if all the Bible you get is that little bit from under the calendar hurriedly snatched as a sop to conscience."

THE BENEFITS

If you're still not convinced that Inductive Bible Study is worth the investment of your time and effort, glance over a few of the benefits listed below.

(1) You will learn how to carefully observe the Scriptures and in so doing you will be enabled to "*rightly divide the Word of Truth*" (2Ti 2:15+) and you will be better equipped to accurately interpret God's Word on your own. President Teddy Roosevelt rightly declared that "A thorough knowledge of the Bible is worth more than a college education."

(2) You will no longer be dependent on commentaries, devotionals, pastor's sermons, conferences, etc. Please do not misunderstand. All believers should sit under a good and godly teacher of the Word, but this should be a stimulus, not a substitute for getting into the book for ourselves!

(3) When you encounter differences between interpretations in various commentaries (which you frequently will), IBS enables you to discern which comments represent the more accurate interpretation.

(4) You will increase in the knowledge of God and His ways, growing "in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ." (2Pe 3:18+, cp Jn 17:3)

As **Matthew Henry** put it "They who would grow in grace must be inquisitive."

Phillips Brooks said that "The Bible is like a telescope. If a man looks through his telescope, then he sees worlds beyond: but if he looks at his telescope, then he does not see anything but that. The Bible is a thing to be looked through, to see that which is beyond; but most people only look at it; and so they see only the dead letter."

Spurgeon - The sight of the promises (of the Bible) themselves is good for the eye of faith. The more we study the words of grace, the more grace shall we derive from the words.

(5) Your personal faith will be greatly strengthened for "faith comes from hearing and hearing by the word of Christ." (Ro 10:17, cp 1Thes 2:13+)

D. L. Moody - The study of God's Word brings peace to the heart... light for every darkness, life in death, the promise of our Lord's return, and the assurance of everlasting glory.

Henry Ward Beecher - The Bible is God's chart for you to steer by, to keep you from the bottom of the sea, and to show you where the harbor is, and how to reach it without running on rocks and bars.

(6) You will become increasingly aware of what it means to be **in Christ** ([click uses](#)) (see notes on in Christ and in Christ Jesus) and to **be holy for I am holy** (Ex 6:7, 19:6, Lv 11:44, 45, 19:2, 20:7, 26, Dt 7:6, 14:2, 1Pe 1:15, 16+, 1Pe 2:9+). Washing one's self with the pure water of the Word (Eph 5:25, 26+) allows the Spirit to progressively set us apart as He renews our mind and transforms our thinking from glory to glory (2Co 3:18, 4:16, 17, 18, Ro 12:2+), Eph 4:23+; Col 3:10, 11+). In one sense this process of sanctification by God's Word and the Spirit is an answer to our Lord's great prayer on our behalf that God the Father would...

Sanctify (His disciples) (aorist imperative - command which speaks of the urgent need for us to be set us apart, made holy) in the Truth. Thy Word is Truth. ([Jn 17:17](#))

The **NLT** paraphrases John 17:17 as "Make them pure and holy by teaching them Your words of truth."

It has been well said that "This book will keep you from sin or sin will keep you from this book."

Howard Hendricks adds that "Dusty Bibles lead to dirty lives. In fact, you are either in the Word and the Word is conforming you to the image of Jesus Christ, or you are in the world and the world is squeezing you into its mold." ([ibid](#)) (If everyone dusted off their Bible, the US would probably have one of the greatest dust storms of all time!)

Henry Ward Beecher wisely said that "The Bible is God's chart for you to steer by, to keep you from the bottom of the sea, and to show you where the harbor is, and how to reach it without running on rocks or bars."

(7) You will develop an increasing assurance that you are believing not what someone else teaches but what the God's Word truly teaches. And since we behave on the basis of what we believe, we can be certain that we are "[walking](#) (living) in a [manner worthy](#) of the [Lord](#), to [please](#) Him in [all respects](#), [bearing fruit](#) in [every good work](#) and [increasing](#) in the [knowledge](#) of [God](#) (Col 1:10 +)? So you can see why it is critical that what one believes about God is in fact truly what God says and not what someone else's "systematic" interpretation teaches, no matter how authoritative and respected the source! And make no mistake -- this attitude is not one of arrogance but one of prudence! Howard Hendricks once asked a group of businessmen

"If you didn't know any more about your business or profession than you know about Christianity after the same number of years of exposure, what would happen ?

'One guy said, "They'd ship me!" to which Dr. Hendricks replied

"Thank, you, sir, for the honesty"! ([Ibid](#)).

(8) You will learn a method of independent Bible study that can be passed on to others who in turn can go out and teach others. (cf 2Ti 2:2+).

The Bible gives us all we need
To live our lives for God each day;
But it won't help if we don't read
And follow what its pages say -Sper

Backsliders begin with dusty Bibles
and end with filthy garments.

C H Spurgeon

(9) We need to know where we are going in this life and the life to come -

In **Unlocking the Scriptures** Hans Finzel addresses "**Why We Need to Study the Bible**" explaining that "When you take a trip to a place you've never been, you probably refer to a road map to plot a course, get a general sense of the terrain you'll be passing through, and mark your progress along the way (**ED**: Of course today we use our smart phones, but the principle is the same!). As Christians, **we are on a spiritual journey all our lives; we are earthly pilgrims on our way home to heaven**. But since we have never been there, we must trust our sense of direction to the **map of Scripture**. If we let it, the Bible will guide us, redirect us when we get off the course, and lead us safely to our destination.

Pictorial Distinction between Deductive Bible Study and Inductive Bible Study (from Hampton Keathley III, [The Word-Filled Life](#)) - [click to enlarge...](#)

INDUCTIVE BIBLE STUDY RESOURCES

At this point you may feel a bit overwhelmed, and yet you are intrigued with the inductive approach. Let me encourage you first of all to continue reading the remainder of the summary notes on this page. Here are some other suggestions you might consider:

1) "[How to Study Your Bible](#)" (borrow) ([click here for an excerpt of the first 24 pages which gives a good introduction](#)) by Kay Arthur is the most succinct, straightforward synopsis on inductive Bible study currently available. See the related, albeit distinctly different book by Kay Arthur entitled [Lord, Teach me to Study the Bible in 28 Days](#) - if you don't have any inductive classes available in your city or you are just curious about inductive study, [this](#) is the book for you. It is more "hands on" than [How to Study Your Bible](#). While "[Lord, Teach me to Study the Bible in 28 Days](#)" duplicates some material in the [How to Study Your Bible](#), the latter is also useful as a reference book with more details on the inductive method, while the [former](#) functions like an introductory level "instruction manual" in inductive study. If you are intrigued by the inductive method and want to purchase only one book as an "experiment", I would recommend [Lord, Teach me to Study the Bible in 28 Days](#), and I can assure you after one month with your own "personal Trainer", your Teacher, the Holy Spirit (Jn 14:26, 1Jn 2:27), you will never read your Bible the same! Your time in God's Word of Truth will turn from the drudgery of a "read through the Bible in a year" to the delight of experiencing the joy of self (Spirit led) discovery of the glorious truths about the Holy One of Israel!

2) [New International Inductive Study Bible](#) was developed by Precept Ministry International specifically with the inductive student in mind. This Bible is unique with an excellent synopsis of the inductive method including an example of how to mark the text, wide margins, paucity of study notes, suggestions at the beginning of all 66 books on how to study that specific book inductively ([click](#) and "turn the pages") and at the end of each book there is a blank "At A Glance" chart to record your chapter themes, key words, etc. If you are serious about the inductive Bible study method, you should strongly consider purchasing this Bible.

3) **40 Minute Bible Studies** ([click](#)) on a variety of topics (click following examples "[How Can A Man Control His Thoughts, Desires and Passions?](#)", "[Money, Possessions, and the Pursuit of Peace](#)", "[A Marriage that Really Works](#)", "[Discovering What the Future Holds](#)", a study on prophecy, etc).

Each 40 minute study (so named because the lesson can be completed in 40 minutes) is self-contained, self-instructional, does not require advanced training and is easily adapted to a small group setting even if participants are not familiar with inductive study. These 40 minute studies are an excellent, "painless" way to begin to experience inductive Bible study, learning how to study the Scriptures on your own in a way you never thought possible before.

4) **God Are You There? Do You Care? Do You Know About Me?** This self-contained study on the book of John will give you an excellent introduction to the inductive Bible study technique. You could do this one in your personal devotional time to whet your appetite for a full fledged Precept Upon Precept study discussed below.

5) **Sign up for a Precept Bible Study in your area: Precept Upon Precept Bible Studies** are the best in depth studies available for inductive Bible study. They take from 3-5 hours of homework per week but are well worth the time investment for you will learn more life transforming truth in these courses than you ever thought possible in a lay setting. You can also download the first lesson of each of their expanding selection of available Bible book studies in Pdf format (click for list of available studies and Pdf downloads). You may feel overwhelmed at first but all Precept leaders are trained in the inductive method and are willing to assist you. If you are unable to find a Precept Bible study in your call Precept headquarters at 1-800-763-8280.

Yes, Inductive Bible study takes more time and is more work but as **A W Pink** once said "No verse of Scripture yields its meaning to lazy people."

6) **Sign up for a Precept Workshop on Inductive Bible Study:** An Introduction to inductive Bible study is offered by Precept in Chattanooga (a blessing to visit if you are able) in addition to periodic seminars throughout the USA (call 1-800-763-8280).

7) **Living by the Book** by Dr Howard Hendricks. This work is an entertaining and enlightening introduction to inductive Bible study which one could use to supplement the more broader selection of inductive Bible study materials available from Precept Ministry International. ([Living by the Book & Workbook](#))

8) **Basic Bible Interpretation** by Dr Roy B. Zuck. This book is an authoritative, well written, easy to understand textbook on hermeneutics (the "science" of interpretation). Chapter 2 is especially useful to give the student of Scripture an excellent historical summary of how the Bible has been rightly and wrongly handled over the last 2000 years. ([Hardbound book](#) or [borrow](#))

9) **Basics of Bible Interpretation** by Bob Smith is a well written book available free of charge online. Although it is not specifically a treatise on inductive study ([click - chapter 6](#)), this book does contain excellent guidelines on interpretation of [figurative language \(chapter 7\)](#) and practical guidelines on how to utilize the original languages, [Greek \(chapter 10\)](#) and [Hebrew \(chapter 11\)](#).

10) **Hermeneutics - Study of Interpretation of Scriptures** - by Dr Robert Lewis. This 152 page Pdf is used as for the course on hermeneutics at Chafer Theological Seminary and represents a compilation of sound, useful material from a number of sources. On page 22 there is an excellent summary of how the Bible has been interpreted over the past 2000 years (similar to resource #8 but no charge).

11) **How Can I Understand The Bible?** : A brief, well done online booklet from Radio Bible Class summarizing inductive Bible study.

12) **How to Read a Book (online)** by Mortimer Adler. **Howard Hendricks** writes that "even though [How to Read a Book](#) is about books in general, it's an outstanding resource for Bible study because it teaches you how to read... I read it, and it transformed my study skills. In fact, it changed the course of my life. And that's what it can do for you in terms of Bible study." Here is a sample excerpt from Mortimer Adler's book "One of the primary rules for reading anything is to **spot the most important words the author uses. Spotting them is not enough, however. You have to know how they are being used.** Finding an important word merely begins the more difficult research for the meanings, one or more, common or special, which the word is used to convey as it appears here and there in the text." ([From Chapter 2 The Reading of Reading](#))

13) Inductive Bible Study on the Computer

This has become a reality with [Logos Bible Software](#) but it comes with a price. Logos products are expensive and Logos requires a relatively robust computer with ample Ram and Memory ([system requirements](#)).

Here are a few links to help you weigh the options...

- [Links to a number of discussions on Inductive Study in Logos](#)

- [E-sword](#) - Free software
- [TheWord](#) - Free software - I like this better than E-sword

14) Miscellaneous Related Resources:

Gotquestions

- [What is the Bible?](#)
- [Why is the Bible called the Holy Bible?](#)
- [Why should we read the Bible / study the Bible?](#)
- [What is the key to applying the Bible to my life?](#)
- [What is good biblical exegesis?](#)
- [What are the different forms of biblical literature?](#)
- [What is the difference between exegesis and eisegesis?](#)
- [What is inductive Bible study?](#)
- [What is deductive Bible study?](#)
- [Why are there so many different Christian interpretations?](#)
- [What are some different methods of Bible study?](#)
- [Why is it so hard to understand the Bible?](#)
- [How can we know what parts of the Bible apply to us today?](#)
- [How should the different genres of the Bible impact how we interpret the Bible?](#)
- [Can / Should we interpret the Bible as literal?](#)
- [Why is it important to study the Bible in context? What is wrong with taking verses out of context?](#)
- [Is it ever appropriate to take a single verse of Scripture out of its context?](#)
- [What does it mean that a biblical passage is descriptive rather than prescriptive?](#)
- [Questions about the Bible](#)
- [What is the value of doing a word study in understanding the Bible?](#)
- [What is Biblical hermeneutics?](#)
- [What is the law of first mention?](#)
- [How can we know what parts of the Bible apply to us today?](#)

John MacArthur resources

- [How to Study Your Bible](#)
- [How to Enjoy Bible Study](#)
- [The Power of the Word in the Believer's Life - Pt 1](#)
- [The Power of the Word in the Believer's Life - Pt 2](#)
- [Who Can Study the Bible?](#)

C H Spurgeon resources

- [How to Read the Bible \(1Ti 4:13\)](#)
- [How to Read the Bible \(Matthew 12:3-7\)](#)

R A Torrey

- [How to Study the Bible for Greatest Profit](#)

WHAT ARE YOU WAITING FOR?

Begin your great adventure by first learning what to look for as you develop your God given ability to observe the living and active Word of God. Click the discussion on how to observe the Scripture.

**HOW MUCH DO YOU
LOVE GOD'S WORD?**

In France, there once lived a poor, blind girl who obtained the Gospel of Mark in raised letters and learned to read it with the tips of her fingers. By constant reading, her fingers became calloused, and consequently her sense of touch decreased until she could no longer distinguish the letters & words. She became so desperate for the Word of God that she literally cut the calloused skin from the ends of her fingers in an attempt to restore sense of touch, but in so doing actually resulted in completely destroying her sense of touch. Faced with the inevitable reality that she must now give up her beloved Book, with weeping & tears she pressed the Braille copy of Mark to her lips, saying "*Farewell, farewell, sweet word of my Heavenly Father!*" To her surprise, she discovered that her lips were even more sensitive to touch than her fingers had been & she was able to distinguish the individual letters. All night she "perused" the Word of God with her lips and overflowed with joy at this amazing provision from her LORD.

William Romaine rightly said that...

The longer you read the Bible, the more you will like it; it will grow sweeter and sweeter; and the more you get into the spirit of it, the more you will get into the spirit of Christ.

John Stott wrote that

A man who loves his wife will love her letters and her photographs because they speak to him of her. So if we love the Lord Jesus, we shall love the Bible because it speaks to us of Him. (our Bridegroom)

Related Resource: Study on **The Power of God's Word**

QUOTES RELATED TO THE WORD OF GOD & INDUCTIVE BIBLE STUDY

Warning: Inductive Bible study can be habit-forming. Putting the principles into practice can cause loss of anxiety, decreased appetite for lying, cheating, stealing, hating and "symptoms" of growing sensations of love, peace, joy, compassion.

A. T. Pierson - Human literature requires a lexicon and often a library of reference books to disclose its meaning. For the most part the Word of God is its own dictionary and library of reference. Within its own compass may be found either the direct or indirect definition of its own terms, making the careful student in a large measure independent of outside help, and so enabling even the poor and simple to learn its meaning, and bringing it within universal reach.

"In order to understand the Bible, you must read it." This is an axiom that we both firmly believe. A secondary principle to which we both hold is, **"If you didn't understand it the first time, read it again."** More than anything else, the understanding of the Bible requires reading it, and then reading it some more. For many generations, committed believers held to the principle of the clarity of Scripture. Among other things, this simply means that if followers of Jesus the Messiah read the Bible, they can understand it.

Nevertheless, there are some qualifications for this general principle:

1. Understanding the Bible requires effort—we need to work at studying the Scriptures.
2. Understanding the Bible will take time—we won't get it all immediately.
3. Understanding the Bible requires that the Holy Spirit open our hearts and minds to the Scriptures.
4. Understanding the Bible will happen only if we are willing to obey it.
5. Understanding the Bible will never be complete—we can always learn more. (Michael A Rydelnik, Michael G Vanlaningham, editors, The Moody Bible Commentary)

Puritan Papers and Quotes related to the Word of God (Brethren - This is a veritable "Treasure Trove" with over 100 papers lifting high the Word of Life. Glory!) - [The Scriptures!](#)

C H Spurgeon's Sermon - [Matthew 12:3-7: How to Read the Bible](#)

Joseph Parker's interesting discussion on [How To Read the Bible \(from The People's Bible, Luke 10:26\)](#)

Leave not off reading the Bible till you find your hearts warmed. Let it not only **inform** you but **inflamm**e you. -- Thomas Watson

Word of God - Click for descriptions of how God describes His Own Word

Luke records that "No Word (rhema) from God shall be void of power (adunateo ~ "without power" [also used in Lxx of Ge 18:14) -

see study on related word adunatos)." Lk 1:37ASV (See simple study **on the Power of God's Word**)

The ultimate goal of Inductive Bible study is not to merely **inform you** but to radically **transform you** (see metamorphoo). (Ro 12:2+)

Men do not reject the Bible because it contradicts itself, but because it contradicts them. - E. Paul Hovey (cp "Reproof" **plegchos - Word Study**] in 2Ti 3:16+)

The Old Covenant is revealed in the New, and the New Covenant is veiled in the Old. - Augustine (**Ed**: I would add that the New Covenant supersedes the Old - cp Heb 8:13+; See also Covenant: Why the New is Better)

The new is in the old contained, and the Old is in the New explained. - Graham Scroggie

God's Word is its own best argument. - Vance Havner

The best evidence the Bible's being the Word of God is found between its covers. -- Charles Hodge

The family Bible is more often used to adorn coffee tables or press flowers than it is to feed souls and discipline lives. - Charles Colson

The Old Testament altar points to the New Testament Cross. (cp the bronze serpent Nu 21:4 5 6 7 8 9 pointing to the Cross Jn 3:14 15 16 17 18)

We find the Bible difficult because we try to read it as we would read any other book, and it is not the same as any other book. -- A. W. Tozer

The Bible is meant to be **bread** for daily use, not **cake** for special occasions. (Dt 8:3, Mt 4:4 Lk 4:4)

The Bible is the best "TV guide". (Ps 101:3 [Spurgeon on Ps 101:3](#))

When the Bible is put on the shelf the church will surely follow it. (Corollary Question - Does your pastor preach the Word of God as if it were the only source sustenance for your soul... for it is!)

It is for the Bible to form and reform the church... it is for the church to keep and keep to the Bible. -- J. I. Packer

The Bible, the whole Bible, and nothing but the Bible is the religion of Christ's church. -- C. H. Spurgeon

When you open your Bible, ask the Author to open your heart. (Ps 119:18, Lk 24:44 45, Ep 1:16+ Ep 1:17+ Ep 1:18 +)

We glory most in the fact that Scripture so commends itself to the conscience, and experience so bears out the Bible, that the gospel can go round the world and carry with it, in all its travel, its own mighty credentials. - Henry Melvill (See intrinsic life giving power of Gospel - Col 1:5+, Col 1:6+)

Make it the first morning business of your life to understand some part of the Bible clearly, and make it your daily business to obey it in all that you do understand. -- John Ruskin

If a Christian is **careless** in Bible reading, he will **care less** about Christian living. (**Definition of careless** = having no care; unthinking; inattentive; unmoved by; indifferent toward; unconcerned for; done with insufficient attention; negligent; heedless; - **Beloved do any of these describe your heart's attitude? See F B Meyer's thoughts on the Bible as Our Food - scroll down to "How to Create an Appetite for the Word"**)

As a medical doctor I know that **loss of appetite** is a sign of serious illness, possibly even impending death, and just as serious is one's loss of appetite for the spiritual food found only in God's Word of Life! **Beware** if you are losing your appetite for God's Word, the real (only) "soul food"!

To understand the supernatural Word of Truth, rely on the Spirit of Truth (Jn 14:26 1Co 2:13 1Jn 2:27).

You can't enjoy the harmony of Scripture if you play just one note of truth. (Acts 20:27)

To hear God speak in His Word

Read it **carefully**

Study it **prayerfully**.

Backsliders begin with dusty Bibles and end with filthy garments. -- C H Spurgeon (See quotes on Backsliding or Drifting)

The devil is not afraid of the Bible that has dust on it.

We cannot bear fruit without the water of God's Word. (Luke 8:15)

The highest goal of learning is to know God. (John 17:3)

The Holy Scriptures tell us what we could never learn any other way: they tell us what we are, who we are, how we got here, why we are here and what we are required to do while we remain here. -- A. W. Tozer

The Scriptures were not given to increase our knowledge but to change our lives. -- D. L. Moody

When we look into the mirror of God's Word, we see ourselves more clearly. (Jas 1:23, 24, 25)

The most learned, acute, and diligent student cannot, in the longest life, obtain an entire knowledge of the Bible. The more deeply he works the mine, the richer and more abundant he finds the ore; new light continually beams from this source of heavenly knowledge, to direct the conduct, and illustrate the work of God and the ways of men; and he will at last leave the world confessing, that the more he studied the Scriptures, the fuller conviction he had of his own ignorance, and of their inestimable value. -- Sir Walter Scott

A text taken out of **context** becomes a pretext. Or to quote one of my students "Any text taken out of context is a pretext for a proof text!"

A T Pierson on the importance of context - As in any organism, no member or part, however minute, can be fully understood aside from its relation to the whole; so, in Scripture, every paragraph and sentence is part of its totality, and must be studied in relation to all the rest. The text will be illumined by the context, or scripture immediately preceding and following. Every occurrence and utterance should be studied in its surroundings. How, why, when a word was spoken or an act done, helps to explain it, is its local coloring. Hidden relationships must be traced like underground roots and subterranean channels.

Here is a quote I at first did not want to add because it is so painfully true (I fear) - The Bible is a Book that has been read more and examined less than any book that ever existed - Thomas Paine (1737-1809)

Let God's Word fill your mind, rule your heart, and guide your tongue. (Col 3:16+, Ep 5:18, 19, 20see notes)

The Bible: The more you read it, the more you love it; the more you love it, the more you read it.

How precious is the Book divine,
By inspiration given!
Bright as a lamp its doctrines shine,
To guide our souls to heaven.
--John Fawcett

The best protection against Satan's lies is to know God's truth. (Ep 6:14+, cp Jn 17:17)

Like a compass, the Bible always points you in the right direction. (Deut 28:13, 14, Joshua 1:7, 8, 9+)

Those who only sample the Bible never acquire a taste for it. (Jer 15:16, Job 23:12+, Ps 19:10+)

While other books **inform**, and some few **reform**, this one book **transforms**. -- A. T. Pierson

Other books were given for our **information**—the Bible was given for our **transformation**.

If you're too busy to read the Bible, **you're too busy!**

Oh how the world needs to hear this one = The authority of Scripture is not one that binds, but one that sets free. --W N Clarke (cp Jn 8:31, 32, 36)

The Word of God is either absolute or obsolete. - Vance Havner

It is impossible to practice godliness without a constant, consistent and balanced intake of the Word of God in our lives. -- Jerry Bridges

People say they're going to make the Bible "relevant." But if the Bible is not already relevant, nothing you or I do will help. The Bible is relevant because it is revealed. It's always a return to reality. -- Howard Hendricks

Do not try to make the Bible relevant; its relevance is axiomatic. -- Dietrich Bonhoeffer

Whatever keeps me from my Bible is my enemy, however harmless it may appear to me. -- A W Tozer

God feeds the birds, but He doesn't throw the food into their nests. (**Ed**: Does this help you understand why the extra work of

Inductive Bible Study might be worth it?)

We lose the joy of living in the present when we worry about the future. And we lose the joy of living for the future when we focus on the present. (cp Col 3:1, Col 3:2)

Opening your Bible can be a real eye-opener.

A well-read Bible is a sign of a well-fed soul.

It is not possible to be full of Scripture and full of carnality.

The source of all our troubles is in not knowing the Scriptures. --Chrysostom

The Bible **breaks hard hearts** and **heals broken hearts**. (Ps 147:3⁺)

A Bible that's falling apart usually belongs to someone who isn't.

Sin will keep you from the Bible or the Bible will keep you from sin.

It's better to live one verse of the Bible than to recite an entire chapter.

We must study the Bible more. We must not only lay it up within us, but transfuse it through the whole texture of the soul. -- Horatius Bonar

The Bible: read it through, work it out, pass it on!

The jewel of the Word should not hang in our ears, but be locked up in a believing heart. -- William Jenkyn

The Word is both a glass to show us the spots of our soul and a laver to wash them away. -- Puritan Thomas Watson (Jas 1:22, 23, 24+, Jas 1:25+)

One proof of the inspiration of the Bible is that it has withstood so much poor preaching. - A. T. Robertson

It is impossible to practice godliness without a constant, consistent and balanced intake of the Word of God in our lives. -- Jerry Bridges (1Ti 4:7, 8, 9, 10+)

The Bible is none other than the voice of him that sitteth upon the throne. Every book of it, every chapter of it, every syllable of it, every letter of it, is the direct utterance of the Most High. -- John William Burgon

Apply yourself to the Scriptures and the Scriptures to yourself.

The man who reads on the surface will live on the surface—and a superficial Christian is apathetic parody of the truth. -- John Blanchard

The Bible is alive, it speaks to me; it has feet, it runs after me; it has hands, it lays hold on me. - Martin Luther (He 4:12, 13)

I hold one single sentence out of God's Word to be of more certainty and of more power than all the discoveries of all the learned men of all the ages. -- C. H. Spurgeon

Reading the Bible without meditating on it is like eating without chewing. (Ps 119:15⁺, Ps 119:23⁺, Ps 119:27⁺, Ps 119:48⁺, Ps 119:78⁺, Ps 119:97⁺, Ps 119:99⁺, Ps 119:148⁺)

Psalms 119:102 (⁺) I have not turned aside from Thine ordinances, For Thou Thyself hast taught me.

God speaks through His Word--take time to listen. (Ps 95:7, Pr 8:6, Isa 55:3, Re 3:20⁺)

If my sermons kept people from reading the Bible for themselves, I would like to see the whole stock in a blaze and burned to ashes. But if they serve as fingers pointing to the Scriptures and saying, "Read this and this and this," then I am thankful to have printed them. - C H Spurgeon

The value of the Bible is not knowing it, but obeying it. (1Sa 15:22, Ho 6:6, Mt 5:24+, Mt 12:22)

When you have read the Bible, you will know it is the Word of God, because you will have found it the key to your own heart, your own happiness and your own duty. -- Woodrow Wilson

He that reads his Bible to find fault with it will soon discover that the Bible finds fault with him. - C H Spurgeon

It is not the Word hidden in the head but in the heart that keeps us from sin. - Vance Havner (Ps 119:9, 10, 11)

The Bible is a letter God has sent to us; prayer is a letter we send to him. -Matthew Henry

A Bible in hand is worth two on the shelf.

The Holy Scripture, as it is a rule both of our duty to God and of our expectation from him, is of much greater use and benefit to us than day or night, than the air we breathe in, or the light of the sun. -- Matthew Henry

It is not commentaries, councils or creeds that should mould our Christian beliefs, however valuable some of them may be, but the Word of God. -- Brian Edwards

The shortest road to an understanding of the Bible is the acceptance of the fact that God is speaking in every line. --Donald Grey Barnhouse

Had I the tongue of angels, I could not sufficiently set forth the excellency of Scripture. -- Thomas Watson

The study of God's Word for the purpose of discovering God's will is the secret discipline which has formed the greatest characters. -
- James W.Alexander

Born in the East and clothed in Oriental form and imagery, the Bible walks the ways of all the world with familiar feet, and enters land after land to find its own everywhere. It has learned to speak in hundreds of languages to the heart of man. It comes into the palace to tell the monarch that he is a servant of the Most High, and into the cottage to assure the peasant that he is a son of God. Children listen to its stories with wonder and delight, and wise men ponder them as parables of life. It has a word of peace for the time of peril, a word of comfort for the time of calamity, a word of light for the hour of darkness. Its oracles are repeated in the assembly of the people, and its counsels whispered in the ear of the lonely. The wicked and the proud tremble at its warnings, but to the wounded and the penitent it has a mother's voice. The wilderness and the solitary place have been made glad by it, and the fire on the hearth has lit the reading of its well-worn pages. It has woven itself into our dearest dreams; so that love, friendship, sympathy and devotion, memory and hope put on the beautiful garments of its treasured speech, breathing of frankincense and myrrh.—
Henry van Dyke

A **Red** Letter Bible is fine, but one that is **Read** is far better!

When the Bible becomes a part of you, you'll be less likely to come apart.

The Bible is a corridor between two eternities down which walks the Christ of God; His invisible steps echo through the Old Testament, but we meet Him face to face in the throne room of the New; and it is through that Christ alone, crucified for me, that I have found forgiveness for sins and life eternal. The Old Testament is summed up in the word Christ; the New Testament is summed up in the word Jesus; and the summary of the whole Bible is that Jesus is the Christ. — Bishop Pollock

In regard to this great book I have but to say it is the best gift God has given to men. All that the good Saviour gave to the world was communicated through this book. --Abraham Lincoln

The Bible is simple enough for a child to read and too deep for a scholar to master. (1Co 2:14)

We should always be chewing and sucking out the sweetness of this cud (the Word)... What we take in by the Word we digest by meditation and let out by prayer. -- Thomas Manton

Devout meditation on the Word is more important to soul-health even than prayer. It is more needful for you to hear God's words than that God should hear yours, though the one will always lead to the other. --F. B. Meyer

A Bible that has frayed edges usually has an owner that doesn't.

The reading of Scripture is intended to awaken our minds, not to send them to sleep. -- J. I. Packer

Be walking Bibles. -- C. H. Spurgeon

Beloved, is your faith fainting? Then be encouraged and stimulated by Martin Luther's words that your "Faith is not an achievement, it is a gift. Yet it comes only through the hearing and study of the Word." (Ro 10:17+ - Get in the Book so the Book can get in you and thereby the Spirit might fan the embers of your faith to full glow.)

The Word generates faith and regenerates us. -- Joseph Alleine

Where the Scripture hath no tongue we must have no ears. -- John Trapp

Doers of the Word are the best hearers. -- Thomas Watson

The more reverence we have for the Word of God the more joy we shall find in it. -- Matthew Henry

If you believe what you like in the Bible, and reject what you like, it is not the Bible you believe but yourself. -- Augustine

The best thing to do with the Bible is to know it in the head, stow it in the heart, sow it in the world, and show it in the life.

Devout meditation on the Word is more important to soul-health even than prayer. It is more needful for you to hear God's words than that God should hear yours, though the one will always lead to the other. -- F. B. Meyer (Ge 24:63, Josh 1:8, Ps 1:2, 3, Ps 38:12; 63:6; 77:3, 6, 12; 119:15, 23, 27, 48, 78, 148; 143:5; 145:5)

The Christian is bred by the Word and he must be fed by it. --William Gurnall

The best way for Christians to grow is to eat the Bread of Life. (Jn 6:48, 51, 58, Mt 4:4, Lk 4:4)

The Word of God is the candle without which faith cannot see to do its work. (Pr 6:23, Ps 19:8)

The true Christian church is the work of the Word communicated by every available means. -- Martin Luther

The Bible is like a compass—it always points the believer in the right direction.

The Bible is like the ocean. You can wade in it, feed from it, live on it--or drown in it. But those who take the time to learn its truths and practice them will be changed forever.

With God's **Word** as your **map** and His Spirit as your **compass**, you're sure to stay on **course**. (Pr 3:5, 6, Pr 16:9 Ps 25:8,9, 32:8 Isa 30:21, 48:17 Jer 10:23, Jas 1:5+)

When you study the Bible "hit or miss," you MISS more than you HIT.

The Scriptures teach us the best way of living, the noblest way of suffering and the most comfortable way of dying. -- John Flavel

When the Word of God dwells in you, the love of Christ shines through you.

Oh, to have "the word of Christ" always dwelling inside of us;—in the memory, never forgotten; in the heart, always loved; in the understanding, really grasped; with all the powers and passions of the mind fully submitted to its control! --C. H. Spurgeon.

Beware! Error often rides to its deadly work on the back of truth! --Spurgeon (2Cor 11:13, 14, 15)

There is no devil in the first two chapters of the Bible and no devil in the last two chapters. Thank God for a book that disposes of the devil! -- Vance Havner

Spiritual growth requires the meat of God's Word. (He 5:14+, 1Pe 2:2+)

Be diligent in your study of the Word of God. Then, instead of falling into error, you will stand firmly on the truth.

God's Word is like the wheat in the hand of the mummy, of which you have often heard. It had lain there for thousands of years, but men took it out of the hand and sowed it, and the bearded wheat, which has now become so common in our land, sprang up. So you take a divine promise, spoken thousands of years ago, and lo, it is fulfilled to you! It becomes as true to you as if God had spoken it for the first time this very day, and you were the person to whom it was addressed. - Spurgeon

Men, in a word, must necessarily be controlled either by a power within them or by a power without them; either by the word of God or by the strong arm of man: either by the Bible or by the bayonet. -- Robert Winthrop

The Bible in the memory is better than the Bible in the book-case... Be walking Bibles. --Spurgeon.

If you hear a man rail at the Bible, you can usually conclude that he never reads it. -- Spurgeon.

Study the Bible to be wise; **believe** it to be safe; **practice** it to be holy. (cp Ezra 7:9, 10 - Note why Ezra experienced "the good hand of the Lord"! And you can too!)

The Word of the Lord is a light to guide you, a counselor to counsel you, a comforter to comfort you, a staff to support you, a sword to defend you, and a physician to cure you. The Word is a mine to enrich you, a robe to clothe you, and a crown to crown you. - Thomas Brooks

Your life will run smoother if you go by "The Book."

Some people like to read so many chapters every day. I would not dissuade them from the practice, but I would rather lay my soul

asoak in half a dozen verses all day than rinse my hand in several chapters. Oh, to be bathed in a text of Scripture, and to let it be sucked up into your very soul, till it saturates your heart! Set your heart upon God's Word! Let your whole nature be plunged into it as cloth into a dye! - C H Spurgeon

If you wish to know God, you must know His Word. If you wish to perceive His power, you must see how He works by His Word. If you wish to know His purpose before it comes to pass, you can only discover it by His Word. -- Anonymous

If we want our life to run well, even through stormy situations and rough circumstances, we must take the time to study the "Owner's Manual."

A man who loves his wife will love her letters and her photographs because they speak to him of her. So if we love the Lord Jesus, we shall love the Bible because it speaks to us of him. -- John R. W. Stott

Mark 4:4 - Click for interesting Illustration from nature!

Many people store the Bible on the shelf instead of in their heart.

Some people make the Bible say what they want to hear

To be a healthy Christian, don't treat the Bible as snack food.

A well-read Bible is the companion of a well-fed believer.

I never knew all there was in the Bible until I spent those years in jail. I was constantly finding new treasures. -- John Bunyan

On studying a book of the Bible Irving Jensen gives sage advice - "The rule of study of a book of the Bible is, "Image the whole, then execute the parts." That is, first survey it for overall impressions, and then analyze its individual parts for detailed observations."

Do you know a book that you are willing to put under your head for a pillow when you are dying? Very well; that is the book you want to study when you are living. There is only one such book in the world. -- Joseph Cook

Scripture knowledge is the candle without which faith cannot see to do its work.

A Christian is the world's Bible—and some of them need revising. -- D. L. Moody

One proof of the inspiration of the Bible is that it has withstood so much poor preaching. --A. T. Robertson

What the Bible says, God says. -- Benjamin B. Warfield

The Bible is a rock of diamonds, a chain of pearls, the sword of the Spirit; a chart by which the Christian sails to eternity; the map by which he daily walks; the sundial by which he sets his life; the balance in which he weighs his actions. -- Thomas Watson

Remember that our Bible is a blood-stained book. The blood of martyrs is on the Bible, the blood of translators and confessors. The doctrines which we preach to you are doctrines that have been baptized in blood—swords have been drawn to slay the confessors of them. And there is not a truth which has not been sealed by them at the stake or the block, where they have been slain by hundreds. - Spurgeon (Related Resource - [See one of the most incredible DVD's \[about 4 hours long\] you will ever watch - The Indestructible Book - How We Got our English Bible - It will make you weep!](#))

I never saw a useful Christian who was not a student of the Bible. - D. L. Moody

We must approach God's Word as if our lives depended on it--because they do.

If your life depended on knowing the Bible, how long would you last?

We must align ourselves with the Bible, never the Bible with ourselves.

Lay hold on the Bible until the Bible lays hold on you. -- Will H. Houghton

One who uses the Bible as his guide never loses his sense of direction.

The branches of growing trees not only reach higher, but their roots grow deeper. It's impossible for a strong tree to have high branches without having deep roots. It would become top-heavy and topple over in the wind." The same is true with Christians. It's impossible for us to grow in the Lord without entwining our roots around His Word and deepening our life in His commands." - Joni Eraeckson Tada

The roots of stability come from being grounded in God's Word.

The Bible is a vein of pure gold, unalloyed by quartz or any earthly substance. This is a star without a speck; a sun without a blot; a light without darkness; a moon without its paleness; a glory without a dimness. O Bible! It cannot be said of any other book that it is perfect and pure; but of thee we can declare all wisdom is gathered up in thee, without a particle of folly. This is the judge that ends the strife, where wit and reason fail. This is the book untainted by any error; but is pure, unalloyed, perfect truth. -- C H Spurgeon

Bible study demands pondering deeply on a short passage, like a cow chewing her cud. It is better to read a little and ponder a lot than to read a lot and ponder a little."

Unless God's Word illumine the way, the whole life of men is wrapped in darkness and mist, so that they cannot but miserably stray. - John Calvin

Hold fast to the Bible as the sheet-anchor of our liberties; write its precepts on your hearts and practise them in your lives. To the influence of this book we are indebted for the progress made in true civilization, and to this we must look for our guide in the future. Ulysses S. Grant

If you wish to know God, you must know his Word. If you wish to perceive his power, you must see how he works by his Word. If you wish to know his purpose before it comes to pass, you can only discover it by his Word. - Spurgeon

The Christian is bred by the Word and he must be fed by it. -- William Gurnall

There's no better book with which to defend the Bible than the Bible itself. - D. L. Moody

The study of God's Word brings peace to the heart. In it, we find a light for every darkness, life in death, the promise of our Lord's return, and the assurance of everlasting glory. - D. L. Moody

No one ever graduates from Bible study until he meets its Author face to face. - Everett Harris

No diligence or success in Bible study will really profit us unless it makes us humbler, holier men. In all our use of Holy Scripture this must be definitely our main objective. ([Andrew Murray in The inner chamber and the inner life](#))

Martin Luther on the Word of God - "I had then already read and taught the sacred Scriptures most diligently privately and publicly for seven years, so that I knew them nearly all by memory" (LW 34:334)... There I began to understand [in Romans 1:17+] that the righteousness of God is that by which the righteous lives by a gift of God, namely by faith ... Here I felt that I was altogether born again and had entered the gates of paradise itself through open gates. There a totally other face of the entire Scripture showed itself to me. Thereupon I ran through the Scriptures from memory. I also found in other terms an analogy, as, the work of God, that is, what God does in us, the power of God, with which he makes us strong, the wisdom of God, with which he makes us wise, the strength of God, the salvation of God, the glory of God (LW 34:337)... For some years now, I have read through the Bible twice every year. If you picture the Bible to be a mighty tree and every word a little branch, I have shaken every one of these branches because I wanted to know what it was and what it meant (LW 54:165)... The neglect of Scripture, even by spiritual leaders, is one of the greatest evils in the world. Everything else, arts or literature, is pursued and practiced day and night, and there is no end of labor and effort; but Holy Scripture is neglected as though there were no need of it. Those who condescend to read it want to absorb everything at once. There has never been an art or a book on earth that everyone has so quickly mastered as the Holy Scriptures. But its words are not, as some think, mere literature (Lesewort); they are words of life (Lebewort), intended not for speculation and fancy but for life and action... May Christ our Lord help us by His Spirit to love and honor His holy Word with all our hearts. Amen (LW 14:46)... You should diligently learn the Word of God and by no means imagine that you know it. Let him who is able to read take a psalm in the morning, or some other chapter of Scripture, and study it for a while. This is what I do. When I get up in the morning, I pray and recite the Ten Commandments, the Creed, and the Lord's Prayer with the children, adding any one of the psalms. I do this only to keep myself well acquainted with these matters, and I do not want to let the mildew of the notion grow that I know them well enough. The devil is a greater rascal than you think he is. You do as yet not know what sort of fellow he is and what a desperate rogue you are. His definite design is to get you tired of the Word and in this way to draw you away from it. This is his aim (WA 32, 64f.). You are so to deal with the Scriptures that you bear in mind that God himself is saying this... Every word in the Bible points to Christ.

Dwight L Moody on Study of the Bible -

All the men who have been very much used of God have been well versed in the Scriptures Moses rehearsed God's dealings with the children of Israel; Peter told it out on the day of Pentecost, and Stephen did the same. Christ conquered Satan by the sword of the Word. **"How am I to know the Word of God?"** By studying it with the help of the Holy Ghost. As an American bishop said, not with the blue light of Presbyterianism, nor the red light of Methodism, nor the violet light of Episcopacy, but with the clear light of Calvary. We must study it on our knees, in a teachable spirit. If we know our Bible, Satan will not have much

power over us, and we will have the world under our feet...

A great many fail in their work for God because they neglect their Bibles. You must get something into a man before you can get anything out of him. You may put the pump into the well, and pump as long as you like; but if there is no water, it is no use pumping. Search the Scriptures, and when you get something good pass it around. (Arrows and Anecdotes)

A description of the Bible - This book contains: the mind of God, the state of man, the way of salvation, the doom of sinners, and the happiness of believers. Its doctrine is holy, its precepts are binding, its histories are true, and its decisions are immutable. Read it to be wise, believe it to be saved, and practice it to be holy. It contains light to direct you, food to support you, and comfort to cheer you. It is the traveler's map, the pilgrim's staff, the pilot's compass, the soldier's sword, and the Christian's charter. Here heaven is open, and the gates of hell are disclosed. Christ is the grand subject, our good its design, and the glory of God its end. It should fill the memory, rule the heart, and guide the feet. Read it slowly, frequently, and prayerfully. It is a mine of wealth, health to the soul, and a river of pleasure. It is given to you here in this life, will be opened at the judgment, and is established forever. It involves the highest responsibility, will reward the greatest labor, and condemn all who trifle with its contents. — Anonymous (found on the flyleaf of an old Bible)

The Bible is like a telescope. If a man looks through his telescope, then he sees worlds beyond: but if he looks at his telescope, then he does not see anything but that. The Bible is a thing to be looked through, to see that which is beyond; but most people only look at it; and so they see only the dead letter.” **Phillips Brooks**

I would rather speak five words out of this book than 50,000 words of the philosophers. If we want revivals, we must revive our reverence for the Word of God. If we want conversions, we must put more of God's Word into our sermons. - Spurgeon

Reader, remember this: if thy knowledge do not now **affect** thy heart, it will at last, with a witness, **afflict** thy heart; if it do not now **endear** Christ to thee, it will at last **provoke** Christ the more against thee; if it do not make all the things of Christ to be very **precious** in thy eyes, it will at last make thee the more **vile** in Christ's eyes. -- Puritan Thomas Brooks

The Bible was not written to satisfy your curiosity, but to make you conform to Christ's image. Not to make you a smarter sinner, but to make you like the Savior. Not to fill your head with a collection of biblical facts, but to transform your life.” --Howard Hendricks in Living by the Book

The Bible redirects my will, cleanses my emotions, enlightens my mind, and quickens my total being. -- E. Stanley Jones

To me the Bible is not God, but it is God's voice, and I do not hear it without awe. -- C. H. Spurgeon.

If lips and life do not agree, the testimony will not amount to much - Harry Ironside

It has been said that the Bible is so deep that theologians cannot touch the bottom, yet so shallow that babes cannot drown.

Old-fashioned believers could give you chapter and verse for what they believed; but how few of such remain! -- C. H. Spurgeon.

J. I. Packer once said that "If I were the devil, one of my first aims would be to stop folk from digging into the Bible."

In the midst of that period of intellectual history called The Enlightenment, a philosophy known as deism was sweeping Europe. In the midst of this development, the famous skeptic, Voltaire, proclaimed that within 25 years, the Bible would be forgotten and Christianity would be a thing of the past. However, 40 years after Voltaire's death in 1778, the Bible and other Christian literature were being printed in what had once been Voltaire's own house!

Precious book! I would say of you what David said of Goliath's sword: "There is none like that; give it me" (1Sa 21:9). You are marrow and fatness, honey and wine. Yes, manna of angels and water from the Rock, Christ Jesus. Of all soul medicines you are the most potent. Of all mental dainties you are the sweetest. And of all spiritual food you are the most sustaining. - Spurgeon

My rule for Christian living is this: anything that dims my vision of Christ, or takes away my taste for Bible study, or cramps my prayer life, or makes Christian work difficult is wrong for me, and I must, as a Christian, turn away from it. - **Dr. Wilbur Chapman**

The Bible is God's chart for you to steer by, to keep you from the bottom of the sea, and to show you where the harbor is, and how to reach it without running on rocks or bars. - **Henry Ward Beecher**

Sow a thought, and you reap an act;
Sow an act, and you reap a habit;
Sow a habit, and you reap a character;
Sow a character, and you reap a destiny. |

- **Samuel Smiles**

Leave not off reading the Bible till you find your hearts warmed... Let it not only inform you, but inflame you. -**Thomas Watson**

Never let good books take the place of the Bible. Drink from the Well, not from the streams that flow from the Well . --**Amy Carmichael**

Vance Havner said...

The storehouse of God's Word was never meant for mere scrutiny, not even primarily for study but for **sustenance**. It is not simply a collection of fine proverbs and noble teachings for men to admire and quote as they might Shakespeare. It is **ration** for the soul, **resources** of and for the spirit, **treasure** for the inner man. Its goods exhibited upon every page are ours, and we have no business merely moving respectfully amongst them and coming away none the richer.

Gipsy Smith told of a man who said he had received no inspiration from the Bible although he had "gone through it several times." "Let it go through you once," replied Smith, "then you will tell a different story!"

John Mason on the Bible...

The word of God must be ... nearer to us than our friends, dearer to us than our lives, sweeter to us than our liberty, and

pleasanter to us than all earthly comforts.

Take the candle of God's word and search the corners of your heart.

We speak to God in prayer; God speaks to us in His word.

All arguments against the word of God are fallacies; all ideas against the word are delusions; all derision against the word is folly; and all opposition against the word is madness.

When God threatens, that's a time to repent; when He promises, that's a time to believe; when He commands, that's a time to obey.

If a man believed the threatenings of the word of God, he would tremble and fly to the promises for refuge.

C H Spurgeon in his sermon on Hosea 2:23 exults in the authority and efficacy of God's holy Word...

To my mind, it is very instructive to notice how Paul quotes from the Prophets. The revelation of the mind of God in the Old Testament helps us to understand the gospel revealed in the New Testament. **There is no authority that is so powerful over the minds of Christian men as that of the Word of God.** Has God made known any truth in his Word? Then, it is invested with divine authority. Paul, being himself inspired by the Holy Spirit, and therefore able to write fresh revelations of the mind of God, here brings the authority of God's Word in the olden times to back up and support what he says: "As he saith also in Osee (Hosea)."

Beloved friend, if you are seeking salvation, or if you want comfort, never rest satisfied with the mere word of man. Be not content unless you got the truth from the mouth of God. Say in your spirit, "I will not be comforted, unless God himself shall comfort me. I want chapter and verse for that which I receive as gospel." Our Lord's reply to Satan was, "It is written, man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." **Give me, then, but a word out of God's mouth, and I can live upon it; but all the words out of man's mouth, apart from divine inspiration, must be as unsatisfying food as if men tried to live on stones.**

Notice, again, how Paul teaches that the very essence of the authority of the Scriptures lies in this, that God speaks through his revealed Word:

"As **HE** saith also in Osee (Hosea)."

It is God speaking in the Bible whom we ought to hear. The mere letter of the Word alone will kill; but when we hear God's voice speaking in it, then it has power which it could not possess otherwise. **It is a blessed thing to put your ear down to the promises of Scripture, till you hear God speaking through them to your soul. It is truly profitable to read a gospel commandment, and to listen to its voice until God himself speaks it with power to your heart.** I pray you, do not regard anything that is preached here unless it agrees with what is written there in the Bible. If it is only my word, throw it away; but if it is God's truth that I declare to you, if God Himself speaks it through my lips, you will disregard it at your peril.

I will make only one other observation by way of introduction. Is it not wonderful how God's Word is preserved

century after century? There were seven or eight hundred years between Hosea and Paul; and it is remarkable that the promise to the Gentiles should lie asleep all that time, and yet should be just as full of life and power when Paul was quoting it after all those centuries. **God's Word is like the wheat in the hand of the mummy, of which you have often heard. It had lain there for thousands of years; but men took it out of the hand, and sowed it, and there sprang up the bearded wheat which has now become so common in our land. So you take a divine promise, spoken hundreds or thousands of years ago, and lo, it is fulfilled to you!** It becomes as true to you as if God had spoken it for the first time this very day, and you were the person to whom it was addressed.

O blessed Word of God, how we ought to prize thee! We cannot tell yet all that lies hidden between these covers; but there is a treasury of grace concealed here, which we ought to seek until we find it. (See full message on Hosea 2:23 God's People, or Not God's People) (Bolding added for emphasis)

BIBLE VERSIONS COMPARISON OF LITERALNESS

MORE LITERAL LESS INTERPRETATIVE MORE WORD FOR WORD							MORE PARAPHRASE MORE INTERPRETATIVE** MORE CONCEPT FOR CONCEPT			
Young's Literal	NAS ASV	Amp ESV	KJV NKJV RSV	NRSV NAB	NIV NJB	NCV ICB	NLT Phillips	GNT CEV	TLB	Msg
NAS = New American Standard Amp = Amplified Version ASV = Authorized Standard Version 1901 ESV = English Standard Version RSV = Revised Standard Version KJV = King James Version NKJV = New King James Version				NRSV = New Revised Std Version NAB = New American Bible NJB = New Jerusalem Bible NIV = New International Version NCV = New Century Version ICB = International Children's Bible			NLT = New Living Translation Phillips = J B Phillips Paraphrase GNT = Good News Translation CEV = Contemporary English Version TLB = The Living Bible Msg = The Message			

**** MORE INTERPRETATIVE:** For the most objective, non-biased and "pure" inductive study, do not use paraphrased versions as your **primary** resource for they provide no way to determine whether or not the translator's interpretation of the original Greek and Hebrew is accurate. The more literal versions such as **NAS, ESV, KJV, NKJV** more accurately render the words of the original biblical authors and are therefore recommended for inductive Bible study. Although more literal, the Amplified is not recommended as your primary text, but can be helpful once you have done your study because in many verses it functions like a "mini-commentary". Consultation (after your own inductive study) with some paraphrases (e.g., NLT and Phillips) may also yield insights into the meaning of the passage. Note that the **NIV** is a thought-for-thought (dynamic equivalence) translation which can be helpful for new believers, but it is **not recommended** for in depth bible study because of the inconsistent way in which it renders the Hebrew and Greek texts. In some cases, the NIV includes significant interpretation which leaves the reader without any indication of the other possible ways to understand that particular verse. Although every translation has some degree of interpretation, the **NAS** is the least interpretative of the modern translations. The **NAS** also has the advantage over the NIV in that it identifies words in **italics** that are not present in the original language but which have been added by the translators to make the passage more readable. Several other versions also use **italicized words** (ASV, Darby, KJV, NKJV, YLT) to signify words and phrases added by the translators to clarify or smooth out the reading. This feature helps one know when they are standing on solid ground (words not in italics) or "thin ice" (italicized phrases). Note that popular versions like the ESV, NIV, and NET Bible do not use italics (although sometimes they include notes to help explain the specific rendering.)