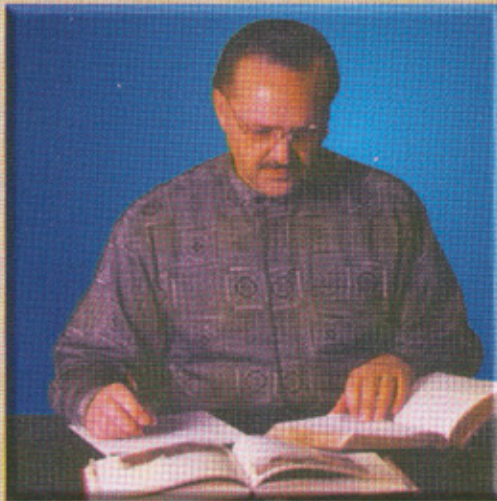


How to  
**Study**  
the  
**Bible**



# How to Study the Bible

by **Thomas Maphori**

---

*Developed in Cooperation with  
the Global University Staff*

*Editor: Doris Repko*

*Illustrator: Brenna Olsen*



Global University  
1211 South Glenstone Avenue  
Springfield, Missouri 65804  
USA

Address of the ICI office in your area:

Most Scripture quotations are from the *Good News Bible (Today's English Version)*.  
© American Bible Society, 1976. Used by permission.

The *King James Version (KJV)* and *New International Version (NIV)* are also quoted.

First Edition 1980  
Second Edition 1991

---

© 1996 ICI University,  
a division of Global University  
All Rights Reserved

L2220E-90-2ed  
ISBN 1-56390-011-4

# Table of Contents

	<b>Page</b>
First, Let's Have a Talk .....	4
<b>UNIT ONE</b>	
<b>Lesson</b>	
1 Reasons for Bible Study .....	7
2 Basic Information About the Bible .....	13
3 The Bible as Literature .....	20
4 Preparation for Bible Study .....	29
<b>UNIT TWO</b>	
5 Individual Book Study .....	37
6 Topical Study .....	43
7 Character Study .....	51
8 Devotional Study .....	57
Student Reports .....	64
Answer Sheets .....	69

# First, Let's Have a Talk

## A Word From Your Study Guide Author

The Bible, which is the Word of God, reveals God's plan for every person. The plan is for our redemption or salvation by accepting Jesus Christ as our personal Savior. As soon as we do this, we are saved.

Once we have chosen to follow God's plan for our lives, we are responsible not only to conform our own lives and characters to Christ's image, but to share Christ's love with others so their lives can be transformed. We can fulfill our responsibilities as we respond to the Holy Spirit, who reveals God to us when we study the Bible.

The study of God's Word demands our best attention. The Holy Spirit teaches us, but we must apply ourselves as well. It takes careful study of the Bible to understand its deep meanings.

This course will present basic facts about the Bible and give you a few methods by which to organize your study. Without a plan of action, it would be very difficult to build a house, sew a dress, or graduate from school. But a plan of action makes any task more enjoyable and profitable. A modern method of teaching yourself helps you to learn the principles easily and put them into practice immediately.

## Your Study Guide

This book is a pocket-sized workbook that you can take with you and study whenever you have five or ten minutes free. Try to do at least a lesson a week.

You will notice that objectives are given at the beginning of each lesson. The word *objective* is used in this book to help you know what to expect from your study. An objective is something like a goal or a purpose. You will study better if you keep in mind your objectives.

Be sure to study carefully the first two pages of each lesson. This prepares your mind for what follows. Next, study the lesson section by section and follow the instructions under the title *For You to Do*. If there is not enough room to write your answers to the study questions in the study guide, write them in a notebook so you can refer back to them when you review the lessons. If you are studying this course with a group, follow the instructions of your group leader.

## How to Answer Study Questions

There are different kinds of study questions in this study guide. Following are samples of several types and how to answer them.

A *MULTIPLE-CHOICE* question or item asks you to choose an answer from the ones that are given.

### *Example of Multiple-Choice Question*

- 1 A week has a total of
- a) 10 days.
  - b) 7 days.
  - c) 5 days.

The correct answer is *b) 7 days*. In your study guide, make a circle around *b)* as shown here:

1 A week has a total of

- a) 10 days.
- b) 7 days.
- c) 5 days.

(For some multiple-choice items, more than one answer may be correct. In that case, you would circle the letter in front of each correct answer.)

A *TRUE-FALSE* question or item asks you to choose which of several statements are TRUE.

*Example of True-False Question*

2 Which statements below are TRUE?

- a The Bible has a total of 120 books.
- b The Bible is a message for believers today.
- c All of the Bible authors wrote in the Hebrew language.
- d The Holy Spirit inspired the writers of the Bible.

Statements **b** and **d** are true. You would make a circle around these two letters to show your choices, as you see above.

A *MATCHING* question or item asks you to match things that go together, such as names with descriptions or Bible books with their authors.

*Example of Matching Question*

3 Write the number for the leader's name (right) in front of each phrase that describes something he did (left).

- |         |                                  |           |
|---------|----------------------------------|-----------|
| ..1.. a | Received the Law at Mt. Sinai    | 1) Moses  |
| ..2.. b | Led the Israelites across Jordan | 2) Joshua |
| ..2.. c | Marched around Jericho           |           |
| ..1.. d | Lived in Pharaoh's court         |           |

Phrases **a** and **d** refer to *Moses*, and phrases **b** and **c** refer to *Joshua*. You would write **1** beside **a** and **d**, and **2** beside **b** and **c**, as you see above.

### Your Student Report

If you are studying to earn a certificate, you will need to complete the Student Report. The Student Report and answer sheets are located at the end of the book.

There are two units in this course. In the Student Report there are questions for each unit. There is also an answer sheet for each of the two units. Your study guide will tell you when to answer the unit questions and to fill out the appropriate answer sheet.

Follow the instructions given in your student report for sending the answer sheets to the ICI office in your area. The address should be stamped at the top of the copyright page. When you do this, you will receive an attractive certificate. If you have already earned the certificate, you will receive a seal to affix to it, indicating that you have completed another course in this unit of study.

### About the Author

Thomas Maphori is an African pastor who chose to study and work in his own area. He attended African Bible College in Rustenburg, Republic of South Africa, for three years and is continuing his studies under the ICI program.

Besides teaching and pastoring, Mr. Maphori has shown active interest in his community, serving as school board secretary for two years. He and his wife, Matshediso, have two children.

Now you are ready to begin Lesson 1. God bless you as you study!

**Additional Helps**

Other materials are available for use with this study guide, including supplemental audiocassettes, an Instructor's Guide, and an Instructor's Packet (for instructor's use only). Consult the Evangelism, Discipleship, and Training Manual.

Lesson  
1

# Reasons for Bible Study

The Bible tells us:

Listen to what is wise and try to understand it. Yes, beg for knowledge; plead for insight. Look for it as hard as you would for silver or some hidden treasure. If you do, you will know what it means to fear the Lord and you will succeed in learning about God (Proverbs 2:2-5).

You may have known times when there was no rain for your crops or water for your animals and yourselves. You perhaps dug deep into the ground looking for a hidden stream. When you need something as important as water you try very hard to get it.

When you study God's Word to gain wisdom and knowledge of God, you will have to work hard, digging deep into the Scriptures, just as you would search for water. When you work at studying the Bible, you will find life-giving water.

Jesus used water, which we need for physical life, as an illustration of our need to have Christ in our lives. He said:

Whoever drinks the water that I will give him will never be thirsty again. The water that I will



give him will become in him a spring which will provide him with life-giving water and give him eternal life (John 4:14).

In order to have this experience of drinking living water, a person must keep studying the Bible day after day. This lesson tells why we study the Bible.

**In this lesson you will study . . .**

God's Will  
Our Needs  
Our Attitude

**This lesson will help you . . .**

- Explain why Bible study is necessary.
- Describe how Bible study meets our needs.
- Approach your Bible study with the proper attitude.



---

## GOD'S WILL

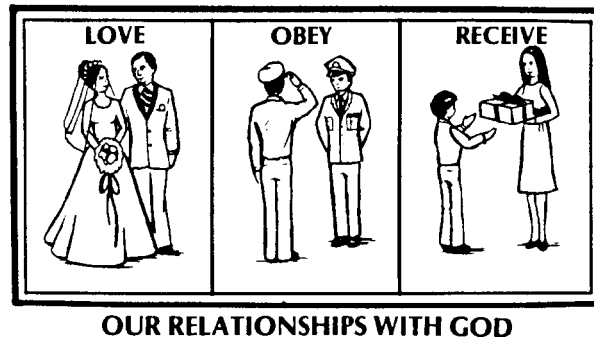
---

**Objective 1.** *Recognize why Bible study is necessary for the Christian.*

If you love someone, you want to be with him. You want to know everything about him. You want to understand his thoughts and share his feelings. You want to please him. As your love for that person grows through close contact, you become more complete, more satisfied, and more productive.

God's will for us is that we love Him above all else. When we truly love God, we want to spend time getting to know Him. We can do this by reading and studying His word. Then, our love increases.

Our relationship to God depends upon our obedience to His commands. The only way we can obey Him is to know what His commands are. The Bible tells us to give full attention to our work so that we can understand the Word of God and be able to teach it to others (2 Timothy 2:15). Jesus noted the importance of knowing God's Word. He said, "Man cannot live by bread alone, but needs every word that God speaks" (Matthew 4:4). As we use our minds to search for the meaning of God's Word, we are fulfilling part of God's great command: "Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with *all your mind* (Matthew 22:37). In other words, in order to do



God's will, we must study His Word. In this way we learn of His commandments and come to love Him more.

In Psalm 119 King David writes about learning God's law. The word *law* in this Psalm means the advice and commands given in Scripture. David repeats over and over the idea that learning and obeying go together. He says, "If I pay attention to all your commands, then I will not be put to shame" (v. 6). Obedience produces understanding and wisdom to know the meaning of God's Word. Then we can apply it to our lives, and teach it to others.

We are told in 1 Peter 2:2, "Like newborn babies, crave pure spiritual milk, so that by it you may grow up in your salvation." As we study the Bible it gets inside of us in the way that Colossians 3:16 describes: "Christ's message in all its richness must live in your hearts." Just as food has to get inside our bodies to give us strength, God's Word has to get inside our spirits to cause us to grow spiritually. Only when we feed our spirits with the rich nourishment of the Word will we grow spiritually.

Studying God's Word is easier when we ask the Holy Spirit to help us. God expects us to study His Word. Thus, He gave us the Holy Spirit to teach us. Jesus told His disciples:

When, however, the Spirit comes, who reveals the truth about God, he will lead you into all the truth. He will not speak on his own authority, but he will speak of what he hears and will tell you of things to come (John 16:13).



---

## For You To Do

In each one of these *For You to Do* sections, the question or exercises will help you review or apply what you have studied. Do not look up the answers until you have marked your own.

In these exercises, draw a circle around the letter in front of the correct sentence completion.

- 1 God's will for you is to
  - a) have a relationship with Him built on love.
  - b) always be very religious.
  - c) become educated about the format of the Bible.
- 2 The study of the Bible is necessary for you to
  - a) become a Christian.
  - b) know God's will.
  - c) prove your goodness.
- 3 Obedience to God's will depends upon
  - a) responses you make when you are saved.
  - b) learning what God's commands for you are.
  - c) knowing that God will punish you for disobeying Him.
- 4 You can best accomplish the task of studying the Bible when you
  - a) ask your friends to help you.
  - b) spend much time at it.
  - c) allow the Holy Spirit to teach you.

You will find the answers to these exercises on the last page of this lesson. Check your answers to these exercises now.

---

## OUR NEEDS

---

**Objective 2.** *Recognize how our needs are met through the study of God's Word.*

God made us. He is concerned about us. He knows our needs better than we know them.

A master craftsman knows his product better than anyone else does. If a product does not work, we send it back to the craftsman to have it repaired. He makes it work again.

Our lives are broken. We are bitter or sad. We have bad habits. We do not follow God as we should. We need repairing—teaching, correcting, and reshaping. The Word of God is the only instrument equipped to make the repairs. We read in 2 Timothy 3:16-17:

All Scripture is inspired by God and is useful for teaching the truth, rebuking error, correcting faults, and giving instruction for right living, so that the person who serves God may be fully qualified and equipped to do every kind of good deed.

God begins to repair our lives when we accept Christ as our personal Savior. He cleanses us from sin and gives us a new start. He instructs us how to become like Jesus. The teachings of the Bible guide us in our growth. They describe God's will for us in our daily living.

As God's Word makes repairs, it fulfills many needs in our lives. It helps us know the truth about our salvation. It teaches us what our heritage in Christ is. It gives us strength and power through

Christ. It discusses how to be filled with the Holy Spirit. It provides joy and peace that come from God. It directs us to live holy lives. Hebrews 4:12 tells us:

The word of God is alive and active, sharper than any double-edged sword. It cuts all the way through, to where soul and spirit meet, to where joints and marrow come together. It judges the desires and thoughts of man's heart.

The Word of God shows us when our desires are against God's will. It helps us shape our thoughts to be like His thoughts. Our desires and thoughts are at the center of our spiritual life in the same way that joints and marrow are central to physical life.

The more we read and study the Bible and listen to the Holy Spirit teaching us, the more we are able to know and do God's will. We have purpose in life and the wisdom to make the right choices. The Bible discusses God's Word: "The explanation of your teachings gives *light* and brings wisdom to the ignorant" (Psalm 119:130). This *light* guides us in our daily lives. It gives us understanding about Christ's return and our eternal life in heaven.

The *light* of God's Word changes us into the image of Christ. As we study, we "put off the old self with its habits and have put on the new self." (Colossians 3:9-10). Then the likeness of Christ can shine through us to a lost world who needs Him.

When we truly know God, our spirits are joined with His Spirit which is the source of life. In this way our greatest need is met—the need for life itself.

**5** Draw a circle around the correct answer to the following question: Who is best qualified to meet our needs?

- a) We are.
- b) Our parents are.
- c) God is.

**6** Fill in the blank with the correct word:

The Word of God is like ..... because it guides our way and brings life to us.

**7** Circle the letter in front of the correct completion: The Bible teaches us

- a) how to earn special favors.
- b) God's will for us personally.
- c) the major religions of the world.

**8** Circle the letter in front of each correct completion: God's Word meets our needs by

- a) teaching the truth.
- b) condemning us.
- c) correcting our faults.
- d) giving instruction for right living.

---

## **OUR ATTITUDE**

---

**Objective 3.** *Select statements describing attitudes which affect the results of Bible study.*

The Bible is different from all other books. Just as you can understand a letter from your own family better than an outsider can, true Christians can best understand the Word of God. This is possible because we become God's children when we are born again through salvation. We have His Spirit as 1 Corinthians 2:6-16 tells us.



### The Bible is like a letter from God

Being born into God's family is only a beginning. As we take God's Word, we become hungry for more of His truths. As young children who come daily to their parents to be fed, we must come to God to have our spiritual hunger satisfied. (See 1 Peter 2:2.)

Also, we must approach God's Word in an attitude of obedience. The child who gets the most from his parents love and receives an inheritance is *obedient*. He listens to his parents commands. The Apostle Paul was concerned about the disobedience of the church in Corinth and wrote them a letter (1 Corinthians) to counsel them. He explained that because of their arguing and other bad attitudes, they were not growing spiritually. He said:

I could not talk to you as I talk to people who have the Spirit; I had to talk to you as though you belonged to this world, as children in the Christian faith. I had to feed you milk, not solid food, because you were not ready for it. And even now you are not ready for it, because you still live as the people of this world live (1 Corinthians 3:1-3).

Our attitude must include *discipline*. We cannot expect God to reveal things to us unless we make a real effort to learn. The Scripture says, "*Ask*, and you will receive; *seek*, and you will find; *knock*, and the door will be opened to you" (Matthew 7:7). This means we need to spend time in careful study.

Now, in order for our study to change our lives, we must be teachable. We must be willing to receive our Heavenly Father's instruction. Too often we try to live life our own way. Both King David and the prophet Isaiah admitted to God their need and desire to be taught.

I have not neglected your instructions, because you yourself are my teacher. How sweet is the taste of your instructions—sweeter even than honey (Psalm 119:102-103).

The Sovereign Lord has taught me what to say, so that I can strengthen the weary. Every morning he makes me eager to hear what he is going to teach me (Isaiah 50:4).

When we are teachable, we approach God's Word humbly. There may come a time when we think we are very wise spiritually or self-righteous. But we must remember not to boast. God has made us what we are, as 1 Corinthians 1:30-31 tells us.

But God has brought you into union with Christ Jesus, and God has made Christ to be our wisdom. By him we are put right with God; we become God's holy people and are set free. So then, as the scripture says, 'Whoever wants to boast must boast of what the Lord has done.'

We can never learn everything in God's Word. But we continue to learn as the Holy Spirit reveals God's truth to us. Our learning will go on even in heaven for God's Word will not pass away.



### For You To Do

**9** Read 1 Corinthians 2:10-12. Circle the correct answer to this question: People who aren't Christians can't fully understand the Bible because they

- a) are not teachable.
- b) do not have God's Spirit.
- c) are not hungry for truth.

**10** Circle the letter in front of the **WRONG** answer: Our attitude toward studying God's Word should include all the following *except*

- a) hunger.
- b) obedience.
- c) self-righteousness.
- d) discipline.
- e) teachableness.
- f) humility.

**11** The proper attitude toward God's Word develops when we

- a) think we are wise.
- b) open our hearts to receive His Word.
- c) have learned everything.

Now that you know more about why you need to study the Bible and how you should approach God's Word, you can look forward to Bible study.



### Check Your Answers

The answers to your study exercises are not given in the usual order, so that you will not see the answer to your next question ahead of time. Look for the number you need, and try not to look ahead.

- 1** a) have a relationship with Him built on love.
- 7** b) God's will for us personally.
- 2** b) know God's will.
- 8** a) teaching the truth.  
c) correcting our faults.  
d) giving instruction for right living.
- 3** b) learning what God's commands for you are.
- 9** b) do not have God's Spirit
- 4** c) allow the Holy Spirit to teach you.
- 10** c) self-righteousness.
- 5** c) God is.
- 11** b) open our hearts to receive His Word.
- 6** light

Lesson  
2

## Basic Information About the Bible

The Bible is a book for all kinds of people—young and old, uneducated and educated, rich and poor. It is a spiritual guidebook to teach people how to be saved and to know God’s plan for them. The Bible says:

Everything written in the Scriptures was written to teach us, in order that we might have hope through the patience and encouragement which the Scriptures give us (Romans 15:4).

Thus, each person can relate personally to the Bible.

We can receive blessing and instruction from reading the Bible, even though we do not understand it completely. But the full joy of Bible knowledge comes only with serious study. Therefore, we need to have some basic information. In this lesson we will learn about the writing of the Bible, its central ideas, unity, and divisions.



**In this lesson you will study . . .**

Writers of the Bible

Inspiration

Authority

Transmission of the Bible

Unity of the Bible

Old and New Testaments

Progressive Revelation

**This lesson will help you to . . .**

- Describe how the Bible was written and transmitted to us.
- Describe the main theme and structure of the Bible.

---

## WRITERS OF THE BIBLE

---

**Objective 1.** *Support the truth of God's Word by stating two characteristics of the Bible.*

### **Inspiration**

About 40 men wrote the Bible during a period of about 1600 years. With so many different writers and circumstances involved, the Bible could have had little or no unity. But a *supernatural* force was present guiding the whole project. The Bible clearly tells us that that force was God. God *inspired* the writers to write about His dealings with man.

*Inspiration*, in reference to the Bible, is the actual “breathing in” of God’s Spirit to guide the thoughts of the writers. This is easy to understand if we recall that God created man out of soil and gave him life by breathing life-giving breath into his nostrils.

Some scholars try to persuade us that though the Bible does contain God’s truth, it also contains errors. Others try to explain that parts of the Bible become the inspired Word of God to each person when God speaks to people through these particular Bible words. Still others explain that God dictated the Bible word by word to men who wrote it without thinking about the words. *These are all wrong ideas about inspiration.*

The Bible says, “*All Scripture is inspired by God . . .*” (2 Timothy 3:16). And in 2 Peter 1:21 we read:

For no prophetic message ever came just from the will of man, but men were under the control of the Holy Spirit as they spoke the message that came from God.

If we accept any of God’s Word as truth, then we must accept the whole Word as truth.

Also, we cannot say that the writers were mere machines with no freedom of choice. Though some did not fully understand what they wrote, especially concerning prophecies yet to be fulfilled, others studied their topics. They even wrote about their own experiences. What all had in common was God’s special revelation. Paul noted this:

God revealed his secret plan and made it known to me . . . . In past times mankind was not told this secret, but God has revealed it now by the Spirit to his holy apostles and prophets (Ephesians 3:3, 5).

His Holy Spirit continues to confirm God’s Word as truth.

### **Authority**

The words of the Bible, just as the writers wrote them at first, are the best words possible for God’s purpose. Since God inspired them, we can trust them. They are always true. The words of God cannot fail.

The Bible is complete. As the Word of God, it needs nothing else. Nothing is to be added to the Bible words, and nothing is to be taken from them.

Because the Bible is true, complete, and inspired by God, biblical scholars say that it has “authority.” Even the crowds who heard Jesus speak recognized divine anointing. They said He wasn’t like other teachers, but he taught with authority (Matthew 7:29). The three main meanings of *authority* are: final truth, official statement or law, and power to give commands. God’s Word has authority in all three areas. It reveals the truth about God. It is the official plan of redemption for all people. And it has power to change lives as people obey its commands.

When we accept the authority of God’s Word, we can study it with greater understanding. We no longer just say it is God’s Word and forget about it; we respond to it as the *real, living* Word of God, which transforms our lives. As we understand its teachings, we accept them without doubt.

Paul was so thankful that the church of the Thessalonians received and accepted God’s message “not as man’s message but as God’s message” (1 Thessalonians 2:13).

We can rely on the authority of the Bible. We can believe God’s promises are real and claim them for our lives. His joy and peace will follow. Then we can respond to the Word in complete obedience. As we study the Word, we are in God’s presence. It is like hearing Him talk directly to us through the words of the Bible.



**For You To Do**

Complete the following statements with the correct word or words.

- 1 In order to understand the Bible, we must recognize that it was written under divine .....
- 2 Because the Bible is true, it speaks with .....

Circle the letter in front of each correct sentence completion. Each sentence may have more than one correct answer.

- 3 We recognize inspiration of the Bible through
  - a) its own words.
  - b) its literary qualities.
  - c) the work of the Holy Spirit.
- 4 The authority of the Bible is seen in its
  - a) final truth.
  - b) power to change lives.
  - c) hundreds of commentaries.

Check your answers with those listed at the end of this lesson.

---

**TRANSMISSION OF THE BIBLE**

---

**Objective 2.** *Tell how the Bible was written and named.*

For a long time there was no written revelation from God to man. But God did speak to people and guided them in many of their actions. God’s Word was given to each person in a direct way. For instance, God called Abraham and told him that through him and his descendants (the Hebrew nation), all the world would be blessed. Out of that nation God chose certain men to write His revelation. We will describe how the Bible was written and transmitted or given to us.

God inspired Moses to write a revelation that would explain the creation of the earth and give God’s laws, promises, and prophecies. Thus, Moses wrote a set of books to which other holy men of God added writings.

These writers wrote the books of the Bible on stones, clay tablets, skins, and scrolls. These first writings do not exist today. God could have preserved them. But if He had, people might want to worship the scrolls or tablets. We are to worship God only, not objects or places that remind us of God.

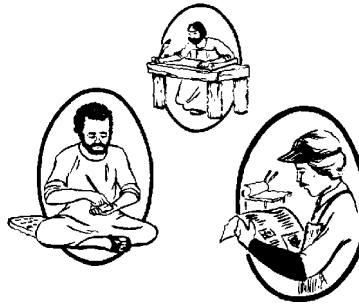
Therefore, God guided wise and faithful men to copy all the books of the Bible. Many true copies of the first writings do exist today. They are in museums and libraries throughout the world.

For many years the books in the Bible were called “the Books.” The word “Bible” came from the Greek word *biblia*, which meant “book.” Then the Bible became known as “the Book,” corresponding with the Greek. Thus, the meaning of the name “Bible” is a good one for the 66 books, which make the holy book.



Bible scholars have examined and accepted the Bible as the inspired Word of God. In fact, they call the books of the Bible “the canon.” The word *canon* used to mean a tool for making straight lines or accurate measures. The canon is complete. There are other ancient writings about God, but they are not inspired. They are not part of God’s revelation to us.

God wants us to understand His message. He had the Old Testament writers use Hebrew so the Hebrew people could understand them. The New Testament writers used Greek, which was the common language of Jesus’ day.



**The Word of God has been written in many ways.**

Today, a few people know both Hebrew and Greek. But godly people have translated the Bible into 1300 languages. Some languages have several translations so that everyone can understand the message. It is common to find different wording in different translations. But the message is the same.



---

### For You To Do

Draw a circle around the letter in front of the correct sentence completions.

- 5 In modern language the word “Bible” means
  - a) the Book.
  - b) Greek books.
- 6 The Bible is translated into 1300
  - a) books.
  - b) languages.
- 7 The books of the Bible are called the canon because
  - a) they are accepted as the inspired Word of God.
  - b) they are written by 66 men.
- 8 We have the Bible today because
  - a) it was written on solid stones.
  - b) God guided wise men to copy the writings.
  - c) God preserved the day tablets and scrolls.

---

## UNITY OF THE BIBLE

---

**Objective 3.** *Recognize the main factors that create unity in the Bible.*

### Old and New Testaments

The 66 books of the Bible are divided into the Old Testament with 39 books and the New Testament with 27 books. Yet they are one book, one history, one story. The main idea of each book is God’s plan of redemption for man. The Old Testament predicts what will happen in the New Testament. And the New Testament explains and fulfills the old covenant. Thus they work together in unity, for both were written under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit.

The central figure of both Testaments is Christ. Each book shows Him in a special way. For instance, Genesis shows Christ as the Creator, Exodus shows Him as the Redeemer. Samuel, Kings, and Chronicles show Him as the King, and Isaiah shows Him as the Messiah. Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John show Christ as the promised Messiah, the Servant of God, the Son of Man, and the Son of God. As you study each book, try to see how Christ is shown.

The word *testament* means “agreement.” The Old Testament reveals God’s agreement with man about his salvation before Christ came. This was based on the *laws* God gave Moses to write down. The New Testament is God’s agreement with man after Christ came. It is based on God’s *grace* which is His total and complete love for man. God sent His Son to die and rise again so that we can have the gift of salvation.

The Old Testament predicts the coming of Christ. It also shows us the weakness of the old agreement. It was for a limited time and for one nation, the Jews. It was limited in other ways. For one thing, the people had to sacrifice animals each year to keep paying for their sins. (See Hebrews 10:4-7, 10, 14.)



The New Testament tells of Christ’s coming. It fulfills the predictions of the Old Testament: “But when the right time finally came, God sent his own Son” (Galatians 4:4). The new agreement lasts forever (Hebrews 7:24, 28). It is for all nations (Acts 10:34-35). It pays the penalty for all men’s sins. All we have to do is accept God’s gift of His Son.

This chart shows how to group the books of the Bible.

<b>Old Testament</b>		
Law	Genesis-Deuteronomy	(5)
History	Joshua-Esther	(12)
Poetry	Job-Song of Songs	(5)
Prophecy		
Major Prophets	Isaiah-Daniel	5)
Minor Prophets	Hosea-Malachi	(12)
<b>New Testament</b>		
Gospels	Matthew-John	(4)
History	Acts	(1)
Epistles		
Paul’s	Romans-Philemon	(13)
General	Hebrews-Jude	(8)
Prophecy	Revelation	(1)

## Progressive Revelation

The Bible story begins in Genesis with the creation of the world and man. It ends in Revelation with the ending of life on the earth as we know it. In between these two books we have the story of how God worked out man's salvation so that he can enjoy eternal life in heaven.

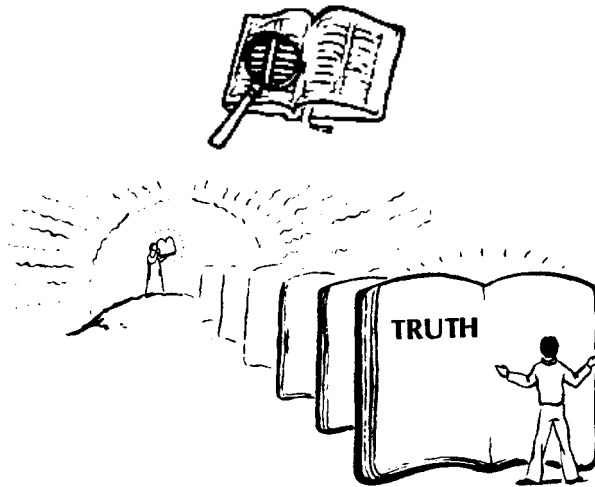
When Adam and Eve disobeyed God, they sinned. They were then separated from God spiritually. But God still loved them. He began to make a way to heal their spirits. It took a long time for man to receive the full revelation of God about spiritual healing. Hebrews 1:1-2 tells us:

In the past God spoke to our ancestors many times and in many ways through the prophets, but in these last days he has spoken to us through his Son. He is the one through whom God created the universe, the one whom God has chosen to possess all things at the end.

Today, we have the full revelation through Christ who is the living Word. The people who lived in the Old Testament times did not have this. They had a part of it.

As time went by, God revealed more and more of His truth. God taught "letter by letter" (Isaiah 28:10). We call this *progressive revelation*.

God dealt with Old Testament people in a different way than He deals with us. The teachings in the New Testament against polygamy and divorce, for example, seem to conflict with Old Testament stories of these practices. But Jesus explained that God dealt differently in the past because the people were slow to understand. They had less of the truth revealed to them than we have (Matthew 19:3-9). We have more truth because Jesus came to show us the way.



As you read and study the Bible, you will see more and more the unity of God's plan for your life.



### For You To Do

- 9 Circle the letter in front of each TRUE statement:
- a The main theme of the Bible is the creation of the world.
  - b The Old and New Testaments are God's old and new agreements with man.
  - c The Old and New Testaments work together to explain God's plan for man.
  - d The message of each book in the Bible centers on a different character.

**10** Select the description below which best represents progressive revelation.

- a) The revelation of God is for a few people.
- b) People tell others about God's revelation from beginning to end.
- c) God revealed His truth a little at a time.

**11** Select from the list those statements which illustrate the unity of the Old and New Testaments.

- a) Both were written on ancient scrolls.
- b) The Old Testament predicts what will happen in the New.
- c) The central figure of both Testaments is Christ.
- d) God dealt with people the same in Old Testament times as in New Testament times.
- e) The New Testament reveals truths from the Old Testament.

Reading the entire Bible through will help you to see that what some unbelievers have called contradictions are not that at all. Instead, they are confirmations of the completeness of God's Word.



**1** inspiration.

**7** a) they are accepted as the inspired Word of God.

**2** authority.

**8** b) God guided wise men to copy the writings.

**3** a) its own words.

c) the work of the Holy Spirit

**9** a) False.

b) True.

c) True.

d) False.

**4** a) final truth.

b) power to change lives.

**10** c) God revealed His truth a little at a time.

**5** a) the Book.

**11** b) The Old Testament predicts what will happen in the New.

c) The central figure of both Testaments is Christ.

e) The New Testament reveals truths from the Old Testament.

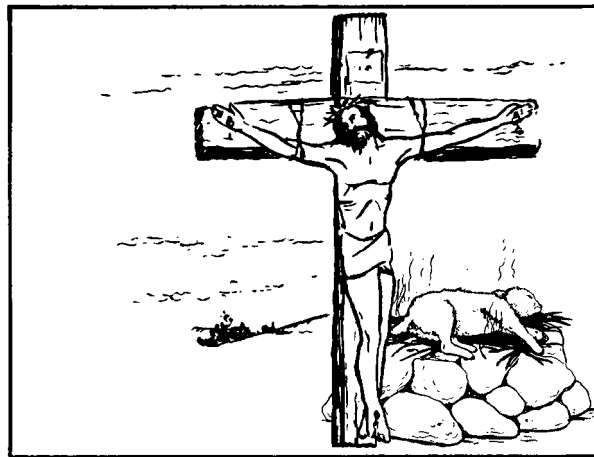
**6** b) languages.

Lesson  
3

# The Bible as Literature

When you talk to someone, you want that person to understand you. So you choose a way to express yourself that will make your ideas clear. In other words, you know that *what* you say and *how* you say it work together. Like speech, literature or writing is effective when the writer states his ideas clearly.

The writers of the Bible chose their words and arranged them to fit their purposes. Studying how writers express their ideas should help you in your Bible study. You will better understand something like “I am the vine, and you are the branches.” You will be better able to see the main idea in a passage of Scripture. You will be able to understand more of the writer’s purpose when you can identify his style or manner of expressing himself.



**In this lesson you will study . . .**

Literal and Figurative Language  
Organization of Ideas  
Styles of Writing

**This lesson will help you . . .**

Explain the meaning of certain forms of language used in the Bible.  
Locate the main points or ideas in a given passage of Scripture.  
Understand the purpose of the writer by recognizing the style of his writing.

---

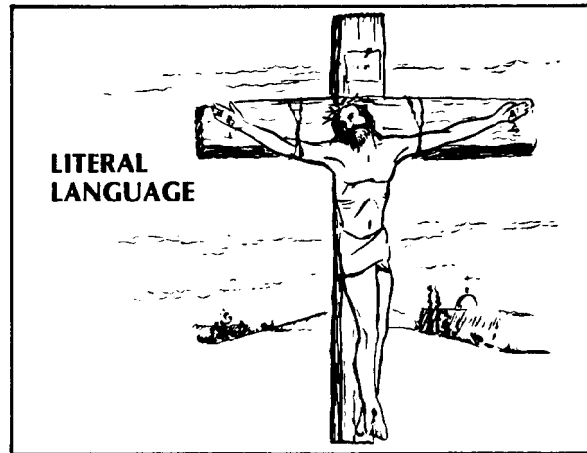
## LITERAL AND FIGURATIVE LANGUAGE

---

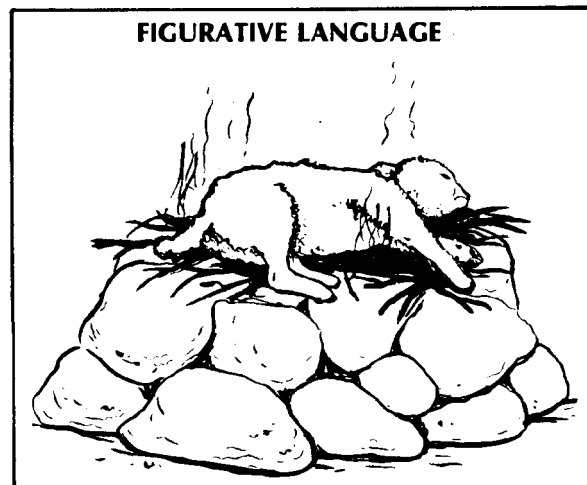
**Objective 1.** *Distinguish between literal and figurative uses of language in the Bible.*

God wants us to understand the truth that He has revealed to us through His Word. He did not have the writers write a book about unreal things. They wrote about reality. And, most often, they used language that is *literal* or factual. Therefore, we can know what the Bible means by accepting the natural meanings of its words.

When we read, “Jesus went up a hill to pray” (Luke 6:12), we know that this is *literally* or actually what He did. When we read that He “ordered the fever to leave” someone and it left (Luke 4:39), we know this is the literal truth.

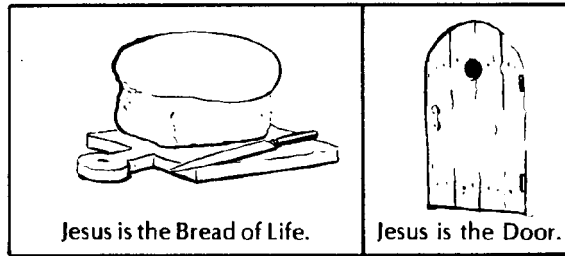


But when we read a passage like, “John saw Jesus coming to Him, and said, ‘There is the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world’” (John 1:29), we cannot interpret all the words literally. Jesus is not a lamb or animal. He is *like* a lamb, which in the Old Testament was sacrificed for the sins of the people. Thus, some of the language of the Bible is *figurative* or symbolic in meaning. It helps to explain a literal truth.

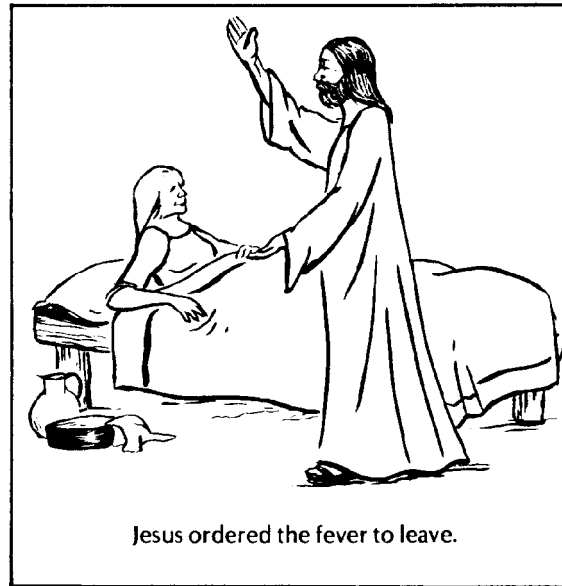


*Figurative language is made up of figures of speech.* These are words or phrases that help us understand something hard to explain by relating it to something we know about. John gave us a mental picture of Christ as a lamb being offered on an altar for our sins. This helps us understand Christ’s purpose in coming to the world.

## FIGURATIVE



## LITERAL



Figures of speech help us to understand spiritual things, which we cannot see with our natural eyes. Remember, in Lesson 1 we said Jesus compared Himself to life-giving water. He also compared Himself to bread, light, and a shepherd. On one occasion He said, “Listen! I am coming *like* a thief!” (Revelation 16:15). These examples show us we cannot go too far in comparing Jesus to any one of these things. He is *like* each thing in a limited way. But, the figures of speech help us to remember certain truths.

Christ often used figurative language when He talked to His followers. He told them simple stories to help them understand important spiritual truths. In Matthew 18:10-14, Christ tells the story of the lost sheep. He compares Christians to sheep. He wants to teach us that He is as concerned about each one of us as a shepherd is about a lost sheep.

Some figures of speech are called symbols. Symbols are words that represent truth about something. The words *light*, *salt*, and *sheep* are symbols of Christians. We are like each of these things. Even objects can become symbols. In the Lord’s Supper, the bread and cup are symbols of Christ’s body and blood. They remind us of Christ’s death and suffering for our salvation.





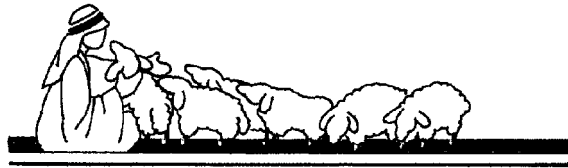
---

---

**For You To Do**

**1** Identify each statement as being either literal or figurative language. Write in front of each statement the number of the kind of language it matches. Remember not to look up answers before you have marked your own.

- .... **a** Near the Sheep Gate in Jerusalem there is a pool (John 5:2).      1) Literal
- .... **b** There is the Lamb of God (John 1:29).      2) Figurative
- .... **c** I am the gate for the sheep (John 10:7).
- .... **d** There are other sheep which belong to me (John 10:16).



**2** Read the story of the weeds in Matthew 13:24-30 and the explanation of it in verses 36-43. Read the description in the right column and write in front of each symbol in the left column the number of the description it matches. Notice there are two sets to match.

- .... **a** The sower      1) People belonging to the kingdom of God
- .... **b** The enemy      2) The Son of Man
- .... **c** Good seed      3) The devil
- .... **d** Weeds      4) People belonging to the evil one
- .... **e** Wheat and weeds together      5) The end of the age
- .... **f** Weeds gathered up      6) The heavenly kingdom
- .... **g** Wheat by itself      7) The world as it is

---

---

**ORGANIZATION OF IDEAS**

**Objective 2.** *List six ways writers can organize their thoughts.*

When we write, we are careful to organize our ideas. We try to bring together related ideas to support a main idea. And, we try to arrange the ideas so that they fit together smoothly. In this section, we will describe several ways writers organize their ideas.

1. *Repetition.* The writer uses *the same or similar terms over and over.* In 2 Corinthians 8:1-15, the idea of Christian giving is developed through repetition: “give, gave, helping God’s people, gave themselves, special service of love, be generous, eager to help, made Himself poor, finish the job, eager to give, gift, help.”

2. *Progression.* The writer creates a forward movement by adding detail after detail, as we do when we tell a story. The story about Philip in Acts 8:26-40 shows progression. The Spirit spoke to Philip to go to a certain road. Then He led Philip to a certain man to share the Good News about Jesus. After the man accepted Christ and Philip baptized him, the Spirit took Philip away.



3. *Climax*. The writer leads up to a high point in a progression of details. In Philippians 3:10 Paul tells us what true righteousness is, “to know Christ and to experience the power of his resurrection, to share in his sufferings and become like him in his death.” Verses 1-9 lead up to this climax.

4. *Contrast and Comparison*. For contrast, the writer brings together two opposites to emphasize their good and evil or light and darkness. Psalm 1 contrasts godly men who are planted like trees, bearing fruit, with evil men who are like straw being blown away. You will notice in this contrast the use of comparison, “evil men . . . are like straw.” For comparison, the writer brings together two things to emphasize their similarity.



5. *Main Points*. The writer uses turning points in a progression of ideas. These points are necessary to the particular outcome of a story or to the meaning of a passage. In the Book of Esther, one of the main points is Queen Esther’s winning the king’s favor when she approaches him uninvited. Without his favor she could not have fulfilled her plan to help protect the lives of her people.

6. *Reasons and Results*. The writer arranges ideas to show the relationship between a certain result and the reasons for it. He may begin with either the result or the reasons. In Colossians 1:3, Paul tells the church that he gives thanks to God for them. This is a result. In verse 4 he gives the reason: “For we have heard of your faith in Christ Jesus and of your love for all God’s people.” Then he repeats this idea in verses 8 and 9, beginning with the reason and ending with the result this time.

Sometimes we combine two or more of these ways to organize our ideas. In 1 Corinthians 1:3, 4, 8, and 9, Paul used reasons and results and repetition to make his meaning clear to us.

**3** Read each Scripture and decide which way of organizing listed in the right column was used to make clear the main idea. You may use a description more than once and may need more than one description for some Scriptures.

- |  |                        |
|--|------------------------|
| .... a Galatians 6:7-9, the idea of reaping what we plant                                  | 1) Repetition          |
| .... b Ephesians 2:14-18, the idea of Christ uniting Jews and Gentiles in peace            | 2) Reasons and results |
| .... c 1 Kings 17:8-24, the idea that Elijah’s obedience made him a man of God             | 3) Contrast            |
| .... d Judges 6:11-40, the idea that Gideon’s response to God’s call brings about changes  | 4) Progression         |
| .... e 2 Chronicles 1:7-12, the idea that because Solomon did something, God did something | 5) Main points         |
| .... f Ephesians 4:17-32, the idea of what new life in Christ involves                     |                        |

---

## STYLES OF WRITING

---

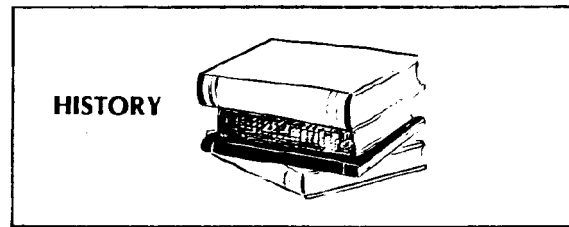
**Objective 3.** *Recognize the main styles of writing used in the Bible.*

### History

The Bible is the history of God's dealings with man. Thus, it is a written story of what happened in the lives of certain people. The Holy Spirit guided the writers to choose certain people and events to share with us. As we read about them, we can improve our relationship to God. We can build up our faith through learning from their struggles and victories.

For example, when we read about the task God called Gideon to do and Gideon's struggle with fear, we can learn to reverence God and conquer our fears of other people and of failure. (See Judges 6 and 7.) The greatest story is of Christ Himself. By following His example, we can live in obedience to God's will.

History is found throughout the Bible. The books, which are primarily history, are Joshua through Esther in the Old Testament and Matthew through Acts in the New Testament. Genesis through Deuteronomy are a mixture of history and prophecy.



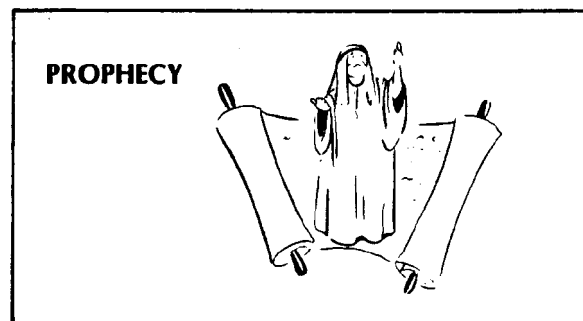
### Prophecy

In Bible history, God uses certain men, called prophets, to speak directly to the people for Him. They declared God's will and purpose. Prophecy is what they spoke. Their prophecies proclaimed truth for immediate fulfillment and predicted truth for future fulfillment. Some prophecies are not fulfilled yet. They predict events that will happen in the end times. The books of Ezekiel, Daniel, and Revelation contain many of these.

It is helpful to study first the prophecies, which are already fulfilled and explained in the New Testament. Acts, for example, refers to the fulfillment of several Old Testament prophecies. These include the pouring out of the Holy Spirit, Christ's suffering and rejection, the enslavement of the children of Israel in Egypt, Christ's resurrection, salvation for Gentiles, and the hardness of men's hearts toward understanding the gospel.

Although the meaning of some prophecy is hard to understand because it contains many symbols, we need to study it to get a clearer picture of God's plan for us.

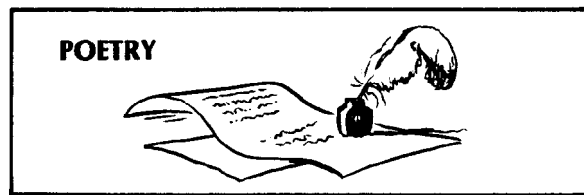
The last 17 books of the Old Testament, Psalms, and Revelation contain important passages of prophecy.



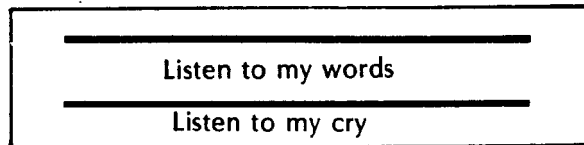
## Poetry

Poetry is writing that uses patterns in lines and rhythm to express deep emotion. While history tells of actual events or what man does, poetry reveals what man thinks and how he feels—happy, sad, despairing, or joyful. Poetry uses much figurative language. It cannot be interpreted literally in the way history is. So, when we read Job, the poetic books of Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and Song of Songs, and the other poetic passages scattered throughout the Bible, we need to watch for the use of figurative language.

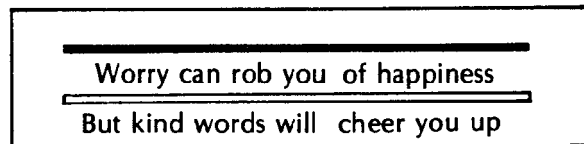
To give rhythm to their ideas, the Hebrew writers often related two lines of thought to each other. This is called parallelism. The relation could be repetition. In Psalm 5, the meaning of the first line, “Listen to my words, O Lord, and hear my sighs,” is repeated in the next line, “Listen to my cry for help, my God and king!” The next two lines repeat each other and the method is continued throughout the passage.



### Parallelism



### Contrast



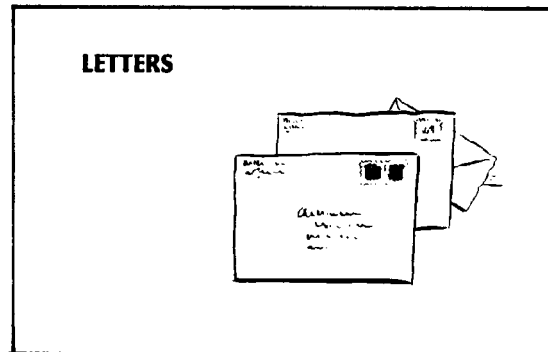
Two lines may be related by contrast: “Worry can rob you of happiness, but kind words will cheer you up” (Proverbs 12:25). Or, two lines may be related by adding one thought to another to help explain it. This method is used in Job 36:21, which begins, “Be careful not to turn to evil.” The next line adds to the meaning: “Your suffering was sent to keep you from it.”

The main ideas of the poetic books are about emotions in our lives. Job describes human suffering. Psalms guides us in worship to God. Proverbs shows us our need for wisdom to carry on practical, everyday affairs. Ecclesiastes shows us a negative view of life, full of doubt. And Song of Songs expresses marital love.

## Letters

Letters are easy to identify. They begin with a greeting, have a main message, and close with a farewell greeting. The main body of the letter may be concerned with answering questions mentioned in someone else’s letter. Thus, it is good to remember that a letter is a response to specific needs. It does not offer a complete teaching on any topic.

The Apostle Paul wrote 13 of the New Testament letters, called epistles. Several other men wrote the other 8 letters. When we study all these letters and compare their teaching, we receive guidelines for our faith and new life in Christ.




---



---

**For You To Do**

- 4 Read each of these Scriptures and write which style of writing is used in each one.
- |                             |             |
|-----------------------------|-------------|
| .... a Philippians 1:1-2    | 1) History  |
| .... b Zephaniah 1:14-18    | 2) Prophecy |
| .... c Psalm 91             | 3) Poetry   |
| .... d 1 Corinthians 5:9-11 | 4) Letter   |
| .... e 2 Samuel 7:18-28     |             |
| .... f Job 36:22-26         |             |
| .... g Acts 2:1-13          |             |
| .... h Revelation 4:1-11    |             |




---



---

**Check Your Answers**

- 1 a 1) Literal.  
 b 2) Figurative.  
 c 2) Figurative.  
 d 2) Figurative.
- In c and d Jesus is referring to Christians as sheep.
- 3 a 3) Contrast; the harvest of death is contrasted with the harvest of life.  
 b 1) Repetition; similar terms such as “Christ Himself,” “with his own body,” “He abolished,” “by his death,” “by means of the cross Christ came and preached,” “through Christ.”  
 c 4) and 5) Progression and Main points; Elijah obeyed God, depends on God at each point in this sequence of events, and at the end the widow recognizes him as God’s servant.  
 d 5) Main points; God gave Gideon three signs which together created a turning point.  
 e 2) Reasons and results; Solomon prayed for wisdom and knowledge which pleased God who, as a result, gave this and much more.  
 f 3) Contrast; old life of evil, lying and anger is contrasted with new life or new desires and new way of thinking, truth, and calm.

Your ideas may not be exactly like those given here, but you should be able to explain reasons for your own choices.

- 2 a** 2) The Son of Man.
  - b** 3) The devil.
  - c** 1) People belonging to the kingdom of God.
  - d** 4) People belonging to the evil one.
  - e** 7) The world as it is.
  - f** 5) The end of the age.
  - g** 6) The heavenly kingdom.
- 
- 4 a** 4) Letter; this is the greeting at the beginning of a letter.
  - b** 2) Prophecy; this predicts future events in the end times.
  - c** 2) Prophecy and 3) Poetry; this has a pattern of lines and parallelism and it proclaims God's truth.
  - d** 4) Letter; this is a response to specific people about a problem they have.
  - e** 1) History; this is a record of what happened to King David.
  - f** 3) Poetry; this has a pattern of lines and parallelism.
  - g** 1) History; this is a record of what happened on the Day of Pentecost.
  - h** 2) Prophecy; this is a vision or a prediction of future events.

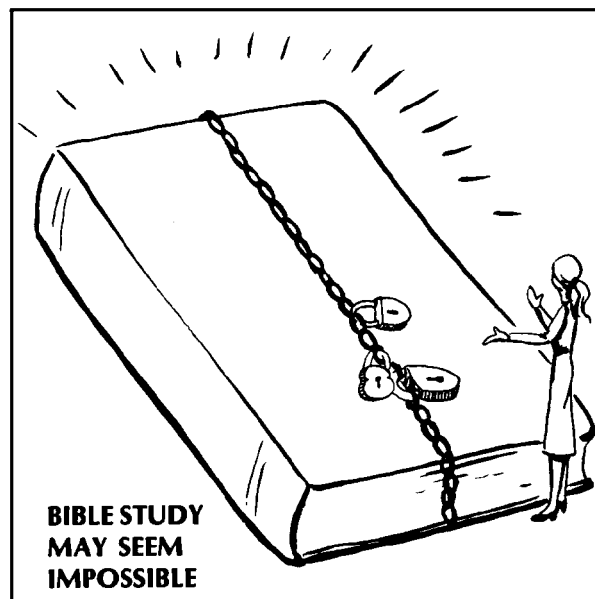
Lesson  
4

## Preparation for Bible Study

Now that we have stated reasons for studying the Bible and briefly described the Bible, we need to discuss how to study the Bible. In this lesson we want to talk about things that will prepare you to study. Then, in the next four lessons we will present some methods of organizing your study.

You might think that to study the Bible is an impossible task. There is so much material to cover and some of it is difficult to understand. But as with any other large task, if you know how to do it and divide it into smaller parts, you will accomplish a great deal.

You might be interested to know that it took over 20 people to prepare this book, *How to Study the Bible*, in a process of 35 steps. Many of the steps took weeks to complete and some of them had to be repeated. This book is just one in a series of books that have been and are being written for you to help you know about God and His will for your life. A few years ago this whole task seemed impossible. It is being accomplished because of a plan of action.



**In this lesson you will study . . .**

Basic Tools for Study  
Basic Rules of Interpretation  
Prayer for Guidance

**This lesson will help you . . .**

- Describe basic tools for Bible study.
- Describe basic rules for how to interpret the writer's intended meaning.
- Tell why you need the Holy Spirit to teach you as you study.

---

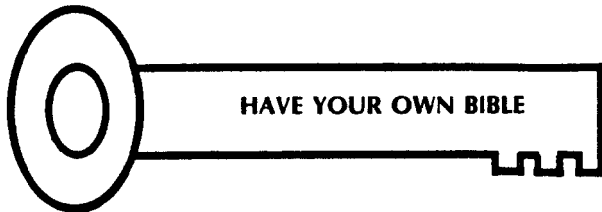
## BASIC TOOLS FOR STUDY

---

**Objective 1.** *Show understanding of the use of three basic tools for Bible study.*

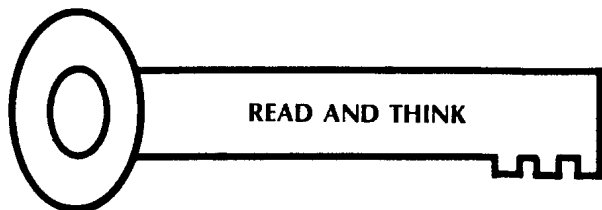
The best way to grow spiritually is to study the Bible. You cannot rely on the studies or teachings of other people. The study of God's Word is an individual task. It is perhaps the most personal task you will ever become involved in. This task will affect your whole being—who you are and what you do.

Naturally, you influence other people around you. Therefore, what you learn in your private Bible study, you must share with others. As you learn and grow in the knowledge of God, you should teach Sunday school, share in group Bible studies, and tell your friends and neighbors about Christ.



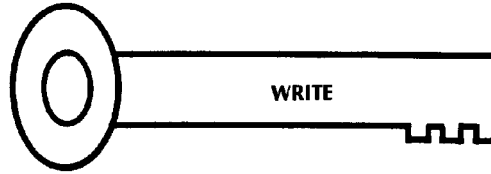
The tools you need for Bible study are very few. Of course, *you need a Bible*. (It is helpful to have more than one version of the Bible so you can compare the wording of difficult passages of Scripture.) The Bible expresses all of God's revelation to man. It tells you all you need to know about your new life in Christ and your eternal life in heaven. Thus, the Bible is its own best interpreter. The more you read it, the more you understand its meaning.

*Your eyes and mind are the second tool* for study. When you use your eyes, you can experience many things a blind person cannot. Yet, so many people who can see are careless and do not really "see" or experience all that they could through using their eyesight and their ability to think.



Physical sight is closely connected to spiritual sight. This means knowledge or insight into the hidden truths of God. In fact, the Scriptures use the word "seeing" to mean "knowing spiritual truth." According to 2 Corinthians 4:4 those who don't believe the gospel about Christ are blinded by Satan so they cannot see the light that comes from God's Word. (See also Matthew 13:14-16.) And Isaiah 44:18 says that those who reject God "close their eyes and their minds to the truth." On the other hand, the pure in heart, those who love God, will "see God" as Matthew 5:8 tells us. Yet, so many Christians are guilty of not studying God's Word, as they should. They do not "see" or experience as much of the truth as they could.

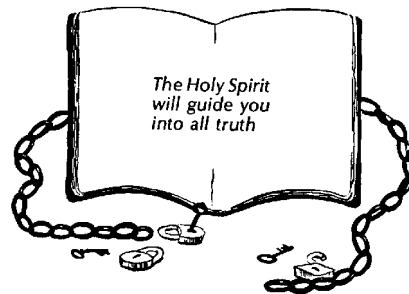
You can begin to have the mind of Christ (1 Corinthians 2:16), if you allow the Holy Spirit to make the Word clear to you. The goal of your study is to have spiritual sight. You want to know God's truth and apply it to your life in your daily decisions and actions (1 Corinthians 2:13-16). Through careful study you will receive knowledge of the Bible's teachings about your new life. You will be better prepared to recognize and reject false teachings. The Apostle Paul warned the young churches and his friend Timothy to be aware of false teachers. They would try to lead Christians away from the truth by making them obey rules that are not biblical. (See Ephesians 4:14.)



Your third tool is a pen to write notes as you read the Bible. To write something helps you to remember it because you “see” it in a different way. As you write repeated words or special things that are mentioned, you will actually “see” more of what the writer wrote. Write references that are made to other passages so that you can read and compare them. Also write any questions that come to your mind as you read, or any thoughts you have. Later when you read over your notes, you will begin to understand the Bible better and you can answer some of your questions.

These three tools, the Bible, your physical and mental eyes, and a pen, are really all you need to study the Bible. There are other tools that are helpful to Bible study. You may be able to use a Bible concordance, which lists in alphabetical order all the words of the Bible and their Scripture references. If, for example, you wanted to read several Scriptures about “faith,” you could easily find them by referring to the word “faith” in the concordance. Many Bibles have a small concordance in the back of them. The *Good News Bible: Today’s English Version* has a very small section called the “Subject Index.” It lists names, places, and major topics, giving their page references. It does not list separate words with all their Scripture references.

The Bible dictionary is a tool that provides definitions of difficult words and information about biblical times, places, culture, and people. Another kind of tool is the Bible commentary. These are books written by various Bible scholars who share their own understanding of the Scriptures based on their long and intense study.



If none of these extra tools are available to you, don’t worry. The Holy Spirit will reveal the meaning of the Word to you even though you have no study helps. Ask for divine guidance as you put into practice the study methods you learn in this course.



---

### For You To Do

- 1 You can depend on just the Bible for learning about God’s revelation to man because
  - a) other great religious books duplicate its material.
  - b) no other books discuss God’s revelation to man.
  - c) the Bible expresses all of God’s revelation to man.
- 2 The most important tools for Bible study are
  - a) commentaries by well-known writers.
  - b) a Bible, your eyes, and a pen.
  - c) books on new revelations.



3 The relationship of spiritual sight to eyesight is suggested by the term

- a) seeing the truth.
- b) circumstances of truth.
- c) light for seeing.

4 The main purpose of writing notes as you study is to

- a) keep a record of what you have studied.
- b) keep from having to remember what you read.
- c) see in a different way what you are studying.

Check your answers.

---

## **BASIC RULES OF INTERPRETATION**

---

**Objective 2.** *Show understanding of three basic rules of interpretation.*

You may wonder how to begin your study of the Bible. What book should you start with? How many verses should you study each day?

You should begin with a short book (such as Colossians which we will study in Lesson 5) and study about 20-25 verses a day. You may be able to read more than this, but your study will take more time. You should cover a short passage each day in order to gain the most out of your study.

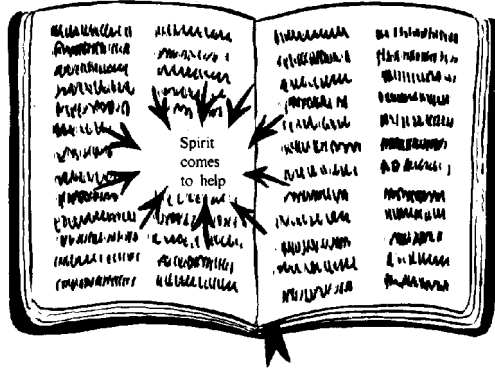
Just as you may have questions about how to study, you may have questions about the meaning of certain passages of Scripture. How can you interpret or explain the meaning of them? One rule of interpretation is: Ask questions about each passage of Scripture. Who is the author? What is his main purpose? To whom is he writing? Who or what is the passage about? How was something done? When did it happen? Where did it happen? What does this passage mean? What was the purpose in saying this? What truth does it suggest?

We will use Romans 8:26-27 as a sample passage to interpret.

In the same way the Spirit also comes to help us, weak as we are. For we do not know how we ought to pray; the Spirit himself pleads with God for us in groans that words cannot express. And God, who sees into our hearts, knows what the thought of the Spirit is; because the Spirit pleads with God on behalf of his people and in accordance with his will (Romans 8:26-27).

We cannot answer the first three questions. But we can see *what* these verses are about. They are about prayer, the Holy Spirit's prayers on our behalf. *How* the Spirit prays is in "groans." These come from deep inside us in "our hearts" where the Spirit dwells. (See John 14:15-17.) The Spirit prays when we don't know how we ought to. The Spirit prays on behalf of God's people wherever they are. This passage means that we have a very great Helper. He not only pleads with God for us but also pleads for that which is according to God's will. We cannot see yet how these verses serve the author's main purpose but they do serve to encourage us in our faith. They also suggest, for one thing, that as we really seek to do God's will, the Holy Spirit will renew our mind! Then we will pray in accordance with God's will.

In order to answer the other questions, we must read the verses that surround this passage. Surrounding material is called the *context*. By reading verses 1-25, we see that the author is discussing our new life in the Spirit (vs. 5, 9) as children of God (vs. 14, 17) who have hope in a future glory (v. 18). This context helps us to better understand why we have the power of the Holy Spirit in our prayers. It is because of who we are in Christ.



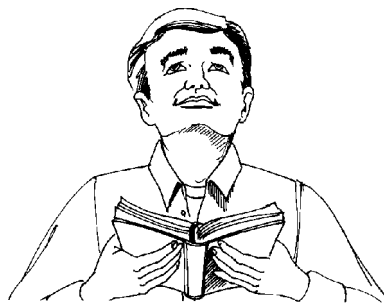
**THE CONTEXT HELPS  
TO MAKE THE MEANING CLEAR**

By reading chapter 1 of Romans we learn that Paul, an apostle (v. 1), wrote this letter to the church in Rome (v. 7). After giving his greetings, he states his main purpose in verses 16 and 17: the gospel of Jesus Christ teaches that salvation is by faith, not by anything else. Now we can see how the emphasis in verses 26 and 27 on our victory through the Holy Spirit supports Paul main purpose. He teaches that faith brings salvation and future glory in heaven.

The second *rule of interpretation* is: Explain the meaning of a Scripture as it relates to its context. False teachings can arise from taking a verse or part of a verse out of its context. Sometimes people claim God’s promises while ignoring the conditions that go with them (See the condition in Matthew 6:33.) Others may use a verse to support their own belief without paying attention to the intended meaning of the verse that is based on its context. For example, a man who wants to divorce his wife might refer to 1 Corinthians 7:1 to support his desire. But this verse alone is not support enough for his argument. In fact, when we read all of chapter 7 and Ephesians 5 and 1 Timothy 4: 1-4, we see that divorce is not acceptable to God.

When a passage presents limited teaching or a seeming conflict, we need to study other passages that give related teaching. This third *rule of interpretation* provides a more complete and balanced teaching of the truth. Look in the margins of your Bible for references to related Scriptures.

These three rules become easier to use the more you read the Bible.



**For You To Do**

- 5 Select the best completion answer for each of the following sentences:  
a If you ask questions as you read a passage of Scripture, it helps you

.....  
interpret the passage./see how much you already know.

- b If you cannot answer many questions about a Scripture, you should  
 .....  
 go on to find something else./read the context to find more answers.
  
- c References listed in the margins of your Bible are  
 .....  
 helpful for anyone who studies./important for teachers only.
  
- d Using the rules of interpretation helps you  
 .....  
 find support for your ideas./avoid false ideas.
  
- 6 Read Romans 14:4 and interpret it as you read and answer the following questions.
  - a What is this verse about?  
 .....
  - b Read the context in verses 1-6. What seemed to be causing problems in the church at Rome?  
 .....
  - c Read Colossians 2:16, which is given as a reference for Romans 14:1-6, and 1 Timothy 4:3, a  
 verse we referred to in the lesson. What do these verses suggest?  
 .....
  - d Read James 4:11-12 which gives related teaching. What particular new meaning does it  
 suggest?  
 .....
  - e Read Matthew 7:1-5 and Luke 6:37-38, 41-42 which give Jesus' own instructions on this matter.  
 What additional emphasis is made about our conduct towards others in Luke 6:37-38?  
 .....
  - f Now read all of Romans 14 for a more thorough teaching of what verse 4 means. What should  
 you do about Christian brothers who believe differently than you do?  
 .....

---

**PRAYER FOR GUIDANCE**

---

**Objective 3.** *Recognize the relationship between prayer and your study of God's Word.*

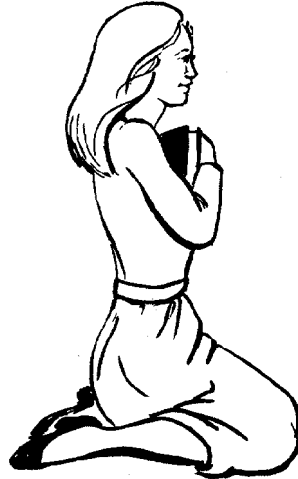
We have the Holy Spirit to direct us in God's will for us. The Holy Spirit dwells in us, continually, and is our guide. This is described in 1 John 2:27:

But as for you, Christ has poured out his Spirit on you. As long as his Spirit remains in you, you do not need anyone to teach you. For his Spirit teaches you about everything, and what he teaches is true, not false.

Remember, people who do not have God's Spirit in them cannot interpret the spiritual truths of the Bible. But neither can we unless we ask the Holy Spirit to help us. He doesn't force the truth on us. We must pray for understanding as King David did, repeatedly.

Open my eyes, so that I may see the wonderful truths in your law. I am here on earth for just a little while; do not hide your commands from me. My heart aches with longing; I want to know your judgments at all times (Psalm 119:18-19).

Effective Bible study depends on prayer. Prayer indicates our humility, sincerity, and dependence in our relationship to God. Prayer shows us our need for help and guidance. Prayer



helps us pay attention to our study and respond to Bible lessons. Prayer opens our minds so that we are ready to receive truth:

So then, have your minds ready for action. Keep alert and set your hope completely on the blessing which will be given you when Jesus Christ is revealed (1 Peter 1:13).

Once again we refer to what 2 Timothy 3:16-17 says:

All Scripture is inspired by God and is useful for teaching the truth, rebuking error, correcting faults, and giving instruction for right living, so that the person who serves God may be fully qualified and equipped to do every kind of good deed.

This passage shows us why we must study God's Word. Pray that the Holy Spirit will help you learn as much as you can about interpreting God's Word as you continue studying this book.

**7** Circle the letter in front of each correct completion. Prayer is necessary for effective Bible study because

- a) the Holy Spirit is our teacher.
- b) we acknowledge our need for guidance through prayer.
- c) it makes us receptive to the truth.
- d) it reduces the burden on us to study hard.

Now that you have completed the first four lessons, you are ready to answer the first section of your student report. Review Lessons 1-4, then follow the instructions in your student report. When you send your answer sheet to your instructor, ask him about another course of study.



## Check Your Answers

- 1 c) the Bible expresses all of God's revelation to man.
- 5 a) interpret the passage.  
b) read the context to find more answers.  
c) helpful for anyone who studies.  
d) avoid false ideas.
- 2 b) a Bible, your eyes, and a pen.
- 6 a) We are not to judge our brothers in Christ. Their master is Christ. He will judge them.  
b) There is arguing about what people can and cannot eat and whether or not one day should be set above the other. If you read verse 17, you see that these are not to be our concerns.  
c) We need to look to God for guidance rather than to men. Thus we will be judged by God, not by men.  
d) The act of judging another person shows our disobedience. We must not play God or we will be judged even more severely.  
e) Not only should we not judge others, but we should forgive them and love them by giving to them.  
f) Do not judge or condemn them; instead protect them by not doing anything that would weaken their faith.
- 3 a) seeing the truth.
- 7 a) the Holy Spirit is our teacher.  
b) we acknowledge our need for guidance through prayer.  
c) it makes us receptive to the truth.
- 4 c) see in a different way what you are studying. **Lesson**

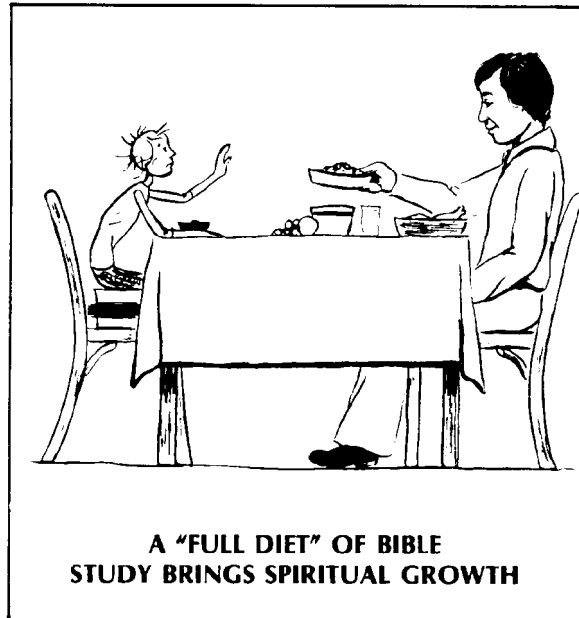
Lesson  
5

## Individual Book Study

It might seem easier to rely on a few favorite Bible verses to guide and nourish us spiritually. But we need a “full diet” of God’s Word in order to grow into the stature of Christ (Ephesians 4:13). We must eat heartily of God’s Word day after day in order to reach this goal.

Jesus said, “I am the bread . . . He who comes to me will never be hungry; he who believes in me will never be thirsty” (John 6:35). As the bread of life, Jesus is our source of life. To better understand our life in Christ, we need to study what each book of the Bible says about Him. Our belief increases with our knowledge.

When the people asked Jesus what they could do to please God, His answer was that God wanted everyone to believe in His Son. When we believe in Him, then we can do what God wants us to do (John 6:28-29).



**In this lesson you will study . . .**

The Benefits of Book Study  
The Approach to an Individual Book  
The Book of Colossians

**This lesson will help you . . .**

- Better understand the purposes of Bible study.
- Put into practice what you have learned about Bible study.

---

## THE BENEFITS OF BOOK STUDY

---

**Objective 1.** *List personal benefits of individual book studies.*

In time your studies of each book of the Bible will provide you with a strong familiarity of God's whole revelation. You will be able to see how the events of the Bible fit together. You will be better informed and spiritually prepared for the fulfillment of prophecy regarding Christ's second coming. You will build a solid foundation for other studies on specific spiritual lessons and truths.

A very important benefit of studying God's Word book by book is being able to see particular teachings in context. Often we can understand the intended meaning of a passage only when we see its context. Thus, familiarity with the whole Bible will help you to recognize and resist false teachings. They are as widespread today as they were in the early church. Many of the Epistles in the New Testament deal directly with false teachings that arose with the rapid spread of the gospel right after Christ's death and resurrection.

The greatest benefit of studying the Bible book by book is that the Bible will become the living Word in you. Any time you have problems in your daily life, you will be able to turn to teaching in the Bible to strengthen your faith and instruct you in what to do.



---

### For You To Do

- 1 List three personal benefits of individual book studies.

.....

.....

.....

---

## THE APPROACH TO AN INDIVIDUAL BOOK

---

**Objective 2.** *List the three main steps in book study.*

You begin the study of a book by reading it through. When you complete a book you begin to see the whole picture. It would be wise to read Colossians, or any book you are going to study, two or more times (even 10 or 12) before you begin writing down notes or trying to answer too many questions. This will give you a general impression about the main subject of the book. It will let you know how the author feels. The feelings might be of despair, encouragement, worship, hope, joy, concern, sorrow, humility, judgment, or some other human emotion. And your reading will reveal key words and phrases that are repeated throughout the book.

The first step is to *read and observe* until you see what the author is saying. This step takes time and patience as well as a desire to know what God's Word says.

The second step is to *interpret what the author means*. Use the three rules of interpretation we described in Lesson 4. Ask questions, pay attention to the context, and read related Scriptures. Also, notice the literary style, the language, and the organization of ideas. Write notes based on what these things show you. Try to sum up the meaning of the book. This means you should pick out the book's main points and show their relationship to each other in a brief written form. Use your own words. Once you have done this, the book becomes alive to you. It can become a part of you, a personal living force.

The third step is to *apply this living force* to your life. You must allow what you learn about Christ to transform your character and your actions. When this happens, your life will be a "light" to others. You will be able to show them the way to Christ



---

---

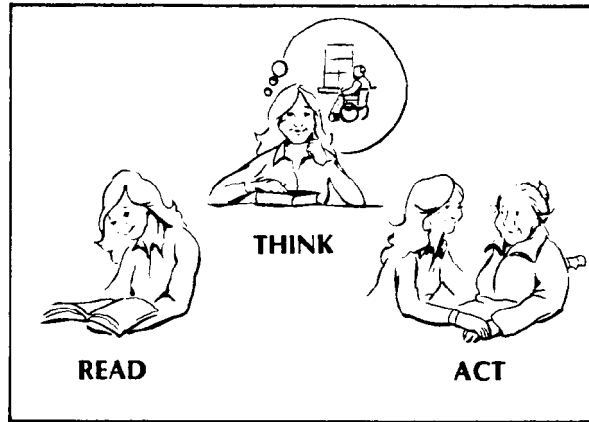
**For You To Do**

2 Name the three main steps in your approach to studying a book of the Bible.

.....

.....

.....



---

---

**THE BOOK OF COLOSSIANS**

**Objective 3.** *Identify main ideas in the book of Colossians.*

Before you go any further in this lesson, please stop and read Colossians. You may want to read it several times before trying to interpret it. If you are using the *Good News Bible: Today's English Version*, be sure to read the "Introduction" and "Outline of Contents" at the beginning of Colossians. This brief description tells that Paul wrote this letter to the church at Colossae to oppose the false teachings there. His main point is that "Jesus Christ is able to give full salvation."

After you have read the book once, continue your study by rereading and making notes on your first impressions of the book. Notice how often these words or ideas are repeated: "faith," "set free," "life in Christ." Notice repeated words as you read. They help you to identify main ideas.

In these exercises, draw a circle around the letter in front of the correct answer for each question.



---

---

**For You To Do**

- 3 What seems to be Paul's mood or feeling as he writes this letter? See verses 1:2-14; 1:24; and 2:1-2, 5 for help.
- a) Irritation
  - b) Pity
  - c) Concern
- 4 Based upon your reading, which of the following statements give a main idea from the book of Colossians? Read verses 2:10 and 3:11 for help. Circle the correct letter.
- a) We receive full life through union with Christ.
  - b) We will receive full life in heaven.



**Objective 4.** Use some of the rules of interpretation to study selections from Colossians.

Colossians is written in the literary style of the letter. The writer, Paul, is discussing the false teachings about salvation. He uses figures of speech to help the people picture in their minds what union with Christ really means. For example, in verse 2:8, he says, “see to it, then, that no one enslaves you.” When we are united with Christ, we are set free from the bonds of manmade rules regarding salvation. Salvation is not imprisonment. We are not slaves.

Paul also uses different ways of organizing his ideas to emphasize his main points. Make notes on what you find and then work the following exercises.



**For You To Do**

- 5 Fill in the blank spaces with the correct word or words:
- a Paul uses three figures of speech to illustrate the complete change in our lives that comes from union with Christ. Verses 2:11-12, and 20 symbolize this change by ..... (2:11), ..... (2:12), and ..... (2:20).
  - b There are several illustrations of our life in Christ. In verses 1:18 and 2:19, the church is compared to a ..... which is controlled by Christ who is the ..... In verses 3:9-14 our new life is compared to .....

<b>HOW TO MAKE AN OUTLINE</b>	
A. First main idea	
1. First major point related to first main idea	
a. Minor point	
b. Minor point	
2. Second major point related to first main idea	
a. Minor point	
b. Minor point	
B. Second main idea	
1. First major point related to second main idea	
a. Minor point	
b. Minor point	
2. Second major point related to second main idea	

6 For each main point described in the left column, write the number which represents the way of organizing ideas named in the right column.

- |  |                            |
|--|----------------------------|
| .... a Verses 2:12-13, 20, and 3:1 refer to life in Christ.                                  | 1) Contrast and comparison |
| .... b Verses 3:10-11 refer to all Christians as being the same in Christ.                   | 2) Repetition              |
|  | 3) Reasons and results     |
| .... c Verses 2:20 and 3:1, 5, 9-10 refer to the relationships between sin, death, and life. |                            |

It is helpful to put the teaching of a book into context by comparing it with related teachings in other books. If you check the margins of Colossians you will see several references to Ephesians. One of these references is Ephesians 2:1-10. There again we read about passing from death to life.

EXAMPLE OF AN OUTLINE OF COLOSSIANS	
A. Greetings and prayers	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Thanks for the people</li> <li>2. Prayers for the people</li> </ol>
B. The nature and work of Christ	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. What Christ is like               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. The full nature of God</li> <li>b. Creator and Savior</li> </ol> </li> <li>2. What Christ does for us               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Makes us His friends</li> <li>b. Gives us power to serve</li> </ol> </li> </ol>
C. The new life in Christ	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. A life of strength</li> <li>2. A life of freedom</li> <li>3. A life of new relations               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Relations with God</li> <li>b. Relations with people</li> </ol> </li> </ol>



**For You To Do**

7 Fill in the spaces with the correct words. Ephesians 2:9-10 says “For it is by ..... that you have been ..... through ..... It is not a result of your own efforts, but God’s ..... so that no one can boast about it. God has ..... what we are, and in our ..... with ..... he has created us for a life of ....., which he has already prepared for us to do.”

All of the thoughts in these verses were not new to you because they relate to what you have already learned from your study of Colossians. It reminds us again that the Bible consists of many books, but it is still one book.

8 Write here a brief summary of what the study meant to you.

.....

.....

**Objective 5.** *Indicate in what ways you can live a full life with Christ as illustrated in Colossians.*

It is only as you prayerfully consider the teachings in God’s Word and respond to them that you can really benefit from your study. Knowledge alone is not enough. You must apply what you have learned and allow God to fit your life into His plan.

None of us would say that we have arrived at a point where we could claim living 100% the life described in Colossians. Yet God has helped us, and we claim His promises for continued help.



**For You To Do**

Read the following statements and choose one of the two answers given.

- 9 To enter God’s presence I must not allow myself
- a) to be shaken from the hope I have gained.
  - b) to visit another church.

- 10** To preach Christ to others I must use
- the strength Christ supplies.
  - whatever strength I have in myself.
- 11** See to it that no one enslaves you by using
- heavy iron chains.
  - the deceit of human wisdom.
- 12** Be fair with others, remembering that
- they might try to get even with you.
  - you too have a Master in heaven.

This completes our lesson on a brief study of Colossians. You will want to study Colossians further when you see how it relates to other books. Also, it holds precious truths to enrich your devotional life. May God bless you as you apply your skills to this book and other books of the Bible.

## **Check Your Answers**

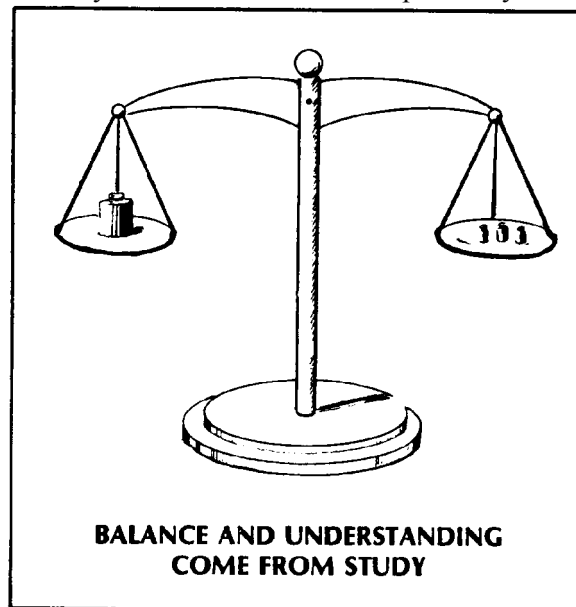
- 1** Be familiar with the whole Bible, recognize and resist false teaching, have the living Word in you.
- You may wish to list other personal benefits which you have learned from experience.
- 7** God's grace, saved, faith, gift, made us, union, Jesus Christ, good deeds.
- 2** Read and observe, interpret, apply.
- 8** Your own answer. It may be that the study helped you realize how full your life in Christ can be. It may be that you have found a truth which you can apply in teaching others.
- 3** c) Concern; Paul feels love for these Christians (1:3, "give thanks;" 1:9, "Always prayed for you"). He cares enough for them to suffer (1:24) for them and to work hard (2:1) for them and to encourage them in their faith (2:2).
- 9** a) to be shaken from the hope I have gained.
- 4** a) We receive full life through union with Christ. Christ is the "key" to our lives (2:3). Christ is mentioned at least 38 times as Christ, 12 times as Jesus, Lord, or Son, and many times as He or Him. Repeated words help to identify main ideas.
- 10** a) the strength Christ supplies.
- 5** a) circumcision, burial, death; all these suggest being cut apart from.  
b) body, head, new clothing.
- 11** b) the deceit of human wisdom.
- 6** a) 2) Repetition; the idea of being raised from death to life is mentioned in each verse.  
b) 3) Reasons and results; as a result of our new life, we are all the same in Christ: "Christ is all, Christ is all in all."  
c) 1) Contrast and comparison; our death to sin (2:20) is like putting to death our earthly desires (3:5) just as our life in Christ (3:1) is like putting on a new self (3:9, 10).
- 12** b) you too have a Master in heaven.

Lesson  
6

# Topical Study

Paul talked about prayer in his letter to the Colossians. He said, “Be persistent in prayer, and keep alert as you pray, giving thanks to God” (4:2). Then he asked the people to pray for him and his fellow workers. He wanted God to give them chances to preach the gospel. To understand why Paul told the people to be persistent, to keep alert, to give thanks, and ask for specific things in prayer, we will do a topical study of prayer.

Any time you do not understand something about your Christian life, you can do a topical study on that subject. You may want to know how to live by faith. Maybe you need to be baptized with the Holy Spirit. Do you know who you are in Christ? How can you live a holy life? Whatever the topic is, a study of it will show you a little more of God’s plan for you.



**In this lesson you will study . . .**

The Benefits of Topical Study  
The Approach to Topical Study  
The Topic of Prayer

**This lesson will help you . . .**

- Describe the value of topical studies.
- Put into practice a topical study of *prayer* as a model for other topical studies.

---

## THE BENEFITS OF TOPICAL STUDY

---

**Objective 1.** *State two benefits of topical study.*

We already suggested one benefit of topical study. It is to be able to find answers to questions about how to live a Christian life. You might want assurance of your salvation. You may need

victory over a fear you have. Or you may be wanting to know God's will for you. You can find the answers. Search the Bible for passages which teach about these things.

Another benefit of topical study is that it helps you to balance the teachings on each of the main topics of God's Word. These main topics are the basic truths which God intends for us to live by. The Bible says:

He must hold firmly to the message which can be trusted and which agrees with the doctrine. In this way he will be able to encourage others with the true teaching and also to show the error of those who are opposed to it (Titus 1:9).

As you study each truth from various viewpoints, compare one reference with another. Then you will be able to interpret God's Word as He intends for you to.



---

---

**For You To Do**

- 1 In your own words, state two reasons why topical study helps us.

.....

.....

---

---

### **THE APPROACH TO TOPICAL STUDY**

---

---

**Objective 2.** *List three steps in topical study.*

A topical study may take a short or long time to do. Some topics, like the Holy Spirit or salvation, occur often in the Bible. Bible scholars who write books on these topics sometimes spend years searching for all the references to the topic.

*Step 1* List all the references you can find to the topic you wish to study. (A Bible concordance lists many references for any given topic.) Write both the reference and the relevant part of the Scripture in a notebook.

*Step 2* Arrange the references into groups of related material. Write a title or heading for each list of references.

*Step 3* Summarize the main points about the topics in each list. To do this, read each Scripture and its context to be sure of the correct meaning. Place Scriptures under other headings if you see they should be changed. Write brief summaries in your own words.



---

---

**For You To Do**

- 2 List three steps in a topical study.

.....

.....

.....



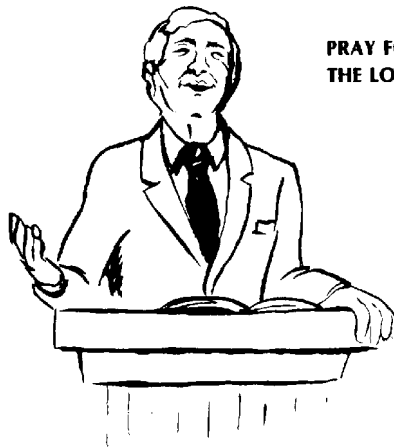
**PRAY FOR  
YOUR CHILDREN**



*When to pray.* 1 Samuel 1:10, 16; Matthew 26:36-44; Mark 1:35; Luke 5:16; 18:7; Romans 12:12; Ephesians 6:18; 1 Thessalonians 3:10; 1 Timothy 5:5.

*Hindrances to prayer.* Proverbs 15:8; 28:9; Isaiah 1:15; 59:2; Matthew 6:5; Luke 18:10-14; 20:47; James 1:6-8; 4:3.

**PRAY FOR  
THE LOST**



*Where to pray.* Isaiah 56:7; Matthew 14:23; Mark 6:46; Luke 9:18; Acts 1:14; 10:9; 1 Timothy 2:8.

*Answers to prayer.* Genesis 20:17-18; 25:22-23; Daniel 9:21-23; Jonah 2:7; Acts 4:29-31; 8:17; 10:31; 2 Corinthians 12:8-9.

*Prayer requests.* 1 Kings 18:36-38; Nehemiah 1:5-11, Psalm 64:1; Isaiah 38:2-5; Matthew 26:41; Luke 22:32; John 17:1-26; Acts 1:24; 4:29; 8:15, 22; 9:40; Romans 10:1; 15:31; Ephesians 6:18; James 1:5; 5:13-14.

**PRAY WHEN  
YOU STUDY**



**PRAY FOR  
THE SICK**





**PRAY WHEN YOU  
NEED HELP**

*How to pray.* Jeremiah 33:3; Matthew 6:7-14; 18:19-20; 26:39; Mark 11:24-25; Luke 11:5-13; 18:1, 10-14; John 14:13-14; 15:7; Romans 8:26-27; 1 Corinthians 14:13-25; Philippians 4:6; Colossians 4:2; 1 Timothy 2:8; Hebrews 5:7; 10:22; 11:6; 1 Peter 4:7; 1 John 3:20-22; 5:14-15; Jude 20.

*Praise and thanksgiving.* 2 Samuel 7:18-29; Isaiah 38:10-20; Matthew 14:19; Acts 10:1-2; 16:25; 1 Timothy 4:4; James 5:13.

*Posture.* 1 Kings 8:22; Psalm 95:6; Jeremiah 33:3; Daniel 9:3; Matthew 19:13-15; 26:39; Mark 11:25; Luke 18:13; Acts 8:17; 9:40; 1 Timothy 2:8; James 5:14.

*Effects of prayer.* Proverbs 15:8; Luke 3:21-22; 9:28-35; 2 Corinthians 1:11; Ephesians 3:20; Philippians 1:19; James 5:16-17; Revelation 5:8.



**For You To Do**

**3** Draw a circle around the letter in front of each Scripture that refers to prayer.

- a) 1 Peter 3:7
- b) 1 Peter 3:9
- c) 1 Peter 3:12
- d) 1 Peter 3:17

**4** Match each Scripture with the category it fits and write the number in front of the category in the space in front of the Scripture.

- |                                    |                            |
|------------------------------------|----------------------------|
| .... <b>a</b> Psalm 66:18          | 1) Praise and thanksgiving |
| .... <b>b</b> Matthew 7:7-11       | 2) Hindrances to prayer    |
| .... <b>c</b> Mark 6:41            | 3) How to pray             |
| .... <b>d</b> 1 Thessalonians 5:17 | 4) Effects of prayer       |
|                                    | 5) When to pray            |

**Objective 4.** Summarize the main points about prayer which are made in a given set of Scriptures.

Now we are ready to summarize the main points given under each heading relating to prayer. The best commentary on the Bible is the Bible itself. Let the Bible speak to you and answer your questions.



**For You To Do**

**5** Turn back to the Scriptures listed under *whom to pray for*, and look them up. After reading them all, circle the letter in front of each TRUE statement about whom we should pray for.

- a** Pray for leaders, but only if they are godly.
- b** Pray for all God's people everywhere.
- c** Pray for our enemies.



**6** Turn back to the Scriptures listed under *when to pray*, and look them up. After reading them all, circle the letter in front of each answer that could complete this sentence. We should pray

- a) both day and night.
- b) continually.
- c) no matter how we feel.

**7** Another reason we should pray always is found in Psalm 121:4. Write that reason here.

.....  
.....

**8** Are we sometimes responsible for our prayers not being answered? The Bible has something to say about that too. Read the Scriptures under *hindrances to prayer*. Then mark the reasons you would give if someone asked you what might hinder our prayers.

- a) Disobedience or hidden sin in our lives
- b) Asking for selfish reasons
- c) Maybe our parents or grandparents sinned.

**9** The list of Scriptures given in this course is by no means complete. Bible stories, too, give interesting insights concerning the places where people have prayed—like Jonah crying out to God from the belly of the whale. After reading the Scriptures under *where to pray*, mark the sentence you feel is correct.

- a) The church is the best place to pray.
- b) If you really want answers, pray alone.
- c) We can pray anywhere and God will hear.

**10** *Answers to prayer*. God’s answers vary. Some are immediate, others delayed. People receive healing, longer life, children, forgiveness, help, and all kinds of problems taken care of. There is no limit to His provision. On the basis of God’s Word, how would you complete this sentence? Circle the correct letter. Some people receive answers that are different from what they expected,

- a) and some will never get answers.
- b) but all receive answers from God.
- c) so maybe they didn’t have faith.

**11** *Prayer requests* also vary. People ask for signs, healing, the baptism of the Holy Spirit, divine guidance, greater faith, and for material needs to be met. Perhaps what you want most hasn’t been named, but you can ask in faith and receive. On the lines below write your own request and the Bible reference you choose as your authority.

.....  
.....

**12** *How to pray*. We must ask God for all that we need in the name of Jesus. We must ask from a heart free from sin, such as unforgiveness. In the list of Bible references given, one is a pattern for prayer. What do we usually call that pattern and where is it found?

.....  
.....

**13** When we think of God’s goodness to us, our hearts respond in worship and praise. The Bible also encourages us to sing hymns and songs of thanksgiving. Complete this verse found under *praise and thanksgiving*, together with the reference.

About midnight.....  
.....  
.....

**14** Our posture during prayer seems to be a matter of personal choice. Some people stand up and some raise their hands. Others bow or kneel. Over a period of time we may do all of these. After reading the verses listed under *posture*, which statement would you say is correct?

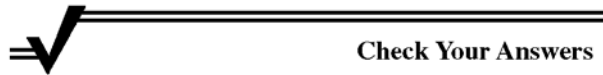
- a) Our posture in prayer must hold true to tradition.
- b) The Bible gives us no set of rules for posture during prayer.

**15** *Effects of prayer.* Prayer is powerful. It draws us to God, transforms us into Christ's image, releases the power of the Holy Spirit within us. And our prayers are precious to God. What Scripture in the list given tells us that our prayers are as incense to Him?

.....

From this study you can see that prayer is communication with God. You talk to Him and He answers you. As you practice the Bible's teachings on prayer, your life will change. You will receive great blessing from God. You will have power to share the gospel with others.

Continue to learn about prayer. Add references to your study of prayer as you study other topics, for the main themes of the Bible are closely interwoven. Also take time to listen to other people's experiences with prayer.



### Check Your Answers

- 1** It helps us find answers we need and also helps us balance Bible truths.
- 9 c)** We can pray anywhere and God will hear.
- 2** List Bible references.  
Group the references.  
Summarize the main points.
- 10 b)** but all receive answers from God.
  - a) 1 Peter 3:7.
  - c) 1 Peter 3:12.
- 11** Your own answer. It might be one like asking for wisdom on the basis of James 1:5.
  - 4 a** 2) Hindrances to prayer.
  - b** 3) How to pray.
  - c** 1) Praise and thanksgiving.
  - d** 5) When to pray.
- 12** The Lord's Prayer. Matthew 6:9-13.
  - 5 a** False.
  - b** True.
  - c** True.
- 13** Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God, and the other prisoners were listening to them (Acts 16:25).
  - 6 a)** both day and night.
  - b)** continually.
  - c)** no matter how we feel.

**14** b) The Bible gives us no set of rules for posture during prayer.

**7** God never slumbers nor sleeps. Revelation 5:8.

**8** a) Disobedience or hidden sin in our lives.

b) Asking for selfish reasons.

**3** a) 1 Peter 3:7

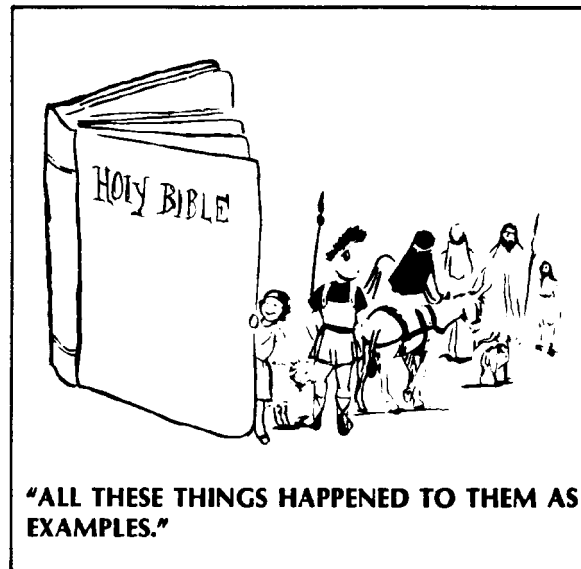
**15** Revelation 5:8

Lesson  
7

# Character Study

People everywhere, young and old, enjoy stories. Stories entertain us. But also they can teach us. We remember a good story. Jesus knew the value of stories. He used them to illustrate deep spiritual truths.

We can be thankful that God chose to record many of the Bible's lessons in story form. The characters of these stories are real people who lived long ago on this earth. They faced the same kinds of problems that we face today. People like Moses, David, and Peter made mistakes and learned by their mistakes. Now we can read about what happened and profit by their experiences. Also, we can read of their victories and be strengthened by their faith.



**In this lesson you will study.....**

The Purpose of Character Studies  
Approach to a Character Study  
The Story of Jacob

**This lesson will help you...**

- Explain how character studies are important to your life.
- Put into practice a biographical study of Jacob as a model for other studies.

---

## THE PURPOSE OF CHARACTER STUDIES

---

**Objective 1.** *Recognize true statements concerning the importance of character studies.*

The Bible mentions over 2,900 different persons in its pages. While many of these are only named, others are described in some detail. These descriptions offer us subject matter for individual studies. In character study we look at a person's life history. We see who he was, what he did, and what he was like.

This method of study is very effective in teaching children. They listen closely to the stories of baby Moses in a basket, of young David facing the giant Goliath, of Ruth gathering fallen grain,

and of baby Jesus in the manger. Children identify easily with their Bible friends. They learn important lessons about God’s will for their lives.



### EVERYONE LIKES BIBLE STORIES

Adults, too, identify with Bible characters, especially those who struggled with weaknesses and doubts as people everywhere do. Although some Bible characters appear to be almost perfect, they were not perfect. James 5:17 makes this clear: “Elijah was the same kind of person as we are.” Our prayers will be just as effective as his were if we ask in faith.

David was called a man after God’s own heart. Yet, on occasion he was guilty of lying, adultery and murder. This does not mean that God was pleased with his sin. David was a man after God’s own heart because he repented of his sins. He found God’s forgiveness. He learned from his mistakes to submit to God.

We can learn from David’s life not to make the mistakes he did. His failure is like a flare on a dark night, warning us to pray that we don’t fall into temptation. Thus, the Scripture emphasizes the purpose of studying the lives of Bible characters: “All these things happened to them as examples for others, and they were written down as a warning for us” (1 Corinthians 10:11).

Our own grandfathers and fathers can give us good advice. They know the problems of life. They know certain truths about the weather, the farm, animals, work, business, and people. Usually, we find it easier to learn from them than to learn rules from books. That is why the Bible is not written as a set of rules. Instead, most of it records the experiences of real people, of how God worked in their lives.

We read and study these personal experiences to gain knowledge and help in Christian living. In our study of Jacob, see how many times you learn a new truth or receive practical help.



### For You To Do

- 1 Circle the letter in front of each TRUE reason why biographical studies are important.
  - a We can relate better to people with Bible names.
  - b All people can learn from each other’s mistakes.
  - c We can be proud we never made the same mistakes as those of Bible characters.
  - d Life stories appeal to both children and adults, and we can learn from them.

---

### APPROACH TO A CHARACTER STUDY

---

**Objective 2.** *Tell how to study the life of a Bible character.*

After you choose the person you want to study, list all the Scriptural references you can find that relate to him or her. This is the same process as for a topical study. Some studies will be quite short, others very long. For example, Queen Esther is described only in the Book of Esther. Moses stands out as a central character in four books and is mentioned in 26 other books.

Do not neglect reading the scattered references to a character. A brief reference may help you to better understand that person. Also, we don't want to confuse references relating to two or more persons having the same name. To illustrate, there are six women named Mary in the New Testament, four men named John, and three named James.

Second, read the references. *Write notes about the person's life, work, and personal traits.* Note everyone's life story is given in detail. But, find out as much as you can about his background. What does his name mean? What is his ancestry? Where did he spend his early years? What influences were important in his youth? For example, Timothy grew up with the godly influence of his grandmother, Lois, and mother, Eunice. Note who the person's friends and associates are. How did they influence him? In a study of David, it is helpful to study his friend Jonathan.

Note the places where the Bible character has lived and traveled. For instance, Moses' life is in three divisions. He spent forty years among royalty in Egypt, forty years as a shepherd in Midian, and forty years leading the Israelites toward the promised land. Likewise, some of Paul's letters become more meaningful when we realize he wrote them while in prison.

How do Bible characters differ personally from each other? Paul, Peter, and John were strong leaders in the early church. God used all of them with their particular traits and talents to present his truths. Paul is known as the apostle of faith, Peter as the apostle of hope, and John as the apostle of love.

We see their strengths, and we see their weaknesses as well. How did some of their failures affect their futures? How did God deal with the person you have chosen to study?

Note the great events in the person's life. How did he react in times of trouble and in times of happiness? What changes took place in him? Find out what contributions he made in the time when he lived and to our lives today.

After you observe these things, *sum up the main lessons you learn from the story of this person's life.*



---

---

### For You To Do

- 2 Circle the letter in front of each correct completion for the following statement: As part of a complete study of a Bible character, you need to pay attention to
- a) scattered references to the person.
  - b) the last part of the person's life.
  - c) the person's growth in character.
  - d) details concerning people with similar names.

MAKE A LIST OF IMPORTANT FACTS
Character's name
Meaning of name
Place of birth or home
Names of relatives and friends
Place in history
Special traits
Weaknesses
Strengths
Important events
Important acts
Lessons learned from this life

---

## THE STORY OF JACOB

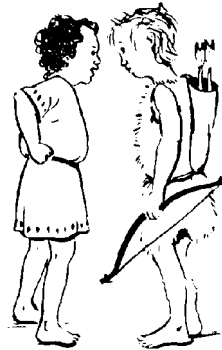
---

**Objective 3.** *Express what lessons you learn from Jacob's life story.*

The study of Jacob's life is particularly helpful as a character study. He was a man with character flaws. He tried to get the best of others if he could. And those faults are recorded in the Bible. Each of us can see something of ourselves in him! Yet God's grace and power transformed him from a deceiver into a prince having a special relationship with the Lord. (See Romans 9:10-13.) The Scripture applies Jacob's experience to all of us: "So then, everything depends, not on what man wants or does, but only on God's mercy" (Romans 9:16). Certainly there is hope for us, too, as we allow God to transform us.

The first step in a study of Jacob is to find the references to him. His life story is in Genesis 25-50. There are many other brief references to him including Matthew 1:2; 8:11; Luke 1:32-33; John 4:5-6; Acts 7:8-16, 32; Romans 9:11-13; Hebrews 11:9, 13, 21.

**JACOB AND ESAU  
WERE TWINS.**



Second, read the passages and take notes. Jacob was born after his twin brother Esau, holding on to Esau's heel. The meaning of Jacob is often translated *deceiver* (Genesis 25:26). Jacob's father and mother were Isaac and Rebecca, and his grandfather Abraham was known as the father of the Hebrew nation. Abraham was a direct descendant of Noah through the line of Shem (Genesis 11:10-26).

Jacob lived with his parents and his brother Esau. He was a quiet man and his mother's favorite (Genesis 25:27-28), but he was deceitful (25:31-34). He stole his brother's birthright as the elder son. Then he stole Esau's blessing as well (27:33-36).



**JACOB WORKED FOR LABAN.**

After this, Jacob had to flee from his home to escape Esau's anger. He went to Haran to live with Laban, his uncle (Genesis 27:42-43). During this time Laban cheated him. Jacob wanted to marry

Rachel, but Laban gave him Leah first (29:23). As a result Jacob had to work fourteen long years to get Rachel and then six more years to build up his own flocks (31:41). To make matters worse, Laban changed Jacob's wages ten times (31:7).

Jacob's life story unfolds in several places. In Beersheba he was a deceiver (Genesis 28:10). In Haran he served Laban and was both the deceiver and the one who was deceived (30:25-43). In Hebron he became a saint after his meeting with God at Peniel (37:1). And at the end of his years he became a respected man of wisdom in Egypt (Genesis 46:3-4).

By nature Jacob was a deceiver. But even though he did wrong, he set his heart on that which God had promised (Genesis 25:23). He believed in the value of both the birthright, which Esau didn't care about (25:33-34), and the blessing. He appreciated spiritual values. After his dream about God's promises to him, he set up a memorial at Bethel where people would worship God. He vowed to pay back to God a tenth of everything God gave him (28:18-22).

**JACOB MADE A  
MEMORIAL AT BETHEL.**



Nevertheless, Jacob suffered for his wrong doing. His daughter Dinah was disgraced. His sons turned into deceivers and murderers (34). Rachel, his beloved wife, died in giving birth (35:16-20). He lost Joseph, his first son by Rachel (37:34-35). He felt the disgrace of Judah, his fourth son (38) and He was separated from Benjamin, his youngest son (43).

Looking back on Jacob's life we see the crisis came at Peniel where he wrestled with God. It had been twenty years since Jacob had made his vow to God at Bethel. When Jacob's struggle with God ended in a face-to-face battle, God changed Jacob's name to *Israel* which means *Prince with God*. He gave Jacob a new blessing (32:24-30). Jacob submitted the rest of his life to God, even in the midst of problems and tragedies (47:9). God allowed Jacob to see into the future and grant blessings to Joseph's sons (48:13-20) and his own sons (49).



---

**For You To Do**

3 Jacob's life teaches us many lessons. Answer the following questions in your own words, using Jacob's life for your illustrations. Afterwards compare your answers with the ones we have given. The first question is done for you, to help you begin.

a) Is it true that what we sow we will also reap?

*Yes. Jacob deceived others and later Laban deceived him.*.....



b) Does prosperity always mean that God approves of what we are doing?

.....  
.....

c) Can God make our enemies be at peace with us?

.....  
.....

d) Do we have to pay for our wrong doing?

.....  
.....

e) Can God change our nature?

.....  
.....



**Check Your Answers**

- 1** a) False.  
b) True.  
c) False.  
d) True

- 3** b) No. Jacob prospered even when he was disobedient.  
c) Yes. Esau forgave Jacob and the brothers became friends again.  
d) Yes. Jacob and even Jacob's sons suffered because of his bad actions.  
e) Yes. He changed Jacob and gave him a new name that means *Prince with God*.

- 2** a) scattered references to the person.  
b) the last part of the person's life.  
c) the person's growth in character.

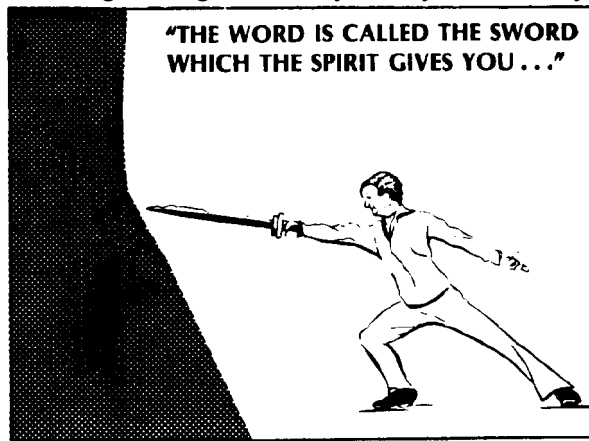
Lesson  
8

# Devotional Study

Devotional study is very personal. Its purpose is to draw you close to God. It brings you into contact with deep spiritual truth. The Holy Spirit is your guide. But, the devil does not like this. He does not want man to be close to God.

As you apply the Word of God to your life, the devil will fight you. He wants to make you discouraged. He wants you to doubt God. He creates spiritual conflict within you.

Jesus showed us how to deal with spiritual conflict. When the devil tempted Jesus in the wilderness (see Matthew 4:1-11), Jesus resisted him. Jesus fought back by using the most powerful weapon in the world. He quoted the Scriptures. The devil had to flee because God's Word is truth and life. In Ephesians 6:17, the Word is called, "the sword which the Spirit gives you." With it you will be able "to stand up against the Devil's evil tricks . . . . After fighting to the end, you will still hold your ground" (6:11, 13). The Word of God brings you cleansing, healing, and victory when you hide it in your heart.



### In this lesson you will study...

The Value of Devotional Study  
Guidelines for Devotional Study  
Application of Devotional Study

### This lesson will help you...

- Describe the value of devotional Bible study.
- State the guidelines for devotional study.
- Describe how to apply devotional study to your life.

---

## THE VALUE OF DEVOTIONAL STUDY

---

**Objective 1.** *Identify true statements concerning the value of devotional study.*

You may learn much from the Bible by using the skills you have studied so far in this book. But to fully understand God's Word, you must study the Bible with devotion. Devotional study is gaining knowledge of the Word for personal spiritual reasons.

The word *devotion* means “strong love” and “attachment.” It also means “an act of prayer in which one asks humbly and earnestly of God.” Devotional study demands the full attention of the student.

To be in Christ and to have Christ in us is our goal as Christians. Jesus said:

If you remain in me and my words remain in you, then you will ask for anything you wish, and you shall have it. My Father’s glory is shown by your bearing much fruit; and in this way you become my disciples. I love you just as the Father loves me; remain in my love. If you obey my commands, you will remain in my love, just as I have obeyed my Father’s commands and remain in his love. I have told you this so that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete (John 15:7-11).

Devotional study creates unity between Christ and the believer. In devotional study, we read a short passage of Scripture. We read it slowly, probably several times. We prayerfully think about what it means. We ask ourselves, what does this passage say to my heart? Does it speak to my present need? How does it reveal Jesus to me?

This process is called *meditating*. It is “attending to.” We read the same verse or passage until our minds are *occupied* with the meaning and with the presence of the Lord. At this time, the Word gets inside us and feeds us.

The written Word reveals Christ to us. He is the living Word. The more we know the written Word, the better we know the living Word. The better we know Christ, the more we love Him and obey Him.

King David meditated much on God’s Word. He said, “My thoughts will be deep; I will speak words of wisdom” (Psalm 49:3). When we are in Christ and Christ is in us, we have the mind of Christ (1 Corinthians 2:15-16). Our meditation renews our minds.



### For You To Do

- 1 Circle the letter in front of each TRUE statement about the value of devotional study.
  - a It draws us close to God.
  - b It fulfills our spiritual needs.
  - c It gives us the mind of Christ.
  - d It replaces other types of Bible study.
- 2 Circle the letter in front of the correct sentence completion: The key to devotional study is that which allows us to
  - a) separate ourselves from reality.
  - b) fill our minds with the Word.
  - c) get new ideas of our own.

---

## GUIDELINES FOR DEVOTIONAL STUDY

---

**Objective 2.** List the guidelines for devotional study.

David prayed, “Open my eyes, so that I may see the wonderful truths in your law” (Psalm 119:18). We need to pray this as we study how to make the message of God’s Word plain, personal, and practical.

Every passage of Scripture has a main truth. Often, there are other less obvious truths too. It is your task to find out what the Holy Spirit intends to say. *Follow these five steps to help make the message plain.*

## Five Steps to Follow

*Read.* Bible study begins with reading. In 1 Timothy 4:13, Paul says, “Give your time and effort to the public reading of the Scriptures and to preaching and teaching.” We must feed daily on God’s Word to be spiritually healthy: “They find joy in obeying the Law of the Lord, and they study it day and night” (Psalm 1:2). In Bible days, a group of Christians who lived at Berea were known for their love of Bible study (Acts 17:10-11). They were more than listeners; they searched the Scriptures daily. We need to be faithful in study as they were.



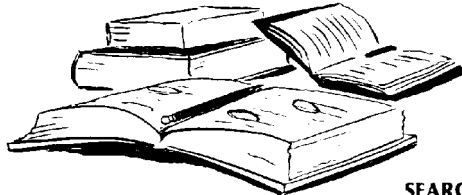
**READ**

*Record.* The attentive Bible student writes notes as he reads and studies the Bible. His pencil is a tool to help his eyes and mind “see” spiritual truth as the Holy Spirit guides his understanding.



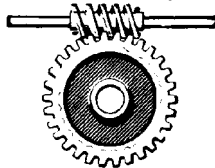
**RECORD**

*Search.* Bible truth is clear and simple, but at the same time it has deep meaning. The deep meanings of the Word are as “silver” and “hidden treasure” for which we must search in our studies (Proverbs 2:4).



**SEARCH**

*Relate.* Before interpreting the meaning of a passage, we need to relate it to its context. We need to read related teachings. This helps us to find the harmony of each passage with the whole Word of God.



**RELATE**

*Meditate.* We must meditate on the Word. “Listen to what is wise and try to understand it” (Proverbs 2:2). The Holy Spirit will always bring some message to our hearts as we take time to think about what we have read: “How I love your law! I think about it all day long” (Psalm 119:97). If we follow the command of Proverbs 4:20-21 in our meditation, we will gain much. By “paying attention to what God says,” we *gain knowledge* of God and His Word as we become more acquainted with Him. When we really “listen to God’s words,” we allow them to control our lives. We *learn obedience*. Meditation opens our hearts to God and makes us want to obey Him and express our love. True meditation affects the way we live.



**MEDITATE**



**For You To Do**

3 List five steps for devotional study.

.....  
.....

4 Read Psalm 119, verses 27, 48, 78, 95, 99, and 148. What word is mentioned in each of these verses?

.....

---

**APPLICATION OF DEVOTIONAL STUDY**

---

**Objective 3.** *Describe how to apply devotional study to your life.*

**Making the Message Personal**

Devotional study of God’s Word makes the Bible message plain and also personal. A worthwhile part of devotional study is memorizing verses. God commanded in Deuteronomy 6:6-9:

Never forget these commands that I am giving you today. Teach them to your children. Repeat them when you are at home and when you are away, when you are resting and when you are working. Tie them on your arms and wear them on your foreheads as a reminder. Write them on the doorposts of your houses and on your gates.

Keeping God’s Word in our hearts helps us to keep from sinning against the Lord (Psalm 119: 11). It helps us to overcome the devil (Revelation 12:11; Luke 4:4), and live holy lives (Psalm 119: 9; John 15:3). It helps us to succeed (Joshua 1:8), to develop strong faith (Romans 10:17) and to grow spiritually (1 Peter 2:2). It helps us to witness to others (2 Timothy 3:16).

Memorizing Bible verses is just part of making the Word personal. We must apply the Word to ourselves. We must make the word a lamp to guide us and a light for our path (see Psalm 119:105). We must ask ourselves, What does this verse say to me right now? and, What am I going to do about it? The Scripture gives us advice about how to act on God’s Word:

Do not deceive yourself by just listening to his word; instead, put it into practice. Whoever listens to the word but does not put it into practice is like a man who looks in a mirror and sees himself as he is. He takes a good look at himself and then goes away and at once forgets what he looks like. But whoever looks closely into the perfect law that sets people free, who keeps on paying attention to it and does not simply listen and then forget it, but puts it into practice—that person will be blessed by God in what he does (James 1:22-25).

There are various ways we must put God’s Word into practice. We must *obey His commands and prohibitions*. For example, we must love our neighbor (Luke 10:27) and we must not judge our brother in Christ (Romans 14:13). We *must claim the promises God has made*. It is not enough to know that we have been given full life in union with Christ (Colossians 2:10); we must claim that full life and exercise our freedom in Christ (Colossians 2:11, 20). We must *learn from the examples of others*, good and bad, as we studied in Lesson 7. Above all, we must *believe God’s statements of truth and live according to them*. To illustrate, the Bible teaches that we are one in Christ (Ephesians 2:14-18) and that love is the thing that makes us like Christ (Ephesians 3:17-19; 1 Corinthians 13). Our response to these truths will show whether or not we have applied them to our lives.

## Making the Message Practical

God wants us to share the gospel with others. Thus, a main purpose for Bible study is that it helps us to share God's truth with others. It gives us knowledge and the desire to teach others.

Teaching begins in the home. We must teach God's Word to our children (Deuteronomy 6:7). It is a joy to have knowledge and to be able to pass it on to children and young people, especially in our own families.

Then, as Colossians 3:16 states, we are to "teach and instruct one another with all wisdom." Paul told Timothy:

Take the teachings that you heard me proclaim in the presence of many witnesses, and entrust them to reliable people, who will be able to teach others also (2 Timothy 2:2).

Christ gave every Christian this task to do: "Go throughout the whole world and preach the gospel to all mankind" (Mark 16:15). Part of this task is to teach them (Matthew 28:20). Christ wants us to bear fruit. He said, "You did not choose me; I chose you and appointed you to go and bear much fruit, the kind of fruit that endures" (John 15:16).



We must strive to say what Jesus said: "My food is to obey the will of the one who sent me and to finish the work he gave me to do" (John 4:34). You see, God did not save us so that we could just sit down and enjoy our salvation; He expects us to tell others about Him. God wants us to study the Bible as a means of devotion, strength, and joy for ourselves; but He is most pleased when we share it with others. Our love of God's Word makes us want to share it.

May God bless you, as Bible study becomes life to you.



### For You To Do

5 Fill in each blank with the correct word: Two ways to apply devotional study to your life are to make it ..... and .....

6 List five ways to make the Word personal.

.....

.....

.....

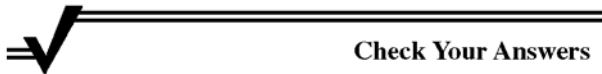
7 State why we need to make the message practical.

.....

.....

The more we study the Bible, the more beautiful it becomes. The more we search it, the more it grips our hearts. Our belief in it brings unlimited blessing. Our living it adds joy and peace. Our sharing it with others demonstrates again its eternal power.

Now you are ready to fill out the last half of your student report for Lessons 5–8. Review these lessons, then follow the instructions in your student report. When you send your answer sheets to your instructor, ask him about another course of study.



### Check Your Answers

- 1 a True.  
b True.  
c True.  
d False.
- 5 personal, practical.
- 2 b) fill our minds with the Word.
- 6 Obey it, claim it, learn from it, believe it, live according to it.
- 3 Read, record, search, relate, meditate.
- 7 We must share the gospel with others through teaching and preaching. (In order to do this we must be able to explain the message of the Word in a practical way.)
- 4 The word mentioned is meditation or meditating. Verses 11, 15, 23, 55, and 97 refer to meditation also.

### One Final Word

This is a special kind of book because it was written by people who care about you. These are happy people who have found good answers to many of the questions and problems, which trouble almost everyone in the world. These happy people believe that God wants them to share with others the answers they have found. They believe that you need some important information in order to answer your own questions and problems and find the way of life that is best for you.

They have prepared this book in order to give you this information. You will find this book based on these fundamental truths:

1. You need a Savior. Read Romans 3:23, Ezekiel 18:20.
2. You cannot save yourself. Read 1 Timothy 2:5, John 14:6.
3. God desires that the world should be saved. Read John 3:16-17.
4. God sent Jesus who gave his life to save all those who believe in Him. Read Galatians 4:4-5, 1 Peter 3:18.
5. The Bible shows us the way of salvation and teaches how to grow in the Christian life. Read John 15:5, John 10:10, 2 Peter 3:18.
6. You decide your eternal destiny. Read Luke 13:1-5, Matthew 10:32-33, John 3:35-36.

This book tells you how to decide your destiny, and it gives you opportunities to express your decision. Also, the book is different from others because it gives you a chance to contact people who prepared it. If you want to ask questions, or explain your needs and feelings, you may write to them.

In the back of the book you should find a card called *Decision Report and Request Card*. When you have made a decision, fill out the card and mail it as indicated. Then you will receive more help. You may use the card to ask questions, or make requests for prayer or information.

If there is no card in this copy of the book, write to your ICI instructor and you will receive a personal answer.



# How to Study the Bible

---

## UNIT STUDENT REPORTS AND ANSWER SHEETS

### STUDENT REPORT DIRECTIONS

When you have completed your study of each unit, fill out the answer sheet for that unit. Do only one unit at a time. Return each answer sheet to your ICI instructor or office in your area as soon as you have completed it.

The following are directions on how to indicate your answer to each question.

### EXAMPLE

*There is one best answer. Blacken the space for the answer you have chosen.*

- 1** To be born again means to
- a) be young in age.
  - b) accept Jesus as Savior.
  - c) start a new year.

The correct answer is b) *accept Jesus as Savior*, so you would blacken space **b** like this:

<b>1</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>C</b>
----------	----------	----------	----------

Now read the questions in your Student Report and mark your answers in the answer section as we have shown in our example. Choose your answer and blacken the space **a**, **b**, or **c** according to your choice.

## STUDENT REPORT FOR UNIT ONE

*For all questions, be sure the number beside the spaces on the answer sheet is the same as the number of the question.*

- 1** Our relationship with God depends upon our
  - a) living a productive life.
  - b) obeying His commands.
  - c) doing works of service.
  
- 2** The study of God's Word
  - a) makes us successful.
  - b) increases our intelligence.
  - c) helps fulfill our needs.
  
- 3** A person who grows spiritually through Bible study is a(n)
  - a) educated person.
  - b) person who is guided by God's Spirit.
  - c) deeply religious person.
  
- 4** A person who grows spiritually through Bible study has
  - a) the proper attitude toward study.
  - b) no need to grow any more.
  - c) no set pattern for study.
  
- 5** We must approach the study of God's word with
  - a) knowledge.
  - b) anticipation.
  - c) obedience.
  
- 6** Two characteristics of the Bible are inspiration and
  - a) authority.
  - b) authenticity.
  - c) revelation.
  
- 7** Your Bible or your friend's Bible is
  - a) the original manuscript.
  - b) a copy of the original manuscript.
  - c) a translation of the original manuscript.
  
- 8** The word *Bible* came from the Greek word *biblia* which means
  - a) book.
  - b) bibliography.
  - c) two books.
  
- 9** The New Testament tells about an agreement between God and man
  - a) for a limited time.
  - b) a fulfillment of the Old Testament.
  - c) a preparation for another covenant.
  
- 10** The main factor that creates unity in the Bible is that each book
  - a) gives us the full revelation of Christ.
  - b) shows Christ in a special way.
  - c) is written by the same man.

- 11** The use of the figurative language in the Bible is
- important only as a form of literature.
  - confined to the Old Testament types.
  - important to illustrate spiritual truths.
- 12** Which of the following is a way in which ideas are often presented in the Bible?
- Chalk board illustrations.
  - Comparison and contrast.
  - Formal speeches.
- 13** When Bible writers organized and presented their material, they
- used different styles and methods.
  - tried to write like each other.
  - followed certain rules for writers.
- 14** Poetry is a style of writing which usually
- provides a record of human events.
  - expresses man's thoughts and feelings.
  - foretells future events.
- 15** The main styles of writing used in the Bible include history, prophecy, poetry, and
- fiction.
  - letters.
  - novels.
- 16** You need these basic tools for Bible study:
- Bible, pen, seeing.
  - commentaries, pen, Bible.
  - Bible, eyes, concordance.
- 17** Which of the following is a good approach to understanding a portion of scripture?
- Look up the meaning in a Bible commentary.
  - Ask your pastor or Bible teacher.
  - Ask yourself the following questions about the verses: Who, What, Why, When, and to Whom.
- 18** The most important principle of interpretation is to read
- all the commentaries you can.
  - the context of a particular Scripture.
  - slowly without interruption.
- 19** What is the relationship between prayer and studying God's Word?
- You must pray to understand God's Word.
  - Prayer is an unnecessary addition to Bible study.
  - The Bible can be understood without any prayer.
- 20** The best way to receive spiritual help from the Bible is to study
- with an attitude of prayer.
  - at the same hour each day.
  - an original version.

*This is the end of the requirements for Unit One. Please stop here and return your Answer Sheet for Unit One to your instructor. Continue your study in Unit Two.*

## STUDENT REPORT FOR UNIT TWO

*For all questions, be sure the number beside the spaces on the answer sheet is the same as the number of the question.*

- 1** The greatest benefit of studying the Bible book by book is
  - a) being able to predict the exact time of Christ's second coming.
  - b) being able to see contradictions.
  - c) having the living Word in us.
- 2** The first step in book study is to
  - a) apply its truth to our life.
  - b) interpret what the author means.
  - c) read and observe what the author is saying.
- 3** After reading Colossians several times we observe that the main theme is
  - a) the Christian's full life in Christ.
  - b) Christ's death and resurrection.
  - c) the Christian's heavenly home.
- 4** In Colossians the symbols of circumcision, burial, and death illustrate
  - a) three different levels of separation.
  - b) the truth that the Christian is free from sin.
  - c) an unpleasant transformation from sin.
- 5** To really benefit from the truth found in Colossians, you must
  - a) apply it to your life.
  - b) draw a neat chart of the main points.
  - c) compare your study with another.
- 6** What does the book of Colossians say about how we can live a full life in Christ?
  - a) We should follow the example of Paul, the author of the book.
  - b) Christ provides a life of strength, freedom, and new relations.
  - c) Colossians repeats many of Jesus' teaching from the Sermon on the Mount.
- 7** To study a particular doctrine of the Bible you should do a
  - a) topical study.
  - b) biographical study.
  - c) book study.
- 8** A topical study requires a person to
  - a) do very little work.
  - b) carefully search for references.
  - c) choose one of a few, limited subjects.
- 9** Prayer, according to our topical study, is
  - a) needed occasionally in our lives.
  - b) a daily ritual that occurs at a set time.
  - c) a regular and continual part of our lives.
- 10** After selecting a topic, the first thing to do is
  - a) list all the references on the topic you can find.
  - b) summarize the references.
  - c) arrange the references into categories.

- 11** Which is a reason why we can always pray?
- We will always have enemies to pray for.
  - We are given many examples in the Bible.
  - God can always hear us.
- 12** Why do character studies help us to understand spiritual truth more easily?
- The Bible tells real experiences of real people.
  - The Bible is a set of rules for people to follow.
  - Bible characters were examples of people who were perfect.
- 13** Which of the following is a good rule for character studies?
- Choose good examples for your study.
  - Find out as much as possible about the character.
  - Start with a study of Adam and continue through the Bible in order.
- 14** In biographical studies it is helpful to
- identify ourselves with the person studied.
  - skip the scattered references to the person.
  - focus on persons who lived perfect lives.
- 15** Jacob is a good biographical study because
- he was a perfect man.
  - his faults are recorded to help us.
  - he moved from place to place.
- 16** A lesson we learn from Jacob's life is that
- we earn for ourselves rewards.
  - everything depends on God's mercy.
  - a little sin is acceptable.
- 17** An important part of devotional study is
- listing many references to our subject.
  - organizing the main points into an outline.
  - meditating on a passage of Scripture.
- 18** Which of the following is a true statement about devotional Bible study?
- The truths of the Bible are easily learned by reading and taking notes.
  - Once you have learned the truths of the Bible, they will never be forgotten.
  - One must search for deep meaning and personal application.
- 19** When we obey the Bible's commands and live according to its truths, we are
- going beyond our duty to God.
  - making the message personal.
  - living in bondage.
- 20** Our main goal in devotional study should be to
- read the Bible daily at the same hour.
  - enjoy our salvation alone.
  - become able to share gospel truths.

*End of requirements for Unit Two. Please return your student report Answer Sheet for Unit Two to your ICI instructor. Now that you have completed your study of this course, ask your instructor to recommend another course of study.*

# How to Study the Bible

## Answer Sheet for Unit One

**CL2220**

*Please fill in the blanks below:*

Your name .....

Your ICI Student Number .....  
(Leave blank if you don't know what it is.)

Your Mailing Address .....

.....

City ..... State or Province .....

Zip or Postal Code .....

Country .....

Age ..... Sex .....

Occupation .....

How many members are in your family? .....

How many years have you studied in school? .....

If you are a member of a church, what is the name of your church?  
.....

.....

What responsibility do you have in your church? .....

.....

How are you studying this course: Alone? ..... In a group? .....

What other ICI courses have you studied?  
.....

.....

*Now, turn the page and answer all questions.*

Blacken the correct space for each numbered item.

1	A	B	C
2	A	B	C
3	A	B	C
4	A	B	C
5	A	B	C
6	A	B	C
7	A	B	C

8	A	B	C
9	A	B	C
10	A	B	C
11	A	B	C
12	A	B	C
13	A	B	C
14	A	B	C

15	A	B	C
16	A	B	C
17	A	B	C
18	A	B	C
19	A	B	C
20	A	B	C

Write below any questions you would like to ask your instructor about the lessons.

.....

.....

.....

Now look over this answer sheet to be sure you have completed all the questions. Then return it to your ICI instructor or office in your area. The address should be stamped on the copyright page of your study guide.

**Christian Life Program**

For ICI Office Use Only
Date ..... Score of UPE 1 ..... Score of UPE 2 .....

# How to Study the Bible

## Answer Sheet for Unit Two

**CL2220**

*Please fill in the blanks below:*

Your name .....

Your ICI Student Number .....  
(Leave blank if you don't know what it is.)

Your Mailing Address .....

.....

City ..... State or Province .....

Zip or Postal Code .....

Country .....

### REQUEST FOR INFORMATION

The ICI office in your area will be happy to send you information about other courses that are available and their cost. You may use the space below to ask for that information.

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

*Now, turn the page and answer all questions.*



*Blacken the correct space for each numbered item.*

1	A	B	C
2	A	B	C
3	A	B	C
4	A	B	C
5	A	B	C
6	A	B	C
7	A	B	C

8	A	B	C
9	A	B	C
10	A	B	C
11	A	B	C
12	A	B	C
13	A	B	C
14	A	B	C

15	A	B	C
16	A	B	C
17	A	B	C
18	A	B	C
19	A	B	C
20	A	B	C

Write below any questions you would like to ask your instructor about the lessons.

.....

.....

.....

**CONGRATULATIONS**

You have finished this course. We have enjoyed having you as a student and hope you will study more courses with ICI. Return this student report answer sheet to your instructor or to the ICI office in your area. When we have checked your answers, we will send you a certificate for this course in your program of studies.

Please print your name below as you want it to appear on your certificate.

Name .....

**Christian Life Program**

For ICI Office Use Only		
Date .....	Score of UPE 1 .....	Score of UPE 2 .....

**CL2220 How to Study the Bible**  
Decision Report and Request Card

After studying this course, I have placed my trust in Jesus Christ as my Savior and Lord. I am returning this card with my signature and address to your ICI office for two reasons: first, to testify to my commitment to Christ and, second, to request information about more material to help me in my spiritual life.

NAME.....

ADDRESS .....

.....

SIGNATURE .....



**THE GREATEST OF ALL  
IS THE SERVANT OF ALL**

Serving is one of the greatest ways we can show our love to God. ICI courses prepare you to better serve others.

Using our courses will create an orderly system of Bible study and encourage a better understanding of spiritual truths.

To begin preparing for God's service, we suggest enrolling in courses offered from our **Christian Service Program**.

Some courses from the **Christian Service Program** are:

- THE GREAT QUESTIONS OF LIFE
- GOD LOVES YOU
- WHO JESUS IS
- WE BELIEVE
- GOD'S DESIGN—YOUR CHOICE
- CHRISTIAN WORSHIP
- PERSONAL EVANGELISM
- ALIVE IN CHRIST
- CHRISTIAN MATURITY

*If you desire a more detailed description about each course or directions on how to enroll in any of these courses, contact your local ICI director.*

**SEND US THE NAMES AND ADDRESSES  
OF YOUR FRIENDS**

We will send them Lesson 1 of  
“The Great Questions of Life.”

Print Clearly

Name .....  
Mailing Address .....  
City.....  
Province or State.....  
Country .....  
E-mail.....

Name .....  
Mailing Address .....  
City.....  
Province or State.....  
Country .....  
E-mail.....

Name .....  
Mailing Address .....  
City.....  
Province or State.....  
Country .....  
E-mail.....

Your Name .....  
Mailing Address .....  
City .....  
Province or State .....  
Country .....  
E-mail .....