

*DIANE FORSYTH*

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*Mine the  
Word*

**Ministry**



**Releases**



# **Mine the Word**

**Diane Forsyth**

**The Ministerial Association  
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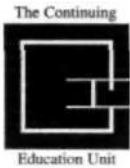
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## — Earn Continuing Education Credit\* —

Each lesson of this book concludes with an assignment. If you read all twelve chapters of *Mine the Word* and faithfully perform all of the prescribed exercises, you qualify for two Continuing Education Units (CEUs) which fulfill the annual continuing education requirement for Seventh-day Adventist ministers. Complete the CEU Registration Request in the back of the book.

*Never think that you have learned enough, and that you may now relax your efforts. The cultivated mind is the measure of a man. Your education should continue during your lifetime; every day you should be learning, and putting to practical use the knowledge gained.*

—Ellen G. White, *Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 4, p. 561.

\*CEUs are non-academic credit and cannot be applied to a degree.

# To Help You Use This Book

How shall I study the Bible? is a very big question with many answers. Those many answers seem to fall into one of three categories: (1) the Mood, (2) the Method, and (3) the Principles of Interpretation.

The Mood has to do with the attitudes and expectations with which we study. The Method has to do with the skills we use as we actually "dig in and do it." The Principles of Interpretation are what we might call the "rules of understanding" that we should keep in mind, or discover, as we study. These principles affect how we interpret the Bible.

This book focuses on the second of these three categories, the Method. Each lesson also includes a few comments about the Mood, but it is not the purpose of these lessons to discuss the Principles of Interpretation.

For those who would like to read about Principles of Interpretation, here are three uncomplicated introductions:

Walter A. Henrichsen, *A Layman's Guide to Interpreting the Bible* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan; and Colorado Springs: Navpress, 1978).

A. Berkeley Mickelsen and Alvera M. Mickelsen, *Better Bible Study: A Layman's Guide to Interpreting and Understanding God's Word* (Glendale: Regal Books Division, G/L Publications, 1977).

John R. W. Stott, *Understanding the Bible* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1976). Especially useful is his Chapter 7, "The Interpretation of the Bible."

There are some principles of interpretation that seem to go without saying. Others are debated. Still other principles may be commonly accepted but not so easily used. There is an ongoing and fairly involved



discussion about these matters. Does that mean we should wait to study the Bible until the debates about it are all settled? No.

"Digging in and doing" Bible study can actually help us discover sound principles of interpretation. Some have felt that we must know the principles of interpretation *before* we begin, but it is also possible to begin and learn about the principles of interpretation as we go. No matter which way we do it, those principles must continue to be refined and understood in the light of what we read in the Bible.

Dr. Robert Traina and others who teach Bible study skills say there are three important steps in Bible study: observe, interpret, and apply. These steps don't happen in isolation from each other, yet one can be emphasized at a time. This book emphasizes the first step—observation.

Recently I heard H. M. S. Richards say that the prophecies of the Bible are not always easy to understand. Then he added, "Neither is solid geometry." Some may feel that these lessons are a little like solid geometry. That is not because they are difficult to read but because it takes some perseverance and effort to do the assignments. Doesn't skill development always take effort? It may be quite simple to describe a skill, but it's usually another matter to learn a skill. How would it sound, for example, if you described how to type? All one has to do is apply a little pressure to the appropriate key at the right time, and presto, the words appear on paper. That is, *if* the typist knows which key for which finger, and *if* the typist has developed the coordination it takes to put those words on that paper. Bible study, like typing, is a skill to be learned. It's not something just to read about. It is something to read about and then try—repeatedly.

The amount you do from each of these lessons, and the pace at which you do it, is up to you. If a lesson includes more than you want to do in a week, take more time, or do only a part of the lesson. You must decide which skills, and what plan of study, serve you best. It will help you make that decision if you do more than just read this book. As you read, please try the suggested skills—enough to know by experience how valuable the skill is for you. Remember that skills cannot be valuable to you personally until you practice them.

One more note about this simple, but challenging, set of lessons.

They are written so that a group can use them, but an individual can also use them for personal study. There are 12 lessons, each with five parts (as outlined in the introduction). If you are using these lessons individually, Part 3 of each lesson ("Comparing Notes About the Last Assignment") can become a time for personal, rather than group, reflection. There is also an appendix included with teacher's notes for those who wish to lead a group.

Diane Dunlap Forsyth

## **About the Author**

Engaging God's love—and helping others do the same—draws and motivates Diane Dunlap Forsyth, and always has.

Educated and experienced in theology, religion, and spiritual life development, Diane has served as pastor, Bible teacher, and chaplain. Currently she is director of Charistis, a ministry dedicated to spiritual life development for children and adults.

She is convinced that Bible study and prayer involve the whole person: *being* as well as thinking and doing, *listening* as well as talking. Her experience with this kind of Bible study and prayer have led her **to** prepare this book and other materials that contribute to spiritual life development.

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# Introduction to Mine the Word

(1) See Appendix A.

How do you feel about Bible study? While you think about your own answers to that question, consider the following answers that indicate some of the problems people have with Bible study:

"I feel Bible study is an important part of my Christian experience, but I don't know how to do it."

"They tell me I should study the Bible, but actually I'm not sure I want to."

"Maybe I should, but Bible study hasn't helped me a whole lot with my personal problems."

"Frankly, when I study the Bible I get bored."

"I really don't have time. There are so many things that are more pressing."

"I'm more interested in witnessing than digging into the Bible and coming up with some theological points to argue about."

"I've studied the Bible so long that when I read it now it's pretty much what I've heard already."

"I'm doing all right, and yet I feel my Bible study experience could be a lot better."

(2) See Appendix A.

It is the *purpose* of this book to reduce the difficulties and increase the rewards of Bible study.

About four years ago, a pastor in the Upper Columbia Conference surveyed his congregation and discovered that 90 percent of them use some source other than the Bible for their personal devotions. That's hard to believe, isn't it? Jesus said, "The words that I have spoken to you are spirit and life" (John 6:63). And in *Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 6, p. 393, by Ellen White, we are told, "The Bible is God's voice speaking to us, just as surely as though we could hear it with our ears." Think what those folks are missing when they fail to choose the Bible as the primary source for their personal devotions. You can make listening to Him top priority. These lessons are intended to help you do that—and be glad you did!

Each lesson in this book will follow a format like this:

1. Thoughts about the teaching ministry of the Holy Spirit.
2. How to let Bible study be what it can be.
3. Comparing notes about the last assignment.
4. Skills or methods to use in personal Bible study. (Lessons 6 through 12 incorporate several skills into a single plan of study.)
5. Assignment.

(3) See Appendix A.

When I attended Seattle Pacific University one summer, I had a class from Dr. Robert Traina, an accomplished and most methodical Bible student. As we began that class, he asked us, "What do you do when you sit down to study the Bible? How do you go about it?"

Several of us had been through college as theology majors and were in Seattle for graduate school, but still we, at least I, found that question challenging. What *did* I do?

I had studied the Bible a lot. This included 16 years in the classroom plus many years in Sabbath school. It was not that I had not studied, but I just had not given much thought to *how* I studied. You see, most classroom assignments or Sabbath school lessons are outlined so the student, without realizing it, depends on them, and does not really know how to go about Bible study on his/her own.

When you sit down to study your Bible, what are your options? What can you do? In addition to answering the questions provided in a

Sabbath school quarterly or in a syllabus, how might you go about Bible study?

(4) See Appendix A.

There are many ways to go about it. In the first five of these lessons we will talk about and try some of the many skills. Then in the last seven lessons we will combine several skills into one plan of study. Skills can be likened to the ingredients we put in bread, and a plan of study is like the loaf after the parts are blended.

As you discuss and try these methods, shop for ingredients; that is, select the study skills you think you will find most useful; then consider how you will combine these skills in your personal plan of study.

When Dr. Traina went on to show us what his plan of study was, I objected. "Wouldn't it get too routine knowing just what you were going to do each time you study the Bible? If you always went through the same steps you might limit spontaneous discoveries or the work of the Holy Spirit," I thought.

Since then I've come to realize some things that help me answer my own objection to having a personal plan of Bible study. For example, I've learned that my plan of study can always be improving, just like my knowledge of the Bible continues to improve. This improvement occurs because I continue to look for a better recipe (plan of study) and for better ingredients (study skills) while I go on using the old recipe.

### **Practicing the Presence of Your Teacher**

We have not always thought about the teaching ministry of the Holy Spirit in connection with study "skills," yet I believe it is appropriate to do so. In fact, this is the most important Bible study skill.

What makes the promised ministry of the Holy Spirit effective for *you*? Is it the fact that the Spirit is more eager to help than you are to have this help? Is it the fact that the Spirit is the best Teacher in the universe? Well, the Spirit certainly is the most eager and best Teacher in all the universe, but that is not what makes this Teacher most effective for you. *You* are the one who makes the Holy Spirit most effective for you. The Spirit's marvelous willingness and ability to teach must be met

by your willingness to be taught. That's where practicing the presence of your Teacher comes in.

How do we practice the presence of our Teacher? There are three R's that help us answer that question. They are: **remember**, **refer**, and **recognize**.

1. **Remember**, Jesus promised that our Teacher would guide us into truth (John 14:26 and John 16:13). Remembering is elementary and obvious. Yet, forgetting is much easier. So, the first step in the most important Bible study skill is remember that well-known promise: "The Holy Spirit . . . will teach you all things."
2. **Refer** to the Holy Spirit's presence as you study. Most Bible students know they should pray as they begin Bible study. But not all realize that the whole study time should be a conversation. Bible study is one of the best times to experience conversation with God. The Bible is God's voice—speaking to us. And as we hear, it is appropriate to respond. There are many ways to respond. Two simple ones are "Please" and "Thank you." Have you ever studied the Bible and found you were up against a really difficult spot? There are many things we may not understand, but the really difficult spots are those times when it seems urgent that we understand, yet we still don't. It may be that we are troubled by something that a lot of other things seem to hinge on. What do you say at a time like that? Say, "Please." It's like raising your hand in the classroom. Refer to the presence of your Teacher.

Then there are those times when the light really comes on. It may be that an old, familiar text glows in new, unthought-of ways. What do you say? "Thank you!" Your Teacher is with you when you study; refer to the Spirit's presence.

3. **Recognize** the Teacher's methods. It will increase your awareness of God's presence as well as your appreciation for God's help if you stop to think about what your Teacher is doing for you and how. The teaching ministry of the Holy Spirit is worth our close attention. The

first part of each lesson in this series, as well as the assignment for next week, will help you recognize the Teacher's methods.

### **Assignment 1**

Between now and the next group meeting, **gather** some thoughts that you find especially meaningful about the Holy Spirit's teaching ministry. **Bring** those thoughts next time, and if possible **include** your reason for bringing them. Why did you find them meaningful?

Here's how you might do this assignment: **read** the columns in a Bible concordance (the big ones, Strong's or Young's, are best since they list every reference in the Bible to each word for "Holy Spirit" and related words). As you read the short phrase for each listing, notice if it suggests something about the teaching ministry of the Holy Spirit to you. If so, place a light pencil mark beside that reference in the margin of the concordance. For instance, you might check "full of the Holy Spirit and of faith" (Acts 11:24). After you have read the columns referring to the Holy Spirit, review the listings you checked. **Select** those that you are most interested in. Turn to those texts and read the complete text and some of the context. Then write a note about why that verse helps you appreciate the teaching ministry of the Holy Spirit. You may also read the columns in the *Comprehensive Index to the Writings of Ellen G. White* for "Holy Spirit" and do the same thing.

(5) See Appendix A.



## Lesson 1

# Question-Asking Skill

### **Part 1: Teaching Ministry of the Holy Spirit, and**

### **Part 3: Comparing Notes About the Last Assignment**

This time, comparing notes about the assignment combines with our introductory thoughts about the teaching ministry of the Holy Spirit.

What did you discover, or rediscover, about the teaching ministry of the Holy Spirit that you would like to share?

(6) See Appendix A.

### **Part 2: How to Let Bible Study Be What It Can Be**

What is the most interesting experience you can remember having? As I write this, I'm looking from a sunny veranda onto the sparkling water of Hayden Lake. A sailboat glides out there in the gentle breeze, and a speedboat cruises out from the dock. A few weeks ago, laughing cargos were scrambling onto the "sea slug," a six-place, elongated blue bubble that went by several other names as well. The goal of the riders, as they straddled the "slug" and grabbed a handle, was to *stay on!* But the goal of the one driving the boat they were roped to was to *dump them* splashing and squealing—all ages and sizes—into the water.

Are the people in the sailboat, the speedboat, or on the sea slug having an interesting time? What makes an experience interesting? If we like to do it, does that make it interesting? If it doesn't take much effort, does that make it interesting? What does it take to interest you?

Answering questions like this can help us decide whether or not we find Bible study interesting, and why. Don't we at least have to get, or expect to get, something we want out of the experience before we call it interesting? And doesn't the objective experience—that is the boat, the

blue water, and the breeze—have to be matched by a subjective experience—that is the person who takes advantage of those resources? Why put a sourpuss in a sailboat? What good is an ideal setting if you feel miserable?

A couple of things that can make an experience interesting are:

1. What we expect to get out of it, and
2. How we feel about doing it.

Most of what we talk about in Part 2 of these lessons will have to do with one of those two reasons why an experience is, or is not, something we want to do.

One thing we can expect to get out of Bible study is nourishment. Bible study is as essential to our spiritual well-being as food is to our physical well-being. Jesus said, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink His blood, you have no life in you. . . . My flesh is food indeed, and My blood is drink indeed" (John 6:53, 55). That is a vivid symbol, isn't it? It comes about two-thirds of the way through a long chapter about bread. First, 5,000 people were fed special bread that Jesus multiplied on the spot. Then Jesus told the people about far more enduring bread and announced simply, "I am the Bread of Life" (John 6:35). Realizing that Jesus first multiplied their food and then announced that He was the Bread of Life helps us to understand the vivid symbol in John 6:53, 55, doesn't it? Wasn't Jesus just saying, "You must let Me do for you spiritually what bread does for your physically"?

But if Jesus said *He* is the Bread of Life, why say spiritual food comes from Bible study? Something Jesus said later in the same Bread of Life discussion helps. In John 6:63 He said, "The words that I have spoken to you are spirit and life." The words He spoke are life, nourishing bread of life, right? And those words from Jesus—the Jehovah of the Old Testament and Messiah of the New Testament—are in the Bible.

One way, then, to let Bible study be what it can be is to remember that Bible study is as essential to spiritual life as food is to physical life.

**Part 3: Compare Notes About Last Assignment** (see Part 1 of this lesson)

**Part 4: Asking Questions—a Bible Study Skill**

Have you thought of question asking as a Bible study skill? It really is. And that's what we want to think about now.

From the Bible student's standpoint there are two categories of questions: those the student prepares and those prepared for the student. Whether prepared *for* or *by* the student, there are many kinds of questions, ranging all the way from questions of fact to questions of understanding. What we'll call a question of fact is specific, like, "In what town was Jesus born?" Questions that can be answered with a specific person, place, date, or event all fall in this category.

On the other end of the spectrum there are what we will call questions of understanding. These are wide open, and often in the process of answering them we will discover additional questions.

So we're suggesting that there are two categories of questions and within those two categories many kinds of questions. And there's an important question to ask about questions. That is, What makes a *good* question? Have you ever heard someone say, "That was a *dumb* question!" Or, on the other hand, "That sure was a *good* question!" We often hear comments like that even before the question is answered, but how do we know whether it was a dumb or good question?

First, we need to be forewarned that it is easy to misjudge a question as "poor." We may feel self-conscious because we asked and therefore assume it is a dumb question, when it may actually be a very fine question. Or the question may sound simple, and therefore we assume it is dumb. But simplicity or fear of embarrassment are not automatic indicators of poor questions.

Then how do we decide what is a good question for a Bible student to ask? Here are some suggestions:

- The best questions are those that you, the Bible student, have prepared. The process of asking the question is as important as answering it.
- The best questions are those that open the most doors of thought.
- The best questions are not always those for which we have an answer, but those that increase our insights.
- The best questions are those that lead me, the one asking, from

where I am to where I have the potential to be in understanding. It is possible for a question to be beneath or beyond you and yet be just right for me.

If you use questions prepared *for* you, choose those with the most appeal and the most potential for you, remembering there is a whole range from questions of fact to questions of understanding. Following are some discovery questions (from the "understanding" end of the spectrum) that you might want to adopt as yours. They can be asked of many Bible passages, and they lead us to many insights:

**Questions to ask of any Bible passage:**

- What does this tell me about God? An expanded version of that question is: What does this passage tell me about God, my relationship to God, to other believers, to unbelievers, and to myself?
- Is there an example for me to follow?
- Is there a sin to shun?
- Is there a duty to perform?
- Is there a promise for me to claim? If so, what are the conditions?
- Is there a prayer for me to echo?

**Questions to ask of specific kinds of Bible content:**

**Biographies\***

- What is the ancestry of the person?
- What advantages in training did this person have?
- What work did this person accomplish?
- Was there a crisis in this person's life? If so, what? How did he or she meet it?
- What traits of character does this person display throughout his or her life? What are the causes or consequences of his or her strengths and weaknesses?
- What influence did this person have upon others?
- What growth does the character of this person show?
- What friends did this person have? How did these friends affect his or her work?

- What was this person's religious experience—prayer life, faith in God, service for God, knowledge of Scripture, courage in testimony, and attitude in worship?
  - In what way(s) do you think he or she is a type or antitype of Christ?
  - What is the one great lesson in this person's life for you?
- \* (From Wilbur M. Smith, *Profitable Bible Study*, 2nd rev. ed., pp. 44-46.)

### Prayers

There are approximately 83 prayers in the Old Testament and 49 prayers in the New Testament (28 of those in the Gospels). The following points (taken from Smith's *Profitable Bible Study*, pp. 48-50), may be considered in a study of any prayer:

- The one who is praying—is this person a child of God or not?
- The circumstances which lead to prayer—God's goodness will lead to *thanksgiving*. A new sense of God's glory and majesty will lead to *adoration*. A consciousness of guilt will lead to *confession*. A knowledge of the needs of others will lead to *intercession*. One's realization of one's own deep need for guidance, healing, strength, courage, food, etc., will lead to *petition*.
- The physical aspects of praying—the time when prayer is offered, day or night; the place in which the prayer is offered, in public or in private, outdoors or in a church; the attitude of the body in praying; the position of the hands, kneeling, the eyes opened or closed.
- The definite word used to indicate the act of praying.
- The one to whom prayer is offered. Which Person of the Trinity? What title of God is used in praying? What attributes of God are recognized in such praying?
- The general order of the prayer. Five forms of prayer are **adoration, thanksgiving, confession, petition, and intercession**.
- The subject or subjects of the prayer.
- The relation of the prayer to the promises of the Word of God (see such passages as Num. 14:17, 18; 2 Sam. 7:27; 1 Kings 8:22-53; Acts 4:25, 26).

- The answer to the prayer. Is the answer recorded or assumed from later events? How long between the offering of the prayer and the answer to the prayer? If an answer is not given at once, is the prayer offered again? If the petition is not answered, is there a reason given for such silence? Does God ever answer some prayers that would be better unanswered?
- The result of the prayer—for the one praying; for others.

### **Miracles\***

- Make an outline of the miracle.
- Note the term designating the miracle. Does it imply wonder, power, or purpose?
- What does the miracle evidence regarding the human agent who performed it?
- What does the miracle reveal about the nature of God? Which attributes are especially stressed?
- What does the miracle reveal about the work of God? What is God's normal means? What prompts God to work in this unusual manner? What would those who watched have learned from it?
- What command or prayer brought forth the miracle? (State this as it is given in the Bible version you are using.)
- In the light of the total impact of Scripture, why do you think the miracle was recorded in Scripture? (See John 20:30, 31 for an overt expression of such purpose.) What one main truth does this miracle teach?
- Construct a chart describing in parallel columns the realm, occasion, people, means, results, and reactions of the miracle.

\* (From Lloyd M. Perry and Robert D. Culver, *How to Search the Scriptures*, pp. 194-195.)

### **Parables** (Also taken from *How to Search the Scriptures*, pp. 201-202)

- What occasion provoked the telling of this parable?
- Note the details, customs, and practices which form the natural part of the parable. This involves gathering information on the manner of living referred to.

- To whom was the parable told? What one lesson does it teach? Can you put yourself in their place and determine what they would have understood from it?
- What other Bible passages teach the truth that this parable illustrates? Is the parable interpreted as a whole or in part anywhere in Scripture? If so, note the scripture reference and the nature of the interpretation.
- Are there clues for interpretation of the parable in its immediate context?
- What is its central teaching? How can you apply this truth to your own experience this very week?
- Write a modern parable, using present-day situations and customs, to teach the same truth. This is a valuable test to see how well you comprehend the parable and how well you can adapt it to a modern setting.

If you adopt questions like these as your own, you will find it is easier to pay attention as you read the Bible, and of course, as a result, you will get more out of what you read.

When I started college I worked at the Walla Walla College Color Press doing a variety of things, including reading out loud to the proof-reader. Some copy was very boring, but I found a way to handle it. I learned to read, even out loud, and plan supper while I read. Read one thing, think about another. That's what it amounted to. Unfortunately, that is not an uncommon skill. In fact, it is a major frustration of Bible students, even seasoned students. Asking questions about what you read will help you overcome it. By the time you get to the end of a chapter, you will have a better idea of what is in the chapter because you make yourself account for it.

Preparing your own questions is even better than adopting someone else's questions. This keeps you even more alert as you read, and it produces many more insights. How do we formulate our own questions? Here are a couple of suggestions:

- Keep the five *W*'s—*Who*, *What*, *When*, *Where*, *Why*, and *How*—in

mind and frequently use them to ask specific questions. For instance, instead of a blanket What does this mean? question, ask instead, *What* does "the Spirit Himself intercedes for us" mean in Romans 8:26? *How* do those two phrases relate to each other? *Who* really intercedes? *Why* does it mention the Spirit in one place and God in another? In this way the *What*, *Who*, *How*, and *Why* are tailored to the specific content.

- Dr. Robert Traina (Robert A. Traina, *Methodical Bible Study*) tells how to ask questions. Among other things, he shows that there are what he calls questions of definition, rationale, and implication. Others simply ask, What? And So What? Traina's question of definition is the basic What question. His question of rationale is the Why, and his implication the Therefore or So What? For example, if God said, "Remember the Sabbath day," we can ask, What is a Sabbath day? After defining Sabbath, we could go on to ask, Why did God say to remember the Sabbath? Various answers could be given, including—because He wants us to stay close to Him. Following on, we can ask, What are the implications of remembering the Sabbath? What happens if we forget it?

As we develop the question-asking skill, we need to remember that we are not doing it for the sake of collecting questions or to get into a debate or contest. Nor are we doing it to challenge or contradict others.

"It does not require much learning or ability to ask questions that are difficult to answer. A child may ask questions over which the wisest men may be puzzled. Let us not engage in a contest of this kind."—  
Ellen G. White, *Testimonies to Ministers and Gospel Workers*, p. 109.

We should develop our question-asking skill in order to **increase awareness** of what is in the Bible, and because of that increased awareness we will develop new **insights** and **appreciation** for the Bible.

We have friends who live in the country, on a hill, with a wide-open view in every direction. The man of the house built their beautiful home. Let's imagine for a minute that as he built it, he did not include any



windows, and only one door—the front door. We go to visit and are impressed with the good taste in interior decorating. We take our time going from room to room noticing the carpets, drapes, and furnishings. The handmade finishing touches capture special attention. We can spend a lot of time getting thoroughly acquainted with the interior. Then we begin to talk, and have a meal together, and talk some more. We listen to good music, watch TV, and play some games. But there will come a time when we want more than there is on the inside of that house.

Imagine, then, that we go to the wall and make a large, window-sized hole in it. And from the confines of the house we look out—across the green lawn, to the gold fields of grain and on to the pale-blue sky and puffy white clouds. A bird flies through the scene, a dog chases a cat across the lawn, and butterflies float in the breeze. It's a riot out there—a riot of color and forms and activities. As we look we begin to wonder, What makes the sky blue, the grain gold, the grass green? Why do the birds and butterflies get around by air, and the dog and cat on the ground? On and on the Why, What if, and How Come questions can go.

What did we accomplish by knocking the hole in the wall? Did we learn something? Or did we only recognize how much we don't know? Knocking the hole in the wall compared to the first serious question asking a Bible student does. You see, we can read and learn a lot without getting into many questions, just as we can go through the interior of the house getting acquainted. But there comes a time for more. And we begin to ask questions, and when we do that we both learn *and* recognize what we don't know. You see, even if we can't say just why the sky is blue, the grain gold, or the grass green, we at least *know* it is out there. As long as we stayed confined in the house, we didn't know that. Imagine, as more windows are provided on every side of that house, how many vistas are opened up, and because of that how many things can be seen that were unseen from inside. And as the scenery and the details of it multiply, so do the questions. But is that a problem? Would you rather not see the scenery if you couldn't answer all the questions that come to your mind as a result of seeing it?

Asking questions, like knocking a window in a blank wall, increases

awareness of what is there. That will, in turn, multiply our appreciation, and insights will accumulate, even if all our questions are not answered. Our assignment for next week will help to demonstrate this.

### **Part 5: Assignment**

1. **Reread** the discovery questions provided in this lesson and **select** the ones that are best for you.
2. **Select** a Bible content type that is not included in this lesson, doctrines for instance, and write a series of questions to ask of any passage where this kind of content is found.
3. **Read** Psalm 23 and **write** as many questions as you can. No answers, just questions. The group can pick another familiar, short passage from six to 10 verses long. Everyone should do the same passage. **Bring** your questions to the group next time.

## Lesson 2

# Creative Bible Study and "Using" the Bible

### Part 1: Teaching Ministry of the Holy Spirit

"Your heart may be barren, your intellect feeble; but if you will prayerfully study the word of God, light will flash into your mind. God works with every diligent student." Ellen G. White, *Counsels to Parents, Teachers and Students*, pp. 455, 456.

Out of some 50 quotations from the writings of Ellen White about the teaching ministry of the Holy Spirit, this one continues to be a favorite in classes about Bible study methods. Why do you think this is so?

(7) See Appendix A.

### Part 2: How to Let Bible Study Be Interesting and Meaningful

Do you like agates? Maybe you collect them. If so, how do you get them? Perhaps you go to gift shops along the coast and sort through their many polished ones. Or perhaps you prefer to discover your own agates—in the rough—out where the sea gulls call and the salt air blows. On one of our rare agate-hunting expeditions my husband and I met a veteran agate-hunter. He looked as though he owned precious little by the ragged clothes he wore, but he knew better. I was amazed that he would trust those tattered trousers with the treasure he took from his pocket! There, in the palm of his weather-worn hand, he proudly displayed a beautiful discovery—an agate as big as a hen's egg, with *water* in the center. Wouldn't that be some discovery to make and share!

We can get our agates from a gift shop, discovered and polished for

us, or we can discover them for ourselves.

When was the last time you hiked to a peaceful and exhilarating retreat in nature? A couple of autumns ago, my husband and I hiked a ways at Wallowa Lake. On the mountainside we found a great patch of rocks—barren, gray-black rocks—combined with brilliant yellow-leaved trees. What a stark, yet alive and striking scene! We could not describe it well enough for you to imagine it. Not even a camera could capture it adequately. You would have had to *be there* in order to know what I'm talking about. A woman, known for the strength and patience of her love for her husband, recently explained to me that she probably was never more angry with her beloved husband than when she wanted to hike with him to experience the beauty of a falls, and he suggested she stay at the campsite and care for the children, and he would take the hike and return with a picture of the falls for her to see later.

Pictures, like polished agates, are a joy and delight, but what about *being there* and experiencing it for yourself?

Would you rather experience God's Word through the picture someone else takes for you or go to God's Word for yourself and let the peace and exhilaration of it be your own experience?

Would you rather find John 3:16 polished and placed in a sermon? Or would you rather discover this treasure for yourself in John 3, where the night shelters a teacher as he talks with the Teacher, and the waves of his uncertainties break on the shore of truth?

How do we let Bible study be interesting and meaningful? Let it be our own. Polished agates, photographs, and prepared sermons are all right, but our own discoveries, being there for ourselves, that's what really gets interesting and meaningful.

"Every soul is to receive life from God's word for himself. As we must eat for ourselves in order to receive nourishment, so we must receive the word for ourselves. We are not to obtain it merely through the medium of another's mind." Ellen G. White, *The Desire of Ages*, p. 390.

That makes sense, doesn't it? When was the last time you told your hungry husband, wife, or child that you would eat so they would no

longer be hungry? What if the preacher should announce at noon next week that you can stay on for another hour of sermon since someone has agreed to eat lunch for you? Would that satisfy your hunger? Ridiculous, isn't it? We must eat for ourselves.

"It is not enough to know what others have thought or learned about the Bible. Everyone must in the judgment give account of himself to God, and each should now learn for himself what is truth." Ellen G. White, *Education*, p. 188.

"He [Satan] leads the people to look to bishops, to pastors, to professors of theology, as their guides, instead of searching the Scriptures to learn their duty for themselves." Ellen G. White, *The Great Controversy*, p. 595.

"We must not trust to others to search the Scriptures for us. Some of our leading brethren have frequently taken their position on the wrong side. . . ." Ellen G. White, *Gospel Workers*, p. 303.

"God has given us His Word that we may become acquainted with its teachings, and know for ourselves what He requires of us. . . . It is the first and highest duty of every rational being to learn from the Scriptures what is truth, and then to walk in the light, and encourage others to follow his example. We should day by day study the Bible diligently, weighing every thought, and comparing scripture with scripture. With divine help, we are to form our opinions for ourselves, as we are to answer for ourselves before God." Ellen G. White, *The Great Controversy*, p. 598.

"The work which the Lord has laid out before me especially is to urge young and old, learned and unlearned, to search the Scriptures for themselves; to impress upon all that the study of God's word will expand the mind and strengthen every faculty, fitting the intellect to wrestle with problems of truth, deep and far-reaching." Ellen G. White, *Testimonies*, vol. 5, p. 686.

"Let none feel that because they are uneducated they cannot take part in the Lord's work. God has a work for you to do. He has given to every man his work. You can search the Scriptures for yourselves."  
Ellen G. White, *Testimonies*, vol. 6, p. 433.

Let Bible study be exciting. Let it be your *own*.

### **Part 3: Compare Notes About Last Assignment**

If there is time, each group member should read the best question he/she wrote about Psalm 23 (or whatever passage the group worked with). Just read the questions, don't give answers. After each (or as many as there is time for) has shared, then members of the group should consider if they realize or appreciate something about the passage that they did not know before they did this exercise and listened to each other's questions.

### **Part 4: Creative Bible Study**

Perhaps the most important thing to know about creative Bible study is that you do not have to be able to draw pictures or do fancy lettering in order to be able to do creative Bible study. Of course these skills don't hurt, but you don't have to have them. When creative Bible study is complemented by other methods of study, it can be a valuable way for anybody, artist or not, to grasp the meaning of a text, and also a great way to sum up understanding for one's self and for others. The idea is to find some kind of artistic or graphic expression for Bible truth. Bulletin boards at school, Sabbath school, or home are some of the ways to share such study with others. Instead of letting bulletin boards be a chore, let them be a way to understand the Bible better. There are, of course, many creative projects in addition to bulletin boards that offer an opportunity to do creative Bible study. The first step, no matter what form you are going to put it in, is to select the Bible truth you want to illustrate. Then think of ways to illustrate that idea. Then do it.

Here are a couple of samples:

- At a human potential workshop at Andrews University we

studied, among other things, about aims and motives. At the end of the intensive workshop, we were told to sum up the week's experience some way. We could write an essay or a song, do a wood carving or prepare a poster, write a poem or a story. Whatever we liked. I chose to buy a piece of poster board and cut out a large cross. On the vertical bar I wrote LOVE in outlined letters. Inside each letter, in rainbow colors, I wrote various elements of love. For this, I drew from various Bible passages, such as the Psalms and 1 Corinthians 13. The rainbow colors represented the harmonious blending of these elements, and LOVE written on the vertical bar expressed the meaning of the cross. On the horizontal bar of the cross, I wrote "His Motive" on the left, "Our Aim" on the right. The message, graphically portrayed, was, "LOVE, that many splendedored and beautifully balanced virtue, is God's motive and our aim."

- After Mount Saint Helens erupted, and while Mount Hood was still suspect, I was teaching creative Bible study to an Oregon camp meeting class. We discussed what creative project we would do if we had time and supplies. One participant, in this case also an artist, said she would draw a picture to illustrate part of Psalm 23. She said she would paint Mount Saint Helens on the left and Mount Hood on the right, and she would be walking through the valley with a white dove on her shoulder. Wouldn't that be a vivid way to portray the peace of God's presence in the valley of the shadow of death?

### "Using" the Bible:

In Chapter 7 of his book, *How to Study the Bible for Greatest Profit*, R. A. Torrey shows how to study the Bible "for practical usefulness in dealing with men." That is why this method is labeled "using" the Bible. There are three simple steps:

1. **Keep** a file or notebook with a separate card or sheet of paper for as many characteristics or classes of people as you choose. Here are some samples from Torrey's long list:

- The careless and indifferent
- Those who lack assurance
- The sorrowing
- The discouraged

Remember to include positive categories like the joyful, those who love, etc. This helps us to reinforce the good experiences we and our family and friends already have.

2. As you read the Bible **notice** what will reinforce positive experiences and also help you, your family, and friends with overcoming negative experiences. **Select** the most outstanding verses.
3. Then on the appropriate card or page, **write** the reference, the message of the verse and, if you like, a brief note about why you find that particularly helpful.

A friend who frequently calls on people in the hospital said he had a wonderful time reading the Bible through just looking for ideas and promises to help sick and injured people. He coded the margin of his Bible so he could quickly relocate these special verses when he was talking with people. This is another way of studying the Bible for practical usefulness in dealing with men and women.

### Part 5: Assignment

For next week, **select** one or more of the following:

1. **Be prepared** to describe a creative Bible study project you would do if you had the time and supplies.
2. **Prepare** a creative Bible study project and show it to the class.
3. (a) **Read** Ephesians looking for verses that you feel would be especially helpful for you, a friend, or family member.  
 (b) **Record** each verse on a card or notebook page that's been labeled as R. A. Torrey suggests. As you do this, make any brief



notations that may help you later to know why you selected this verse or how you plan to use it.

(c) **Be prepared** to discuss with the group the potential and limitations of this method of study.

## Lesson 3

# Using a Concordance; Thinking and Meditating

### Part 1: Teaching Ministry of the Holy Spirit

"What no eye has seen, nor ear heard, nor the human heart conceived, what God has prepared for those who love Him,' these things God has revealed to us through the Spirit." 1 Corinthians 2:9, 10, NRSV.

"But the Holy Spirit can strengthen our spiritual eyesight, enabling us to see what our natural eyes cannot see, or our ears hear, or our minds comprehend. By the Spirit which searches all things, even the deep things of God, have been revealed precious truths which cannot be described by pen or voice." Ellen G. White, *Sons and Daughters of God*, p. 34.

Three things come to my mind as I read that tremendous passage from 1 Corinthians and this commentary in *Sons and Daughters of God*.

1. Think what it means to have God help us "see" what our eyes, ears, and unaided minds cannot grasp. When we study the Bible with the Holy Spirit as our Teacher, we can expect the results to be better than we could have imagined before we began. We know how to think up some pretty good things. But God has far better ones in mind. That's a big promise.

Have you ever known a teacher who worked hard preparing for class, and he knew his subject, but he wasn't good at getting it across? Everybody knew he got straight A's in graduate school, but few students knew what he was talking about in the classroom? Or, have you ever known a teacher who was a special person and knew just how

to talk to the students? She was kind and thoughtful, but she didn't really know her subject, and therefore you didn't learn much from her that you didn't know before you went to class?

Teachers today suffer from both those extremes. But it isn't so with our Teacher, the Holy Spirit, who is an informed *and* skilled Teacher! The Spirit searches everything, even the depths of God. No one comprehends the thought of God except the Spirit of God (1 Corinthians 2:10, 11). And in addition, the Spirit knows just how to talk to us, the students. Think of it. The Spirit has the content—beyond our imagination—and the skill of communicating it. With a Teacher like that, we learn more than we would have imagined possible.

2. Because this wonderful promise from 1 Corinthians 2:9, 10 is true, I must be prepared for a disappointment. That sounds like a contradiction, doesn't it? Let me explain. The Spirit reveals to me—the Bible student—precious truths that cannot be described by pen or voice. I could not have thought them up. No one but God could have described them to me, and (here's the disappointment) neither can I expect to be able to put them in words—written or spoken. Haven't you wished you *could* describe what the Spirit revealed to you? After preparing a Sabbath school lesson or a devotional talk, have you ever been disappointed at how it "came across"? When the thoughts were so rich, and your own experience so meaningful as you studied, doesn't it *seem* like it ought to appeal to your listeners the way it appealed to you?! Yet, you should not expect to be able to describe what you learn from your Teacher.

3. That brings up the third point. The disappointment we feel when we realize we can't describe the wonderful things God teaches us turns to encouragement again as we realize that the Spirit wants to be the private Tutor of *every* Bible student. As long as the Holy Spirit is present with every Bible student—as God has promised—we don't *have* to be able to relay the instruction with the impact and meaning with which God gave it to us. That doesn't mean God does not use us. God has been relaying messages through humans since the beginning. For example, Jesus said, "Whoever welcomes you [disciples] welcomes me, and whoever welcomes me welcomes the one who sent me" (Matthew 10:40, NRSV).

Yes, God does have a relay system. But that system is not intended to separate us from God. Rather, it is intended to bring us closer to God.

Imagine that system for a minute: Long ago God gave the message to the Bible writers. Then each week your pastor studies the Bible and comes to church with a message for you. So the message is relayed from God to the prophet to your pastor to you. Why is the pastor in that chain? Is it because the pastor is supposed to study the Bible for you, making sure that you "get it straight"? Or is the pastor an incentive, an example, given so that you too might experience the personal teaching ministry of the Holy Spirit? Remember, while studying your pastor will hear some things that only God can explain, and if you would like to understand the same things, you will need the same Teacher.

So why a sermon at all? Mainly to inspire each listener to seek the personal teaching ministry of the Holy Spirit. The pastor cannot tell you all that God revealed, and your pastor cannot tell it the *way* God told it. But the pastor can tell about what God told, and how. The pastor can share the experience of the Word *so that* you, the listener, will also seek that same teaching ministry of the Holy Spirit. So you see, the Sabbath sermon is not so much to inform us. By sending pastors, God draws us into an experience of the personalized teaching ministry of the Holy Spirit.

## **Part 2: Ways to Let Bible Study Be What It Can Be**

Perhaps it is a good idea to face something squarely now, before we go on to more lessons. Bible study is not *all* a matter of knowing the right Teacher. In simple, direct words: Bible study is also hard work.

Now, we need to think about that a little. We need to see if that is "fair" or "right." And we need to see what hard work has to do with letting Bible study be interesting or meaningful.

When we connect Bible study with hard work, it is possible to think, "That sounds like righteousness by works," and we know *that* is anathema. So how can Bible study be hard work?

"For the mind and the soul, as well as for the body, it is God's law that strength is acquired by effort. It is exercise that develops. In harmony

with this law, God has provided in His word the means for mental and spiritual development." *Education*, p. 123.

"God does not work miracles where He has provided means by which the work may be accomplished. . . . The means for an end must be employed, if the desired results are to be obtained. Those who make no decided efforts themselves, are not working in harmony with the laws of God." Ellen G. White, *Fundamentals of Christian Education*, pp. 123-124.

Do you jog? Maybe you walk instead, or swim. However you exercise, do you expect to be physically stronger because you do it? Have you found that it is God's law that strength is acquired by effort? You probably have. If so, does that mean you are legalistic?

If God made us physically so that we are stronger when we exercise, and that's not legalistic, do you think He also could have made us spiritually so that we are stronger if we exercise without *that* being legalistic?

We are told in Romans 2:6 that God will repay "according to each one's deeds [or works]," and although that is not talking about the work involved in Bible study, it is true that in Bible study God also rewards according to our works. The more we put into it, the more we will get out of it. "You reap whatever you sow" (Galatians 6:7).

There are more than 90 references in 27 of Ellen White's publications to the kind of searching, effort, and investigation involved in successful Bible study. Painstaking, earnest, determined, persevering, patient, careful, diligent, intense, thorough, close, taxing, frank, thoughtful, persistent are the words she used to describe the search for truth.

It is important for each of us to remember, of course, that the effort required for successful Bible study is the effort we individually have to give. The treasure in God's Word may be found by every soul who will give all (Ellen G. White, *Christ's Object Lessons*, p. 114). That assurance is inclusive and fair. It is all the powers of *my* mind, not St. Paul's, Einstein's, or Ellen White's, that I must use when I study the Bible. That is both hard enough and fair enough.

Now, how does knowing Bible study is hard work help me let Bible study be a rich, meaningful experience? Wouldn't we be more interested

in Bible study if it weren't hard work? If we could just take it easy when we study the Bible, wouldn't that make it more meaningful for us? Some do have meaningful experiences when they are just taking it easy. But there are many others who find that really meaningful experiences take a lot of effort. Bible study is one of those kinds of experiences. It helps us let Bible study be interesting and meaningful when we recognize it for what it is—hard work that is more than worth it.

### **Part 3: Comparing Last Assignment**

Take time to share your creative Bible study projects. Also, each group member who did the second part of the assignment can share one favorite thought from Ephesians and tell what kind of person, or in what kind of circumstance, this thought would help the most.

### **Part 4: Using a Concordance**

"A concordance is a place to find Bible verses something like a telephone book is a place to find telephone numbers. Neither telephone directories nor concordances are meant to be read through. And we would hardly turn to a telephone book for an explanation of how our friends are thinking nor for instruction in how to develop skills. In the telephone directory we only find a reference to our friends and to the local community college where we can go for instruction. Likewise, a concordance refers us on to the friendship and instruction in the Bible."

Is that how you understand a concordance? Or do you find some part of that description inadequate? Actually, I wrote that description to illustrate a common, but inadequate, understanding of a concordance. The problem is, the description only accounts for the first of the following uses of a concordance:

1. To find Bible passages.
2. To become acquainted with Hebrew and Greek words.
3. To obtain additional understanding of Bible writers and their message.

It is true that a concordance is a place to find Bible passages. We usually do this by remembering that we read about, let's say, a leopard changing its spots. And we want to find that verse. So we look up

"leopard" and glance through the eight listings for leopard. None mention a leopard's spots, but the listing, "Jer. 13:23—Can the Ethiopian change . . . skin, or the leo" sounds like the first phrase of what we are after, so we turn to the verse. Sure enough, we find the whole sentence: "Can Ethiopians change their skin or leopards their spots?" If we are trying to locate a verse that does not have any unique or infrequently-used words in it, then it takes a little longer to locate the verse. For example, "The sabbath was made for man, not man for the sabbath" (Mark 2:27) contains no uncommon word. So we pick the word we think will be listed the least, "sabbath," and look it up. But if we don't know which book of the Bible it is in, we will have to read quite a few listings in the concordance, especially if we are using the big analytical one that gives every listing in the Bible for each word. If we use a smaller, abridged concordance, like Cruden's, then we may not find the verse unless it is a common one, as Mark 2:27 is. The concordance *is* a verse finder. But, as with using a dictionary, it pays to be on the track (like knowing the general area of the Bible where the verse you want is located) before you try to use it.

What about the other uses of a concordance, the ones that were not covered in my beginning description of a concordance? A Bible student who doesn't even know Hebrew or Greek can use a concordance to become acquainted with the original language of the Bible. Take a sample, like "prayer." Turn to the noun form of "prayer" in Young's *Analytical Concordance of the Bible*. It may surprise you to discover the following variety of original Hebrew and Greek words for this single English word:

**Hebrew:**       lachash  
                       sichah, siach  
                       tephillah

**Greek:**         deesis  
                       enteuxis  
                       euche  
                       proseuche

Seven different words all come out "prayer" in English. Discovering this helps us realize that the experience of prayer must have several dimensions. The abbreviated definition of each of these words that is included in the analytical concordance gives us the following additional insights:

*Whisper, meditation, song of praise, beseeching, supplication, intercession, wish, pouring out*

(A copy of "prayer" listings from Young's concordance—Supplement A at chapter's end— illustrates these listings.)

Using the concordance this second way produces more insights than using it to locate missing verses.

But the third way is better still. Contrary to my definition, we *can* turn to a concordance to find spiritual instruction and to find how our friends, the Bible authors, felt. For example, a while back I read in the Sabbath school quarterly, "He [the Holy Spirit] alone can effect a transformation of our characters, because He can live within us." This, and a similar statement in the same lesson, raised several questions. I turned to my Walker's concordance and looked up the phrase "in you." In about a fifth of a small page of reading I discovered that "God," "Jesus," "grace," "words," and "love" may be "in us," as well as the Holy Spirit. Reflecting on a concordance discovery like this can profoundly influence one's concept of God and how God relates to us.

Some time ago I read an article by Krister Stendahl, dean of Harvard Divinity School. He suggested that Paul did not have an introspective, guilty conscience. In support of this radical break with Pauline students, like Martin Luther, Stendahl pointed out that Paul does not talk like a man with a guilty conscience. For instance, Stendahl said, Paul seldom used the words "forgive" or "forgiveness."

I had never thought of that. I turned to my Young's concordance to check out Dr. Stendahl. By reading little more than a single column in this exhaustive concordance, I discovered there are 104 references to "forgive," "forgiven," "forgiveness," and "forgiving" in the Bible. Of this total, 43 are from the Old Testament, 48 from non-Pauline New



Testament books, and only 13 from Paul.

In contrast to his infrequent references to forgiveness, Paul used "faith" (Greek "pistis") 135 times, and that does not even count the 31 times "faith" is used in Hebrews. The balance of the New Testament used "faith" 67 times. These concordance discoveries suggest that our friend Paul was thinking quite a lot more about faith than forgiveness, and that he had a positive, God-centered experience rather than an introspective, essentially self-centered experience.

As this introduction to the use of a concordance suggests, a concordance can be used several ways. It is both a basic and an interesting tool, and knowing how to use it is such an important Bible study skill.

### **Thinking or Meditating**

The second Bible study skill we want to introduce in this lesson is thinking, or meditating.

Sandy was an underprivileged young mother of three whose life was a sad ordeal. She wished she were free like her Christian friends, and I wanted her to be free and happy too. I think my hopes were highest for Sandy when she asked questions like she did one Sabbath as I took her home from church. While we waited to thread our way into the stream of traffic on Ninth Street, she said, "Why don't people just check out a Bible from the library and then read and return it, like they do other books?" Have you ever wondered that?

How is it that the central theme of the Bible—the redeeming love of God—can bear the most concentrated study, continually unfold throughout eternity, and yet never be fully explored or exhausted? Whether or not we can answer this question or Sandy's, we can at least know that the Bible challenges us to an eternity of careful thought; the story of Jesus challenges us to the most vigorous and intense contemplation.

Let's think about thinking for a bit. Notice how often the word "think," or a synonym for it, appears in the following quotation:

"We should *meditate* upon the Scriptures, *thinking* soberly and candidly upon the things that pertain to our eternal salvation. The infinite mercy

and love of Jesus, the sacrifice made in our behalf, call for most serious and solemn *reflection*. We should  *dwell upon*  the character of our dear Redeemer and Intercessor. We should  *seek to comprehend*  the meaning of the plan of salvation. We should  *meditate upon*  the mission of Him who came to save His people from their sins. By  *constantly contemplating*  heavenly themes, our faith and love will grow stronger."  *Sons and Daughters of God* , p. 109. (Emphasis supplied)

Meditate, think, reflect, dwell upon, seek to comprehend, constantly contemplate—why? So "our faith and love will grow stronger." Learning to meditate, think, reflect, dwell upon, seek to comprehend, and constantly contemplate is a lifelong adventure. This m-t-r-du-sc-cc (!) adventure leads us in faith and love on to greater faith and love. It's a very simple and infinitely powerful journey and outcome.

As you follow the m-t-r-du-sc-cc adventure, ask yourself if your faith and love are increasing. Or maybe you only need to gently notice. Faith and love are strong as the rock of Gibraltar, but they are also like a flower unfolding. Neither the rock of Gibraltar nor a flower unfolding needs our rough handling. Just keep in your mind and heart that you are doing what you're doing, you are being what you're being, because of faith and love.

With that in mind, there is ever so much you can do to increase your capacity for m-t-r-du-sc-cc. For example, you can notice how these call for "continued attention." An attentive person is a well-synchronized receiver and transmitter, functioning at top efficiency. Like a lithe leopard poised for action at the right moment, the person who meditates is both patient to wait for and ready to claim the insights that come to the contemplative.

Meditating on the Bible has to do with gathering from it all the information and impressions we can, then comparing them and trying them, saving them and retrying them—patiently, persistently, and effectively.

"My soul is feasted as with marrow and fat, and my mouth praises thee with joyful lips, when I think of thee upon my bed, and meditate on thee in the watches of the night" (Psalm 63:5, 6).

Meditation often happens after the Bible is closed and the mind continues to ponder the words printed there. It is a means of keeping company with God in the darkness, or in the busyness of a day's duties.

Describing the journey of the magi, Ellen White says, "It was necessary to journey by night in order to keep the star in view; but the travelers beguiled the hours by repeating traditional sayings and prophetic utterances concerning the One they sought" (*The Desire of Ages*, p. 60).

Incidentally, when I think about the psalmist meditating in the watches of the night and the wise men "beguiling the dark hours" by the thoughts they were able to repeat, I am convinced that it is worthwhile to memorize Scripture. That way we will have the Bible with us anywhere, anytime, so we can ponder it.

Two of the thinking skills that are a part of meditation are analysis and synthesis. When a seamstress purchases a length of fabric, it does not serve as a dress or shirt until it has been cut out and then sewn together into a shape and size to fit the wearer.

When a student purchases a Bible, it does not serve as faith or a way of life until it has been analyzed and then synthesized (e.g. taken apart and put together again) to fit the mind of the student. Of course, just as the wool or cotton in a shirt is the same wool or cotton that was on the bolt, only now suited to the wearer's needs, so the analyzed and synthesized truth from the Bible is the same truth that was in the Bible, only now suited to the mind of the student.

Analysis is detailed study of the parts, word by word or phrase by phrase. Synthesis is a matter of putting the parts together again, into outlines of topics or chapters, for instance. The recurring interplay of these two thinking skills creates a kind of pulse beat that contributes to meditation.

**Part 5: Assignment**

1. **Get acquainted** with Young's or Strong's analytical concordance to the Bible. If you don't have one, ask a friend if you may borrow his/hers. Perhaps your pastor can help you. Maybe the church, school, or public library will have one you can use.
2. **Think** of a couple of Bible ideas that you can't find on your own in the Bible. Then **select** the most unique word from that thought and look for it in the concordance. Read the Bible verse to be sure it is the one you are looking for.
3. What are the Hebrew and Greek words for "mercy"? What meanings do you find for these words in the concordance?
4. Who talks more about love (or charity)—Paul or John the Beloved? Count the listings for both "charity" and "love" in the writings of each. Does that suggest anything to you about Paul that you may not have thought about before?
5. Where is the word "boast" or "boasting" used most frequently? As you browse through the concordance, can you find other words that seem to be used in one or two books much more than in any other books? Do you find some words that occur frequently in the New Testament but not in the Old Testament, or vice versa? What about "soul" or "faith," for instance? Does this help you discover the emphasis within books or sections of Scripture?
6. Where is Moses mentioned in the Bible? Does noticing the concordance references for Moses suggest anything about Moses or his influence that you did not realize before?
7. Think of some theological words like "millennium" or "trinity." Where and how are these used in the Bible?
8. **Select** a Scripture passage (six to 10 verses would be good). Read it through several times carefully, making sure you are well acquainted with the main thoughts from it. Then let that select passage be your companion in a special way this week. If you have difficulty sleeping, think about it then. If you are doing manual labor that does not demand careful thought, meditate on it then. What are the parts of that passage? What do they suggest?

Does each part help to make the other parts clearer? After "taking the passage apart," put it together again. How would you sum up all the verses in just a sentence? As you keep company with the passage through the week, ask all the questions you can about it. Become inseparably involved with it so that you are really into the passage and the passage really into you.

**Note:** If you are not able to do the whole assignment, select one or two from (1) through (7), then be sure to do (8).

Supplement A, Chapter 3  
From Analytical  
Concordance to the Bible,  
by Robert Young, pp. 767, 768.

**PRAYER —**

1. *A whisper*, שָׁשׁ *lakash*.  
Isa 26. 16 poured out a prayer (when) thy chast-n.
2. *Meditation*, שָׁחָה, שָׁחָה *sichah, siach*.  
Job 15. 4 Yea, thou restrainest prayer before God  
Psa 64. 1 Hear my voice, O God, in my prayer, *pres.*
3. *Prayer, song of praise*, תְּפִלָּה *tephillah*.  
2 Sa. 7. 27 hath found in his heart to pray this pra.  
1 Ki. 8. 25 Yet have thou respect unto the prayer of  
8. 28 to the prayer which thy servant prayeth  
8. 29 the prayer which thy servant shall make  
8. 33 What prayer and supplication soever be  
8. 45, 49 their prayer and their supplication  
3. 54 praying all this prayer and supplication  
59. 1 heard thy prayer and thy supplication  
2 Ki. 19. 4 lift up (thy) prayer for the remnant that  
20. 5 I have heard thy prayer, I have seen thy  
2 Ch. 6. 19 Have respect therefore to the prayer of  
6. 19, 20 the prayer which thy servant prayeth  
6. 29 what prayer (or) what supplication soever  
6. 35, 36 their prayer and their supplication  
6. 40 the prayer (that is made) in this place  
7. 17 I have heard thy prayer, and have chosen  
7. 25 the prayer (that is made) in this place  
10. 27 their prayer came (up) to his holy dwell.  
13. 28 his prayer into his God, and the words of  
13. 29 His prayer also, and (how God) was enr.  
Neh. 1. 5 thou mayest hear the prayer of thy arr.  
1. 11 the prayer of thy servant, and to the pra.  
11. 15 principal to begin the thanksgiving in p.  
Job 16. 17 Not in justice . . . aso my prayer (is) pure  
Psa 4. 1 have mercy upon me, and hear my prayer  
5. 5 hear . . . the LORD will receive my prayer  
17. *title*. A prayer of David. Hear the right  
17. 1 give ear unto my prayer, (that goeth) not  
15. 23 my prayer returned into mine own bosom  
39. 12 Hear my prayer, O LORD, and give ear u.  
42. 1 (and) my prayer unto the God of my life  
54. 2 Hear my prayer, O God; give ear to the  
55. 1 Give ear to my prayer, O God; and hide  
61. 1 Hear my cry, O God, attend unto my pr.  
65. 2 thou that hearest prayer, unto thee shall  
66. 19 he hath attended to the voice of my pra  
66. 20 which hath not turned away my prayer  
69. 13 as for me, my prayer (is) unto thee, O L.  
72. 20 The prayers of David the son of Jesse  
80. 4 be angry against the prayer of thy people  
84. 2 hear my prayer: give ear, O God of Jacob  
85. *title*. A prayer of David. Bow down thine  
86. 6 Give ear, O LORD, unto my prayer; and  
88. 2 Let my prayer come before thee: in mine  
88. 13 in . . . morningshall my prayer prevent thee  
90. *title*. A prayer of Moses the man of God. L.

- 100 *Psalm*. A prayer of the afflicted, when he is oppressed.
102. 1 Hear my prayer, O LORD, and let my cry  
 102. 17 He will regard the prayer. their prayer  
 100. 4 adversaries: but I (give myself unto) pra  
 109. 7 condemned; and let his prayer become  
 141. 2 Let my prayer be set forth before thee (as)  
 141. 5 yet my prayer also. in their calamities  
 142 *Psalm*. David. A prayer when he was in the c.
143. 1 Hear my prayer, O LORD, give ear to my  
**Prov** 15. 8 the prayer of the upright (is) his delight  
 15. 09 he heareth the prayer of the righteous  
 28. 5 He that turneth away. even his prayer
- Isa** 1. 15 when ye make many prayers. I will not  
 37. 4 lift up (thy) prayer for the remnant that  
 38. 5 I have heard thy prayer. I have seen thy  
 56. 7 make them joyful in my house of prayer  
 56. 7 shall be called an house of prayer for all
- Jer** 7. 10 neither lift up cry nor prayer for them  
 11. 14 neither lift up a cry or prayer for them
- Eze** 3. 8 when I cry. he shutteth out my prayer  
 2. 44 that (our) prayer should not pass through
- Dan** 9. 3 to seek by prayer and supplication, with  
 9. 17 hear the prayer of thy servant, and his a.  
 9. 21 while I (was) speaking in prayer, even
- Jon** 2. 7 my prayer came in unto thee, into thine
- Hab** 3. 1 A prayer of Habakkuk the prophet upon
- 4. Beseeching, prayer, supplication, βήσων δεήσις.**
- Luke** 1. 13 thy prayer is heard: and thy wife Elsa  
 2. 37 with fastings and prayers night and day  
 4. 31 make prayers and likewise (the disciples)
- Rom** 10. 1 my heart's desire and prayer to God for I  
**1 Co.** 1. 11 Ye also helping together by prayer for us  
 9. 14 by their prayer for you, which long after
- Phi.** 1. 4 Always in every prayer of mine for you all  
 1. 19 turn to my salvation through your prayer  
**1 Th.** 1. 3 have remembrance of thee in my prayers  
**Heb.** 5. 7 when he had offered up prayers and suppl.  
**Jas.** 5. 16 The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous  
**1 Pt.** 3. 12 his ears (are open) unto their prayers: but
- 5. Intercession, prayer, ἐκρωσῆς ἀντιπροσευχῆς.**
- 1 Th.** 4. 5 sanctified by the word of God and prayer
- 6. A wish, supplication, ἐὶς ἡ ἐσχῆ.**
- Jas.** 5. 15 the prayer of faith shall save the sick
- 7. A prayer, pouring out, προσευχῆ προσευχῆ.**
- Matth** 17. 01 (goeth not out: but by prayer and fasting)  
 21. 13 house shall be called the house of prayer  
 21. 22 whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believ
- Mark** 9. 29 by nothing but by prayer and fasting  
 11. 17 called of all nations the house of prayer
- Luke** 6. 12 and continued all night in prayer to God  
 19. 46 My house is the house of prayer: but ye  
 22. 45 when he rose up from prayer, and was c.
- Acts** 1. 14 with one accord in prayer and supplication  
 2. 42 and in breaking of bread, and in prayers  
 2. 4 into the temple at the hour of prayer  
 6. 4 will give ourselves continually to prayer  
 10. 4 Thy prayers and thine alms are come up  
 10. 31 thy prayer is heard, and thine alms are  
 12. 5 prayer was made without ceasing of the  
 16. 11 river side, where prayer was wont to be  
 26. 16 as we went to prayer, a certain daniel
- Rom.** 1. 9 make mention of you always in my pray

- Rom** 12. 12 patient. . . continuing instant in prayer  
 15. 31 strive together with me in (your) prayers  
**1 Co.** 7. 5 may give yourselves to fasting and prayer  
**Eph.** 1. 16 making mention of you in my prayers  
 6. 18 all prayer and supplication in the spirit  
**Phil.** 4. 5 prayer and supplication with thanksgiving  
**Col.** 4. 2 Continue in prayer, and watch in the same  
 4. 12 labouring fervently for you in prayers  
**1 Th.** 1. 2 making mention of you in our prayers  
**1 Ti.** 2. 1 prayers, intercessions, (and) giving of tha.  
 5. 5 supplications and prayers night and day  
**Phm.** 4 making mention of thee . . . in my prayers  
 22 trust that through your prayers I shall  
**1 Pe.** 3. 7 dwell . . . that your prayers be not hindered  
 4. 7 be ye therefore sober . . . watch unto prayer  
**Rev.** 5. 8 colours, which are the prayers of saints  
 8. 3 should offer (it) with the prayers of all a.  
 8. 4 (which came) with the prayers of the sai.

**PRAYER, to make --**

1. *To smooth down, deprecate, שָׁבַע אַחֲרָי, 3.*  
**Das.** 9. 13 made we not our prayer before the LORD
2. *To interced, make supplication, שָׁבַע אַחֲרָי, 5.*  
**Job** 22. 27 Thou shalt make thy prayer unto him, and
3. *To judge self, pray habitually, שָׁבַע יְמִינִי, 7.*  
**1 Ki.** 8. 29 the prayer which thy servant shall make  
**Neh.** 4. 5 we made our prayer unto our God, and  
**Psa.** 72. 15 prayer . . . shall be made for him continually
4. *To pray earnestly, pour out to, προσεύχουαι pros.*  
**Matt** 23. 14 [for a pretence make long prayer: there.]  
**Mark** 12. 40 for a pretence make long prayers: these  
**Luke** 20. 47 Which . . . to a show make long prayers, the



## Lesson 4

# Participating

## (Part 1 of Experiential Study)

### Part 1: Teaching Ministry of the Holy Spirit

"By the aid of the Holy Spirit, which is promised to all who seek it in sincerity, every man may understand these truths [of redemption] for himself." *The Great Controversy*, pp. 526-527.

The Holy Spirit is the teacher of every Bible student—individually. We can't overemphasize this wonderfully reassuring fact. The Spirit is your teacher. The Spirit is my teacher. The Holy Spirit is the teacher of each one of us—personally.

How is it that we are enabled to understand the truths of redemption? Because we ask the right pastor to explain them? Because we read the right set of lessons or hear the right sermon or tape? No. We understand God's redemption because God helps us understand. In the process the Holy Spirit, as our Teacher, may lead us to the right pastor, right lessons, right sermon, or right tape. But we, the students, need to remember that the Holy Spirit is our reference point, our Guide and Teacher. God is the one to whom we address our questions. And we should thank God when answers are provided, whether those answers come directly from the Spirit or indirectly from God through a person, printed source, or some other way.

God's personalized help is provided on just one condition. What is that? That we have a certain IQ? That we feel a certain way about it? No. It is provided on the simple, searching condition that we sincerely seek God's help. God asks, "Do you want help?" And when we each say, "Yes, I really do," that assures us of God's help. Could God be more generous? More helpful?

## Part 2: How to Let Bible Study Be What It Can Be

In Part 2 of Lesson 3 we saw that we can expect Bible study to involve hard work—not impossibly hard work, just the "fair-enough" kind of hard work that means "I'm giving it all I've got," like when I go jogging or do some other physical exercise. The fact that I am only expected to give it what I not others, have to give suggests something else about the Bible that we need to remember: The Bible is adaptable. It contains truths big enough to challenge an Einstein, and it also contains truths simple enough for me to grasp. It is plain enough and profound enough that I don't have to be either defeated or bored by it.

Think how plain and simple the Bible is and how suited it is to the common person:

"The infinite truths of salvation are stated so plainly that finite beings who desire to know the truth cannot fail to understand." Ellen G. White, *Counsels to Parents, Teachers and Students*, p. 438.

"Men of humble acquirements, possessing but limited capabilities and opportunities to become conversant in the Scriptures, find in the living oracles comfort, guidance, counsel, and the plan of salvation as clear as a sunbeam." Ellen G. White, *Selected Messages*, vol. 1, p. 18.

Think how grand and profound the Bible is and how suited it is to the exceptional person:

"If the individual is possessed of large talents of mental powers, he will find in the oracles of God treasures of truth, beautiful and valuable, which he can appropriate. He will also find difficulties, and secrets and wonders which will give him the highest satisfaction to study during a long lifetime, and yet there is an infinity beyond." Ellen G. White as cited in *The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, Francis D. Nichol, ed., vol. 7, p. 945.

It is impossible for any human mind to exhaust even one truth or promise of the Bible." *Education*, p. 171.

Since the Bible is both *plain* and *profound*, it follows that it is adaptable. "The Bible unfolds truth with a simplicity and a *perfect adaptation* to the needs and longings of the human heart." Ellen G. White, *Steps to Christ*, p. 107 (emphasis supplied).

We can let Bible study be what it is meant to be when we realize how perfectly it is suited to our needs and longings, no matter if we are average or exceptional. Aren't experiences meaningful and interesting to you when you *know* they are going to "suit you to a T"? That's the way it is with the Bible; it is perfectly adaptable to *your* needs and longings.

### **Part 3: Compare Last Assignment**

Review the questions in Part 5 of Lesson 3 and compare your answers. How did this assignment help you? What insights did it give you? Share with each other what you found as you got acquainted with the Young's and Strong's analytical concordances. Was the meditating a meaningful experience? Do you have additional suggestions for the class about how to use a concordance and how to think about the Bible?

### **Part 4: Participation**

Participation has to do with "living" a story as we read it. When you read a story, don't you go where the people in the story go and see what they look at? Can't you feel the atmosphere and even imagine the looks on their faces and tones in their voices? That's what I mean by "participating." When we hear or read stories like those in *Reader's Digest*, participating comes naturally. (At least it did when we were children!) Although, for a couple of reasons, we don't always get as enthusiastically or effectively involved in Bible stories as we do in *Reader's Digest* stories. For one thing, we feel Bible stories are already familiar, and we already know what's going to happen. It is true that we may know how the story comes out, but we don't know all there is to learn from the story yet. The reason for living Bible stories has more to do with getting into the truth they reveal than it does with getting into the plot for the

sake of finding out what happens at the end of the story. When we understand that, familiarity breeds interest, not contempt.

In addition to being familiar, Bible stories are not always spelled out in as great detail as other stories. So, the most helpful kind of participation in Bible study calls for the ability to put sanctified imagination to work filling in some of the details. It is a matter of finishing the story as well as living it. "Uncle Arthur" Maxwell gives examples of this kind of participation in a small book titled *How to Read the Bible*. Following (found on p. 16) is one of his examples:

"As one reads this (Luke 23:50-53) for the first time it appears to be just a brief report of what happened to the body of Jesus immediately after the crucifixion. But stop a moment. Don't rush by so fast! Read it again. Then again.

"See! A ladder has been placed against the cross. An old man is climbing it, while another waits anxiously below. Now the man on the ladder is drawing out the nails that held Jesus to the cross. But he needs help. Another ladder is raised. The second old man climbs it. Then together, very gently, they lower the body to the ground, perhaps with the limp arms of the Master around their necks as though He were saying to them, 'Thank you, friends, for coming; thank you for helping Me.' What a beautiful thought it is that when His own special friends had forsaken Him and fled, these two old men, 'secret disciples,' came to His aid! Even more thrilling is the sudden realization that though someone who hated Jesus drove in the nails, someone who loved Him pulled them out!"

There is another example of participation in the book, *How to Search the Scriptures*. The authors, Lloyd M. Perry and Robert D. Culver, tell on pp. 103-104 the present-day Bible study practices of 17 people in a variety of professions, from grocery company executive to lawyer. One is an insurance company director who finds that seeing and sharing Bible incidents is infinitely worthwhile. He asks himself, "If I had been on the scene, what would my reactions have been to that which I was

observing?" Then he gives an example:

"The synagogue incident of Mark 3 provides an illustration of my method of Bible study.

"Forgetting that I am a student, I become a participating observer. I stand in the synagogue—Jesus in the center—the man with the withered hand in the crowd.

"All the accumulated testimony of the centuries to the power of Jesus Christ, which is our heritage and inheritance, is at that moment in the synagogue, still future.

"Standing by Christ and looking at the man's paralysis, I protest the command, 'Stretch forth thine hand.' Jesus is mocking his impotence. It is impossible and therefore unreasonable. But I can say that only while my eyes are fastened on the man's paralysis.

"Moving to the side of the cripple I can almost feel the struggle in the helpless man's mind. I can see him look into the eyes of Christ and say, I can't . . . I can't . . . I CAN!! There it is—whole as the other.'

*"For a moment I become the man with the paralysis. How many times I have attempted to overcome my disability—a spiritual paralysis. All the effort has ended in heart-sickening failure. But I cannot look into His eyes, and hear His voice and not say, 'I will,' even though all the devils in hell thunder in my ears, 'You cannot.'"*

Participation has to do with getting into the story. This will, of course, help us discover "what happened." But more important, this will put us in touch with the truth revealed in that happening.

### **Experiential Bible Study—Baughman**

Experiential Bible study complements the skill of participation nicely. Experiential study has to do with relating what you read in the

Bible, whether story or not, to your personal experience, and letting that encounter produce good fruits in your experience. You could say that participation is the skill that makes the Bible vivid to you, and experiential study is the skill that makes it apply to you.

Experiential study has more to do with the inward emphasis than with the outward emphasis (as in the "using the Bible" skill) or the upward emphasis (as in asking the question, "What does this tell me about God?"). This is all right as long as this inward emphasis is never at the expense of the upward or the outward. While we talk about experiential study, we need to keep in mind what Lawrence Richards said in his book, *Creative Bible Study*: "The question always is this: 'Is God trustworthy?' Not, 'Is my faith strong?'" Effective experiential study confirms my belief that God is trustworthy. It does not cause me to focus on my faith rather than on God.

In this lesson and the next we want to look at three approaches to this kind of study.

Ray Baughman, in his book *Creative Bible Study Methods*, introduces on p. 14 an elementary version of experiential study in the form of "Heart Check Bible Study." (See Supplement A to this lesson.) At the top, right-hand section of the form, record the passage you are studying. Ten to 15 verses is a good length. Then, as you read through the passage, make a dot for each verse on the graph at the left and write a verse number beside it. If you are studying 1 Thess. 1:1-10, for instance, you will have one dot on the graph and the number "1" beside it in the column headed "verse," on the first line. On the second line you will have one dot and the number "2" beside it, and so forth through the last line needed for your passage (in this case line 10). There are seven positions from left to right on the graph. Your dot indicates how each verse moved your heart. You can decide where to place the dot by asking the question, How does this verse speak to me? If you have a negative response, place your dot to the left under the minus sign. If you respond positively, place your dot to the right under the plus sign.

For the second step complete the center section headed "Diagnosis and Observations." The purpose here is to answer the question, Why—or how did, or didn't—this verse speak to my heart? You see, it is one

thing to know that a verse did not move you or that it had a negative effect on you, and it is another thing to know why that was so. For each verse write a brief explanation. It may be that you prefer to explain only the most extreme verses. However you go about it, the second part is an important step in understanding your own response to what you have read. For example, it may be that your negative feelings about a verse indicate a misunderstanding or distrust of God. By completing the center part of the form you help yourself account for that negative feeling which may otherwise remain vague and unexplained.

Having accounted for the minuses and pluses, you are ready to do the final of the three steps. At the bottom is a space for a prescription. The question here is, what are you going to do about what you discovered in the first two steps? There are ways to maintain the positive and reduce the negative responses, and this prescription section is the place to summarize which of those ways you will use.

The Heart Check Bible Study form is kind of a Bible game, something children enjoy. Yet the questions one asks, in the process of doing it, are appropriate for adult Bible students (experienced or not) to ask any time they study.

### **Experiential Bible Study—Drakeford**

A sample chapter from John W. Drakeford's book, *Experiential Bible Study*, is also included with this lesson (Supplement B). By looking at that chapter as you read on here, you can learn how that author teaches experiential Bible study. His is a group Bible study method, but you can use the same method individually. In each chapter he outlines one session, and he follows essentially the same outline each time. He begins by noting the Scripture that is being studied. Each person in the group should read it carefully before getting together for the study. Then when the group meets, the group leader gives some psychodynamics for that Scripture. As you read the four-paragraph introductory section of the chapter in Supplement B, you can see that the point is to give a modern parallel for the kind of experience you read about in the selected Bible passage. In this case, example setting or role modeling is the point of both John 13 and the short story regarding the movie *Skyjack*.

After a few words about the physical setting for the group, the Sharing Session begins with Bible background. In this case the background includes additional texts about imitative learning.

After sharing the Bible background, there is time for the group to reread the scripture (John 13 and 1 Peter 2:21) together.

Then comes the Reflection Period when the group takes time to reflect—keeping in mind the importance of their personal associations. That simply means what each one personally associates with the passage. When each one reads about the role modeling in John 13, what comes to his or her mind? Does it remind each one of a personal experience? As you reflect you can simply ask the question, How has, or does, my experience compare or contrast with what I read in this passage? Describing this Reflection Period on pp. 26 and 27, Drakeford writes:

"The technique used here is similar to that utilized in many psychological tests that seek to reveal the inner life of the individual. The inkblot test is a good example. The subject is shown an inkblot and then invited to tell what he sees. It is remarkable to listen to the testee pouring out reams of material about his inner life, which is all triggered by something that he saw in the inkblot.

"In another type of projective test the individual is shown a picture of a scene and asked to tell what went before, what is happening at the moment, and what will be the outcome. Once again, many individuals pour out long stories of life experiences.

"In experiential Bible Study the whole situation is enhanced by using a Biblical incident or passage. Many of these are familiar, and more than a few members of the class will already have a wealth of associations that can be utilized."

After there has been adequate time for quiet, personal reflection, there is a round of "sharing associations." The leader can begin by saying something like, "This passage reminds me of an experience I had . . . ," then proceed to tell the experience, as Drakeford has done in the



"Sharing Our Associations" section of this chapter. These shared associations give the stuff out of which the emerging principle of interpersonal relationships is formed. As the group helps formulate this principle, each can state it as he or she sees it, then together perhaps it can be summarized in a single statement or two.

Finally, the Action Commitment is the time for each member of the group to decide and, if willing, to state what he or she is going to do about it.

So there, in a short chapter, you have a sample of John Drakeford's way of going about experiential Bible study.

Perhaps we should end this introduction to experiential study with a question: What is the point of experiential Bible study? The point is to bring human experience—then and now—in touch. Actually, experiential Bible study works in two directions: First, the Bible student asks, What does the Bible say about my experience? Second, the Bible student also should ask, What does my experience tell me about the Bible? Careful experiential study deals with both questions. However, the second one makes some Bible students nervous since we know we should not bring preconceived ideas to Bible study. And it is true, we must not let our experience alter the meaning of the Bible. But it is also true that we *should* let our experience open our eyes to that meaning. One of the best sermons I have heard at our college church was preached by a woman whose study of education and psychology helped her realize and appreciate how Jesus related with people and met their needs. Through the eyes of this educator, simple, old gospel stories came alive with respect and love and meaningful interaction between Jesus and the people He befriended.

Just as this educator appreciated the psychology of the Bible, so historians will appreciate the history of the Bible, philosophers the philosophy, and so forth. Let the things you have studied, as well as your everyday experiences, help the Bible *live* for you and for those you share it with. Ask yourself, What does my knowledge of sociology (or any other area) tell me about the meaning of the Bible, *and* let the Bible help you see the meaning of your experience.

**Part 5: Assignment**

1. *Select* a healing miracle, or some other incident in Jesus' ministry, and practice participating in that story. Then *write* a page or so (like the samples from Uncle Arthur or from Perry and Culver) that you can share with the group that will show your participation in the story.
2. *Try* Baughman's Heart Check Bible Study on a passage of your choice.
3. *Try* Drakeford's experiential study. If you aren't able to try it in a group this week, do it on your own. Select a passage of your choice about some human experience—fear, love, or hope, for example. Then prepare your own information for each of the sections: Psychodynamics, Bible Background, Personal Associations, Principle of Interpersonal Relationships, and Action Commitment.



## **Supplement B, Lesson 4**

Sample Chapter from  
John W. Drakeford,  
*Experiential Bible Study*

### **Imitative Learning**

**Scripture:** John 13:1-17; 1 Peter 2:21

#### **Psychodynamics**

One of the newest ways of teaching is also one of the oldest known to mankind. It is sometimes referred to as imitative learning or "modeling the role," a process whereby the teacher demonstrates by example the lesson that is to be taught.

When exhibitors tried to import the movie "Skyjack" into Australia, Donald Chip, at that time the customs and excise minister, refused permission and explained his action by saying, "The film deals with the hijacking of a crowded passenger plane by a mentally disturbed U.S. Army sergeant. The method of hijacking and of holding a crew and passengers hostage are explicitly and vividly depicted. The experiences of airlines and civil aviation authorities have shown that the hijacking techniques employed in films are reproduced in real life a short time later."

By his action Chip was showing that he believed in imitative learning, as it is employed in education today.

Today's program focuses on the process of imitative learning or role modeling.

#### **The Sharing Session**

#### **The Physical Setting**

Do you have trouble getting started? Try to get your group in on time. Nothing is worse than being interrupted by latecomers. Urge the group to be punctual; leave chairs in a convenient place so that individ-

uals can get in without interrupting the rest of the group once you are underway.

### **Background**

William Barclay, the noted Scottish Bible interpreter, says that Paul's ethic is an ethic of *imitation* and notes the number of times Paul uses the idea of imitation. Of course, the idea is not peculiar to Paul. It is used frequently in the New Testament.

Christians are told to be imitators of God (Eph. 5:1); they are also exhorted to imitate Christ (Eph. 4:20; 1 Peter 2:21); and the great personalities of the Christian faith are to be imitated by Christians: "Consider the outcome of their life and imitate their faith" (Heb. 13:7).

Paul also used the idea of modeling in reference to his teaching ministry and frequently tells the Christians to imitate him: "I urge you, then, be imitators of me" (1 Cor. 4:16); "Be imitators of me as I am of Christ" (1 Cor. 11:1).

It becomes very obvious that the New Testament has anticipated many of the ideas of modern educational procedures and has a lot to say about what one authority calls "imitative learning."

### **Bible Reading**

Do you like modern translations? Some of them are very good. However, in reading around the group it may become a little confusing if one has a King James Version, the next one, *Good News for Modern Man*, and the next *The Living Bible*. One good idea might be to have two people read, one from the King James Version, and the other the same verse from a modern translation. It might not only give variety, but also throw some light on the meaning of the passage.

### **The Reflection Period**

Suggest to your group members that they spend a period of time reflecting on these passages of Scripture. Remind them again about the importance of their personal associations.

### **Sharing Our Associations**

You can see by the nature of this program just how important it is that the leader sets an example before the group. If the leader does not enter into the experience wholeheartedly and become frank and open about his or her own experience, it is highly improbable that the rest of the members will be very frank in their responses.

If I were conducting the group on this program I would say, "This passage reminds me of an experience I had some years ago.

"I used to set a rabbit trap in the bottom of a brick pit. The only way down to the floor of the pit was by a precipitous pathway leading down the side.

"Each afternoon I would pick up my small son, put him on my shoulder, walk across the field and climb down the pathway to the brick pit bottom.

"One afternoon it was raining, so I decided to go without my son. When I got to the pit I found the pathway wet and slippery. I gingerly climbed down the hazardous pathway. When I was about halfway down I stopped and held onto a branch projecting from the wall of the pit. I began to wonder if I were not foolish to have come.

"As I stood there a stone came rolling by, and I looked up to see my little son tottering down the treacherous pathway.

"I spoke quickly to him: 'Warnick, don't come any farther. Stand there, son.'

"I climbed up to him, picked him up in my arms, and began the difficult climb to the top of the pit. Though it was a bitterly cold day, by the time I arrived at the top the perspiration was pouring out of me, and a voice seemed to say, 'That's the way it is. Where you go, he goes. Where you plant your feet, he places his.'"

After you have modeled, turn and invite the class members to express their associations.

### **The Emerging Principle of Interpersonal Relationships**

Ask the group to help you formulate a principle of interpersonal relationships. Some of their ideas might be these:

"I can see that my actions affect other people."

"If imitative learning has any validity, my children will learn more from what I do than from what I say."

"As a Christian I need to set an example before people."

### **My Action Commitment**

Margo Kitterman gives us an example of the way in which she makes an action commitment. She says, "I have been fussing at my children about not keeping their rooms tidy. It has finally dawned on me that I have been untidy myself. I have resolved that next week I'll work on my own untidy habits; then I'll demonstrate to the kids just how I can keep my room tidy and ask them to work on theirs."

## Lesson 5

# Part 2 of Experiential Study—Coleman

### Part 1: Teaching Ministry of the Holy Spirit

"How must God esteem the human race, since He gave His Son to die for them, and appoints His Spirit to be man's teacher and continual guide!" *Steps to Christ*, p. 91.

This short statement of the love of God—God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—makes me think of John 3, one of the most familiar chapters about divine love. This chapter combines the gracious intention and courteous power of God's love. The classic statement of the Gospel in verse 16 reveals that it was the *Father* who so loved the world that He gave His only Son. Paul said something similar when he reminded us that the Father is the source of our life in Christ Jesus (1 Corinthians 1:30). It was, as Paul explained in Ephesians 1:9, the Father's purpose that was set forth in Christ. "How must God esteem the human race!"

As human purposes go, there is many a slip twixt the cup and the lip. But that is not so with God's purposes. Between God's purpose and the realization of it in our lives, there is agony, unthinkable risk, and death, but no slip or defeat. Through the Son and the Holy Spirit the Father's purposes for us are realized.

What a picture. Could we even begin to grasp the enormity of the problem of separation or the immensity and reuniting power of God's love if we did not have the John 3 picture of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—GOD—willing and able to first assess our need and then meet it in incomprehensibly grand gestures of love?



John 3 shows that the cosmic-size gap between God's gracious purpose and our sin problem is bridged by the Son who descended from heaven and ascended into heaven. Jesus is *our* wonderful, He is *God's* wonderful, reuniter of God and humans. Jesus Christ is the living testimony that God's will and power are inseparable and victorious. The Father's purpose of love is incarnate in His Son, our Brother.

But from the heart of Jesus to the heart of humans, there is yet another gap. Just as we could not survive the unveiled glory of God, so we are not able to comprehend God's veiled glory in Jesus of Nazareth. So God gives us the Holy Spirit to conquer our incomprehension of Jesus' life and death. What the Father *wills* and then *works out* through the Son, He also *applies* (makes personal and comprehensible to us) by the Holy Spirit. What enormous, yet courteous, power comes to us in the personalized ministry of the Holy Spirit.

The last two words of today's thought seal the promise with such sweet assurance. Our Teacher is a *continual* guide. When I begin to realize how essential and how powerful and gentle the Spirit's ministry is, I don't want the Spirit to leave. And, the assurance is, the Spirit won't! God has given us a *continual* guide.

## **Part 2: How to Let Bible Study Be What It Can Be**

When I was a child, our family attended a small church with wooden pews, no cushions, and long sermons—well, at least 30-minute sermons. I didn't have anything against church, but I did wish I could understand the sermons.

While I did my share of squirming, I also picked up a few key words, like "love" and "faith." I wanted to know more about these important experiences. But how? One day I fretted to Mother, especially about how hard it was to pay attention to a sermon I didn't understand. She said, "Listen carefully. Even then you may not understand the whole sermon—in fact you probably won't, but listen for what you can understand."

That sounded fair enough. So I tried. And it worked. I didn't have to understand the *whole*, long sermon. I just hunted for little pieces that made sense to me. Of course I was pleased to discover that the little

pieces soon started fitting together so that I learned to understand whole sermons.

Bible study is like that. It does not take a squirming child to think Bible study is hard. Even adult Bible students pick up a few key ideas they want to understand, but they don't know how to go about it. They'd pay attention if only they understood. If you ever feel like that, Mother's good advice can help you.

First, she said, "Listen carefully." I had already told her that I didn't feel like paying attention because I didn't understand. But she helped me to see that I *could* listen carefully even when I didn't understand. In fact, she helped me see that was the way *to* understand. Listening comes first, then understanding. Accepting that simple, but not always easy, fact is one important way to let Bible study be what it can be.

That's not all. There are two things to expect when we listen. One is that we won't understand it all; the other is that we will understand some of it. There we have two more ways to let Bible study be what it can be: Realistically accept our limitations and, just as realistically, realize our potential. Go after what's there for us, even if it should be in small pieces. It works. In fact, it keeps on working as long as there is some part we still don't understand, which is a long time when it is Bible study we are talking about.

### **Part 3: Compare Notes About Last Assignment**

1. One or two group members (more if there is time) should read their participation account to the rest of the group.
2. Share the results of trying Baughman's and Drakeford's experiential study. Even if you don't use Baughman's form, which of his suggestions can you incorporate in your plan of Bible study, and how? Which of Drakeford's suggestions can you incorporate in your plan of Bible study, and how?

### **Part 4: Experiential Study—Coleman**

Lyman Coleman has a couple of words for what we have been calling experiential Bible study. One of his words is "relational," and the other is "motivational." Study of biographies and personal experience

is, in his terms, relational study. This happens when the Bible student relates his experience to the experience he reads about. Study of other content types, like epistles or logical discourses, is, in Coleman's terms, motivational study. This is a matter of the Bible student discovering just how she is motivated by the instruction she reads.

In relational Bible study there are three dimensions or directions:

1. Past. What was the experience of this biblical character? How did the person and God deal with that experience?
2. Present. How do I respond in similar situations today? What does the biblical person's experience contribute to my experience?
3. Future. What do I need to do about it?

At the end of this chapter you will find Supplement A, a relational Bible study (on 1 Kings 19:1-19) in which you can see how each of these dimensions is explored. Read Part A of this relational study and see how the questions provided there help you get in touch with Elijah's experience. Then read Part B and see how those questions help you discover how you respond in similar situations today. Finally, read Part C and see how a study of this person's experience compared to your own experience helps you plan for future victory.

In motivational Bible study there are also three parts:

1. What. That is, what is my response to what I am reading? For example, do I believe and live what I am reading?
2. So what. That is, how do I feel about my response?
3. Therefore . . . What actions do I need and plan to take?

Look at the sample of motivational Bible study based on 1 Corinthians 13:4-7 (Supplement B at the end of this chapter). See how questions 1 and 2 (a multiple choice question and a rating scale) help you discover specific strengths and weaknesses in your response to the passage. Question 3 (in multiple choice form) helps you discover how you feel about your own response. Then question 4 helps you deal with what you discovered. For example, in Part (2), So What, you may conclude that you don't feel good about the response you discovered in Part (1), What. If that's the case, in Part (3), Therefore, you can plan

specific actions to remedy the problem.

In each kind of study, relational and motivational, there are three parts. Then each of these three parts can be explored by means of various questions that can be written in different formats, including multiple choice, rating scale, or essay.

As a part of this introduction to relational and motivational Bible study, it would be a good idea to take time for the group to go through one or both of these samples. Read the Bible passage and keep it open while you answer each question. Think of another question to include in the relational or motivational study. For example, can you think of another question about 1 Kings 19 that will help you get in touch with Elijah's feelings? Doing this will help you understand what is involved in each of these kinds of study. Doing this will also prepare you for the assignment.

### **Part 5: Assignment**

- 1. Prepare** a relational or motivational Bible study on a passage of your choice. For relational study, you might select a favorite portion of Abraham's experience. For motivational study, you might select a portion of the Sermon on the Mount from Matthew 5, 6, and 7. First, write which chapter(s) and verses you are using. Then direct your relational or motivational study specifically to those verses.
- 2.** When preparing a relational study, **keep** the three dimensions—past, present, and future—in mind. For the past dimension, **ask** questions that will help you get in touch with that person's experience—how they felt, what they did, etc., and what the person and God did about it.

Go on to Parts 2 and 3 of the study, keeping in mind the general purpose in each part. Review Part 4 of this lesson. **Write** specific questions about the Bible passage that will help you accomplish the purpose of each part of the study.

3. If you prepare a motivational study, **follow** the three parts, What, So What, and Therefore, as introduced in Part 4 of this lesson.
4. **Bring** your relational or motivational study to class and be prepared to discuss how this kind of study can help you and others. For example, in what way(s) did the process of preparing the relational or motivational study help you? In what setting would you use the study you prepared? Could you benefit from relational or motivational Bible study even if you did not take time to write specific questions?

**Supplement A, Lesson 5****Run, Elijah, Run****A Relational Bible Study on 1 Kings 19:1-19****A. Getting in Touch with Elijah's Feelings:**

1. Use three words to describe how Elijah was feeling when in verse 4 he had run for his life, finally crashed under the broom tree, and was praying for death to come.
  - a.
  - b.
  - c.
2. How does Elijah deal with his feelings? (For each of the passages below, write the verbs which describe what Elijah does.)
  - a. 3, 4
  - b. 8
  - c. 9, 10, 14
  - d. 10-13
  - e. 15, 16, 19
3. How does God respond to Elijah's fear and discouragement? Circle those which you think apply:
  - a. Kicks him in the toga and tells him to shake it off.
  - b. Tells him it serves him right as he should have never gotten into that mess in the first place.
  - c. Scares the sandals off him to let him know that he ought to be counting his blessings instead of being so down.
  - d. Gives him some nourishment to help him rebuild his spent emotional and physical energy.
  - e. Shows genuine concern and interest in him by asking him what happened with him.
  - f. Draws him out of his hole with soft words of encouragement.
  - g. Shakes him up, blows him away, fires at him in order to drive him deeper into his depression.

h. Gives him a plan of action, encouraging him to go back, that he was not alone, that God would not leave him or the other 7,000, but would see them through.

i. \_\_\_\_\_

## B. Getting in Touch With My Feelings

1. When I become frightened and discouraged I usually (circle those which apply):

a. Run away

b. Ask God to let me die

c. Go to sleep

d. Crawl in a hole

e. Talk to a friend

f. Break something

g. Get my mind off it by doing something else

h. Watch TV

i. Attack the problem

j. Get help

k. Spend time in prayer and study

l. \_\_\_\_\_

m. \_\_\_\_\_

2. Right now I'm feeling . . . about college or my career choice (circle those which apply):

a. Exhilarated

f. Shattered

b. Blocked

g. Burnt

c. Optimistic

h. Blown away

d. Depressed

i. Numb

e. Comfortable

j. \_\_\_\_\_

3. Write in a sentence what you have learned from Elijah that will help you in handling these feelings.

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**C. Getting in Touch With My Future**

1. In coming to grips with the fears and discouragements in my life, I sense God encouraging and instructing me to . . . (circle one):
  - a. Hang in there
  - b. Go back
  - c. Change some things
  - d. Listen to Him more
  - e. Try again
  - f. \_\_\_\_\_
2. In His strength and nurturing power I intend to (write your own prayer commitment):

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**Supplement B, Lesson 5**

**Motivational Bible Study**

"Love is patient; love is kind and envies no one. Love is never boastful, nor conceited, nor rude: never selfish, not quick to take offence. Love keeps no score of wrongs; does not gloat over other men's sins, but delights in the truth. There is nothing love cannot face; there is no limit to its faith, its hope, and its endurance" (1 Corinthians 13:4-7, NEB).

**What**

1. As I read the Scripture passage my first thought was (circle one):
  - a. I wish my husband (or wife) could read this.
  - b. Who does he think I am?
  - c. I'll never make it.
  - d. Wow!
  - e. This is impossible.
  - f. If I could only be this way.
  - g. \_\_\_\_\_

**What**

2. Considering the Scripture definitions of love, if I were to rank myself on a scale between 1 and 10—1 being very weak and 10 being very strong—I would do so as follows (circle one number in each area):

*Love is patient:* I am slow to get angry with those I love; I never holler at the children or "lose my temper" with those at work.

Weak—1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 — S t r o n g

*Love is kind:* I am thoughtful and considerate of those closest to me; generous in my praise; extravagant with my time; always on the lookout for ways to "build up" the others in my family and friends.

Weak—1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 — S t r o n g

*Love envies no one:* I am not jealous when others get promoted ahead of me or threatened by their gifts and accomplishments. I do not sit back and pout or pick flaws when I am set aside or go unnoticed.

Weak—1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 — S t r o n g

*Love is never boastful:* I do not hog the conversation, bragging about my own gifts and accomplishments, exaggerating the facts deliberately to leave a better impression than what is absolutely true.

Weak—1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 — S t r o n g

*Love is not conceited:* I do not harbor an inflated view of my own importance, or have to be coaxed, honored, or pampered to do my part; I do not twist the conversation around to my own interests to draw attention to myself.

Weak—1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 — S t r o n g

*Love is not rude:* I am not cruel, nasty, crude, sarcastic, or cocky; but instead am polite, well-mannered, courteous, and gracious with employees, friends and those in my family—even my brothers and sisters and spouse.

Weak—1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 — S t r o n g

*Love is not selfish:* I am not self-centered nor self-seeking, making others fit into my mold or laying expectations on others for my own interests; I am not possessive of those I love, insisting on my own way or my own rights.

Weak—1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 — S t r o n g

*Love does not take offense:* I am not touchy, cranky, defensive, brittle, or supersensitive; I am not easily hurt at any slight thing, nor offended by an oversight by my spouse, friends, or business associates.

Weak—1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 — S t r o n g

*Love keeps no score of wrongs:* I am quick to forgive those who have harmed me; I don't have to retaliate nor "defend myself" when

criticized by my wife or husband, boss, friend, or associate at work.

Weak—1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 — S t r o n g

*Love does not gloat over other people's wrongs:* I do not secretly rejoice when others make a mistake or are proven wrong; I don't take pleasure in reminding others in my family or office of their faults, or by saying "I told you so."

Weak—1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 — S t r o n g

*Love delights in the truth:* I am glad when right and justice prevail, no matter who gets the credit; I am strong in my own convictions while still leaving room for my own human error.

Weak—1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 — S t r o n g

### So What

3. After taking this inventory, I feel like (circle one):
  - a. crawling into a hole
  - b. giving up
  - c. trying harder
  - d. starting all over again
  - e. crying for help
  - f. shouting
  - g.. \_\_\_\_\_

### Therefore:

4. For the next seven days, I will consciously do one unselfish act every day for my family or friends—something I would not ordinarily do—as a "faith" experiment (circle one):
  - a. Yes
  - b. No
  - c. I'll try

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## Lesson 6

# Introduction to Inductive Study

### Part 1: Teaching Ministry of the Holy Spirit

"But the Counselor, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, He will teach you all things." John 14:26.

That word "Counselor" is a translation of the Greek word *parakletos* (more often simply: *paraclete*). Have you ever wondered how English versions of the Bible could vary so much in the word they use to translate a Greek word like this? In the King James Version it is "Comforter"; in RSV, "Counselor"; E. V Rieu chose "Advocate." *Parakletos* is a Greek word that is both more simple and more complete than any one English word used to translate it, so it is not surprising that different translators chose different, good words in their attempts to capture the richness of this simple word. *Parakletos* is a compound noun composed of a root meaning "to call" and a prefix meaning "to the side." So, the *paraclete* is "one called to the side of." Isn't that simple? And isn't it complete? Is there any need we have that the Spirit is not able to meet? If we need counsel, the *Parakletos* is our Counselor. If we need comfort, the *Parakletos* is our Comforter. If we need correction, the one called to our side is our Corrector. Do you see?

It could go on and on. The *Parakletos* is called to our side to meet whatever need we have.

The *Paraclete* is a very special kind of Teacher!

### Part 2: How to Let Bible Study Be What It Can Be

One important way to let Bible study be what it can be is to move from the simple to the complex. Let me illustrate. When I was a girl, I

had a big drawer of yarn that, almost of its own accord, achieved an amazing state of tangled disarray. It got so bad, in fact, that I bundled the complex mess up and sent it to my patient and retired grandmother to untangle. She worked from a very complex state of affairs to a simple arrangement of yarn, wound in balls and sorted by size and color.

That was a kind and generous thing for a grandmother to do for her granddaughter, but it is an unfortunate mistake for Bible students to treat the Bible as if it were some kind of complex maze that must be reduced to simple terms. Some tackle questions of chronology, archaeology, theology, and any number of other "ologies" with the patient resolve of a grandmother undoing her granddaughter's untidiness. Although the results may be simple, and even helpful, they will not be what they might have been if the student had worked from the simple to the complex.

Given the same investment of time and energy, and by starting with a simple ball of yarn, my grandmother could have created an intricate design that would decorate a home or warm little fingers and big hearts. The climax of her efforts could have been a pair of mittens instead of just a ball of yarn. Bible students should not be satisfied if they have just untangled something. Their goal should be to construct something beautiful that wears well. Beginning with simple Bible statements like, "Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and you will be saved" and "God so loved . . . He gave," a Bible student can develop a pattern of thought, a system of theology, that will grow increasingly comprehensive. The more that fabric of thought develops, the more of the student's needs will be met by the beauty and serviceability of it.

When tempted to tackle some big question of biblical interpretation, remember—you can let Bible study be more helpful if you begin with simple statements you do understand and let them grow into always more intricate and beautiful patterns of thought. Move from the simple to the complex.

### **Part 3: Compare Notes From Last Assignment**

Each group member should share the best question from his/her relational or motivational Bible study. The best question may be the one

that helps you understand the most about the Bible character and yourself. Or it may be the question that helps you get the most help from the experience of that character. Or it may be "best" for any reason you choose.

Then discuss, for a short time, how relational or motivational Bible study can help you and others. In what way(s) does the *process* of preparing the study help you? In what setting would you use the study you prepared? Could you do relational or motivation Bible study even if you did not take time to write specific questions? If so, how?

#### **Part 4: Introduction to Inductive Bible Study**

If you had time for just 10 minutes of devotion, would you be happy if all you had to read was the Bible? If you had a two-hour wait at the airport, would you be glad if all you had to read was the Bible? How about for 17 days? Matt Meacham and his two climbing companions endured 17 days on Mount Hood beginning New Year's Eve, 1975.

For sure, during much of that time they were vigorously climbing or carving snow caves or fighting frostbite by rubbing swelling feet. But during much of the two-week storm on Mount Hood those first days of 1976, the three leaned on their elbows in a five-foot-square snow cave and took turns reading their Bibles aloud for hours a day.

Who can imagine how they hoped and prayed for rescue while they more than doubled the previous five-day survival record in a Mount Hood storm? Of special interest to us just now is that these three academy students knew what to do with their Bibles while they hoped and huddled in a snow cave with a tunnel entrance that grew daily until it reached 30 feet long.

Shortly after the three returned safely to their rejoicing hometown community, I saw Matt in the narthex after church. Matt and his friend Gary Schneider, another of the climbers, had been in a sophomore academy Bible class I taught the spring before the climb. We had used the inductive method of Bible study.

Matt said, "I want to thank you, Mrs. Forsyth, for helping me learn how to study the Bible. Before that class last spring, it seemed like I was studying a syllabus and just using the Bible to look up answers. But

during that semester we learned to study the Bible for ourselves. That really helped me while we were on Mount Hood."

Here are some of the things the inductive method of Bible study can do for you:

- It can give you a sense of responsible independence in Bible study.
- By using inductive Bible study you can have a good time with just your Bible, for hours, days, or longer, at a time.
- Inductive Bible study is one of the most insight-producing experiences you can have.

It is also true that inductive Bible study is more readily "caught" than taught. Having an experienced inductive Bible student share the excitement of his or her own discoveries with you, then show you how it is done, is the best way to learn inductive study. But it is not the only way. It is also possible to read about it in lessons like this, and then go after those good results on your own.

(8) See Appendix A.

It may help to notice, first of all, why this plan of study is called "inductive" Bible study. The difference between inductive and deductive study has to do with whether we begin or end with a conclusion and whether we are studying for the sake of discovery or proof. For example, we could study the Second Coming deductively by beginning with the conclusion: Jesus will come again in the clouds of heaven and the dead in Christ will rise. Then we could look up the verses that prove this conclusion is correct. That compares to a mathematician who begins with a formula and applies it to specific problems and thereby proves that it is a valid formula.

On the other hand, we can study inductively by reading 1 Thessalonians 4 to discover what is there, and in the process come to the same conclusion we began with in the deductive method—that is, that Jesus will come again in the clouds of heaven and the dead in Christ will rise. By studying inductively we come to our conclusion rather than beginning with it.

Deductive Bible study usually involves verses from a variety of Bible books, while inductive study involves a whole chapter or book at a time.

It is important to notice that both deductive and inductive approaches are valuable. Just now, we want to give special attention to inductive study.

In addition to the suggestions and assignments included in this and the following lessons, please note the following sources that will help:

(9) See Appendix A.

- *The Navigator Bible Studies Handbook* (Colorado Springs: Navpress, 1980). (This is probably the most direct and simple introduction to inductive Bible study that is available.)
- Oletta Wald, *The Joy of Discovery in Bible Study*, revised edition (Minneapolis: Augsburg Publishing House, 1975).
- Leo R. Van Dolson, *How to Get the Most Out of Bible Study* (Mountain View: Pacific Press Publishing Association, 1980).

A little more detailed but still very understandable introduction to inductive Bible study can be found in books like these:

- Robert A. Traina, *Methodical Bible Study* (Dr. Robert A. Traina, Asbury Theological Seminary, Wilmore, KY 40390).
- Irving L. Jensen, *Independent Bible Study* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1963).

Before we go into the inductive plan itself, let's quickly review the first six lessons of this series. We have looked at eight of the many Bible study skills:

- Practice the presence of your teacher
- Asking questions
- Creative Bible study
- "Using" the Bible
- Using a concordance
- Thinking or meditating
- Participation
- Experiential Bible study—Baughman, Drakeford, and Coleman



This is a good time to add as many as you think of to that list. For example, you might add:

- Summarizing
- Surveying
- And many more. . . .

Remember, all of these study skills are good in themselves, but they are even better when several are combined into a "plan" of study. Inductive study, for example, combines asking questions, summarizing, and other study skills.

On the page following this lesson there is a one-page introduction to Observation, which is basic to inductive Bible study. Observation comes first and prepares the way for the steps that follow, like interpretation and application. The following from George Washington Carver's experience illustrates the meaning of observation:

George Washington Carver was credited with the ability to see where others were blind. When he was still a little boy gardener for Frau Carver, he wondered why most folks merely *looked* at flowers rather than really *seeing* them.

Later, while Dr. Carver was at Tuskegee Institute, a lady sent an ailing geranium to the plant doctor. The damp string and paper were tossed aside as the greenhouse helpers uncovered the plant. But Doctor Carver saw the string as well. Staring hard at it, he asked, "What's this?"

"What, sir?" the helpers asked.

Excited, Carver responded, "Here on this string. Don't you see it?"

They saw only the string. He observed the mold as well.

He hurried the bit of string to his workbench at the laboratory where he could pursue his observation with a microscope. What he saw in this case, where others were blind, was an extremely rare disease which caused destruction of cotton cellulose. It had been found only once before in England, never in America. Had it not been checked quickly it might have ruined Southern cotton crops.

Bible students often look without really seeing, just as George Washington Carver said most folks do with flowers. Inductive Bible study helps free us from that problem. By careful observation we can learn to really see when we look at the words in the Bible. As outlined on the attached page, observation includes three parts (see the three little boxes across the top). **Survey** the whole; **study** the parts; **summarize** the whole. At each of these three steps the student should be aware of the items in the box at the bottom: (1) Structure or Form; (2) Grammatical Construction; (3) Relationship of Thoughts. Finally, after taking each of the three steps (survey, detailed study, summarize), the student charts it. We'll talk more about all of this in later lessons.

### **Part 5: Assignment**

As an introduction to one small, but comprehensive, part of inductive study, **write** a chapter title for these:

- Psalm 14
- Psalm 24
- Matthew 18
- Luke 2
- Romans 8

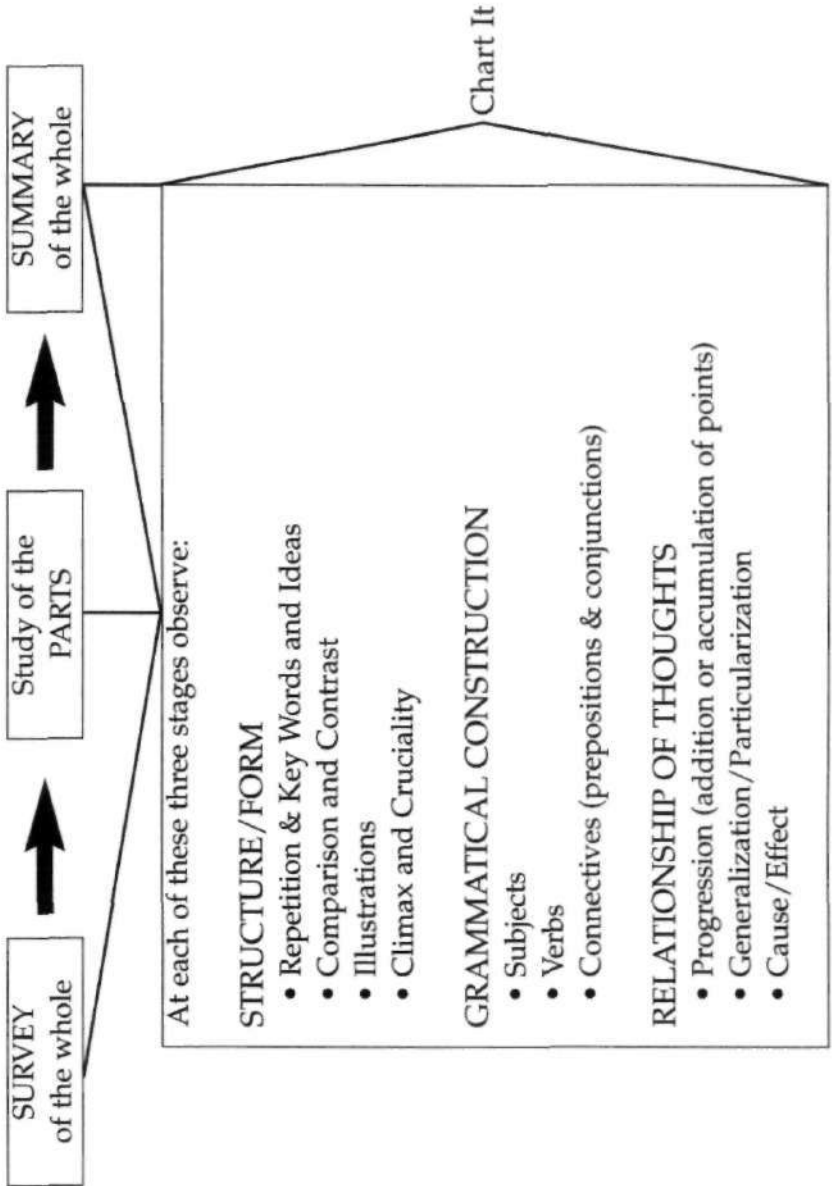
It is important for all to work with the same chapters so that the group's next sharing time will be most productive.

What makes a good chapter title? Think about that as part of this assignment and be prepared to share the answer to that question next week.

**Note:** Keep the chapter titles that you write for this assignment. You will want them in connection with a later lesson.

Supplement A, Lesson 6

# OBSERVATION includes:



## Lesson 7

# Inductive Study

## (Surveying)

### Part 1: Teaching Ministry of the Holy Spirit

"For the written code kills, but the Spirit gives life." 2 Corinthians 3:6.

The written code is commonly associated with the tablets of stone mentioned in verse 3 of this same chapter from 2 Corinthians 3. Without denying that, I would like to add that any of God's Word, when reduced to ink on paper, can be a code that kills. Actually, God's Word on paper, in the form of words, can be cold and meaningless, hence "killed." And if the words are dead, they are hardly able to do anything but communicate death, "to kill."

But the good news is, "the Spirit gives life." In fact, the Spirit is so bound up with God's words to us that we can hardly separate the Bible from the ministry of the Holy Spirit. For example, we are told, "God's holy, educating spirit is in His word" (Ellen G. White, *Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students*, p. 171). And "The Bible is God's voice speaking to us, just as surely as if we could hear it with our ears" (Ellen G. White, *My Life Today*, p. 283). It is only when we fail to recognize the voice of God in the Bible that it is, for us, a written code that kills.

Writing about the Spirit's life-giving power, Ellen White says, "The Holy Spirit takes the things of God and shows them unto us, conveying them as a living power into the obedient heart" (Ellen G. White, *Evangelism*, p. 167). When the Spirit gives life to the words in the Bible, or when the Spirit conveys the things of God to us as a living power, what happens? What's the difference between an idea that is dead and one that is alive? The group may want to discuss this. Some thoughts that come to my mind in answer to that question are:

Words can be dead as a consequence of sin, or they can be dead just because they are not yet alive.

When Adam and Eve were formed out of the dust of the earth, before God breathed into their nostrils the breath of life, they were beautiful but inanimate objects. There was no sign of decay or death, just no sign of life either. So for the person who has heard little or nothing about the Bible, it too may be dead in the sense that there is just no sign of life in it yet.

If the words are dead as a consequence of sin, they once lived, but distrust and doubt destroyed them. This is the most troubling kind of words without life.

What the Spirit does when giving life to the words, then, has to do with the sense in which the words were dead to the hearer. But the outcome of the Spirit's life-giving ministry is the same in either case; that is, the Spirit gives life to the words, so they live.

There are many ways to characterize or describe those living words, just as there are many ways to characterize or describe a living person. One of the ways I find most helpful is: Living words produce life. That is more literal than we may at first realize. Have you ever noticed that "just a word" made a significant difference in how you actually "felt." "Just words" do produce physical consequences. Soothing words can calm a crying child. Kind words relieve weariness. Reassuring words can slow the pulse-beat of a frightened person.

Words do produce physical results. It's true with the Bible too. The Holy Spirit, by silent, but profoundly real

ministry to our minds, helps us realize, as we read, that the words are not just ink on paper, but that they *live* and have power to give life. The things of God, then, do not remain static, distant, or theoretical. They become dynamically alive and actually life-giving.

## **Part 2: How to Let Bible Study Be What It Can Be**

We said in Lesson 6 that inductive Bible study can give us a sense of "responsible independence." Let's think about that some more in connection with ways to let Bible study be what it can be.

The Bible student must first discover that it really is possible to get into the Bible, directly, on one's own. Many people continue to rely on prepared lessons and on commentaries in a way that has prevented them from making this essential discovery. Once students do make this discovery they are also apt to hang onto their discoveries tenaciously and change reluctantly, which may be good or not so good. Hence, we want to underscore that our independence must be *responsible*, and this includes respect for the Bible study of other responsibly independent people!

This is where dialogue comes in. We may dialogue in person, or through printed sources like Bible commentaries. Many times Ellen White urged that we must study the Bible for ourselves. *And*, without altering the importance of that, she also urged that we get together, or dialogue. In a testimony titled "Unity in the Church," she said:

"If one man takes his view of Bible truth without regard to the opinions of his brethren, and justifies his course, alleging that he has a right to his own peculiar views, and then presses them upon others, how can he be fulfilling the prayer of Christ (John 17)? And if another and still another arises, each asserting his right to believe and talk what he pleases without reference to the faith of the body, where will be that harmony which existed between Christ and His Father, and which Christ prayed might exist among His brethren?" *Testimonies*, pp. 446-47.

In *Selected Messages*, vol. 2, p. 97, she wrote: "Teach the people to seek God individually for guidance, to study the Scriptures, and to counsel together. . . ." We are to do both—seek God individually *and* counsel together. Neither is adequate without the other.

When we "counsel together" (dialogue), whether that be by reading a commentary or by conversation with other Bible students, we also remain responsible for arriving at and holding our own convictions. When we read or listen to another Bible student's ideas, we must not expect them to make our decisions.

Worthwhile dialogue can only take place when the participants remain personally responsible. An authority figure, like the author of a commentary, a scholar, or a group of leaders, does not do my thinking for me. Actually, the little phrase, "do my own thinking"—so essential to good Bible study—calls for a good deal of skill and balance. While I must not let someone decide or think for me, I must at the same time remain open to hear what they have to say. If I refuse to listen, I am deciding not to think it through. Ability to think for myself includes the willingness to listen as well as the refusal to let someone else make my decision.

Paul's experience helps us understand how we can counsel together, even with authority figures. Before his Damascus road turnaround, Paul's "convictions of right and wrong and of his own duty had been based largely on his implicit confidence in the priests and rulers" (Ellen G. White, *Acts of the Apostles*, p. 115). After his conversion, Paul was "personally taught by God" at the same time that he "felt the need of counsel." "When matters of importance arose, he was glad to lay these before the church and to unite with his brethren in seeking God for wisdom to make the right decisions" (*Acts of the Apostles*, p. 200). Uniting *with* others to seek God for counsel is quite different from just getting counsel from those others.

Another thought from Ellen White helps us see the importance of both personal and corporate responsibility:

"We must study the truth for ourselves. No man should be relied upon to think for us. No matter who he is, or in what position he may be

placed, we are not to look upon any man as a criterion for us. We are to counsel together, and to be subject one to another; but at the same time we are to exercise the ability God has given us, in order to learn what is truth. Each one of us must look to God for divine enlightenment." *Testimonies to Ministers and Gospel Workers*, pp. 110-11.

So the point for today is: Let Bible study be what it can be—let it be a *responsible* personal *and* corporate adventure.

### **Part 3: Compare Notes From Last Assignment**

Working with one chapter at a time (Psalm 14, Psalm 24, Matthew 18, Luke 2, or Romans 8) have those persons who did that part of the assignment write their chapter titles on small pieces of paper. Collect these and have someone from the group record them each on a blackboard or large piece of paper so all can see them. The group should then decide which are the best titles. In the process, the group should decide what makes a good chapter title. Is a good title one that is helpful? Thorough? Catchy? Or what? The group should also discuss the value of doing this simple kind of Bible study.

### **Part 4: Surveying**

Look again at the one-page introduction to inductive study included with last week's lesson. The first of the three little boxes at the top of that page shows that "SURVEY of the whole" comes first. In this lesson we will think about that part of inductive Bible study.

One day our college professor told us to read the book of Revelation three times, each time at a single sitting. I was accustomed to paying close attention to individual verses. So I thought he had handed us a difficult assignment! But as I disciplined myself to do what he said (and it did take discipline) I discovered that the ability to survey a whole Bible book at once is immensely valuable. Of course, all my questions about details were not answered as I did that assignment. I just had to learn to let questions rest and push on. As I did, I began to profit from some things I never would have noticed if I had not surveyed the whole book. For example, I discovered that all the way through the great sea of



symbols that we call Revelation, there are islands of praise. "Holy, holy, holy . . ." "Worthy art thou . . ." over and over. Until I surveyed the whole book it never occurred to me that Revelation is put together the way it is, and that the trauma of it is offset by praise, and that the mystery of it is offset by the certainty that God is praiseworthy—no matter how bad or perplexing things are.

Surveying has to do with looking at the *whole* before you give close attention to the details. The assignment my college professor gave was a survey assignment. It compares to what Mortimer Adler and Charles Van Doren (in their book titled, *How to Read a Book*) call "inspectional reading." They advise finding out what a whole book is about before studying it in detail. The inspectional reading they recommend includes questions like: Who are the principal characters? What is the historical setting? What is the theme and purpose of the book? How is the theme conveyed and the purpose accomplished? When surveying, we don't search out refined answers to such questions, but rather try to absorb "general impressions." Adler explains that we can do this by reading the index, the preface and perhaps the introduction and conclusion to each chapter of a book. We can do the same with Bible books by reading a commentary or dictionary introduction and then scanning the book itself.

In *The Navigator Bible Studies Handbook* there is a book survey form that can be used in the process of surveying. It includes these items:

- Book title (which Bible book)
- Principal personalities
- Historical setting
- Purpose
- Theme(s)
- Style
- Key words
- Additional personalities
- Geography
- Overview

**Part 5: Assignment**

**Survey Habakkuk.** Remember, do not pay close attention to details. The idea is to get a feel for the whole.

**Write:**

1. An "index" to Habakkuk. (One simple way to do this is to write a one-sentence statement of what is in each chapter.)
2. The theme(s) of the book.
3. Three to five key, or "vantage," verses. (A vantage verse is the verse that gives you the best insights into or summary of the rest of the chapter or book.)

**Note:** You can do this assignment without reference to any other sources. If you prefer, you can follow the format of the book survey form that is mentioned above. If you use that format, answer all the questions you can based on your reading of Habakkuk before you turn to a Bible commentary or Bible dictionary.

## Lesson 8

# Inductive Study

## (Part 1 of Detailed Study)

### Part 1: Teaching Ministry of the Holy Spirit

"Is the Spirit of the Lord impatient?" Micah 2:7.

What do you think? Micah didn't answer his own question, but the context in chapter 2 indicates his answer was No. The people should not think the Lord lost His patience and did to them what they had actually brought on themselves. Their disgrace was not His doing.

When I study the Bible, I can profitably ask the same question that Micah posed: "Is the Spirit of the Lord impatient?" The circumstances of Spirit-led Bible study may be quite different from those described in Micah 2, yet the outcome to that question will be the same. No, the Spirit of the Lord is not impatient.

The fact that each of us has a patient Teacher says some important things about the Teacher and about the students. It helps us understand the process of teaching and learning that is taking place when we study the Bible. For example:

- The fact that patience is being demonstrated suggests the Teacher probably has more to say or give than the student is able to receive. And the Teacher may be very eager to give, as the Holy Spirit is eager to give. See John 16:12: "I have yet many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now." And see Matthew 7:11: "If you then, who are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father who is in heaven give good things to those who ask Him?"
- The fact that patience is being demonstrated suggests the student probably is slow, perhaps even contrary. See Mark 8:17: "Do you not yet perceive or understand?" Sometime read through Mark

and count all the times Jesus asked a similar question, which indicates the disciples were slow. Are we, as Bible students, much different? Don't we try the patience of our Teacher, who has more to say and is more eager to give than we can imagine? Actually, the Spirit's patience is tried (but not weakened) both by the positive force of God's desire to do good and the negative force of the students' slowness.

- The process of God patiently waiting while we learn may seem a frustrating and unnecessary delay. But is it? Isn't something profound happening while God waits? And isn't it a process worth waiting for? Imagine a parent who is able to walk and run gracefully. Imagine also an unsteady toddler hanging onto that parent's hand. The wobbly toddler can hardly stay upright, much less walk with any degree of grace or skill. Yet the parent is enormously interested in the toddler's unsteady progress. The parent offers praise and encouragement as the toddler goes through the ups and downs (psychologically and physically!) of learning to walk. We Bible students have a Teacher who is even more interested in our progress. The Spirit patiently offers help every step of the way as we go through the ups and downs of Bible study. This is a profound process where we, thanks to God's patient power, are increasing in understanding and spiritual strength.

## **Part 2: How to Let Bible Study Be What It Can Be**

In Lesson 1 we say that it makes a big difference what we expect to get out of an experience and how we feel about doing it. Since that lesson we've been noticing some specific expectations and feelings about Bible study. Now we want to add another important expectation that can certainly affect how we feel about Bible study. Let's call it "newness" for now, although a more comprehensive but equally direct word would be better.

One of Jesus' short but far-reaching parables helps show what we mean by expecting "newness." "Therefore," He said, "every scribe who has been trained for the kingdom of heaven is like a householder who brings out of his treasure what is new and what is old" (Matthew 13:52).

What is the "treasure" of a scribe? Isn't it the Word of God? What would bringing new things out of that treasure be? Wouldn't that be new understanding and insights?

An 11-page chapter in *Christ's Object Lessons* focuses on this rich little parable. Included in that chapter are thoughts like:

- We can expect God's word to be ever-unfolding.
- "The truths of redemption are capable of constant development and expansion. Though old, they are ever new, constantly revealing to the seeker for truth a greater glory and a mightier power." *Christ's Object Lessons*, p. 129.
- "Each fresh search will reveal something more deeply interesting than has yet been unfolded." *Ibid.*, p. 134.

Not only 35 times in this single chapter, but perseveringly throughout her writings, Ellen White repeats the assurance and challenge—the Bible is a mine, rich and deep, which contains an inexhaustible treasure. Selected examples of this theme are:

- "Every day you should learn something new from the Scriptures." *Testimonies*, vol. 5, p. 266.
- "Let no one come to the conclusion that there is no more truth to be revealed." *Counsels on Sabbath School Work*, p. 34.
- "There are veins of truth yet to be discovered." *Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students*, p. 437.
- "God intends that even in this life the truths of His Word shall be ever unfolding to His people." *Steps to Christ*, p. 109.
- "It is impossible for any human mind to exhaust even one truth or promise of the Bible." *Education*, p. 171.
- "You need not fear that you will exhaust this wonderful theme [of redemption]." *Fundamentals of Christian Education*, p. 127.
- "Let none think that there is no more knowledge for them to gain. The depth of human intellect may be measured; the works of human authors may be mastered; but the highest, deepest, broadest flight of the imagination cannot find out God. There is infinity beyond all that we can comprehend. We have seen only the glimmering of divine glory and of the infinitude of knowl-

edge and wisdom; we have, as it were, been working on the surface of the mine, when rich, golden ore is beneath the surface, to reward the one who will dig for it. The shaft must be sunk deeper and yet deeper in the mine, and the result will be glorious treasure." *My Life Today*, p. 108.

Thoughts like these repeat what a combination of Romans 11:33 and John 17:3 reveal to us:

- "O the depth of the riches and wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments and how inscrutable [not readily understood] are His ways!" (Romans 11:33). Paul exclaimed this after discovering enough about God to know he was just barely beginning to understand.
- "And this is eternal life, that they know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent" (John 17:3).

It makes sense, doesn't it, that getting acquainted with the infinite God will take eternity. And, it is exciting to know we can begin now and continue through our whole life—here and hereafter. As we continue the search, that is the ongoing process of getting acquainted with God, it will produce always-new understanding and appreciation. Realizing this helps us let Bible study be the inspiring experience it can be.

### **Part 3: Comparing Notes About Last Assignment**

Group members can share their Habakkuk index, theme, and a vantage verse, or the information they put in the Navigator book survey format. Also, compare the group members' indexes or overviews with the outline provided in a couple of Bible commentaries. The *Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary* and *Interpreter's Bible Commentary* are examples. Finally, discuss the value of surveying this way. What purpose does it serve? Is surveying this way consistent with the advice to let the mind dwell on a single text until the meaning of that text becomes clear to us because it is more important to understand small portions well than to read large quantities without understanding?

**Part 4: Detailed Study**

Look again at the one-page introduction to inductive study that was included with Lesson 6. Notice that "Study of the PARTS" is the second of three steps in this kind of study. This is the step that calls for the most careful observation. The box at the bottom of that introductory page contains three categories of things to observe. They are: Structure/Form, Grammatical Construction, and Relationship of Thoughts. In this lesson, let's think about Structure/Form. Let's become structure conscious.

Structures are so common that we don't even stop to think about them being structures. One of the most common forms of structures is buildings—the house we live in, the office building where we work, the church where we worship. All these are constructed of things like steel beams, glass windows, swinging doors, and stairs or elevators.

The Bible is also full of structures. Matthew, Romans, Revelation, for instance. In fact, each book of the Bible is a structure. You may have been studying these structures a story or verse at a time without realizing the impact of the complete structure. But if you will become structure conscious, it will help you expand your understanding and appreciation of the Bible.

A look at the attached chart of Matthew can help you become structure conscious. It shows how this Gospel is divided into five subunits (called "books" on the chart). Matthew signaled the end of one subunit and the beginning of the next by saying Jesus finished something—sayings, parables, or instructions. Transitional phrases like that serve a purpose in writing as a door serves in a building—it leads you out of one area and into another.

Now notice that each of the five subunits divides into two sections: Acts, then Teachings. Matthew 5, 6, and 7 (called the Sermon on the Mount) is probably the most familiar of the five teaching sections. It is not surprising to discover that in each case the Acts (or narrative) section is purposefully related to the Teachings (or sermon) section that follows it. For example, the action in Matthew 8 and 9 consists of Jesus' demonstrations of the healing, life-giving authority He preached about in Matthew 10. In simple terms: Jesus practiced what He preached. And

more than that, He enabled His disciples to practice what He preached! At the first of Matthew 10, Matthew said Jesus called to Him His 12 disciples and gave them authority. Then, in the rest of Matthew 10 we read what Jesus taught the disciples to do and expect as they shared His authority, the kind of authority He demonstrated in a variety of ways as recorded in Matthew 8 and 9.

Reading someone else's chart of a Bible book is just the first step in becoming structure conscious. It is more important to be able to observe that structure for yourself. The question is, how does one do that? And that's where "repetition," "comparison/contrast," "illustrations," and "climax" all come in. (See the box at the bottom of the one-page introduction to inductive study.) Observing those things will help you discover an author's structure for yourself.

### **About Repetition and Key Words or Ideas**

As you read anywhere in the Bible, ask, What are the key words or ideas here? or, What significant words or ideas are repeated? Those two questions are not quite the same, since there can be key words or ideas that are not repeated often. What you are after are the most significant words or ideas, and repetition often indicates what those are. A quick reading of 1 Corinthians 13, with these questions in mind, reveals that this chapter is about love (charity). That key word is repeated frequently there. What about 1 Corinthians 14? The word "tongues" is repeated 15 times in this 40-verse chapter. Sheer repetition indicates the chapter is about tongues, but what about tongues? Does the key word "love," used only once in this chapter but many times in the immediately preceding chapter, help answer that question? And what about "prophecy"? It shows up about half as frequently as "tongues," yet it may also help us discover what the chapter is saying about tongues. So then "love" and "prophecy" may be the key words in 1 Corinthians 14, even if they are not repeated as often as "tongues" in that chapter.

Incidentally, noticing repeated words or phrases in Matthew helps reveal the "flag" (i.e. "Jesus finished . . .") that closes one subunit (or book) within Matthew and introduces the next.

Observing repetition and obviously key words or ideas is a simple



and significant step in becoming structure conscious and in recognizing what a chapter is about.

### **About Comparison and Contrast**

As you read anywhere in the Bible, ask, What significant ideas, people, or places are compared or contrasted? For example, look at John 1:1-5 and ask what contrast is introduced in those few verses.

As you read the interview with Nicodemus (John 3) and the talk with the woman at the well (John 4), notice all the comparisons or contrasts between these two. By doing this we not only become alert to how John structured his material, but we also become better acquainted with each of the people. And by seeing each of them better, we can understand and appreciate Jesus' ministry to both better. We see that Jesus is able and willing to meet a wide variety of needs.

What do you notice about King Herod (Matthew 2) and John the Baptist (Matthew 3)? Careful observation of what is stated and implied in Matthew 2 and 3 about these two men gives insights into the life of rebellion on the one hand and faith on the other.

Compare and contrast what is said about "works" in Romans and James. Martin Luther felt the contrast was so great that he could not harmonize them. For others the thoughts are complementary. Remember, while some contrasts are paradoxical, as with "light" vs. "darkness," other contrasts may be complementary. Observing comparisons and contrasts challenges our perception and broad-mindedness.

### **About Illustrations**

Here are two more questions to ask as you read anywhere in the Bible: Are there illustrations used? What do they illustrate?

Reading through Matthew 18 you will find reference to children, a millstone, cutting off a hand or foot, plucking out an eye, a lost sheep, a tax collector, a king and his debtors, and a servant and his debtor. Is this chapter about nurseries, hospitals, farms, or loan agencies? Or is it about spiritual things? What did Jesus have in mind when He used this interesting assortment of illustrations? Could childlikeness, drowning, amputation, rescue acts, and bill collecting all be illustrating the same

thing? Or is Matthew 18 about an assortment of topics? Or could it be about various aspects of one topic? Asking these questions helps us get serious about the message, doesn't it?

In addition, we need to ask what these illustrations mean *in this passage*. The illustration about plucking out an eye or cutting off a hand or foot appears in Matthew 5 also. Is the same truth illustrated there as in Matthew 18? It is possible for an illustration to be used for quite different purposes, depending on the conversation or sermon where it appears. Sometimes it is necessary to know the subject being discussed before the illustration can be properly understood.

By observing illustrations carefully we will become more alert to how the author structured the material. We will also be more alert to the truth that is illustrated. In addition, it is true that if we observe the general thrust of the passage and discover the subject being discussed, the illustrations will make more sense.

### **About Climax and Cruciality**

Two more questions to ask as you read anywhere in the Bible are: Is there a high or crucial point in this book or chapter? If so, where? How do the preceding and following items contribute to that central point?

Daniel 2 records a dramatic event that occurred during the second year of the reign of Nebuchadnezzar. Where does this story climax? Is it at verse 44 with the words, "And in the days of those kings the God of heaven will set up a kingdom"? Is that the climax of the story of those tense hours when the wise men lived under sentence of imminent death? Or is the climax at verse 19, "Then the mystery was revealed to Daniel," when we realize that the fury of the king will be abated and the lives of the wise men spared?

The order and timing of the events that follow the climax at the first part of verse 19 are significant. I read on in a hurry, wanting Daniel to deliver the message quickly before the king impatiently kills the poor wise men.

But Daniel does not seem to be in a rush. The last part of verse 19 indicates he took time out—right at the critical moment—to "bless the God of Heaven." Wouldn't the Lord have understood if he had deliv-

ered the message first, then prayed? Wasn't Daniel's first business to calm the king and spare the wise men? *Then* he could sigh a huge thank you to God. But that is not how it went.

Daniel's deliberate ways and priorities stand in instructive contrast to the fury of the king and the haste of his captain, Arioch. Neither God nor His man Daniel were breathless about the crisis.

By singling out the climax, and the preceding and subsequent events, we are better able to (1) observe the character of God and of God's followers, and (2) recognize and appreciate the author's structure and the reasons for it.

Matthew 14:1-12 is another good place to observe climax or cruciality.

### **Part 5: Assignment**

1. **Read** back through the information provided in this lesson about repetition, comparison or contrast, illustrations, and climax or cruciality. Do some of the things suggested in those sections.
2. **Prepare** a thought chain in Habakkuk. This will help you try some of what you read about in this lesson, and it will also prepare you for some of what will be discussed in the next lesson.

It may help you to take a photocopy of Habakkuk (it fits on two pages) so that you can circle words and phrases without spoiling the pages of your Bible. Here's how to do a thought chain:

**Select** a thought that recurs in Habakkuk. "Waiting" or "justice" are good ones. Then read Habakkuk and circle each word or phrase that directly relates to the thought you selected. What you circle does not need to include identical words, but the thoughts should be directly and clearly related. After reading the whole book, go back through and reread the circled parts noticing how they all connect. You may want to trace a line connecting them in a chain.

Does preparing a thought chain help you (1) observe repetitions? (2) trace the development in the passage? (3) observe the relationship of thoughts?



## Lesson 9

# Inductive Study

## (Part 2 of Detailed Study)

### Part 1: Teaching Ministry of the Holy Spirit

"The agency of the Spirit of God does not remove from us the necessity of exercising our faculties and talents, but teaches us to use every power to the glory of God." Ellen G. White, *Counsels to Parents, Teachers and Students*, p. 361.

Roger wanted to learn about auto mechanics. When he lifted the hood of a car he wanted to know what made all those parts work. And he wanted to know how to repair them when they did not work properly. So he asked his father, who was an excellent mechanic, to teach him. Since Roger was young and inexperienced, he seemed slow and clumsy, especially contrasted to his experienced father. But he began to try anyway.

However, Dad saw that it was going to take a long time for his son to get his old car in shape, so he took the tools out of Roger's hands and said, "Here, I can do that quickly and easily for you." He could and he did. But Roger didn't learn to repair a car that way.

Does the Holy Spirit help us with Bible study the way Roger's dad "helped" him learn auto mechanics? Does the Holy Spirit want to do it for us? Or does the Spirit want to teach *us* how?

### Part 2: How to Let Bible Study Be What It Can Be

When you study the Bible, what are you looking for? Is it courage? Faith? Love or peace? Do you need help relating to children, parents, in-laws, spouse? Maybe you study the Bible to find career guidance or help with ethical concerns. Maybe you've been studying the Bible trying to find out how or where to live.

If anybody was ever searching for help with personal problems, it must have been Job. As his troubles multiplied, can't you hear Job saying, "Lord, give me relief. I need to understand. Help me, somehow, with these problems!"

How did the Lord answer that prayer?

He restored the fortunes of Job (Job 42:10). But that was not until *after* God gave Job what he needed. Read Job 42:1-6 and see that God first gave Job the knowledge that God can do all things, and then a firsthand view of God. Job described those gifts from God this way: "I know that thou canst do all things, and that no purpose of thine can be thwarted" (Job 42:2). "I had heard of thee by the hearing of the ear, but now my eye sees thee" (Job 42:5).

When we study the Bible, we may not receive immediate or direct answers to our questions. The problems that harass us may not be solved right away. But we *can* expect to see God. Like Job, we can discover through Bible study (1) that God can do all things, and (2) a firsthand view of Him for ourselves. Whether or not God solves our personal problems just when or how we wish, the fact that we realize God's power and see Him firsthand is reason enough to study and reward enough for having studied. Of course, the fact that God can do all things assures us that He will help with all our personal problems in just the right way and at the right time.

Let Bible study be what it can be—let it be your time to see and trust God.

### **Part 3: Compare Notes About Last Assignment**

Review together each part of the assignment: observing repetition, comparing or contrasting, observing illustrations, following climax or cruciality, and preparing a thought chain. Share what you learned from the Bible as you did the assignment. Also, share the benefits of doing the kind of study you did. You could ask several questions to help you do this, such as, Did preparing a thought chain, or some other part of the assignment, help you discover the structure of the chapter or book? How did your discoveries help you appreciate the Bible writer's message? Did this assignment help you "get it all together" so that you

have a feel for where the author was coming from and headed?

#### **Part 4: Detailed Study (Section 2).**

Look again at the one-page introduction to inductive study that was included with Lesson 6. In this lesson we will discuss Observation of Grammatical Construction and Relationship of Thoughts—the last two items in the box at the bottom of that page.

Remember, this is all a part of paying close attention to the details as we read so that we will understand and appreciate more and more of the message.

#### **About Grammatical Construction**

Questions to ask about this, wherever you read in the Bible, include: (1) What or who is the subject? (2) What are the verbs? (3) What connectives are used? How do these help me understand the passage?

Read Genesis 1 and underscore the subject of each sentence. After doing this, would you say this chapter is about creation or the Creator? What God said and did is certainly involved, but grammatically the *subject* in these sentences is God—over and over again. Recognizing this prepares us to consider the chapter from the standpoint of what it says about *God* as well as what it says about God's powerful words and deeds.

The simple but revealing process of asking what or who is the subject of Genesis 1 leaves us with more (not fewer) questions, and therefore with an even healthier respect for this great chapter. But in the process of recognizing the complexity of this chapter, we may have accomplished a couple of things, like ordering priorities more carefully so that the Creator comes before creation. It is embarrassing to think how close we can come to an age-old distortion if we concentrate on creation as the essence and end of Genesis 1. It's possible for God-worshippers, who would never worship the sun, to become absorbed in questions about the creation of light and fail to keep the Creator of light in first place.

In addition, recognizing that Genesis 1 is about both Creator and creation invites a more equitable treatment of the questions about each.



Questions about the Creator tend to be asked, and explored, with a kind of patient reverence and faith that does not always promote discovery. On the other hand, questions about creation are asked, and explored, with less reserve. This vigorous scientific inquiry multiplies evidence but also tends to complicate and yet oversimplify the issues.

Perhaps more of the reserve that has characterized questions about the Creator should be used in asking about creation. And maybe more of the vigor that characterizes questions about creation should be used in asking about the subject of Genesis 1—the Creator.

The second question to ask of grammatical construction is, What are the verbs? In his little book, *The Art of Plain Talk*, Rudolf Flesch said, "It is the verb that gives life to any sentence; it literally makes the sentence go." Verbs "make the Bible go" too.

As we notice the Bible's many verbs, it helps us live the passage. Try living the householder parable (Matthew 21:33-41) by underscoring each verb. This short parable pops with more than 25 active verbs including *planted, dug, built, leased, collect, flogged, killed, stoned, threw, destroy, and give.*

Some favor Mark's short gospel because action verbs predominate there. Read it and notice how it moves right along on the wings of action verbs.

Being alert to the verbs as you read the Bible will help you imagine how it happened, how it felt, and how it affected the people you read about. This all helps us understand and appreciate the Bible.

The last question we will discuss about grammatical construction is also an introduction to the next section about relationship of thoughts. That is, What connectives are used, and how do they help me understand the passage?

Various parts of speech, like conjunctions, prepositions and adverbs, serve as *connectives*. They are so ordinary and functional that their significance is easily overlooked. What *real* meaning does "and," "but," "therefore," "then," or "when" have anyway? We would not single out one of these when looking for key words. Nor would we find one of them particularly interesting for a word study. Yet each *is* vital because of its function.

A connective can shift the whole train of thought, reinforce a point by introducing a second argument, transplant the reader many miles or years from the preceding thought, or introduce an answer to a question, the summary of a discussion, or a resolution of a problem. Connectives invite us to follow the author's logic and to notice where the author has been and is going.

One of Paul's many "therefores" (a connective) comes at the first of Romans 5. "Therefore, since we are justified by faith. . . ." "Therefore" alerts us to a transition. In this case, it invites us to review and sum up what he said in Romans 1-4 about being justified by faith, and it prepares us to follow what he will say in the next few chapters about the ongoing effects of this experience.

Romans 1:16-19 is another example of Paul's use of connectives. Read these four verses and see how many times you find the word "for" or "because." Then read the same verses again asking Why? just before each "for" or "because." This will help you see how each "for" clause leads you on through Paul's logic by answering a question.

It goes like this: *I am not ashamed of the gospel . . . (Why not ashamed?) for it is the power of God unto salvation . . . (Why so powerful?) for in it the righteousness of God is revealed . . . (Why is His righteousness revealed?) for the wrath of God is revealed . . . (Why is His wrath revealed?) for what can be known about God is plain. . . .*

Awareness of the little Greek connective *gar* (translated "for" or "because") not only helps us follow Paul's train of thought, but it also helps us see that it *is* a train (logical sequence) and not just scattered thoughts randomly recorded in the same vicinity. The "for" or "because" connects the thought before it with the thought after it. Then that thought connects us with the next section.

### **About Relationships of Thoughts**

Whether or not there are connectives to flag the relationship of thoughts in a passage, it helps to be aware of the likelihood that the thoughts are purposefully related. As we read chapters and books, we can ask what each paragraph has to do with the one before and after it. Simply ask, What thoughts are related here, and how?

There are several ways that thoughts may be purposefully related. An author may build a case by simple addition or accumulation of points so that each thought in a chapter or book adds to the one(s) before it. The thoughts may balance or offset each other, or the author may discuss cause(s) and effect(s). There may be a general statement of truth which is followed by several particulars which illustrate or reinforce the generalization, or this could be reversed with the particulars given first and the generalization used as a summary.

Consider Matthew 5. It begins with a list of "blesseds" and ends with a simple and profound "be perfect." How do the thoughts in that chapter relate? How do the blesseds at the beginning (verses 3-11) relate to each other and to the rest of the chapter? What do the illustrations about salt and shining lights (verses 13-16) have to do with each other and with the beatitudes at the first and the law-keeping later in the chapter? Compare your answers to these questions with those suggested in the summary chart of Matthew 5 that is provided at the end of this lesson (Supplement A).

Can you find the use of generalization followed by several particulars in Matthew 10? What about, "He called to him his twelve disciples and gave them authority over unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal every disease and every infirmity" (Matthew 10:1). Then what particulars follow about how that gift of authority is to be exercised?

What generalization is there in 1 Corinthians 13:1? What particulars follow in the rest of that chapter? Is there also a summary conclusion in 1 Corinthians 13:13?

Notice the series of woes in Matthew 23, then notice the concluding statements in verses 37-38. Are the thoughts in this chapter related in a cause-effect way, so that there are several causes listed and then in verses 37-38 the effect?

How do the points from the parables of the ten virgins, the talents, and the sheep and the goats in Matthew 25 relate? What do these parables have to do with the sermon that begins at the first of Matthew 24?

Once we become alert like this to the idea that thoughts are purposefully related (even when that relationship is not expressly stated), then there is no end to the questions we can ask and the insights we can

gather from the Bible.

Being alert to the relationship of thoughts is also a remarkably effective way to let the Bible be its own interpreter. There is more than one way to compare scripture with scripture. In addition to selecting similar thoughts from a variety of Bible books, we can recognize how the thought in one verse relates to the thoughts that precede and follow it in the same chapter and book.

In addition to the suggestions given in this lesson, preparing thought chains (as assigned in Lesson 8) is an excellent way to learn to be more aware of the relationship of thoughts.

### **Part 5: Assignment**

**Read** Habakkuk and **write** all the observations and questions you think of. Include any cross references or linking thoughts that come to your mind.

That's all there is to this assignment, but the following may help you do it:

- Remember what you learned about asking questions as a study skill.
- Be sure to keep things like structure/form, grammatical construction, and relationship of thoughts in mind. Observe and ask questions in such a way that it helps you understand and appreciate the whole, as well as the parts, of Habakkuk.
- Do your observations and questions help you see God?
- Remember the up, out, and in dimensions that are involved in Bible study. Do your observations and questions reflect an awareness of all three of these?
- Remember experiential Bible study. Have you included relational or motivational observations or questions?
- Choose a format for this assignment:
  - You may want to just note the chapter and verse at the left of the page and jot down whatever you think of beside it, without trying to organize your work in columns.
  - On the other hand, you may prefer to organize. Some turn the page lengthwise and make three columns headed "Observation"

/ "Questions" / "Cross Ref. or Linking Thought." You can add a fourth column, "Notes and Comments," for anything that doesn't seem to fit in one of those three columns.

-Whatever format you choose, you need not work with every verse, and you need not do everything (observe, question, cross reference) with the verses you do select. This plan of study is to serve you and your search for understanding and enjoyment of the Bible. Don't become a servant to the plan.

## Supplement A, Lesson 9

### MATTHEW 5

The Citizens' Characters

1-12

#### Characteristics of the Citizens

- 3-6 In themselves they see and deplore spiritual poverty and are open to and eager for relief.
- 7-12 To others they extend mercy out of a pure heart, making peace and receiving persecution.

13

#### Without These Characteristics

The citizens are discarded and ignored.

14-16

#### With These Characteristics

**Good** works are evident and the Father is glorified.

17-20

#### These Characteristics are the Complement of the Law and the Prophets

Complete righteousness includes thoroughly doing and teaching the law.

21-48

#### Citizens' Commandment Keeping Excludes:

- 21-26 Anger and insults
- 27-30 Lustful desire
- 31-32 Unwarranted divorce
- 33-37 Unjustified authority
- 38-42 Revenge

#### Includes:

- 43-48 Impartial love

### LUKE 2

Recognition of the Divine Mission

1-7

#### Obscure Birth

The baby was born away from home and public attention.

8-14

#### Angels Recognize

They announce that a Savior is born and that the result will be glory to God and peace among humans.

15-20

#### Shepherds Recognize

They glorify and praise God for the Bethlehem baby.

21

#### The Baby Named

He is called Jesus, as instructed by the angel.

22-35

#### Simeon Recognizes

In this baby he sees God's salvation and prophesies concerning Jesus' life.

36-38

#### A Prophetess Recognizes

She thanks God and identifies the baby with the redemption of Jerusalem.

39-40

#### Childhood

Early physical, intellectual, and spiritual development in Nazareth.

41-50

#### Jesus Recognizes

At the age of 12, at the Passover, Jesus identified with His Father.

51-52

#### Youth and Young Manhood

Continued intellectual, physical, spiritual, and social development in Nazareth.

## Lesson 10

# Inductive Study

## (Summarizing)

### Part 1: Teaching Ministry of the Holy Spirit

"Deep, earnest study of the word under the guidance of the Holy Spirit will give you fresh manna, and the same spirit will make its use effectual." *Testimonies*, vol. 6, p. 163.

Have you ever wondered why the Israelites complained about the miracle of manna? It was a miracle, wasn't it? Shouldn't they have found that exciting? Shouldn't they have been pleased to be miraculously fed every day?

Imagine for a moment the story of a modern young father, let's call him Harold, who has a wife and three children at home. The cost of living increased more rapidly than Harold's wages. His job on the assembly line paid so little that there was not enough for necessities. They juggled family finances, but during the winter months, when heat bills were high, they had less and less to spend for groceries. Often for dinner they had only dried beans cooked with a little salt to season them. They had no butter, no bread, no milk.

Then one winter morning, as the snow fell softly, the children played outside. They were amazed to discover some very big snowflakes falling among the normal snowflakes. They were *so* big that the children called them falling snowballs. Each flake was as big as a pea. As they held out their mittens to see what the huge snowflakes looked like, they discovered something more surprising than the size. The snowflakes didn't melt. The normal snowflakes didn't last long on their warm mittens. But these "falling snowballs" were different. They stayed.

Since children like to eat snow anyway, it wasn't any wonder that

they popped these falling snowballs into their mouths. Then they were in for another even bigger surprise. They didn't melt like ice, nor taste like water.

The taste was very special. All three liked it but couldn't describe it. They didn't even know what to compare it to. It was something like fruit and something like the fluffiest bread they had ever eaten. It was tender, yet chewy; juicy, but not watery.

They were excited about their new discovery. *Imagine*, they thought, *falling snowballs that don't melt and that taste better than any snow we've ever eaten, even better than any food we can think of.*

When they told their mother and dad, they thought they saw tears in their eyes. They wondered why their parents would cry about such a special discovery. But then the children didn't understand about tears of gratitude.

They handed a mittenful to Mother and Dad, who tasted these strange little snowballs and agreed that they were very special.

Every day for the rest of the winter, whether or not regular snowflakes fell, little snowballs fell. And every day the family ate these special morsels.

One day, as the daffodils began breaking through the ground, Mother said to Dad, "Do you suppose when the season changes that the flavor of the morsels will change also?"

Dad said, "Do you want it to?"

"Well," she said, "I was just thinking about the chocolate cakes I used to bake when we had enough money to buy the ingredients. They tasted so good. Wouldn't it be nice if the morsels tasted like that?"

That was just the beginning. As the days went by, the children started asking, "When will the morsels change? Wouldn't it be nice if they tasted like chicken . . . or cranberry sauce . . . or . . . ."

Those modern children and their parents discovered something ancient Israel discovered a long time ago. God's miracle manna is:

always fresh  
always nourishing, and  
always manna!

Israel wanted quail, or leeks, or some other luxury they had enjoyed



in Egypt. But all they got was manna, fresh and nourishing, every morning.

Our thought for today about the teaching ministry of the Holy Spirit reminds us that the Bible is God's spiritual manna to us, and that the Holy Spirit makes that manna fresh and effectual (nourishing) for us.

What more could we want? Luxuries from another way of life may at times seem more tantalizing, but always fresh and thoroughly nourishing food is, in fact, the most desirable. The Bible—when taught by the Holy Spirit—is never stale or ineffective.

## Part 2: How to Let Bible Study Be What It Can Be

What do we expect from Bible study? How do we feel about Bible study? These are the kinds of questions we are thinking about in Part 2 of each lesson. Today, our thought is: *If our expectations and attitudes about Bible study are healthy, we will expect to grow as a result of, and in the process of, Bible study.*

Growth is something children are usually excited about, and parents are eager for their children to do. That's why grow charts show up on doors around the house.

But adults don't seem so interested in growth—for themselves. For example, not too many grown-ups look forward to growing big and tall as a result of eating their spinach! We call adults grown-ups, not "growing-ups." But spiritually speaking, every Bible student is always a growing-up, never a grown-up.

Physically we may reach our prime and then decline, yet in several other important ways we can continue to grow as long as we live. Three of those ways are **mind development**, **character development**, and what we call **outreach development**.

Perhaps you are acquainted with a familiar classic from *Steps to Christ* about mind development: "There is nothing more calculated to strengthen the intellect than the study of the Scriptures" (p. 90). On at least 78 different pages in 22 of the printed volumes by Ellen White, there are references to the mind development that results from Bible study. The condition of, use of, "size" of, and quality of one's mind are all affected by Bible study. For example, as results of Bible study we can expect:

- an energized, invigorated, and sharpened intellect
- sound judgment and an evenly-balanced mind
- clearer comprehension and understanding
- greater efficiency in the use of one's mind
- improved reasoning faculties
- retentive and strengthened memory
- ability to think more deeply
- enlarged, enriched, expanded minds
- refined, elevated, purified minds

That's some list! We have a ways to go in really appreciating what all those things mean, but we can understand enough to want even more. Bible study produces desirable mind development.

Transformed life or character development are terms used even more frequently by Ellen White to describe the effects of Bible study. She reminds us that through Bible study our lives will be made new and kept new. A strong, consistent character that is noble, purified, and refined is the consequence of correct Bible study.

Bible study has a positive effect on our motives and gives stability of purpose, fortitude, faith, love, peace, and joy. Also, by contemplating Bible themes, one's prayers will be more and more acceptable to God because they will be more and more mixed with faith and love (*Steps to Christ*, p. 89).

What about outreach development? Just as Bible study causes us to reach up (in prayer) more acceptably, it is also true that it will cause us to reach out to others more meaningfully. Those others include both believers and unbelievers. "All who take the word of God as their rule of life are brought into close relationship with one another. The Bible is their bond of union" (*Testimonies*, vol. 5, p. 389). So believers are bound together by the Bible. And it is because of Spirit-filled Bible study that believers can also reach unbelievers: "As they themselves drink from the fountain of living water, from them will flow living streams to bless and refresh others" (*Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students*, p. 450).

Just as there are several ways we can grow from Bible study, there are also several reasons why growth is necessary. Two that haven't yet

been mentioned specifically: growth produces both hope and humility.

How does growth produce hope? Most of us feel that we understand only a small part of what we want to understand. We would feel hopeless about Bible study if we did not know that it is possible to grow in our understanding of the Bible, not in a single leap but almost imperceptibly. There are companion thoughts—one in Psalms, one in Proverbs—that help to illustrate this. The psalmist said, "Thy word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path" (Psalm 119:105). In Proverbs 4:18 we are reminded, "The path of the righteous is like the light of dawn, which shines brighter and brighter until full day."

Imagine a progression of lights from a small candle to the sun. For some people the amount they understand from the Bible equals just one little candle, lit in the darkness of their experience. But then, through study, God's word becomes a flashlight to them, then a bright light bulb, and finally the rising sunshine that will shine brighter and brighter until the full day when they hear God's words spoken to them audibly.

Isn't it encouraging to know that we don't remain ignorant? But, as we already noticed, we don't jump from ignorance to full light in a single leap. We grow. We are always growing-ups, never grown-ups, in Bible study. This fact should keep us humble.

Do you remember reading (Daniel 1:17) that Daniel had understanding in all visions and dreams? That sounds like *he* may have been a grown-up, doesn't it? But have you also noticed that later on (Daniel 8:27) this same Daniel did not understand the vision given to him? He had understanding in all visions, but didn't understand a vision given later. Even Daniel was growing, wasn't he? Why should we self-confidently feel no need for more truth and greater light? (*Testimonies*, vol. 5, p. 709). We have to be careful not to become set in our ideas or imagine our ideas and opinions are infallible (*Testimonies to Ministers*, pp. 105, 110).

If we will remember that Bible students are always growing up and never grown up, it will increase our hope and humility.

### **Part 3: Compare Notes About Last Assignment**

The group should compare what specific observations and questions they had in each of the following categories:

(As group members offer specific questions and observations in each of these categories, those who are listening should write down all they can that they did not already have in their own assignment. This will help with the assignments in this lesson and in Lesson 11.)

- Questions or observations about God  
What questions or observations did you have that helped you:
  - understand God's character
  - understand how God related to people
  - worship or love God
- Questions or observations about **structure or form** in Habakkuk  
Which of your questions or observations were about:
  - repetition and key words or ideas
  - comparison and contrast
  - illustrations
  - climax or cruciality
- Questions or observations about **grammatical construction** in Habakkuk  
Which of your questions or observations were about:
  - subjects of sentences
  - verbs
  - connectives (prepositions and conjunctions)
- Questions or observations about **relationship of thoughts** in Habakkuk  
Which of your questions or observations were about:
  - progression (addition or accumulation of points)
  - generalization / particularization
  - cause / effect
  - other relationship of thoughts

Specific relational, motivational, or experiential observations or questions

-Remember how Baughman, Coleman, and Drakeford do experiential kinds of Bible study? Did you ask any questions or make any observations that will help you experience the text for yourself?

In this comparing session the group is actually classifying the ques-

tions and observations from their last assignment (Lesson 9). In addition, this provides time for each class member to add questions and observations to his or her own list.

#### **Part 4: Inductive Study—Summarizing**

Please refer again to the single-page introduction to inductive Bible study provided with Lesson 6. Notice the third little box in the top right-hand corner—SUMMARY of the whole. That is the part of inductive study that we are thinking about in this lesson.

Lesson 6 introduced summarizing by means of an assignment that called for a chapter title for Psalm 14, Psalm 24, Matthew 18, Luke 2, and Romans 8. Now let's look a little closer at this skill.

Summarizing has to do with putting thoughts in fewer words. Compare this with paraphrasing, which has to do with putting thoughts in other words. You could call summarizing a matter of "putting it in a nutshell" or "boiling it down."

In the college classroom, the ability to summarize is a survival attempt. Students cannot possibly write down everything the teacher says, so they must select. And if they are taking good notes they will manage to summarize what the teacher said so that they can remember as much as possible of what was said, and even how.

That is how it should be when we use the summarizing skill in Bible study. It is not an attempt to say everything the Bible writer said "in 25 words or less." The Bible is condensed as it is. John said, "There are also many other things which Jesus did; were every one of them to be written, I suppose that the world itself could not contain the books that would be written" (John 21:25). We could have had a world full of books, but instead we have one small Bible. We should not try to condense that even more by leaving some of it out. Instead, we should learn to summarize in such a way that we can grasp all of it—or at least more of it—rather than neglect parts of it.

The best summary is the one that helps you remember the most from the passage you have summarized. Your summary title for any chapter should help you remember as much as possible of that chapter, including the "tone" of the chapter, how the parts of the chapter fit

together, and what the chapter told you about God and about your own experience. As you have probably guessed, the kind of question asking and observing that you learned in Lessons 8 and 9 help you be more aware of what is in each chapter. The summary that you write *after* you do detailed study will, of course, be more helpful and complete than you might write without detailed study.

### **Part 5: Assignment**

**Read** Psalm 14, Psalm 24, Matthew 18, Luke 2, and Romans 8, and **write** all the observations and questions you think of. (Part 5 of Lesson 9 explained how to do this kind of assignment.)

After completing the detailed study, write a summary title for each chapter. Work with one chapter at a time, completing this entire assignment on each chapter before beginning the next chapter.

**Compare** this summary title with the one you wrote for the assignment included in Lesson 6. What is the difference between the two summary titles you wrote? How did your detailed study affect your summary title?

## Lesson 11

# Inductive Study

## (Charts)

### Part 1: Teaching Ministry of the Holy Spirit

"As we observe the things of the natural world, we shall be enabled, under the guiding of the Holy Spirit, more fully to understand the lessons of God's word. It is thus that nature becomes a key to the treasure-house of the word." *Education*, p. 120.

If there is any chance that you have not been in a child's Sabbath school department, you must go soon. Those who have been there know it is a world of illustrations for little people. There are felt people, places, and things, pictures, cutouts, flannel boards, stuffed animals, and on Sabbath morning there may be any number of live baby animals that show up—perhaps a lamb or kitten. Wise teachers know that pictures and illustrations get and hold the attention of children.

The Holy Spirit also illustrates for us. Not just in a special room somewhere, but in the whole outdoors. Those who have been there, with the Holy Spirit as their guide, know about this natural world of illustrations for big people. Our wise Teacher knows that pictures and illustrations—especially the natural, alive kind—get and hold our attention. Our Teacher enables us to observe the things of nature in such a way that we, as a result, will understand the Bible lessons better.

### Part 2: Ways to Let Bible Study Be What It Can Be

An eager student once asked a famous Bible teacher, "How can I know the Bible as well as you do?"

The teacher replied, "It's easy, just study the Bible every day for 50 years."

That teacher was right, don't you think? It *is* easy, as long as you're willing to go after it a little bit at a time and willing to keep after it until those little bits add up to a lot. Real understanding and appreciation of the Bible sort of add up, slowly but surely.

But that's not quite all. The slow-but-sure process of addition is not all that is happening. Consider this thought about the use of our talents that surely includes the use of our Bible study abilities:

"By faithfulness in little duties, we are to work on the plan of addition, and God will work for us on the plan of multiplication." *Christ's Object Lessons*, p. 360.

It is an interesting combination: We must be willing to work on the plan of addition and able to believe in the plan of multiplication. We cannot expect understanding to come at a single leap. Yet we should not be surprised if insights seem to multiply rapidly sometimes.

### **Part 3: Compare Notes About Last Assignment**

Group member should share with each other the difference between the summary titles they wrote for Psalm 14, Psalm 24, Matthew 18, Luke 2, and Romans 8, first without and then with detailed study. Did careful observations and questions help them prepare a more adequate summary of these chapters?

### **Part 4: Inductive Study—Charts**

Refer again to the one-page introduction to inductive study provided with Lesson 6. The final item on the right-hand side is CHART II. That is what this lesson is about.

Teachers of inductive Bible study like to tell the story of Professor Agassiz's student and the fish. Here's an abbreviated form of that story:

Renowned Professor Agassiz gave a specimen fish to a new, aspiring student whose special interest was insects. In addition, he gave quite a different assignment than the student expected. He said, "Take this fish and look at it; we call it a haemulon. By and by I will ask what you have seen."



The professor left him alone for hours, when the student thought minutes was long enough to see all there was to see about the fish.

Finally, frustrated with the assignment, the student began to draw the fish, and as he did so, he was surprised to discover new features. When the professor returned and found the student drawing, he said, "That's right, a pencil is one of the best eyes."

As the story goes, the student still had only begun to see the fish, but he was using a great helper—a pencil.

A pencil is a great helper in Bible study too. If we should ever feel left alone with just a chapter from the Bible and with much more time than we think necessary, we can let a pencil help us see. It is important to write our questions and observations, and it is important to summarize them. The skill of putting our summary in chart form is what this lesson is about.

Preparing such a summary chart helps us in at least two ways: First it helps us sum up and clarify what we have already learned about the chapter. It also helps us learn some things we wouldn't have thought of if we had not prepared the chart.

There are different ways to summarize, but a summary chart such as those of Matthew 5 and Luke 2 (provided with Lesson 9) is a simple way. Look at those charts and notice the three parts:

1. A title for the whole chart,
2. A statement of the "point" of each paragraph, and
3. A brief, condensed statement of what each paragraph says.

The purpose is best served if each part of the chart is short. Less than 10 words is good for chart titles and for statements of the point of each paragraph. The condensed statement of each paragraph may extend to about 20 words.

You may wonder what the difference is between the point of each paragraph (the part that is underscored) and the condensed statement of what the paragraph says. While both have to do with what the paragraph is about, the point should also take into account *why* the paragraph is there. The points of the paragraphs should, in some way, show the relationship of all the paragraphs in the chapter. For example, there may be a key word included in several of the point statements ("recog-

nize" is repeated in the Luke 2 summary chart). No matter how you show the relationship of the paragraphs, it should be evident when you read down through the underscored portions of your chart that the paragraphs do relate, and how they relate.

As you prepare a summary chart you will discover how your questions and observations fit together. Also, as you prepare such a chart you will make more observations.

### **Part 5: Assignment**

**Prepare** a summary chart for each of the three chapters in Habakkuk. As you do this **notice** how your observations and questions (the assignment in Lesson 9) help you see the whole chapter and prepare you to summarize each part more carefully. Notice how your observations and questions help you realize the relationship of all the parts of the chapter. Also notice how the process of preparing the chart increases your insights. If you write down some of what you notice while doing this assignment, you will be prepared to share when the group meets next time.

## Lesson 12

# Putting It Together

### Part 1: Teaching Ministry of the Holy Spirit

"It is not the highest work of education to communicate knowledge merely, but to impart that vitalizing energy which is received through the contact of mind with mind, and soul with soul. It is only life that can beget life." *The Desire of Ages*, p. 250.

The Holy Spirit is not just a Teacher who informs us and stays at arm's length while doing. Rather, the Holy Spirit is a Teacher who is really in touch with us—Mind with mind, whole Person with whole person. When the Spirit educates, it affects my whole *mind* (intellect, emotions, will) and *body* and *soul* and *might*. The Spirit's life produces life in me. God is the life-giver when coming to us in Jesus Christ *and* when coming to us as our Teacher, the Holy Spirit.

In this series of lessons we have discussed several educational methods or means that the Spirit uses. All these are a part of an enormous act of love. They are all a part of God's life—producing life in us.

### Part 2: Ways to Let Bible Study Be What It Can Be

Bible study, by any method, is something like putting a jigsaw puzzle together—not because it is so puzzling but because putting a jigsaw puzzle together has to do with keeping the whole in mind while working with the parts. Each jigsaw puzzle piece fits with another, and they with others, and finally all are part of the total picture.

Realizing that puzzle pieces can be put together into a picture keeps us from simply stacking the pieces according to size, color, or shape. We haven't "done" a jigsaw puzzle when we have gathered similarly-

colored pieces into separate heaps on the table.

So it is with Bible study. We really have not done it adequately if we have only gathered similar-sounding texts into separate collections in our mind. We need to go a step further and be sure that those separate collections are integrated into the whole picture of the Bible.

What is this whole picture? It is not printed on the Bible box top, like jigsaw puzzle pictures that we can prop up in front of us while we work.

How do we find the whole picture? We can look at how someone else assembled it. For instance, "There is one great central truth to be kept ever before the mind in the searching of the Scriptures—Christ and Him crucified. Every other truth is invested with influence and power corresponding to its relation to this theme" (*Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 6, p. 1084).

"The student should learn to view the word as a whole and to see the relation of its parts. He should gain a knowledge of its grand central theme—of God's original purpose for the world, of the rise of the great controversy, and of the work of redemption." *Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students*, p. 462.

". . . all [in the word of God] is but a revelation of the character of God."  
Ellen G. White, *Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 596.

Christian authors, both technical and popular, come to similar conclusions. "Heilsgeschichte" (salvation history) is a frequently-used technical term which refers to "the revelatory and saving acts of GOD whereby He has sought to save the world and to which the O.T. and N.T. primarily bear witness" (Van A. Harvey, *A Handbook of Theological Terms*, p. 113). Scholars have chosen this single word to describe the "whole" to which all of the Bible testifies.

Some other Christian writers are not as technical, and yet they also relate the parts of scripture to a whole. Frederick Grant says, "The great overruling interest of the Bible is religion" (*How to Read the Bible*, p. 33). According to Frank Gaebelein, "The Bible has a single great purpose. It was given to reveal the love of God as manifested in the divine provi-

sion of salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ" (James M. Boice quotes Frank Gaebelein in *The Sovereign God*, p. 117). So then we can easily find Christians who state what the whole Bible is about. That is one way to find the whole picture—look at the whole picture as others see it, then put the puzzle together for yourself, following their general outline.

Another way to find the whole picture is to discover it for yourself. This corresponds to the hard-working puzzle solver who does not look at the picture on the box top. If this puzzle solver should see the box top, the response would be, "But I'll see if that's really the picture that is in this box."

Whatever way we choose for finding the whole picture, there is a caution to remember about seeing the Bible as a whole. We must be careful how we define or limit that whole. We are not necessarily ready to describe the boundaries of the whole or the nature of its unity, just because we have discovered that there is a whole. For example, we could not say we had assembled a puzzle simply because we looked at the picture of it. Once we know the whole picture of the Bible is "heils-geschichte," we have the task of putting that together—for ourselves. As we work with the pieces of a puzzle, we are reminded that the whole picture consists of many shapes, sizes, and colors that don't always seem to fit together. So it is with the Bible. We may find parts that seem to contradict each other. Yet we will also discover that the whole picture encompasses parts that individually might sound contradictory.

For example, in the whole picture of the Bible, a conquering King *is* also a suffering Servant. When the picture is left whole enough, it encompasses both Paul and James: "For we hold that a person is justified by faith apart from works prescribed by the law" (Romans 3:28, NRSV), *and* "You see that a person is justified by works and not by faith alone" (James 2:24, NRSV).

Whatever method of Bible study we use, we must keep the whole picture in mind and allow for endless and surprising developments within that whole. Even if things like submissive conquerors do not make sense to us, we should not reject truth in an effort to reduce the whole to fit our minds. Instead, we must let our minds expand to begin to grasp the whole.

### **Part 3: Compare Notes About Last Assignment**

Group members should trade their Habakkuk summary charts with each other so that no one is looking at his/her own chart. Then each should read aloud the underscored portions (statements of the point of each paragraph) on the chart he or she has. Then the group should decide together whether those statements clearly show the relationship between the parts of the chapter. If it is not clear, the participants can kindly suggest ways to clarify the relationship of the parts. (Note: It is important, of course, not to impose a relationship of thoughts that an author did not have in mind. We must be both alert to notice the relationship of thoughts that is there and cautious not to insist on a relationship that is not there.)

### **Part 4: Putting It Together**

Go back through Part 1, **Teaching Ministry of the Holy Spirit**, in each lesson and review what was said there. Then in a short phrase or sentence list the point from Part 1 of each lesson. Then the group should add to or revise that list.

Go back through Part 2, **Ways to Let Bible Study Be What It Can Be**, and do the same thing: review, list, and add to or revise.

Go back through Part 4 in each lesson. This was the part that introduced new study skills. Again: review, list, and notice how the skills complement each other and how they fit into a single plan. The group may then wish to add or revise that list.

### **Part 5: Assignment**

Although this is the end of this series of lessons, it actually is just the beginning of assignments. Please do the following:

- Continue to develop your Bible study skills by regular, personal use.
- Continue to notice what your plan of study is. Continue to think about how you can improve or refine that plan, as well as the skills it is made of.
- Help others learn Bible study skills and develop their own plan of study.

- Let the author of these lessons (Diane Forsyth, Charistis, P.O. Box 462, College Place, WA 99324, or e-mail: [charis@owt.com](mailto:charis@owt.com)) know if, and how, these lessons have helped you. She welcomes constructive suggestions for improving the lessons, and she rejoices with you when personal Bible study becomes increasingly meaningful for you.

# Appendix A

## Teacher's Manual

(1) The material in *Mine the Word* is prepared for group use in learning more about how to study the Bible. Occasionally a number has been inserted, telling you to refer to this Teacher's Manual for the following helps.

(2) Encourage your group members to give all the responses to this question that they can think of. It may be they would rather write their answers in order to express themselves without feeling self-conscious or embarrassed about what the rest of the group will think of them. If so, hand out small pieces of paper. Then, from what they say or write, you might summarize their main points, noticing that they fall into two main categories:

### **What Bible Study Can Be**

Meaningful

Helpful

Relevant

Interesting

Challenging

Possible

A great way to grow in every relation—with God, self, others

### **What Bible Study Too Often Is**

Discouragingly hard

Boring

Repetitious

Irrelevant

Frustrating

Etc.

(3) Time will be limited each week. Look over each lesson and decide how much time you can take for each section. Be careful not to spend too much time on Parts 1, 2, or 5.

(4) If there is time, explore that question with your students. List their suggestions on a blackboard. If there is no blackboard available, you can



list them with a felt marker on large sheets of butcher paper. Following is one such list, alphabetically arranged for convenience:

Asking questions

Categorizing according to:

    What it talks about (Content)

    How it tells it (Form)

Comparing and Contrasting

Creative study

Devotional study

Experiential study

Group study

Language study

Obedience

Observing nature

Observing structure

Organization

Outlining

Participating

Paraphrasing

Reading

Summarizing

Surveying

Teaching

Thinking

Using a Concordance

Using a Bible

Writing, Note taking

(5) If there are folks in your group who do not have an analytical concordance, you could have a copy of the appropriate page or two prepared for them, either typed or photocopied. Since this assignment involves a pencil mark in the margin, it will not be a good idea to borrow concordances.

Help your group understand how important it is to do the assignments. That is how the students will really learn about these skills and find out for themselves whether they are valuable.

**Please note:**

Before you do any more lessons, please read Teacher's Manual item number (8). Please do the inductive study assignments included in Lessons 6-12 soon so you can be prepared to help when your group gets to those lessons.

(6) Here again, listing the responses of the group is a good idea. You might put the responses in two or three columns like this:

<b>Methods of the Holy Spirit</b>	<b>The Spirit's Attitudes Toward Us</b>	<b>Other Thoughts About How the Holy Spirit Educates Us</b>
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Here are some observations I have made about the teaching ministry of the Holy Spirit that you might want to share with the group:

**a. Holy Spirit and Bible—Mutually *Inclusive***

Some things are mutually *exclusive*, but the Holy Spirit and the Bible are mutually *inclusive*; that is, each complements the other. It is because of the Holy Spirit that we understand the Bible, and it is because of the Bible that we can recognize and test the work of the Holy Spirit. Notice the following statements about this:

- "The word of God—the truth—is the channel through which the Lord manifests His Spirit and power." *Acts of the Apostles*, p. 520.
- "God's holy, educating Spirit is in His word." *Counsels to Parents, Teachers and Students*, p. 171 (see also *Christ's Object Lessons*, p. 132).
- Jesus said, "The words that I have spoken to you are spirit and life" (John 6:63). These words are recorded for us in the Bible.

- "Yet the fact that God has revealed His will to men through His word, has not rendered needless the continued presence and guiding of the Holy Spirit." *The Great Controversy*, p. vii.
- "The Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, he will teach you all things" (John 14:26).

#### **b. God's Word and work agree**

- "Even the work of the Holy Spirit upon the heart is to be tested by the word of God." *Selected Messages*, book 1, p. 43.
- "In hope of eternal life which God, *who never lies*, promised ages ago" (Titus 1:2). Truth in the written word will be consistent with God's work in our life today. Notice how harmonious the words and works of Jesus were. The Gospel of John is especially helpful in showing this. See for example, Jesus' work of healing the blind man, and then the words of Jesus about it in John 9.

Ellen White frequently says, "We cannot use the Holy Spirit; the Spirit is to use us." (See *Gospel Workers*, p. 285; also *Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students*, p. 360; *Desire of Ages*, p. 672; *Evangelism*, p. 172; *Fundamentals of Christian Education*, pp. 227, 436; *Gospel Workers*, p. 155; *Selected Messages*, book 1, p. 130; *Selected Messages*, book 2, pp. 59, 158; *Testimonies*, vol. 6, pp. 57, 396; *Testimonies to Ministers*, p. 65.)

". . . the Spirit is to use us." In the relationships we know about, it is not usually desirable to have one person "use" another person. For us that means things like "take advantage of." So it pays to think about how it is that the Holy Spirit uses us. Does the Spirit take advantage of us? No. In what sense, then, does the Spirit of God use us to *our* best advantage? The Spirit is the self-giving Facilitator who enables us to think and do. The Spirit is the oil that allows the light of our character to shine; the water that nourishes and sustains our growth; the Paraclete who comforts and counsels us; the light that dispels our darkness; the salt that preserves us; the leaven that transforms us. (See Matt. 25:1-19; John 4:14; 7:38, 39; 14:16, 26; 15:26; 16:8; *Testimonies*, vol. 4, p. 319.) The Spirit multiplies *our* capacities and talents. The Spirit gives us responsi-

bility to make the most of our opportunities for study. The purposes and resolutions are ours. So are the perceptive faculties and the research, reasoning power, and decision making. (See *Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students*, pp. 361, 423; Ellen G. White, *Prophets and Kings*, p. 487; *Sons and Daughters of God*, p. 33; *Christ's Object Lessons*, p. 131; *Fundamentals of Christian Education*, p. 124; *Testimonies*, vol. 5, p. 675; *SDA Bible Commentary*, vol. 7, p. 989; *Testimonies*, vol. 6, p. 155; Ellen G. White, *Welfare Ministry*, p. 48.) Think of what it means for the Holy Spirit to use us to our best advantage! The Spirit is a self-giving Facilitator who is genuinely interested in our progress. And that is the best possible kind of teacher to have!

### c. Instructional Principles

Here are some of the instructional principles the Holy Spirit uses in teaching us:

- Paced learning: John 1:50; *Testimonies*, vol. 2, p. 692.
- Advancement based upon achievement (or capacity to receive): Ellen G. White, *Christian Service*, p. 253; *Desire of Ages*, p. 672.
- Proceeding from the simple to the complex.
- The principle of repetition: Ellen G. White, *Counsels on Health*, p. 561.
- Showing as well as telling, and in this way making the things of God powerful and meaningful to us: *Evangelism*, p. 167.

### d. Life Begetting Life

The thought that sums up God's educating ministry best for me is found in *Desire of Ages*, p. 250: "It is not the highest work of education to communicate knowledge merely, but to impart that vitalizing energy which is received through the contact of mind with mind, and soul with soul. It is only life that can beget life." This God did for us in Jesus Christ, and God continues to do it for us in the Holy Spirit. This educating ministry consists of God's life in touch with ours—all ways and always. And Bible study puts my life in touch with God's. (See *Great Controversy*, p. 94, and *Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 596.) This is a contact that affects my whole mind—intellect, emotions, and will. In fact, God's

educating ministry encompasses my whole being—mind, body, soul, and might.

(7) Here are some thoughts in answer to that question: Even though we may not *feel* like studying the Bible—that is, our heart may seem barren—and even though we may not think we have the intellectual capacity for it—that is, we may feel our intellect is feeble—we can study prayerfully and know there will be good results (light will flash into our minds) because God works with every diligent student. We can make a diligent and prayerful effort, even if we don't feel like it and don't think we are "smart" enough. And it is enormously encouraging to know that God works with *every* diligent student. Isn't that fair? Diligence is universally possible.

(8) You can make this plan meaningful for your students by trying the assignments before you give them. That, of course, is not for the purpose of giving your students "answers," but for the purpose of sharing with them the fact that it is valuable—you've tried it and know.

(9) If you can purchase one or more of these, it will be a great help to you and your group members in becoming acquainted with this valuable study method.

# Appendix B

## Mining Every Nugget (An Outline)

This appendix outlines the procedures and questions you can use to study any book of the Bible. The Gospels, the epistles of Paul, the Psalms, and the Prophets are good places to begin. This outline summarizes suggestions from many of the lessons in this book. It serves as a review as well as an outline for your continued use in personal Bible study.

### I. **Survey** of the whole

- A. Read a whole Bible book—lightly. Don't worry about details as you do this.
- B. In a few words (25 or less) write what you feel the theme or purpose of the book is—based on that surface reading.
- C. If you want, write a short (about 10 words) summary of each chapter in the book. Don't give thought to details as you do this.
- D. If you want, select two or three verses from the entire book that seem especially crucial to you and that relate to what the entire book is about.
- E. After doing your own work with the book directly, look in Bible commentaries and make a note of what theme and outline they give for the book.

### II. **Study** of the parts

- A. Read the whole book again—carefully and in detail this time.
- B. Make every comment or observation, ask every question, and note every cross reference you think of. Here are some questions you may ask as you study the details:
  1. What does this tell me about God?  
What is here that will help me:  
understand God's character?

understand how God relates to people?  
 worship and love God?

2. What does this passage tell me about:
  - a. God and God's relationship to me?
  - b. me and my relationship to God?
  - c. me and my relationship to other believers?
  - d. me and my relationship to unbelievers?
  - e. me and my relationship to me?
3. Is there an example for me to follow?  
 Is there a sin to shun?  
 Is there a duty to perform?  
 Is there a promise for me to claim? If so, what are the conditions?  
 Is there a prayer for me to echo?
4. *Who? What? When? Where? Why? How?*

Practice tailoring these questions to the content. For example, instead of asking, What does this mean?, ask, What does "the Spirit himself intercedes for us" mean in Romans 8:26? What does "God, who indeed intercedes for us" mean in Romans 8:34? How do those two phrases relate to each other? Who really intercedes? Why does it mention the Spirit in one place and God in another? (There are two *What* questions, one *How*, one *Who*, and one *Why*. As you tailor questions like this to the passage you are reading, it will help you put the passage together.)

5. Did this verse speak to my heart?  
 Why did this verse speak to my heart?  
 How did this verse speak to my heart?  
 What am I going to do about it?
6. What do I personally associate with this passage?  
 Have I had a similar experience?  
 In what way has, or does, my experience compare or contrast with what I read in this passage?  
 What principle of interpersonal relationships do I find in this passage?

7. What was the experience of the Bible character I am reading about?  
 How did that person and God deal with that experience?  
 How do I respond in similar situations today? How would I like to respond in similar situations today?  
 How does the biblical person's experience, and God's way with him/her, help me?  
 What can I do to make my response what I would like it to be?
8. When reading something other than a story ask:  
 What is my response to what I am reading?  
 For example, Do I believe and live what I am reading?  
 How do I feel about my response?  
 What actions do I need and plan to take?
9. What are the key words or ideas here?  
 What significant words or ideas are repeated?  
 What significant ideas, people, or places are compared or contrasted?  
 Are illustrations used? What do they illustrate?  
 Is there a high or crucial point in this book or chapter? If so, where? How do the preceding and following items contribute to that central point?  
 What or who is the subject of this sentence? (Example: God is the subject of this sentence: "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.")  
 What are the verbs (especially the action verbs) in this passage? (Example: The action verbs are emphasized in this verse from Matthew 21:33: "There was a householder who planted a vineyard, and set a hedge around it, and dug a wine press in it, and built a tower, and let it out to tenants, and went into another country.")  
 What connectives are used? (Example: "therefore, since we are justified by faith. . . .")  
 How does identifying the subject, verbs, and connectives help me understand the passage?  
 What does this verse have to do with the one before and after it?



What does this paragraph have to do with the paragraph before and after it?

What does this chapter have to do with the chapter before and after it?

What thoughts are related here, and how?

Note: The questions asked here in B. 1 through 9 will help you come up with comments and observations. They will also help you ask other questions. So, as you do detailed study, you are both answering and asking questions.

To help you do II. B., you may also want to do a thought chain. See the Assignment in Part 5 of Lesson 8 to review what a thought chain is and how to do one.

### III. Summary of the whole

- A. After studying the parts in detail, then write what you feel the theme or purpose of the book is. Keep it to fewer than 25 words.
- B. Based on your careful study of the details in this Bible book, write a *brief* summary title for each chapter. No more than 25 words for each title.
- C. Complete a summary chart for each chapter including:
  1. Your title for the whole chapter.
  2. The point of each paragraph in the chapter (underline this).
  3. A brief statement of the content for each paragraph.  
See sample summary charts of Matthew 5 and Luke 2 that are included at the end of Lesson 9.

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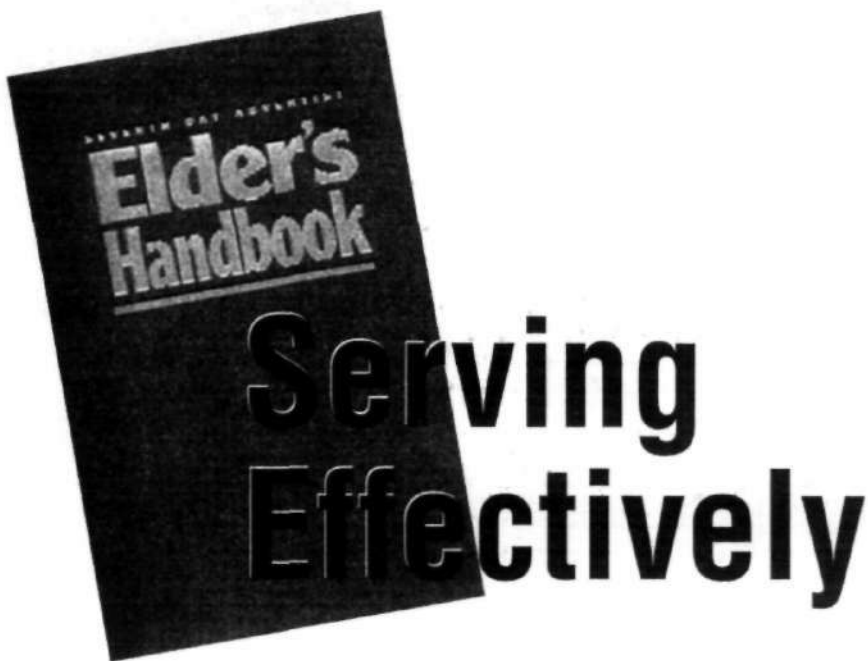
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