

THE HOLY BIBLE

by
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HOW DID THE BIBLE COME?

Someone told me a little story which went like this. A certain family moved into a new house. There were book shelves built in the walls of the den. The family had no books to place in them, so the lady of the house went to a book seller to purchase some. "What kind of books do you want?" the salesman asked. Knowing nothing of the content of books and thinking only of the appearance of her house, she replied, "I would like some red ones, some brown ones and some blue ones."

We might smile at such a little story. Of all the wonderful books in the world and of all the joy and information to be received from them, that person was interested only in the color of the binding.

But there is a wonderful library of books which many people are overlooking. It is called "The Holy Bible." It is a library of sixty-six books written by forty writers over a period of 1500 years. Those writers were kings and shepherds, fishermen and theologians. There is a marvelous unity of its message because it was actually written by God Himself, who used men as His scribes.

Inspired by God

The word we use to describe that miracle of putting the Word of God into the language of men is “inspiration.” “Inspiration” means “God-breathed.” True, inspiration is a miracle, but it is a fact. The Bible claims inspiration for itself.

Second Timothy 3:15-17 reads, *“From a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works.”*

That term “inspiration” indicates that the written Word is the breath of God Himself. God placed the truth in the minds of men and guided them as they wrote down that message. The result is that the original manuscripts of the Bible were written without any error whatever. The Bible is not the product of man’s intellect, but the gift of God’s grace.

When you read the Bible in a faithful translation, you are reading the Word of God. What the Bible commands, God commands. What the Bible approves, God approves. What the Bible forbids, God forbids. What the Bible teaches, God teaches. The Bible is called “The Holy Bible” or “Holy Scripture” because it is and shall remain forever the very Word of God Himself.

How much of the Bible is divinely inspired? Let Paul answer that question in the words he wrote in II Timothy 3:16, *“All scripture is given by inspiration of God.”* How much is inspired? All of it is inspired!

We divide the Old Testament into five books of law (Genesis through Deuteronomy), twelve books of history (Joshua through Esther), five books of poetry (Job through The Song of Solomon) and seventeen books of prophecy (Isaiah through Malachi—commonly called the five major prophets and the twelve minor prophets).

We divide the New Testament into four books of biography (Matthew through John), one book of history (The Acts of the Apostles), twenty-one epistles (Romans through Jude) and one book of prophecy (The Revelation).

When the Bible says, *“All scripture is given by inspiration of God,”* that includes all of the Old Testament and all of the New Testament. Every part of the Bible is true. When it speaks in matters of history, it is historically correct. When it speaks in areas of science, it is scientifically exact. When it speaks on subjects of religion, it is absolute and total truth.

Moved by the Holy Spirit

You can trust your Bible. *“We have also a more sure word of prophecy . . . knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation. For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost”* II Peter 1:19-21.

How did the Bible come? *“Holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.”* The verb “moved” in “moved by the Holy Ghost” means “to be impelled; to be carried away; to be under the influence” of the Holy Spirit. Think about it.

The Bible did not come because a religious man decided to write Holy Scripture. It came into being as the Holy Spirit of God controlled men, causing them to write the Word of God in the language of men and being in control of them so that what they wrote was without error, the Word of God rather than the words of men.

The prophet Jeremiah had an experience such as I have described. God said to

him, *“Thus speaketh the LORD God of Israel, saying, Write thee all the words that I have spoken unto thee in a book”* Jeremiah 30:2. Jeremiah obeyed. As he wrote, he was directed by the Spirit of God so that what we have today in *“The Book of the Prophet Jeremiah,”* as found in our Bibles, is not Jeremiah’s message but God’s message through Jeremiah.

So it is with all the Bible. Remember the occasion when Moses received the Ten Commandments from God on Mount Sinai? God instructed Moses to hew out two tablets of stone, saying, *“I will write upon these tables”* Exodus 34:1. But when the tablets were ready, the Lord commanded, *“Write thou these words”* Exodus 34:27. It seems as if God wrote the words through the agency of Moses. That is the way the Bible has come to us.

Think about this question: How would you feel if God spoke to you in a voice which you could hear with your natural ears? It would be awe-inspiring, wouldn’t it? What if God wrote His message to you in words which you could read and understand! It would still be awe-inspiring, wouldn’t it? And that is what we have in Holy Scripture.

I do not suggest that you worship the Bible. It is not a sacred object to be revered. It is the message of that book which is holy. The message is holy because it is the message of the thrice-holy God. We call that book the Holy Bible because it is a message, indeed the only written message ever received, from the Most Holy God.

What is your attitude toward the Bible? Do you respect it? Do you read and meditate on it? Do you obey its teachings? Do you live by its precepts?

Your attitude toward the Bible reflects your attitude toward God. To reject the Bible is to reject the God who gave the Bible. To treasure and love and obey the Bible is to esteem, love and obey God, who has spoken through the Bible.

I urge you to become a person of the Book. God has given the Bible to you because He loves you and desires the best for you. He has given the Bible to warn of sin, tell of righteousness and reveal Himself that we might be saved.

Read it to be wise. Believe it to be saved. Obey it to be holy. Your Bible has come from God.

WHAT IS THE BIBLE LIKE?

If you were asked to describe the Bible, what would you answer? It is not an easy thing to do. We could speak of it as a book, or even as a library of books. We could say it is a book of religion, and more than that a book of the Christian religion. We could say it is a book about God, the Christian God. But somehow all such statements fall far short of a true description of the Holy Bible.

You might be a little surprised to hear that the Bible seems to sense that same problem in describing itself. There is no one definition given in Holy Scripture by which it defines itself. But there are many figures of speech used which indicate something of the nature of our Bible.

I propose that we look at several of those figures of speech and try to come to a fuller appreciation of what God has said in the Bible about the Bible.

Guardian

The Bible calls itself our guardian. Galatians 3:24 reads, *“Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith.”* When we use the term “schoolmaster,” we think of a teacher in the classroom. But that is not what the term

means. The term means “the slave who leads a child to school, a tutor, a custodian.” The law was never intended to save men and women from their sin. The law only gave a knowledge of sin that we might be directed to forgiveness and salvation in Jesus Christ (Hebrews 7:19; Romans 8:3, 4; Galatians 2:16; Romans 3:20). That is the purpose of the entire Bible. God gave the Bible to show man who God is and who man is. That revelation is designed to bring man and God together in perfect harmony and peace. The Bible is our guardian to direct us to God.

Food

The Bible calls itself our food. The psalmist David wrote of the delights of the words of God and concluded, *“More to be desired are they than gold, yea, than much fine gold: sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb”* Psalm 19:10.

The prophet Jeremiah adds his testimony, saying, *“Thy words were found, and I did eat them; and thy word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of mine heart: for I am called by thy name, O Lord God of hosts”* Jeremiah 15:16.

The apostle Peter took up the same theme in his first epistle and gave this advice to new Christian converts, *“Wherefore laying aside all malice, and all guile, and hypocrisies, and envies, and all evil speakings, as newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby: if so be ye have tasted that the Lord is gracious”* I Peter 2:1-3.

To compare the Word of God with food is to indicate the Bible is sufficient for our strength, health and growth. It indicates further that we need to receive portions of it every day (as we eat our food daily) if we would be in good spiritual health. The more we receive of that spiritual food, the more capable we will be to receive deeper things concerning God, as an infant grows from milk to meat in his diet. Eat and drink deeply of the Word of God each day and you will be a vibrant Christian.

Map

The Bible calls itself a road map. Listen to the words of Psalm 16:11, *“Thou wilt show me the path of life: in thy presence is fullness of joy; at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore.”* The “path of life” of which the psalmist speaks is the course of life set forth in Holy Scripture.

The Bible sets forth that “path of righteousness” in which God leads His dear children (Psalm 23:3). It is appropriate for the child of God to pray, *“Make me to go in the path of thy commandments; for therein do I delight”* Psalm 119:35. It sets forth the good path of “righteousness, and judgment, and equity” which God approves (Proverbs 2:9). He who walks in the way of Bible teaching will discover: *“The path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day”* Proverbs 4:18. You can be confident when you walk according to Bible truth, for that is how *“he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem”* Isaiah 2:3.

God’s word is the voice which we hear saying, *“This is the way, walk ye in it,”* if we would turn aside to the right hand or to the left (Isaiah 30:21). It is a road map for us which invites us, *“Come ye, and let us walk in the light of the Lord”* Isaiah 2:5.

Sword

The Bible calls itself a sword. Ephesians 6:14-17 describes the parts of the Christian armor: a belt of truth, a breastplate of righteousness, shoes of the gospel of peace, a shield of

faith, a helmet of salvation *“and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.”* Hebrews 4:12 goes a step beyond that, saying, *“For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.”*

You see, we are engaged in a spiritual warfare. It is a contest *“against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places”* Ephesians 6:12. Such a spiritual warfare requires spiritual weapons. *“For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds”* II Corinthians 10:4.

The Bible, the truth of Holy Scripture, is the weapon the Christian uses in contesting the devil. Since the Bible is living and powerful and spiritual, it is the only offensive weapon we need to put the devil to flight and to deliver men and women who are enslaved in sin by him.

Mirror

The Bible calls itself a mirror. James 1:23-25 sets out that metaphor in these words, *“If any be a hearer of the word, and not a doer, he is like unto a man beholding his natural face in a glass: for he beholdeth himself, and goeth his way, and straightway forgetteth what manner of man he was. But whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed.”*

The Bible is like a mirror in that it shows a man what he is truly like. It is commonly said, *“The mirror does not lie.”* It reveals how we appear, whether we like it or not. So with the Holy Scripture. One can look there and see himself exactly as he appears in the eyes of God.

I like the statement of Psalm 119:105, which says, *“Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path.”* Many of us could bear like testimony. God’s Word has encouraged us, reproved us, inspired us, directed us, strengthened us and blessed our lives in more ways than we can recall.

We could say with Job, *“I have esteemed the words of his mouth more than my necessary food”* Job 23:12. They are more to be desired *“than gold, yea, than much fine gold: sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb”* Psalm 19:10.

Let us prize the privilege of having the Word of God in the language of men. It converts the soul, makes wise the simple, rejoices the heart and enlightens the eyes of all who receive it because it endures forever and is true and righteous altogether (Psalm 19:7-9).

WHY IS THE BIBLE NEGLECTED?

The greatest book ever written by human hand is the Holy Bible. It is an unusual book. Composed of 66 books, it was written by some 40 authors over a period of 1500 years. Yet it has one theme, does not contradict itself and reveals the truth about God as no other book does.

The Bible is a living book. Its message is always fresh and new. It applies to people in one generation as well as in another. It meets men in every culture and ministers to their spiritual needs. No other book in the world does that.

And yet, the Bible is a neglected book. Multiplied millions in the world have no copy of it. Multiplied millions of others have a copy but seldom read its pages.

This radio ministry reaches in the Chinese language into the Peoples Republic of China (which we call “Communist China”). A listener there wrote after hearing our Chinese language

preacher, “I hear you speak of the Bible. What is the Bible? Is it possible for me to get a copy of it?”

While some people desire a copy of Holy Scripture, others who have copies neglect them. Why do people neglect the Bible? Indeed, why do some people who are called Christians seldom read and study their Bibles?

Personal sin

Some people neglect the Bible because they have sin in their lives. The Bible calls itself a mirror which reveals to people the truth about themselves (James 1:23-25). A person whose life does not meet God’s requirement for holiness is uncomfortable when the Bible shows him his sin. Therefore, he ignores the Bible.

The Bible calls itself a sword which pierces even to the dividing of soul and spirit and is *“a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart”* Hebrews 4:12. That word “discerner” means that the Bible exposes, passes judgment and scrutinizes the inmost thoughts and motives of a person. He whose thoughts and motives are evil will flee from such an examination.

Jesus gave that same explanation of why men turn from the truth of God, saying, *“This is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reprov’d. But he that doeth truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God”* John 3:19-21.

Yes, I am well within the mark when I say that men neglect the Bible because there is sin in their lives.

Daily cares

Some people neglect the Bible because of the ordinary cares of daily life. You have heard people say, “I just do not have time for Bible study. I am so busy that I do not have the time I would like to have.”

Jesus told a parable about a farmer who sowed his field with grain. Some fell on the pathway, and the birds of the air ate it before it could grow. Some fell on the rocky soil, began to grow but withered away when the heat of the sun fell upon it. Some fell on soil where thorns grew. It was choked by the thorns and did not produce a harvest. Some fell on good ground and brought forth a good harvest. When Jesus interpreted that parable, He made this statement, *“He also that received seed among the thorns is he that heareth the word; and the care of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, choke the word, and he becometh unfruitful”* Matthew 13:22.

Did you notice why the seed (which Jesus said is the word of God, verse 19) was unfruitful in one case? That is the person who is *“choked with cares and riches and pleasures of this life”* Luke 8:14. *“The cares of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, and the lusts of other things”* Mark 4:19 have kept many, many people from delighting in the Word of God, learning its precepts and living by them.

The truth is, a person has the time to do what he truly wants to do. He who uses the excuse that he has no time for Bible study indicates that he is not truly interested in it. Please don’t let that happen to you. Take time for Bible study.

Wasted time

Some people neglect the Bible with the argument that they have no time. That is the most flimsy argument of all. I say again that a person has time to do what he truly wants to do.

Does one have time to eat, to sleep, to rest, to work? Does he have time to read the newspaper, to listen to the radio, to watch a program on television? If he has time for those activities, he has time for the Word of God as contained in Holy Scripture, if he desires such time.

It may be necessary that a person set a time which he will devote to Bible reading and prayer. Such a time may be early in the morning, during the noon hour, at evening or just before retiring at night. Whenever it is, set that time and protect it. Let nothing interfere with that time which you have set to meet God in His Word.

When other occasions arise which would keep you from that time with your Bible, refuse to participate. Use the excuse that you have a previous appointment. Indeed, you do! It is an appointment with God.

Difficult passages

Some people neglect the Bible with the argument that they cannot understand it. When such people are asked what part they do not understand, they usually point to some symbolism of a prophetic passage—a beast from the book of Daniel or Ezekiel or some symbol in the book of Revelation. True, there are some parts of the Bible which are difficult to understand, but there is much more which is easy to understand.

An interested person will deal with those parts of the Bible which he can understand. Then he will discover that gradually he will understand more and more clearly the parts which had been difficult to him before.

The Holy Spirit is in the world for the express purpose of leading Christians into the full truth of God. Jesus promised, *“When he, the Spirit of truth is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will show you things to come. He shall glorify me: for he shall receive of mine, and shall show it unto you”* John 16:13, 14.

What a privilege! We have the same Holy Spirit of God who inspired the writing of the Bible to personally teach us in our study of the Bible. That being the case, we can understand it.

Jesus has opened our understanding that we might understand the Scriptures (Luke 24:45). *“Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God . . . we have the mind of Christ”* I Corinthians 2:12, 16.

WHY SHOULD THE BIBLE BE STUDIED?

We are so practical in our approach to life that “Why?” has become one of the most often asked questions. When a duty is mentioned, we respond with “Why should I do that?”

It is not surprising for that question to be asked concerning our statement that the Christian should have a daily time which he will devote to study and meditation on the teachings of the Bible. Let us seek some answers to the question, “Why should I study my Bible?”

To obey God

We should study the Bible because God commands us to do so. The command is expressed in the Old Testament in these words, *“The book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth; but thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein: for then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt*

have good success” Joshua 1:18. The command is expressed in the New Testament in these words, *“Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth”* II Timothy 2:15.

Those statements are so plain that they cannot be misunderstood. The man of God is to “study” and “meditate” on Holy Scripture in order that he may “observe to do” all that God has required and that he might be “a workman that needeth not to be ashamed” but is able to “rightly divide” the word of truth. That requirement is laid upon all of God’s people, not just preachers or Bible teachers.

Psalm 1 relates blessedness under God with study of the word of God, saying of the blessed man, *“His delight is in the law of the Lord; and in his law doth he meditate day and night”* Psalm 1:2.

You are obeying God when you study the Bible but disobeying Him if you neglect to study the Bible.

To combat sin

We should study the Bible because it keeps us from sin and error. The ancient psalmist understood that truth and wrote in Psalm 119:11, *“Thy word have I hid in my heart, that I might not sin against thee.”* He speaks of a protection against sin. What is it? It is the Word of God hidden in the heart of man. One hides the Word in his heart when he studies it, memorizes portions of it and meditates on its application to his life.

Many people who lived in Palestine during the personal ministry of Jesus on earth misunderstood Him and His teachings. He said to them, *“Ye do err, not knowing the scriptures, nor the power of God”* Matthew 22:29. What was the cause of their error? They did not know the scriptures. The teaching is plain that if one knows the scriptures (and follows their teachings), he will not err.

The Bible has a blessed and sanctifying influence in the life of the believer in Jesus Christ. Jesus prayed to the Father concerning up who believe, *“Sanctify them through thy truth; thy word is truth”* John 17:17.

Are you having problems with sin in daily life? Practice faithful and daily Bible study. Find a passage of Scripture which relates to your area of weakness and temptation. Memorize that passage. Meet temptation with it. And you can be victorious. Faithful Bible study can keep you from sin in action and error in doctrine.

To strengthen faith

We should study the Bible because it builds us up in the faith. Consider this statement from Romans 15:4: *“Whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope.”* That means the Bible was given to produce hope in us-to build us up in confident trust and expectation concerning God. You will find your faith increasing and your stability in the doctrine being strengthened as you give time and effort to a study of the Bible.

I love the word expressed in II Timothy 3:16, 17, which states, *“All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works.”*

Let us ask a series of questions concerning that passage of Scripture. Why is the Bible reliable? It is *“given by inspiration of God.”* How much of the Bible is inspired? *“All scripture is given by inspiration of God.”* In what areas is the Bible authoritative? It has authority

in “*doctrine . . . reproof . . . correction . . . instruction in righteousness.*” What is the effect of the Bible in the life of the Christian? It does two things: it makes him “perfect” (which means it equips him to serve) and it “thoroughly furnishes” him unto all good works.

If you feel incapable of serving God, get into the Bible. Nothing on earth will equip you to serve like a diligent and faithful pursuit of the principles of Holy Scripture.

To generate joy

We should study the Bible because it is a source of great joy. An ancient saint wrote this word of confident testimony, “*Thou wilt shew me the path of life: in thy presence is fullness of joy; at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore*” Psalm 16:11. God guides His people by His Spirit in accordance to His word. Therefore, the Bible is of great value: “*More to be desired than gold, yea, than much fine gold: sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb*” Psalm 19:10.

What does the Bible do, and what is it like, that it brings such joy to the child of God? Psalm 19:7-9 answers in these words:

“The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul: the testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple. The statutes of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart: the commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes. The fear of the Lord is clean, enduring for ever: the judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether.”

What a precious testimony to the Bible. Its nature is law, testimony, statutes, commandments, fear and judgments. Its qualities are pure, sure, right, perfect, clean and true and righteous altogether. Its effect is to convert the soul, make wise the unlearned, rejoice the heart and enlighten the eyes. Its permanence is that it will endure forever.

It would be impossible to study and meditate and live by such a book without being filled with spiritual joy. No wonder the prophet Jeremiah wrote, “*Thy words were found, and I did eat them; and thy word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of mine heart: for I am called by thy name, O Lord God of hosts*” Jeremiah 15:16.

Be diligent in Bible study. Give yourself daily to seeking out its blessed principles and applying them to your life. You will discover, as multitudes of other people of God have discovered, “*Great peace have they which love thy law: and nothing shall offend them*” Psalm 119:165. Learn to say with the patriarch Job, “*Neither have I gone back from the commandment of his lips: I have esteemed the words of his mouth more than my necessary food*” Job 23:12.

HOW SHOULD WE STUDY THE BIBLE?

The Bible is a very practical book. It is concerned that we “observe to do” what we should as well as “know and believe” what we should. Its end is practical rather than theoretical.

I have been emphasizing that each Christian should study the Bible daily, devotedly, diligently. The Bible teaches us to study its precepts and to apply them to daily life.

The question might be asked: How does one go about Bible study? I propose to give you some practical guidelines in answer to that question.

Read it daily

We can study the Bible effectively by reading the Bible regularly. Read the Bible. Read it daily. Read it with attention centered on its message. Read it in a quiet place where you can concentrate on it.

Set a time when you give attention to the Word. Make it an appointment with God. Just

as you have a set time when you awake in the morning, a set time when you report for work, as set time when you retire at night, so you should have a set time when you give attention to the Word of God in Holy Scripture.

Give ample time to reading the Bible. Set apart a half-hour each day when you read the Bible and pray. (A longer time than that would be profitable, but at least half an hour should be given.) You will not be rushed by setting such a time. Your reading can be at your natural pace. You will not feel pressed with other duties if you set the same time each day and guard it for the Word.

One problem with setting a certain number of chapters to be read daily is that circumstances will demand you to hasten with that number of chapters. You will read in distracted haste and fail to get the blessing available.

However, if you read three chapters each week day and five chapters on Sunday, you can read the Bible through in exactly 365 days. You should read the Bible through. I recommend that Christians read the Bible through each year. But the reading must be done at one's regular speed, or the message will be impaired.

Search it diligently

You can study the Bible effectively when you search for its meaning. Jesus said, "*Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me*" John 5:39. What does He say? He says, "SEARCH the scriptures."

That word "search" suggests diligence, thoughtfulness, and great care. Knox has translated it, "You pore over the scriptures." Williams suggests in his translation, "You keep on searching the scriptures."

One searches the scriptures when he looks for meanings of words, compares one passage with another, looks for meaning rather than just reading words. It is in searching the Scriptures that God's blessing comes to the student of the Bible.

Bible study is not casual reading as one might read the newspaper or some popular novel. It is a careful seeking for meaning and application of meaning to daily life.

You will need some aids to study if you would "search the scriptures." You need a concordance so you can find passages which are related to that which you study. You need a good dictionary so you can distinguish the meanings of words. You need a Bible with print which you can read with ease. But more than anything else, you need a heart that seeks after God in His word.

Meditate on it constantly

You can study the Bible effectively when you meditate on its meanings. God commanded Joshua, "*This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth; but THOU SHALT MEDITATE THEREIN DAY AND NIGHT, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein . . .*" Joshua 1:18.

To meditate means to think, to muse, to consider, to turn a subject over and over in one's mind and seek to understand all of its aspects.

Meditation in Holy Scripture is essential to understanding Holy Scripture. God said of the blessed man, "*His delight is in the law of the Lord; and in his law doth he MEDITATE day and night*" Psalm 1:2. The man of God will testify, "*O how I love thy law! It is my meditation all the day*" Psalm 119:97.

There must be times of quiet for one to meditate on the scriptures. Turn off the radio,

television or stereo. Have a quiet time in the midst of your day in which you think of the things of God. If there is a night when you cannot go to sleep, use that time to think about God. The psalmist wrote from experience, *“My soul shall be satisfied as with marrow and fatness; and my mouth shall praise thee with joyful lips: when I remember thee upon my bed, and meditate on thee in the night watches”* Psalm 63:5, 6. You can experience those blessings, also.

Approach it prayerfully

You can study the Bible effectively when you approach it prayerfully. I prefer to begin personal Bible study time with the prayer of Psalm 119:18, *“Open thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of thy law.”*

Young Samuel set a good example for us as we seek to understand the things of God. His request was, *“Speak, Lord; for thy servant heareth”* I Samuel 3:9, 10.

It will be a tragic mistake to approach the Bible with the desire to find a text to confirm what we already believe. The spirit of teachableness must be in our hearts. We must be available to truth, as revealed in the Scriptures, whether it confirms or contradicts our previous beliefs.

The Holy Spirit is in the world to teach each Christian the things of God. Jesus promised, *“When he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth . . . He shall glorify me: for he shall receive of mine, and shall show it unto you”* John 16:13, 14.

Be available for God to instruct you by the Holy Spirit. Be humble and prayerful before Him. Follow as He leads, and you will come into increasing understanding of the truth of God.

Memorize it faithfully

You can study the Bible effectively when you memorize portions of it. Learn to say in truth to God, *“Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee”* Psalm 119:11.

Memorizing passages of scripture will enable you to meditate on the Bible at many times during your daily affairs. It will endear the Word to your heart. It will manifest your devotion to God. It will strengthen you in times of temptation. It will enable you in Christian witnessing. Yes, you need to memorize the Word.

But all that is ineffective unless we apply the teachings of the Bible to our daily conduct. Let us do what it commands. Let us shun what it forbids. God is speaking to us through His written Word, the Holy Bible.

The Bible has come to us from God through the process of inspiration. It was and is the very Word of God in the language of men. It is designed to show us ourselves and God, to direct us to God, to illuminate the way we walk, to enable us to stand against the devil. It must not be neglected but read and studied and made the subject of our meditation day by day.

The Bible is God’s word to you. What has God said to you through His Word today?