

**Pine Knoll Sabbath School Study Notes**  
**Second Quarter 2026: *Growing in a Relationship With God***  
**Lesson 4 “The Role of the Bible”**

**Read for this week’s study**

Lamentations 3:22, 23; 2 Timothy 3:15–17; John 17:17; Ephesians 1:13; Psalm 119:11;  
1 Corinthians 2:14.

**Memory Text**

“For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart” (Hebrews 4:12, NJKV).

**Lesson Outline from Adult Sabbath School Study Guide**

- I. Introduction
- II. The Most Powerful Weapon
- III. Scripture, the Authority
- IV. Bible Truth
- V. Bible Claims
- VI. State of the Heart
- VII. Further Study

**Questions and Notes for Consideration**

**Facilitator: Jon Paulien**

1. According to the lesson for this week, if you have a desire to grow in your relationship with God, the best thing you can do is commit to spending quality time with Him daily praying, reading His inspired Word, and surrendering your will to what it teaches. Today’s lesson is about the role of the Bible in a relationship with God. Read Hebrews 4:12. What does this text tell us about the Bible? (Sabbath Afternoon’s Lesson)
2. “Satan employs every possible device to prevent men from obtaining a knowledge of the Bible; for its plain utterances reveal his deceptions.” GC 593. How do we make more time in our lives for God’s Word? (Sunday’s Lesson)

3. Read Lamentations 3:22-23. The beauty of a relationship with God is that even if we are up and down in the relationship, God is wonderfully constant. How does Jeremiah express this truth in Lamentations?
4. Read 2 Timothy 3:15-17. What does the Bible have to say about itself? Compare with 2 Peter 1:19-21. Are the words of the Bible inspired or the people who wrote the Bible inspired? Are there ways that lay people can study the Bible to achieve scholarly-level accuracy in their understanding of the Bible? (Monday's Lesson)
5. In popular culture these days, there is no measuring stick, no solid foundation that can be depended on. In contrast, notice the claims we find in Scripture (John 17:17; Proverbs 30:5-6; 1 Thess 2:13). Is it enough to embrace these claims intellectually or does our understanding need to go deeper? Hebrews 13:8 says that Jesus is the same, yesterday, today, and forever. (Tuesday's Lesson)
6. Ellen G. White grew up in the Methodist tradition. Methodists understand there to be four sources of truth: The Bible, tradition, reason, and experience. Among these four the Bible is the final word, to use Wesley's words, it has primacy. Is this a helpful analysis for the Adventist understanding of truth today? Many Adventists would ask, *Why would anyone need tradition, reason and experience if you already have the Bible?* (Tuesday's Lesson)
7. Read Psalm 119:11. What is David's advice in this verse and how might one follow it? The lesson asks, "What might change in your home if you turned to the Bible when faced with a big decision, relationship problem, or challenge? What might change in your workplace or church if the words of the Bible truly became the lens through which people chose to view the world? (Wednesday's Lesson)
8. Read 1 Corinthians 2:14. What does this verse mean to you? (Thursday's Lesson)
9. A good question to ask ourselves is, "What is the state of my heart and mind as I approach the Scriptures? What are some of the different mindsets people have when they read the Bible? (Thursday's Lesson)
10. If someone wanted to deepen their relationship with God, where would you advise them to start reading? (Friday's Lesson)

### Thoughts from Graham Maxwell

Now where do we find this good news if not in the biblical record? But how does one read the Bible in order to learn the truth about God—to find the answers to our questions and whether or not He is worthy of our trust? Should we go through the book and collect statements, sometimes known as key texts? And I'm not going to make light of key texts; I wish I knew five thousand more! But key texts, statements, are claims. And God does not ask us to believe mere claims. God is love. God is this. God is that. Those are claims. Where is the evidence? The evidence is in between the key texts. The evidence is in the stories. And we adults do a very

strange thing. We collect the claims—and give the evidence to the children, and hope they understand how Samson, filled with the Holy Spirit, could kill a thousand men with the jawbone of an ass! We may not know what that means, but we hope the little dears will be able to understand it clearly.

Children are willing to accept statements and claims. “My daddy says, and I believe it.” As adults we demand evidence. As the children grow up they become more demanding of evidence. Why do we give the evidence to the children while we collect the claims? Give the claims to the children, and we take the stories back. It’s time that we read the stories that the children spend so much time telling to each other after hearing them in grade school or Sabbath school. The stories are the demonstration of the truth about our God. The key texts are the summaries of the meaning. They really are more like claims. ***So to know God better, to determine whether he is worthy of our trust, I believe as adults we have to read all sixty-six books and ask of every story, teaching, and event, what does this tell me about my God?*** {Graham Maxwell. Excerpt from series, “Conversations About God”, #4 – *God’s Way Of Restoring Trust*, recorded February 1984}

### **Recommended Listening:**

Conversations About God #5 “The Record of the Evidence” is available at:  
<http://pkp.cc/5MMCAG>

### **Further Study with Ellen White**

It is Satan’s special device to lead man into sin and then leave him there, helpless and hopeless, fearing to seek for pardon. But God invites, “Let him take hold of My strength, that he may make peace with Me; and he shall make peace with Me.” Isaiah 27:5. In Christ every provision has been made, every encouragement offered. {PK 325.5}

If men will walk in the path that God has marked out for them, they will have a counselor whose wisdom is far above any human wisdom. {2BC 993.1}

Our God is an ever-present help in every time of need. He is perfectly acquainted with the most secret thoughts of our heart, with all the intents and purposes of our souls. When we are in perplexity, even before we open to Him our distress, He is making arrangements for our deliverance. Our sorrow is not unnoticed. He always knows much better than we do, just what is necessary for the good of His children, and He leads us as we would choose to be led if we could discern our own hearts and see our necessities and perils, as God sees them. But finite beings seldom know themselves. They do not understand their own weakness. . . . God knows

them better than they know themselves, and He understands how to lead them. . . .  
{OHC 316.4}

God bids us fill the mind with great thoughts, pure thoughts. He desires us to meditate upon His love and mercy, to study His wonderful work in the great plan of redemption. Then clearer and still clearer will be our perception of truth, higher, holier, our desire for purity of heart and clearness of thought. The soul dwelling in the pure atmosphere of holy thought will be transformed by communion with God through the study of the Scriptures. {AG 34.2}

God wants our minds to expand. He desires to put His grace upon us. We may have a feast of good things every day, for God can open the whole treasure of heaven to us. {Mar 23.3}

The Bible is not given to us in grand superhuman language. Jesus, in order to reach man where he is, took humanity. The Bible must be given in the language of men. Everything that is human is imperfect. Different meanings are expressed by the same word; there is not one word for each distinct idea. The Bible was given for practical purposes. {7BC 945.7}

The Bible is its own expositor. Scripture is to be compared with scripture. The student should learn to view the word as a whole and to see the relation of its parts. He should gain a knowledge of its grand central theme—of God’s original purpose for the world, of the rise of the great controversy, and of the work of redemption. {CT 462.1}

The Bible is its own interpreter. With beautiful simplicity one portion connects itself with the truth of another portion, until the whole Bible is blended in one harmonious whole. Light flashes forth from one text to illuminate some portion of the Word that has seemed more obscure. {OHC 207.5}

He [Christ] maintained his disguise till he had interpreted the Scriptures, and had led them to an intelligent faith in his life, his character, his mission to earth, and his death and resurrection. He wished the truth to take firm root in their minds, not because it was supported by his personal testimony, but because the typical law, and the prophets of the Old Testament, agreeing with the facts of his life and death, presented unquestionable evidence of that truth. {3SP 214.2}

I am afraid of anything that would have a tendency to turn the mind away from the solid evidences of the truth as revealed in God’s Word. I am afraid of it; I am afraid of it. We must bring our minds within the bounds of reason, lest the enemy so come in as to set everything in a disorderly way. {2SM 43.2}

All whom God has blessed with reasoning powers are to become intellectual Christians. They are not requested to believe without evidence; therefore Jesus has enjoined upon all to search the Scriptures. Let the ingenious inquirer, and the one who would know for himself what is truth, exert his mental powers to search out the truth as it is in Jesus. Any neglect here is at the

peril of the soul. We must know individually the prescribed conditions of entering into eternal life. . . . We cannot allow these questions to be settled for us by another's mind, or another's judgment. . . . We cannot trust the salvation of our souls to ministers, to idle traditions, to human authorities, or to pretensions. . . . The Lord positively demands of every Christian an intelligent knowledge of the Scriptures. {RH, March 8, 1887 par. 1}

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. We must individually develop a character that will stand the test in the day of God. {TM 109.4}

The leaven of truth works secretly, silently, steadily, to transform the soul. The natural inclinations are softened and subdued. New thoughts, new feelings, new motives, are implanted. A new standard of character is set up—the life of Christ. The mind is changed; the faculties are aroused to action in new lines. Man is not endowed with new faculties, but the faculties he has are sanctified. The conscience is awakened. {HP 21.4}

We thank God that the Bible is prepared for the poor man as well as for the learned man. It is fitted for all ages and all classes. {FLB 13.7}

The truth as it is in Jesus will not degrade but elevate the receiver, purify his life, refine his taste, sanctify his judgment. {OHC 230.6}

Even the work of the Holy Spirit upon the heart is to be tested by the word of God. The Spirit which inspired the Scriptures, always leads to the Scriptures. {GCDB, April 13, 1891 par. 5}

The Holy Spirit will not compel men to take a certain course of action. We are free moral agents; and when sufficient evidence has been given us as to our duty it is left with us to decide our course. {RH, July 17, 1888 par. 4}

It is not the plan of God to compel men to yield their wicked unbelief. Before them are light and darkness, truth and error. It is for them to decide which to accept. The human mind is endowed with power to discriminate between right and wrong. God designs that men shall not decide from impulse, but from weight of evidence, carefully comparing scripture with scripture (*Redemption: or the Miracles of Christ*, pp. 112, 113). {1BC 1120.5}

The creative energy that called the worlds into existence is in the word of God. This word imparts power; it begets life. Every command is a promise; accepted by the will, received into the soul, it brings with it the life of the Infinite One. It transforms the nature and re-creates the soul in the image of God. {Ed 126.4}

The Holy Spirit will not compel men to take a certain course of action. We are free moral agents; and when sufficient evidence has been given us as to our duty, it is left with us to decide our course. {FE 124.1}

[T]he precious faith inspired of God imparts strength and nobility of character. As His goodness, His mercy, and His love are dwelt upon, clearer and still clearer will be the perception of truth; higher, holier, the desire for purity of heart and clearness of thought. The soul dwelling in the pure atmosphere of holy thought is transformed by intercourse with God through the study of His Word. Truth is so large, so far-reaching, so deep, so broad, that self is lost sight of. The heart is softened and subdued into humility, kindness, and love. {FLB 223.3}

There are veins of truth yet to be discovered, but spiritual things are spiritually discerned. One passage of Scripture will prove a key to unlock other passages, and in this way light is shed upon the hidden meaning of the word. By comparing different texts treating on the same subject, viewing their bearing on every side, the true meaning of the Scriptures will be made evident. {CT 437.2}

Not by the decisions of courts or councils or legislative assemblies, not by the patronage of worldly great men, is the kingdom of Christ established, but by the implanting of Christ's nature in humanity through the work of the Holy Spirit. "As many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name: which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." John 1:12, 13. Here is the only power that can work the uplifting of mankind. And the human agency for the accomplishment of this work is the teaching and practicing of the word of God. {DA 509.4}

All who come to Christ for a clearer knowledge of the truth will receive it. He will unfold to them the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, and these mysteries will be understood by the heart that longs to know the truth. A heavenly light will shine into the soul temple and will be revealed to others as the bright shining of a lamp on a dark path. {TMK 205.6}

A knowledge of the truth depends not so much upon strength of intellect as upon pureness of purpose, the simplicity of an earnest, dependent faith. To those who in humility of heart seek for divine guidance, angels of God draw near. The Holy Spirit is given to open to them the rich treasures of the truth. {COL 59.3}

God bids us fill the mind with great thoughts, pure thoughts. He desires us to meditate upon His love and mercy, to study His wonderful work in the great plan of redemption. Then clearer and still clearer will be our perception of truth, higher, holier, our desire for purity of heart and clearness of thought. The soul dwelling in the pure atmosphere of holy thought will be transformed by communion with God through the study of Scriptures. {COL 60.1}