

Growing in a Relationship With God

The Role of the Bible

Lesson #4 for April 25, 2026

Scriptures: **2 Timothy 3:14-17**; John 17:17; Ephesians 1:13; Lamentations 3:22-23; Psalms 119:11; 1 Corinthians 2:14; Hebrews 4:12.

1. Is the Bible reliable? What is the role of the Bible in my relationship with God?

[From the *Adult Sabbath School Bible Study Guide*=BSG:] **The Bible**. No doubt you own one copy or perhaps many. Throughout history, this precious book has been copied in secret, smuggled, and banned. It's the most published book in the world, in any language, and also one of the oldest. Some have died so that the Bible could be preserved. [See Ken Hart's "Bible Origins" series with 25 handouts and MP3 audios on "How the Bible Came to Us," with discussions regarding the text, translation, and preservation of the Bible: <https://www.theox.org/index.cfm/pageid/812/index.html>]

Where is the Bible in your life? Do you read it or does it sit beside your bed or on a bookcase gathering dust? Is life too busy for you to find time to really study the Word of God or do you feel too tired to open its pages?

God's Word is living and powerful, and God is calling for you to let it speak to your heart, to encourage you, to challenge and change you, and to give you guidance and hope. [Try reading the Bible chronologically!]

The Bible is not just an academic book or a collection of old stories. Instead, it is a beautiful, profound account of how the Creator of the universe seeks to draw us close to Him. 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.—BSG* for Sabbath, April 18.†‡

[From the *Adult Teachers Sabbath School Bible Study Guide*=T-BSG:] The main role of the Word of God is to **feed us spiritually to keep us alive**. The Israelites learned this important spiritual lesson when they experienced physical hunger in the wilderness. Moses' interpretation of God's miracle of the **manna** reflects this notion: " 'That He might make you know that man shall not live by bread alone; but man lives by every word that proceeds from the mouth of the LORD' " (*Deut. 8:3, NKJV*). Jesus was famished in the wilderness when He uttered this principle to the devil [*sic*] (*Matt. 4:4*). We hear this same idea in Peter's epistle in which he compares the Word of God to the **milk** that feeds and nourishes hungry newborn babes: "That you may grow thereby" (*1 Pet. 2:2, NKJV; compare with Heb. 5:13*). These biblical examples make us aware of an important condition that we must have in order to partake of spiritual nourishment from the Word of God. We must come to the Word with an awareness of our need. We must come hungry and thirsting; otherwise, we will not appreciate the vital necessity of spiritual sustenance. Nor will we likely enjoy it or profit from it.—T-BSG* 52.†‡§

[T-BSG:] In this study, we will try to understand two crucial truths about spiritual nourishment: (1) **why** and (2) **how** the process of feeding on the

Word of God sustains us. The basis of our study will be **2 Timothy 3:14–17**, the foundational passage from Paul in his second letter to Timothy. The first question—“**Why?**”—will permit us to examine, from a biblical perspective, the special qualities and effects that make 2 Timothy so powerful and life-changing. The second question—“**How?**”—will propose methods for reading the Scriptures. Such methods will allow for the miracle of feeding on God’s Word to happen in our own lives.—*T-BSG** 52.^{†‡}

2. The apostle Paul in some of his final words to us as recorded in 2 Timothy 3:14-17 clearly spelled out: (1) The authority of Scripture, and (2) How it should impact our lives.

2 Timothy 3:14-17: ¹⁴But as for you, continue in the truths that you were taught and firmly believe. You know who your teachers were, ¹⁵and you remember that ever **since you were a child, you have known the Holy Scriptures**, which are able to give you the wisdom that leads to salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. ¹⁶All Scripture is inspired by God and is useful [Footnote: **Every scripture inspired by God** is also useful.] for teaching the truth, rebuking error, correcting faults, and giving instruction for right living, ¹⁷so that the person who serves God may be fully qualified and equipped to do every kind of good deed.—American Bible Society. (©1992). *The Holy Bible: The Good News Translation*^{®*} [GNT] (*Today’s English Version*) [TEV], Second Edition (2 Timothy 3:14-17). Philadelphia: American Bible Society [abbreviated as *Good News Bible-TEV** or *GNB-TEV**].^{†‡}

3. The word *scripture* means writing. There were many writings in Timothy’s day. Paul was advising Timothy that inspired Scriptures were useful; Paul was not saying that all the writings were useful. Is the *Book of Mormon* useful? Is *Time* magazine useful?

[T-BSG:] **The “Why” of the Scriptures.** Why do the Scriptures possess the power to sustain life? Paul suggests two responses to this question. The first response has to do with Paul’s high view of the Scriptures, as well as the nature, or sacred quality, of the Scriptures. The second response has to do with the effect of the Scriptures, namely, the transformative power of the sacred writings in the life of Paul’s reader, Timothy (*2 Tim. 3:15*), whom Paul also calls the “man of God” (*2 Tim. 3:16, 17*).—*T-BSG** 52-53.^{†§}

[T-BSG:] **The Quality of the Scriptures.** The Scriptures that formed the Bible were first commonly identified as “holy.” The phrase “holy Scriptures” (Greek: *hiera grammata*), which Paul uses, occurs only here in the New Testament. This phrase reflects the technical title *Torah sebbiktav*, “the written law,” that designated in ancient Judaism **the writings that were considered as inspired**.... **Paul here refers to the Old Testament.**

For Paul, the so-called Old Testament was the only Holy Scripture. At that time, the New Testament did not exist and was not yet a part of the instruction that Timothy would have received. The reason these writings are called “holy” derives from the fact that they are considered to be *theopneusto*, “inspired”—literally, “**God breathed.**” This same verb is used to describe the process of God’s creation of man, in which God “breathed into his nostrils the breath of life” (*Gen. 2:7, NKJV*). From this exalted view of Scripture, Paul infers not only lessons concerning the effect of the

Scriptures upon us but also lessons concerning the way that we should approach God's Word.—*T-BSG** 53.†‡§

[T-BSG:] **The Effect of the Scriptures.** The **parallel between the inspiration of the Scriptures and the process of the creation of human beings** is not accidental. This parallel is intended to suggest that **the Word of God is life**. As such, it brings life to its receiver, just as Adam received life from his Creator. **Paul specifies that the Holy Scriptures “make you wise” (2 Tim. 3:15, NKJV).** Paul does not mean that this effect is mechanical, that those who receive the Scriptures would immediately and magically become endowed with wisdom. Paul reminds us that **the wisdom of which he speaks comes through faith in Jesus Christ.** Then, in the next verse, Paul explains that this wisdom functions in four distinct ways in the life of the believer:

1. The first function of the Scriptures is **“doctrinal.”** Scripture guides us in finding and understanding the truth.
2. The second function of the Scriptures is **“reproof”**; that is, it makes us aware of errors we have committed, not only in doctrine but also in the way we behave in our personal lives.
3. The third function of the Holy Scriptures is **“correction.”** It is not enough to realize our mistakes; we also must understand how to correct our course and determine the right direction to take.
4. The fourth and final function of Scripture is for **“righteousness.”** The Scriptures ultimately lead us to repentance and obedience through the Holy Spirit. Paul then concludes that **the goal of the Scriptures is the formation of the complete individual.** Paul concludes his lesson on a practical level with the directive to take action. Thus, Scripture equips us “for every good work” (2 Tim. 3:17, NKJV), as well.—*T-BSG** 53-54.†‡§

[T-BSG:] **The Approach to the Scriptures.** How do the Scriptures produce these extraordinary effects, taking us from where we are to a life of righteousness with all the “good works” it implies? To help us answer this question, four lessons, or principles, concerning our approach to the Scriptures may be drawn from Paul's counsels to Timothy.—*T-BSG** 54.‡

[T-BSG:] **All Scripture.** The first and most basic principle in our approach to biblical texts is the fact **that their “holy” and inspired quality concerns the totality of Scripture.** Paul insists that *all* Scripture is inspired (2 Tim. 3:16). **This principle means that the whole corpus of the Bible is to be considered in our studies and in our quest for God's revelation.** Paul's statement encourages us to read Scripture, trusting that its holy writings will guide us in our search for divine truth and for practical advice in our life. **Not one book or single passage of the Bible is to be privileged over other books or other passages. All Scripture merits the same high degree of interest and attention.** Paul suggests here an approach that has been defined in more recent biblical scholarship as the **“canonical approach.”** **Thus, a particular text should be analyzed in light of other biblical passages that may refer to or allude to it (also called the inter-textual principle).**—*T-BSG** 54.†‡§

[T-BSG:] **Learn and Know.** Paul values the effort of learning and knowing (2 Tim. 3:14, 15). For this reason, ignorance of the Scriptures, or a superficial reading of the Bible, may have a serious impact, not only on our present existence but also on our eternal salvation. Within this framework, Paul's call to learn and know implies that we must give particular attention to the biblical text that is the object of our study. As Ellen G. White reminds us [then, a portion of the following from EGW is quoted]....—T-BSG* 54.†§

[From the writings of Ellen G. White=EGW:] **It is the duty of every Christian to seek a thorough knowledge of the Scriptures. The importance of this can hardly be overestimated. "Given by inspiration of God," "able to make us wise unto salvation," rendering "the man of God perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works," the Book of books has the highest claim to our reverent attention. We must not be satisfied with superficial knowledge, but must seek to learn the full meaning of the words of truth, and to drink deep of the spirit of the holy oracles.**—Ellen G. White, *Advent Review and Sabbath Herald (The Review and Herald)*,* October 9, 1883, par. 1.†† [James White died in 1881.]‡ [<https://egwwritings.org/read?panels=p821.4958&index=0>]‡

[T-BSG:] **Faithfulness.** Paul's exhortation to Timothy to "continue" in the things he had learned (2 Tim. 3:14) echoes Jesus' appeal to "abide" in His Word (*John 8:31, NKJV*). The same Greek verb *menō*, "continue," appears in both verses. It is not enough to learn the biblical truth once; **we should review it.** There is a **Hebrew proverb that says, "Someone who learns a lesson and does not review it is like a farmer who sows and does not reap."** For Timothy, and for many Christians, this training is not a one-time event; the work begins "from childhood" (2 Tim. 3:15, *NKJV*) and continues throughout life. Paul's exhortation to continue in the Word is not just engaging in an intellectual recollection of abstract truths and doctrines. Nor is it a temporary sentimental remembrance. Paul calls Timothy to abide in the Word and practice it at all times. James thinks along these lines when he discusses the connection between faith and works (*James 2:14–26*).—T-BSG* 54-55.††§

John 8:31-32: ³¹So Jesus said to those who believed in him, "If you obey my teaching, you are really my disciples; ³²you will know the truth, and **the truth will set you free.**"—*Good News Bible-TEV*.*†

James 2:14-26: ¹⁴My friends, what good is it for one to say that you have faith if your actions do not prove it? Can that faith save you? ¹⁵Suppose there are brothers or sisters who need clothes and don't have enough to eat. ¹⁶What good is there in your saying to them, "God bless you! Keep warm and eat well!"—if you don't give them the necessities of life? ¹⁷So it is with **faith: if it is alone and includes no actions, then it is dead.**

¹⁸But someone will say, "One person has faith, another has actions." My answer is, "Show me how anyone can have faith without actions. **I will show you my faith by my actions.**" ¹⁹Do you believe that there is only one God? Good! The demons also believe—and tremble with fear. ²⁰You fool! Do you want to be shown that faith without actions is useless? ²¹How was our ancestor **Abraham** put right with God? It was through his actions, when

he offered his son Isaac on the altar. ²²Can't you see? His faith and his actions worked together; **his faith was made perfect through his actions.** ²³And the scripture came true that said, "Abraham believed God, and because of his faith God accepted him as righteous." And so Abraham was called God's friend. ²⁴You see, then, that **it is by our actions that we are put right with God, and not by our faith alone. [Abraham, the saint!]**

²⁵ It was the same with the prostitute **Rahab**. She was **put right with God through her actions**, by welcoming the Israelite spies and helping them to escape by a different road. [Rahab had been a Canaanite prostitute!]

²⁶ **So then, as the body without the spirit is dead, also faith without actions is dead.**—*Good News Bible-TEV*.*††

[T-BSG:] **Impact of Teachers. We cannot have access to the divine truth by ourselves. Because truth is given through revelation, as the Bible teaches, the testimony of human witnesses who have accepted that revelation as true is also needed. For this reason, we need teachers.** From the very beginning of Israel's history, God has urged His people to teach their children (*Deut. 6:7*). Paul alludes to that principle when he writes to Timothy about those "from whom" he had learned (*2 Tim. 3:14*, [See above] *NKJV*). Paul particularly has in mind Timothy's mother, Eunice, and his grandmother, Lois, but also himself among the "many witnesses" of the Christian community (*2 Tim. 2:2*). Paul's appeal, then, concerns not only the students or the children who are indebted to their parents and their teachers but also the parents and teachers themselves who have the responsibility to share what they have learned.—*T-BSG** 55.†§

Deuteronomy 6:7: "Teach them to your children. Repeat them when you are at home and when you are away, when you are resting and when you are working."—*Good News Bible-TEV*.* [That is, **remember at all times!**]†

2 Timothy 1:5: I remember the sincere faith you have, the kind of faith that your grandmother Lois and your mother Eunice also had. I am sure that you have it also.—*Good News Bible-TEV*.*

2 Timothy 2:2: Take the teachings that you heard me proclaim in the presence of many witnesses, and entrust them to reliable people, who will be able to teach others also.—*Good News Bible-TEV*.* [Are we doing that?]†

[T-BSG:] **How do we successfully apply the Scriptures to our lives?** The following activities are intended to help us do just that.—*T-BSG** 55.††

[T-BSG:] **For Reflection:** There is the potential for misunderstanding how to apply the Scriptures in our own lives. The application of the Scriptures to our lives does not mean we are at liberty to manipulate God's Word to accommodate our inclinations. Rather, to apply the Scriptures to our lives means that **we should conform our lives to the teachings of Scripture.**—*T-BSG** 55.†† [Do we apply the Bible to our lives?]†

[T-BSG:] **Activity 1: Daily meditation:** For a week or so, use a short text (one verse or one biblical passage) every morning for your devotional. Learn what this passage means in light of its context. Be creative. Look for new insights and lessons with each reading.

Activity 2: Learn a verse by heart: Every month, choose a Bible verse from your meditation texts and repeat it each morning until you have memorized it. [In our house, we learned a new “Scripture song” every week.]

Activity 3: Teach: The best way to learn is to share with your spouse or a friend what you have learned and discovered in the Scriptures. Find someone with whom you may share and discuss your newfound knowledge and insights about the Bible.

Activity 4: Obey: It is not enough to know a verse by heart. **The most important thing is to apply it to your life and obey its counsel.** As Jesus said: “ ‘If you know these things, blessed are you if you do them’ ” (*John 13:17, NKJV*). **As you read and study the Word, ask for the Holy Spirit to give you wisdom to know how to apply its truth in practical ways to your life.**—*T-BSG** 56.†§

The “Most Powerful Weapon”—The Bible

[BSG:] **One of the most significant attacks Satan can make on you is to stop you from spending time with God in His Word. Keeping people away from their Bibles through business, apathy, tiredness, or doubt is his number-one strategy. He knows that when we spend time with God in His Word, it revives our lives and nourishes our souls; so, of course, he would do everything to prevent this!**—*BSG** for Sunday.†‡

[EGW:] “To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them.” Isaiah 8:20. The people of God are directed to the Scriptures as their safeguard against the influence of false teachers and the delusive power of spirits of darkness. **Satan employs every possible device to prevent men from obtaining a knowledge of the Bible; for its plain utterances reveal his deceptions.** At every revival of God’s work the prince of evil is aroused to more intense activity; he is now putting forth his utmost efforts for a final struggle against Christ and His followers. The last great delusion is soon to open before us. **Antichrist [Satan] is to perform his marvelous works in our sight. So closely will the counterfeit resemble the true that it will be impossible to distinguish between them except by the Holy Scriptures. By their testimony every statement and every miracle must be tested....**

None but those who have fortified the mind with the truths of the Bible will stand through the last great conflict. To every soul will come the searching test: Shall I obey God rather than men? The decisive hour is even now at hand. Are our feet planted on the rock of God’s immutable word? Are we prepared to stand firm in defense of the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus?—Ellen G. White, *The Great Controversy** 593.1-2.*†‡ [This is a fabulous chapter in *The Great Controversy*. Read the whole chapter if you can!][‡]

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4. Satan isn’t ignorant. He understands God’s powerful Word very well; he knows that it makes him powerless. In Ephesians 6:17-18, God’s Word is described as a *sword* which the Spirit gives us to work against the Devil. In Hebrews 4:12 (See below in Item #12.), it

is described as a *double-edged sword*. Jesus confronted the Devil at the tomb of Lazarus.

John 11:41-44: ⁴¹They took the stone away. Jesus looked up and said, “I thank you, Father, that you listen to me. ⁴²I know that you always listen to me, but **I say this for the sake of the people here, so that they will believe that you sent me.**” ⁴³After he had said this, he called out in a loud voice, “Lazarus, come out!” ⁴⁴He came out, his hands and feet wrapped in grave clothes, and with a cloth around his face. “Untie him,” Jesus told them, “and let him go.”—*Good News Bible-TEV*.^{*†} [What could the Sadducees say then? They believed that there was no resurrection. (See **Mark 12:18**.)]‡

5. How does God’s Word impact our lives? Satan will do whatever he can to try to keep us from reading the Bible and learning its lessons. Following the Bible’s counsel could impact our marriages, our relationship with our children, even with friends and coworkers.
6. Let us remember that God is always ready to demonstrate His unfailing love. (Lamentations 3:22-23)
7. From our last lesson, Ezekiel 28:14-17 describes Lucifer/Satan’s role before he fell.

Ezekiel 28:14-16: ¹⁴ “I put a terrifying angel there to guard you. You lived on my holy mountain and walked among sparkling gems. ¹⁵Your conduct was perfect from the day you were created until you began to do evil. ¹⁶You were busy buying and selling [this word can mean **slandering**], and this led you to violence and sin. So I forced you to leave my holy mountain, and the angel who guarded you drove you away from the sparkling gems.”—*Good News Bible-TEV*.^{*‡}

[BSG:] When it comes to personal Bible study, we must be careful not to expect the Bible to serve our purposes or perspectives, which are not always the same as God’s. For example, we shouldn’t use the “close my eyes and point to a text” method, because this isn’t how God wants to communicate with us through His Word. God is not a puppet on a string, waiting to serve our needs and will. His ways and thoughts are so much higher than ours (*Isa. 55:9*), and so we should never try to control His words to us. **Neither should we pick and choose only the parts of the Bible that feel comfortable to us. Instead, we should see the Bible as a whole package rather than reading the easy, familiar passages and leaving out the confronting or challenging ones.** If we truly want God to speak into our lives, **we must take the Bible as a whole** and use sound methods when we engage in careful Bible study, trusting that God will reveal what we need to hear when we need to hear it.—*BSG*^{*} for Monday, April 20.^{†‡§} [See John 16:25-27.][‡]

Isaiah 55:9: “As high as the heavens are above the earth,
so high are my ways and thoughts above yours.”—*Good News Bible-TEV*.^{*}

Matthew 22:37: Jesus answered, “Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.”—*Good News Bible-TEV*.^{*}

8. Please pay very careful attention to these words. God wants us to use our minds to understand His Word. Think of the stories of Enoch, Abraham, Moses, and Job. Think of the many conversations that Jesus had with people in His day. God intends for us to use

our minds to understand all of that.

[BSG:] Human reason, however, is still *human*—capable of error and deception. It's never infallible. It's possible for human reason to push God aside to try to work things out on our own, which places self as equal to, or above, God when it comes to thinking. People can approach Scripture with an arrogant and critical spirit, thinking they've heard it all before and that there is nothing new. **It's when we feel important, confident, self-sufficient, and in need of nothing that we neglect our relationship with God and rely on our own limited knowledge and faulty reasoning.**—BSG* for Monday, April 20.†‡§

[BSG:] A trend among some liberal theologians in the 1960s was to write God out of the field of theology. In 2017, a cover story of *Time* magazine featured the headline “Is Truth Dead?” It's interesting because this trend illustrates the position of our society today. The very idea of “truth” itself is decaying to such an extent that no one knows what truth is anymore. According to popular culture, there is no measuring stick, no foundation that remains constant that can be depended upon to endure the test of time. Contrary to this, Jesus said, “ ‘I am the . . . truth’ ” (*John 14:6*). His Word testifies about Him as truth in complete purity.—BSG* for Tuesday.‡§ [A 1966 cover of *Time* magazine “asked,” “**Is God Dead?**” See *John 14:6*.]†

John 14:6: Jesus answered him [Thomas], “I am the way, the truth, and the life; no one goes to the Father except by me.”—*Good News Bible-TEV*.*†

9. John 17:17; Proverbs 30:5-6; and Psalm 12:6 teach us that God's truth is pure and true, a precious treasure!
10. When some who are not very familiar with the Bible start to read it, they might think it is an old book with timeworn stories. Ellen White had a very different attitude.

[EGW:] It is sometimes the case that men of intellectual ability, improved by education and culture, fail to comprehend certain passages of Scripture, while others who are uneducated, [Think of the disciples of Jesus.] whose understanding seems weak and whose minds are undisciplined, will grasp the meaning, finding strength and comfort in that which the former declare to be mysterious or pass by as unimportant. Why is this? It has been explained to me that the latter class do not rely upon their own understanding. They go to the Source of light, the One who has inspired the Scriptures, and with humility of heart ask God for wisdom, and they receive it. **There are mines of truth yet to be discovered by the earnest seeker.** Christ represented the truth as treasure hid in a field. It does not lie right upon the surface; we must dig for it. **But our success in finding it does not depend so much on our intellectual ability as on our humility of heart and the faith which will lay hold upon divine aid.**—Ellen G. White, *Testimonies for the Church*,* vol. 5, 704.2.*†‡ [Think of the great controversy.]† <https://egwwritings.org/read?panels=p113.3427&index=0>†

11. Paul was delighted when his listeners took the Bible seriously as the Word of God.

[BSG:] **In the end, the Bible, and the Bible alone, must be the foundational source of what we understand as truth. All other sources**

must be tried and tested by the Word of God. Even what we deem “reason” needs to be tested by God’s Word!

Some people want to argue that there is no truth. Why is that statement self-contradictory? That is, why is making the claim that there is no truth an attempt to proclaim truth, and thus self-refuting?—BSG* for Tuesday, April 21.†‡

12. How much do you think your life would be changed if you took the Bible as the Word of God and made it the guiding counsel for your life?

John 6:63: “What gives life is God’s Spirit; human power is of no use at all. The words I have spoken to you bring God’s life-giving Spirit.”—GNB-TEV.*

Hebrews 4:12: The word of God is alive and active, sharper than any double-edged sword. It cuts all the way through, to where soul and spirit meet, to where joints and marrow come together. **It judges the desires and thoughts of the heart.**—*Good News Bible-TEV*.*†

[BSG:] One of the claims the Bible makes about itself can be found in Hebrews 4:12. A two-edged sword is powerful and sharp, but the Bible can do what human tools cannot for the human soul. The Bible describes itself as being alive. Perhaps you’ve wondered how this could be, given that it was written thousands of years ago, but Jesus said, “ ‘The words that I speak to you are spirit, and they are life’ ” (*John 6:63, NKJV*). If your heart is broken or your life is falling apart, God can speak His words into your world and change things around. The Old Testament also describes God’s words as being very active and not at all stagnant or passive (see *Isa. 55:11*). When David reflected on the impact of God’s words on his life, he wrote, “This is my comfort in my affliction, for Your word has given me life” (*Psa. 119:50, NKJV*).—BSG* for Wednesday, April 22.‡§

13. When were you very hungry? Have you ever been really hungry for God’s Word?

1 Peter 2:2: Be like newborn babies, always thirsty for the pure spiritual milk, so that by drinking it you may grow up and be saved.—*Good News Bible-TEV*.*

14. Do you feel that kind of hunger when you open God’s Word?

[BSG:] **The messages in God’s Word, the Bible, come from God Himself. God sent them specifically for us and for every other person who has sought Him. When we read them with a prayerful, open heart, those words won’t be wasted.** [Do we really focus when we read it?]

How much time do you spend daily in the Bible, and how do you spend that time? What can you do to make that time the most spiritually profitable?—BSG* for Wednesday, April 22.†‡

[BSG:] Our ability to receive instruction from God’s Word (*Job 22:22*) depends largely on what **the state of our heart** is like when we come to the Bible. How does 1 Corinthians 2:14 explain this?—BSG* for Thursday.†‡§

1 Corinthians 2:14: Whoever does not have the Spirit cannot receive the gifts that come from God’s Spirit. Such a person really does not understand them, and they seem to be nonsense, because their value can be judged only on a spiritual basis.—*Good News Bible-TEV*.*†

[BSG:] To have spiritual discernment means to have spiritual insight and understanding. It makes sense, then, that a spiritually open-minded person will have very different takeaways when reading the Bible than a spiritually closed-minded person. Someone who thinks the Bible is foolish won't look for truth in its pages.—BSG* for Thursday, April 23.‡

[BSG:] One of the great purposes of the Bible is to speak truth into our lives about the condition of our relationship with God and how to strengthen it. If your heart is open to the Holy Spirit and if you approach the Word with humility, you will always come away changed, even though you might not immediately recognize it day by day. Such change and growth are often incremental. **But if we cling to our apathy and sin and are not willing to change, Bible reading can avail us little good.** The Holy Spirit prompts us to move closer to Jesus Christ. Do we want to step closer? If so, we become “wise unto salvation” (2 Tim. 3:15), and we'll see things we never even imagined.—BSG* for Thursday, April 23.†§

[BSG:] **What is the state of my heart and mind as I approach the Bible? Am I just bringing my opinions to the Bible with the goal of trying to justify them, or am I coming with an open mind and heart, ready with childlike faith to see what God wants to tell me today? Why is that answer so important?**—BSG* for Thursday, April 23.‡

15. Think about the words and ideas that you have expressed in the past 24 hours. Were they loving? Kind? Joyful? Uplifting? Frustrated? Tired? Anxious? Angry? Gossipy? Or, malicious? Remember that your words come out of your heart. (Matthew 12:34) When we have junk in our hearts, it comes out in our words.
16. Are we prepared to accept every word of Scripture as the Word of God?

[EGW:] It is one thing to treat the Bible as a book of good moral instruction, to be heeded so far as is consistent with the spirit of the times and our position in the world; **it is another thing to regard it as it really is—the word of the living God, the word that is our life, the word that is to mold our actions, our words, and our thoughts. To hold God's word as anything less than this is to reject it. And this rejection by those who profess to believe it, is foremost among the causes of skepticism and infidelity in the youth.**—Ellen G. White, *Education** 260.1.††

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17. ***Could you make a list of the logical and rational reasons for your faith? Are those reasons clearly based on your understanding of Scripture? Could you advise someone who wanted to grow their Christian life what to do?***

[BSG:] **Summary: The Bible is living and powerful, and reading it is foundational to growing our relationship with God. Not only does it teach us about God's wonderful character and His interactions with humanity throughout earth's history—it also speaks to each of us today when we come to it in humility.**—BSG* for Friday, April 24.††

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