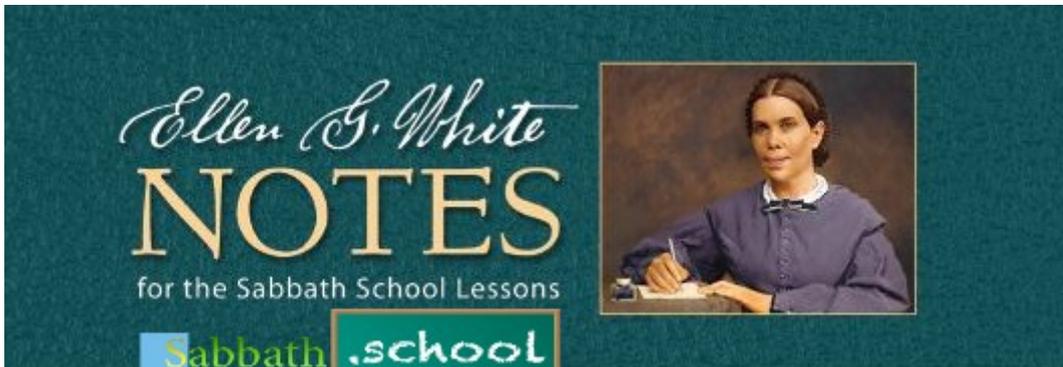


EGW Notes - Lesson 5

How to Study the Bible



Sabbath Afternoon, April 25

There is nothing more calculated to strengthen the intellect than a study of the Bible. No other book is so potent to elevate the thoughts, to give vigor to the faculties, as the broad, ennobling truths of the Bible. If God's Word were studied as it should be, men would have a breadth of mind, a nobility of character, that is rarely seen in these times.

No knowledge is so firm, so consistent, so far-reaching, as that obtained from a study of the Word of God. If there were not another book in the wide world, the Word of God, lived out through the grace of Christ, would make man perfect in this world, with a character fitted for the future, immortal life. Those who study the Word, taking it in faith as the truth, and receiving it into the character, will be complete in Him who is all and in all. Thank God for the possibilities set before humanity. . . .

The time devoted to a study of God's Word and to prayer will bring a hundredfold in return.

The Word of God is the living seed, and as this seed is sown in the mind, the human agent must give diligent care to the successive stages of its growth. How is this to be done? After the Word has been prayerfully received, it is to be cherished, and practiced in the daily life. It is to spring up and bear fruit, putting forth first the blade, then the ear, then the full corn in the ear.

It is not enough to study the Bible as other books are studied. In order for it to be understood savingly, the Holy Spirit must move on the heart of the searcher. The same Spirit that inspired the Word must inspire the reader of the Word. Then will be heard the voice of heaven. “Thy Word, O God, is truth” will be the language of the soul.

The mere reading of the Word will not accomplish the result designed of Heaven; it must be studied, and cherished in the heart. The knowledge of God is not gained without mental effort. We should diligently study the Bible, asking God for the aid of the Holy Spirit, that we may understand His Word. We should take one verse, and concentrate the mind on the task of ascertaining the thought which God has put in that verse for us. We should dwell on the thought till it becomes our own, and we know “what saith the Lord.” . . .

The Word of God is the bread of life. Those who eat and digest this Word, making it a part of every action and of every attribute of character, grow strong in the strength of God. It gives immortal vigor to the soul, perfecting the experience and bringing joys that will abide forever.—*Lift Him Up*, p. 111.

Sunday, April 26

Time

Great light was given to the Reformers, but many of them received the sophistry of error through misinterpretation of the Scriptures. These errors have come down through the centuries, but although they be hoary with age, yet they have not behind them a “Thus saith the Lord.” For the Lord has said, I will not “alter the thing that is gone out of my lips.” In His great mercy the Lord has permitted still greater light to shine in these last days. To us He has sent His message, revealing His law and showing us what is truth.

In Christ is the fountain of all knowledge. In Him our hopes of eternal life are centered. He is the greatest teacher the world has ever known, and if we desire to enlarge the minds of the children and youth, and win them, if possible, to a love of the Bible, we should fasten their minds upon the plain and simple truth, digging out that which has been buried beneath the rubbish of tradition, and letting the jewels shine forth. Encourage them to search into these subjects, and the effort put forth will be an invaluable discipline.

The unfolding of God, as represented in Jesus Christ, furnishes a theme that is grand to contemplate, and that will, if studied, sharpen the mind, and elevate and ennoble the faculties. As the human agents learn these lessons in the school of Christ, trying to become as Christ was, meek and lowly of heart, they will learn the most useful of all lessons—that intellect is supreme only as it is sanctified by a living connection with God. . . .

The greatest wisdom, and most essential, is the knowledge of God. Self sinks into insignificance as it contemplates God and Jesus Christ whom He hath sent. The Bible must be made the foundation for all study. Individually we must learn from this lesson book, which God has given us, the condition of the salvation of our souls; for it is the only book that tells us what we must do in order to be saved. Not only this, but from it strength may be received for the intellect.—*To Be Like Jesus*, p. 102.

Monday, April 27

A Place

The words, “Give us this day our daily bread,” refer not only to temporal food but to the spiritual food which brings everlasting life to the receiver. When we believe and receive Christ’s word, we eat His flesh and drink His blood. . . .

As by eating temporal food the physical system becomes strong, so by eating the flesh and drinking the blood of the Son of God, the spiritual nature is strengthened. God’s Word is spirit and life to all who appropriate it. He who partakes of Christ’s flesh and blood is a partaker of the divine nature. . . . A vital, life-giving current flows from his Saviour to him.

No one can eat this flesh and drink this blood for another. Each must come to Christ with his own soul hunger, each must have his own convictions, feel his own soul’s need, and learn of Christ for himself.

Filled with the Bread of Life, we cannot hunger for earthly attractions, worldly excitements, and earthly grandeur. Our religious experience will be of the same order as the food upon which we feed.

The food we eat at one meal does not satisfy us forever. We must daily partake of food. So we must daily eat the Word of God that the life of the soul may be renewed. In those who feed constantly upon the Word, Christ is formed, the hope of glory. A neglect to read and study the Bible brings spiritual starvation. . . .

Christ is our life. The soul in whom He abides will meet the requirements of His principles, in thorough devotion and consecration to God. Christ’s personal contact with the soul builds it up, supplying its ever-recurring wants. He is made unto us wisdom and righteousness and sanctification and redemption. He is our sufficiency. . . .

He is the lifeblood of the soul. If He abides with us, we may say, “I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me.” [Galatians 2:20](#).—*Our High Calling*, p. 209.

Wherever the truths of the gospel are proclaimed, those who honestly desire to do right are led to a diligent searching of the Scriptures. If, in the

closing scenes of this earth's history, those to whom testing truths are proclaimed would follow the example of the Bereans, searching the Scriptures daily, and comparing with God's word the messages brought them, there would today be a large number loyal to the precepts of God's law, where now there are comparatively few. But when unpopular Bible truths are presented, many refuse to make this investigation. Though unable to controvert the plain teachings of Scripture, they yet manifest the utmost reluctance to study the evidences offered. Some assume that even if these doctrines are indeed true, it matters little whether or not they accept the new light, and they cling to pleasing fables which the enemy uses to lead souls astray. Thus their minds are blinded by error, and they become separated from heaven.

All will be judged according to the light that has been given. The Lord sends forth His ambassadors with a message of salvation, and those who hear He will hold responsible for the way in which they treat the words of His servants. Those who are sincerely seeking for truth will make a careful investigation, in the light of God's word, of the doctrines presented to them.—*The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 232.

Tuesday, April 28

Deep Bible Study

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.

The Bible contains all the principles that men need to understand in order to be fitted either for this life or the life to come. And these principles may be understood by all. No one with a spirit to appreciate its teaching can read a single passage from the Bible without gaining from it some helpful thought. But the most valuable teaching of the Bible is not to be gained by occasional or disconnected study. Its great system of truth is not so presented as to be discerned by the hasty or careless reader. . . . The truths that go to make up the great whole must be searched out and gathered up, "here a little, and there a little" ([Isaiah 28:10](#)).

When thus searched and brought together, they will be found to be perfectly fitted to one another. Each Gospel is a supplement to the others, every prophecy an explanation of another, every truth a development of some other truth. The types of the Jewish economy are made plain by the gospel. Every principle in the Word of God has its place, every fact its bearing. And the complete structure, in design and execution, bears testimony to its Author. Such a structure no mind but that of the Infinite could conceive or fashion.

In searching out the various parts and studying their relationship, the highest faculties of the human mind are called into intense activity. No one can engage in such study without developing mental power.

And not alone in searching out truth and bringing it together does the mental value of Bible study consist. It consists also in the effort required to grasp the themes presented. The mind occupied with commonplace matters only, becomes dwarfed and enfeebled. If never tasked to comprehend grand and far-reaching truths, it after a time loses the power of growth. As a safeguard against this degeneracy, and a stimulus to development, nothing else can equal the study of God's Word.

As a means of intellectual training, the Bible is more effective than any other book, or all other books combined. . . . No other study can impart such mental power as does the effort to grasp the stupendous truths of revelation. The mind thus brought in contact with the thoughts of the Infinite cannot but expand and strengthen.—*Reflecting Christ*, pp. 161, 162.

Wednesday, April 29

A Double Blessing

Happy is the man who has discovered for himself that the Word of God is a light to his feet and a lamp to his path—a light shining in a dark place. It is heaven’s directory for men. But there are many, O so many, who have no guide besides the opinions of finite men, prejudice, passion, or their own changeable feelings. Their minds are in a state of irritation and uncertainty. They suffer continually from mental fever.

Were you following Christ, the Word of God would be to you as a pillar of cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night. But you have not made the honor of God the first object of your lifework. You have the Bible. Study it for yourself. The teachings of the divine directory are not to be ignored or perverted. The divine mind will guide those who desire to be led. Truth is truth, and it will enlighten all who seek for it with humble hearts. Error is error, and no amount of worldly philosophizing can make it truth.

“Ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God’s” ([1 Corinthians 6:20](#)). What does the Lord require of His blood-bought heritage? The sanctification of the whole being—purity like the purity of Christ, perfect conformity to the will of the Lord. What is it that constitutes the beauty of the soul? The presence of the grace of Him who gave His life to redeem men and women from eternal death. . . .

No entreaties are so tender, no lessons so plain, no commands so powerful and so protecting, no promises so full, as those which point the sinner to the fountain that has been opened to wash away the guilt of the human soul.—*This Day With God*, p. 188.

One passage studied until its significance is clear to the mind and its relation to the plan of salvation is evident, is of more value than the perusal of many chapters with no definite purpose in view and no positive instruction gained. Keep your Bible with you. As you have opportunity, read it; fix the texts in your memory. Even while you are walking the streets you may read a passage and meditate upon it, thus fixing it in mind.

Times that will try men's souls are just before us, and those who are weak in the faith will not stand the test of those days of peril. The great truths of revelation are to be carefully studied, for we shall all want an intelligent knowledge of the word of God. By Bible study and daily communion with Jesus we shall gain clear, well-defined views of individual responsibility and strength to stand in the day of trial and temptation. He whose life is united to Christ by hidden links will be kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation.—*In Heavenly Places*, p. 138.

Thursday, April 30

'Tis So Sweet!

When a real love for the Bible is awakened, and the student begins to realize how vast is the field and how precious its treasure, he will desire to seize upon every opportunity for acquainting himself with God's word. Its study will be restricted to no special time or place. And this continuous study is one of the best means of cultivating a love for the Scriptures. Let the student keep his Bible always with him. As you have opportunity, read a text and meditate upon it. While walking the streets, waiting at a railway station, waiting to meet an engagement, improve the opportunity to gain some precious thought from the treasure house of truth.

The great motive powers of the soul are faith, hope, and love; and it is to these that Bible study, rightly pursued, appeals. The outward beauty of the Bible, the beauty of imagery and expression, is but the setting, as it were, for its real treasure—the beauty of holiness. In its record of the men who walked with God, we may catch glimpses of His glory. In the One “altogether lovely” we behold Him, of whom all beauty of earth and heaven is but a dim reflection. “I, if I be lifted up,” He said, “will draw all men unto Me.” [John 12:32](#). As the student of the Bible beholds the Redeemer, there is awakened in the soul the mysterious power of faith, adoration, and love. Upon the vision of Christ the gaze is fixed, and the beholder grows into the likeness of that which he adores. The words of the apostle Paul become the language of the soul: “I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: . . . that I may know Him, and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings.” [Philippians 3:8–10](#).

The springs of heavenly peace and joy unsealed in the soul by the words of Inspiration will become a mighty river of influence to bless all who come within its reach. Let the youth of today, the youth who are growing up with the Bible in their hands, become the recipients and the channels of its life-giving energy, and what streams of blessing would flow forth to the world!—influences of whose power to heal and comfort we can scarcely conceive—rivers of living water, fountains “springing up unto everlasting life.”—*Education*, pp. 191, 192.

Friday, May 1

For Further Reading

Reflecting Christ, “Study the Divine Guidebook in Worship,” June 16, p. 181.

The Upward Look, “The Bible—God’s Word to You,” February 7, p. 52.