



Wary of destructive false teaching in the Ephesian church, Paul wrote to pastor Timothy, “But as for you, continue in what you have learned and have firmly believed, knowing from whom you learned it and how from childhood you have been acquainted with the sacred writings, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus” (2 Tim. 3:14–15). As Paul boldly declares, the Bible is the key to seeing Jesus for who he is, the Savior from sin.

But God’s Word, the Bible, does not merely direct people to Christ—it guides believers in faith to follow Jesus, too. Paul continues, “All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be competent, equipped for every good work” (2 Tim. 3:16–17). Right doctrine, essential for any Christian’s sanctification and church’s progress, is found in the Bible. It is important, then, to study the Bible and know it well.

Psalms 119:103 reads, “How sweet are your words to my taste, sweeter than honey to my mouth!” There are various resources, tools, authors, methods, etc., to help Christians follow the Psalmist’s example and cherish the Bible.

1. *Read the Bible!* Regular time in the Word increases memory and helps connect Scriptures from various places in the Bible. This discipline could mean scheduling daily time to read the Bible, keeping a Bible nearby for quiet lulls in the day, or following a predetermined reading plan. Some good reading plans can be found at:

- <http://www.navpress.com/dj/content.aspx?id=138>
- ESV Online (<http://www.esvonline.org>)

Keep a pen and journal nearby to record anything particularly noteworthy. Also, try reading different translations. While not all translations are equally accurate, reading various translations can provide a fresh look at familiar passages.

CrossPointe recommends the English Standard Version, but other translations like the NASB or NIV are good for regular reading. For that matter, there are many options for reading most Bible translations online.

- ESV Online
- Bible Gateway (<http://www.biblegateway.org>)

Study Bibles provide helpful notes, maps, illustrations and references, too. The ESV Study Bible is simply the most doctrinally sound, practically useful one available. Other useful study Bibles include the NASB Study Bible and the NIV Study Bible.

2. *Pray.* The Bible is God’s Word, inspired by the Holy Spirit himself, so it makes sense to seek the Spirit’s guidance through his Scriptures. Also, pray the Scriptures back to God. This is especially useful for the Psalms.

3. *Use helpful references.* Maps, dictionaries, encyclopedias, etc., can help illuminate the Scriptures. For that matter, commentaries provide additional thoughts on different biblical books, often from a more academic approach. While helpful, commentaries are still the thoughts and analyses of men struggling to better understand God's Word. It's important not to rely on them too much. Visit www.bestcommentaries.com for examples. Additionally, Logos Bible Software provides several translations, word studies, commentaries and books to help with in-depth Bible study.
4. *Read good books.* Some books might expose just a portion of Scripture; others explain how to read the Bible itself.
 - *What Does God Want of Us Anyway?* by Mark Dever
 - *How to Read the Bible for All It's Worth* by Stuart Fee
 - *40 Questions About Interpreting the Bible* by Robert L. Plummer
 - Visit www.insidecrosspointe.com/resources/recommended-reading for more books.