

## Ideas for “Treasuring and Delighting” in the Scriptures

### Rosemary Lind

There are lots of great ways to feast upon the scriptures each day, and if you are like me, you have tried a lot of them. Have you noticed that scripture study is a lot like physical exercise? It keeps your spirit in shape, just as exercise keeps your body in shape. You choose a way of studying and it's great for a while, but you will come to a point where you realize you aren't feeling the spirit as intensely as you were, and you're kind of at a lull in your study. Then it's time to change it and find something new.

Here are some ideas different people have found effective:

**Set a time each day**—don't wait for time to do it, or it won't happen. Protect this time. Many people find that early morning or evening works best because these are the times the phone doesn't ring and the children are asleep. Sometimes you can link it to other daily occurrences, such as the time your children go down for a nap, during or after your exercise time, after breakfast, etc.

**Make scripture reading a priority and use time wisely.** Many of us think we don't have time to read scriptures, but often we can find snatches of time while we are waiting at the doctor's office, in line at the DMV, waiting to pick up kids, etc. One of my friends said she has discovered that sometimes she will finish a Facebook session and realize that in the time she spent there, she could have had a great scripture study session or even attended the temple! Watch out for distractions and set limits. For example, I love reading, but I have a policy that I can't read other things until I have studied my scriptures.

Try to keep scriptures in your purse or car—many of us have them on our phones or iPods. Before you check your e-mail, check what the Lord's message is to you today!

**President Thomas S. Monson has said:** “We become so caught up in the busyness of our lives. Were we to step back, however, and take a good look at what we're doing, we may find that we have immersed ourselves in the ‘thick of thin things.’ In other words, too often we spend most of our time taking care of the things which do not really matter much at all in the grand scheme of things, neglecting those more important causes” (“What Have I Done for Someone Today?” *Ensign*, November 2009).

**Seek the spirit.** Pray before you begin, for understanding and to know what the Lord wants to communicate to you. Write down feelings and revelation you receive. My friend told me a sweet story of a single mother who joined the Church. She didn't read very well, and though she was willing, she couldn't get much out of the

scriptures. The missionaries suggested that she pray and ask the Lord for the ability to understand what she was reading. As she did this, she was able not only to understand, but also to enjoy and remember what she read.

### **Fast for further faith and understanding.**

**President Henry B. Eyring:** “When I go to the scriptures asking to be taught, then adding fasting helps tremendously.... Fasting and prayer work together with scripture study, making it easier for the Lord to teach us” (“A Discussion on Scripture Study,” *Ensign*, July 2005).

**Brother David B. Marsh wrote:** “When I first heard of the importance of studying the scriptures, I didn’t really know how to study. I remember watching others find uplifting insights in the scriptures while I struggled to understand what I was reading. I labored just to get used to the language of the scriptures. I felt inadequate and found myself dependent on others for scriptural insights. During those initial efforts I could not always count on my daily study session to be a spiritual success. However, I received great comfort and the courage to persevere in my personal scripture study when I came across this insight from President Henry B. Eyring, given when he served as Church Commissioner of Education: “That first exposure to the scriptures is going to be hard. ... It may be tough ... because [you] won’t get great insights right away.

“While my first experiences were not as successful as I had hoped, over time and with more practice, the number of uplifting discoveries and the moments of personal revelation occurred more frequently, even daily. I experienced what President Hinckley described when he said, ‘As you read, your minds will be enlightened and your spirits will be lifted. At first it may seem tedious, but that will change into a wondrous experience with thoughts and words of things divine’” (David B. Marsh, “Getting the Most out of Your Scripture Study,” *Ensign*, February 2009, 32–34).

### **Look for answers to questions and problems.**

Elder Henry B. Eyring said: “Going to the scriptures to learn what to do makes all the difference. The Lord can teach us. When we come to a crisis in our life, such as losing a child or spouse, we should go looking in the scriptures for specific help. We will find answers in the scriptures. The Lord seemed to anticipate all of our problems and all of our needs, and He put help in the scriptures for us—if only we seek it” (“A Discussion on Scripture Study,” *Ensign*, July 2005).

My daughter, Emily, tries to read with questions in mind, such as: “How can I become a more charitable person?” or a practical “Where should we make our ‘permanent’ home?” In this question, we see an example of finding an answer to a

question whose answer will not be in the words of the scriptures, but in the inspiration granted through our obedience to diligent study. That is the magic of the scriptures!

**Read straight through.** Most of us can testify of the power we found in the Book of Mormon when President Hinckley asked all the members to read it. I loved that experience, as I hadn't read it straight through for a while. I have kept reading it chapter by chapter along with my other scripture study because I love to read it that way so much now.

**When you get a new calling,** search the scriptures for inspiration from the Lord on how to accomplish his errand. For example, our daughter Emily marked an inexpensive copy with these roles in mind: Mother (pink); Wife (green), her calling (yellow) and daughter of God (orange).

**Mark and color code** specific things you want to remember, such as red for all the scriptures about the Savior, blue for the ones on faith, green for references to the temple, and so on (consider doing this in an inexpensive copy of the scriptures).

**Study with *Preach My Gospel* (look up the scriptures, write in the margins), the BYU syllabi from the religion courses, and gospel commentaries** (recognize that commentaries give us ideas to think about but are not substitutes for the scriptures).

**Choose a topic and look up all the scripture references about it.** Share it with your family in FHE or family scripture study. Husbands and wives can teach each other, and children can teach in Family Home Evening or tell parents what they have learned.

**Switch standard works**—different works touch us at various times of life and in different circumstances. Reading them all helps develop our understanding of the overall gospel plan and doctrine.

One of my college-age friends says she likes to write a **paraphrase of each chapter** as she reads. She also likes to write the **scenes of scripture as plays or in novel form.**

Another suggestion is to **write your inspiration on Post-its; or write supporting quotes from modern prophets and stick them in your scriptures.**

The **Bible Dictionary** is a wonderful help in understanding gospel principles.

**Lds.org** contains all the standard works, helps for studying, and places to write comments and save them.

The website **scriptures.byu.edu** has the scriptures and general conference talks that have been given about them. There is also an app for the iPhone and iPad that does this ("**Citation Index**"). You click on a particular scripture, and the conference talks they are mentioned in are listed. You click on the listed items, and you can read the conference talks.

In a talk she gave in a stake women's conference in California, Sister Laurel Lawrence suggested that just as we prepare food storage, so should we **store spiritual food** by committing scriptures to memory. She also recommended **studying the scriptures each day until we learn something new or are motivated to do better in our lives.**

**Sister Julie B. Beck** gives a great list of ideas:

"The key was **starting and doing it again and again.** One good way to start studying the scriptures is to **'liken' them to ourselves.** Some people start by **choosing a subject in the Topical Guide** that they need to know more about. Or they start at the beginning of a book of scripture and **look for specific teachings as they read through.**

"For instance, when I was called to serve as a Young Women leader, I bought a new set of scriptures, and as **I read and marked those scriptures, I looked for things that would help me in my calling.** Sometimes I put **colored pieces of paper in my scriptures so I have quick access to topics** or themes I am studying. I have **paper tabs in my scriptures for many of my favorite verses about repentance and the Atonement so I can find them easily as I ponder during the sacrament** each week. I usually make notes about what I am learning. Sometimes I keep those **notes in my scriptures,** and sometimes **I write what I am learning in a separate notebook.**

"Once in a while I **invest in a new copy of the Book of Mormon.** When I start reading that new book, I make **notes in the margins** so I have a **record of what I am learning as I study.** To help me remember what I am learning, I **draw lines to connect ideas.** I **shade verses** and **underline key words.** When I find ideas that relate to each other, I make a scripture chain to link those ideas (see "Scripture Linking," *Teaching, No Greater Call* [1999], 58). I like **to think of my scriptures as a workbook,** so sometimes I **record where I was when I gained an insight or the name of the person who taught me.** That way the experience is refreshed in my memory when I read that passage again.

"Many of you study foreign languages. You might like to **start reading the Book of Mormon in another language. When you read the scriptures in another language, you learn what the words mean in a new way.**

“Some people start by **finding answers to their questions**. They want to know who they are and what they should be doing with their lives. A friend of mine suggested that I start looking for **questions that the Lord asks us in the scriptures and ponder them**. Since then I have discovered many important **questions such as “What desirest thou?” “What think ye of Christ?”**). I keep a **list of those questions in the back of my scriptures**. I often **choose one to think about in quiet moments** because pondering enlightens my mind that I ‘might understand the scriptures.’ When I do not have my scriptures nearby, then I start my study **by reviewing teachings I have memorized**. By **reciting the Articles of Faith or other verses to myself**, I am able to keep them in my memory bank.

“Whichever way a person starts studying the scriptures, **the key to unlocking important knowledge is to keep studying**. I never tire of discovering the rich treasures of truth in the scriptures because they teach with ‘plainness, even as plain as word can be.’ The scriptures testify of Christ. They tell us all things we should do. They ‘make [us] wise unto salvation’” (“My Soul Delighteth in the Scriptures,” *Ensign*, May 2004).