HISTORY OF BIBLE READINGS (STUDIES)

In the 1880s, Adventist leader Ellen White, addressing church leadership, said that more teaching was needed and less preaching. This made an impact on another leader named Stephen Haskell. After prayer and contemplating the challenge, he started a meeting where questions were asked to the leading individuals of the day and answers had to come directly from the Bible.

During the exercise it began to rain so hard that no one could leave the tent meeting. Haskell extended the Bible readings for nearly two hours with unabated interest from all in attendance. Everyone was excited about the effectiveness of the method and demanded more. It was labeled “fireside preaching” and later morphed into “Bible readings” (which would be known as Bible studies today). A movement of this method spread across North America. These readings were later compiled into a magazine called the Bible Reading Gazette, which then morphed into the book Bible Readings for the Home Circle. Haskell later authored the Bible Handbook, which was used to train others in this method.

“The plan of holding Bible readings was a heaven-born idea. There are many, both men and women, who can engage in this branch of missionary labor. Workers may thus be developed who will become mighty men of God. . . . The Bible is brought into families, and its sacred truths come home to the conscience. . . . God will not permit this precious work for Him to go unrewarded. He will crown with success every humble effort made in His name” (Gospel Workers, 192).
Write out John 15:1–8 from the translation of your choice. You may also re-write the passage in your own words, outline, or mind-map the chapter.
Go back to your scribed text and study the passage.

**Circle** repeated words/ phrases/ideas

**Underline** words/phrases that are important and have meaning to you

Draw **Arrows** to connect words/ phrases to other associated or related words/phrases

What special insights do your marks seem overall to point to?

Memorize your favorite verse in John 15:1–8. Write it out multiple times to help with memorization.

Why does teaching a Bible study strengthen the spirituality of the teacher as well as the student?

Read more at www.inversebible.org/disc08-3
After looking at your scribed and annotated text, what special insights do your marks seem to point to overall?

What questions emerge after studying this passage? What parts are difficult?

What other principles and conclusions do you find?

How does your local church cultivate your teaching capacity of discipleship?

For more information on the cultivation stage and the Grow cycle, visit https://grow.adventist.org/cultivate/.

Read more at www.inversebible.org/disc08-4
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What relationship do the following verses have with the primary passage?

Mark 4:26–28
1 Peter 1:22–25
1 Peter 2:2, 3
Hebrews 4:12, 13

What other verses/promises come to mind in connection with discipleship and teaching the Word of God?

Review your memorized verse from John 15:1–8.
In your discipleship walk, what questions do you have for Christ directly?

What is He saying to you through these texts?

How do you see Jesus differently or see Him again?

Prayer: How do you respond to seeing Jesus in this way?

Meditate on John 15:1–8 again and look for where Jesus is.
Review the memory verse. How does it apply to your life this week?

After this week’s study of the chapter, what personal applications are you convicted of in your life?

What practical applications must you make in your school, family, workplace, and church?

Read more inSight from the Spirit of Prophecy at www.inversebible.org/disc08-7
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Share insights from this week’s memory verse and Bible study as well as any discoveries, observations, and questions with your Sabbath School class (or Bible study group). Consider these discussion questions with the rest of the group.

How does the Word of God abide in you? How do you abide in Christ?

How regular is your habit of giving Bible studies?

Who, at your local church, can help train you in giving Bible studies?

What happens when the cultivation stage never happens?

Why do people think that only “church professionals” can give Bible studies?

In what way are you directly discipled by Jesus? In what way are you directly discipling someone else?

Where is your space to ask questions and receive biblical answers?