

# Do the **WRITE** Thing

*Writing your thoughts as you study the scriptures can really help you learn.*

## By the Young Men General Presidency

**“EVERY TIME I** start reading the scriptures, I fall asleep!” one missionary told his mission president. “It’s like the scriptures are a sleeping pill!”

His president responded, “Do you ever take notes when you read?”

“No,” said the missionary.

“It’s easy to fall asleep or let your mind drift when you are only reading,” the president said, “but it is impossible when you add writing!”

The advice this mission president gave his struggling missionary made a big difference. So if you’re looking for a new way to strengthen your scripture study, give it a try. As you write about what you’re reading, you’ll likely find yourself more engaged and learning better, too.

Here are some approaches we’ve found really useful.

### **Brother Steven Lund:**

I keep paper handy when I read. As the Spirit prompts me during my study, I write those promptings down.

I got the idea from Elder Richard G. Scott (1928–2015) of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, who said: “Write down in a secure place the important things you learn from the Spirit. You will find that as you write down precious impressions, often more will come. Also, the knowledge you gain will be available throughout your life” (“To Acquire Knowledge and the Strength to Use It Wisely,” *Ensign*, June 2002, 32).

I know those words are true. As I prepare talks and lessons, I go not only to the scriptures but also to what I wrote down while reading them.



### **Brother Ahmad Corbitt:**

I love to study topically. I read the scriptures from beginning to end, but I also like to bounce around and study topics. For example, I’ll use the Topical Guide to find scriptures on faith or the gathering of Israel. Then I don’t just take notes, but I write down what I’m learning to make sure I really understand it. I’m always amazed at how much I understand things better when I do this. I also choose some scriptures to memorize.



### Brother Bradley Wilcox:

I keep a study journal where I write the scriptures in my own words. For example, “For the natural man is an enemy to God” (Mosiah 3:19) becomes “For the prideful and unrepentant man chooses to be an enemy to God, but God is not his enemy. God is his best friend.”

I also write questions. They can be questions I am thinking about before I read, or they can be questions that are sparked by what I read. Either way, it keeps me focused.



#### How Have These Tips Helped You?

What are your experiences with these or other scripture study tips? Share them on social media, and email us at [ftssoy@ChurchofJesusChrist.org](mailto:ftssoy@ChurchofJesusChrist.org).

## The Power of Writing Your Thoughts

Each of us in our presidency studies the scriptures differently, but we all write as we do!

Reading helps us internalize thoughts and feelings. That is important. And when we speak or write, we discover and express thoughts and feelings from the inside-out. We feel that helps us personalize gospel truths better.

One young man discovered this truth for himself when he was asked to give a talk in sacrament meeting. He had heard many other people give talks but could not remember the details. This time was different. When he wrote an outline for his own talk, not only did it help him deliver an organized talk, but he remembered it for a long time.

The same thing can happen in your scripture study. If you are falling asleep when you open your scriptures, it's time to wake up. Try pulling out a pencil, pen, phone, or computer and get writing. You'll be amazed at what a difference it can make! 📖

## The Power of a Study Journal

I was wondering how I could improve my studies and retain knowledge rather than having it merely pass through my mind.

One day I read in *Preach My Gospel*, “Use a study journal to help you understand, clarify, and remember what you are learning” ([2018], xi). I had never tried this, but I thought it was a good idea. I found a notebook and started writing about what I was reading.

It required focus, and that helped me stay attentive and retain knowledge when I studied. Writing in my study journal has helped me really ponder the scriptures. This practice has been life-changing for me.

Elder Calvin,  
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