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Bible Translators

SWEET
WAYS

to Study
Scripture



SAVORING SCRIPTURE

On a warm summer afternoon, you might hear that familiar sound faintly around a street corner — the gentle, whimsical chime of the ice cream truck. Cold ice cream in the heat of summer provides a kind of comfort that makes the afternoon more bearable. The truth is that most of us crave ice cream as soon as we hear the song in the distance. Ice cream is a treat — a thing to be enjoyed and savored! Psalm 119:103 (NLT) says:

*How sweet your words
taste to me; they are sweeter
than honey.*





God's Word is a delight for us; it is both a thing of substance and a source of enjoyment. It was given for us to know God and have a deeper, more satisfying relationship with him.

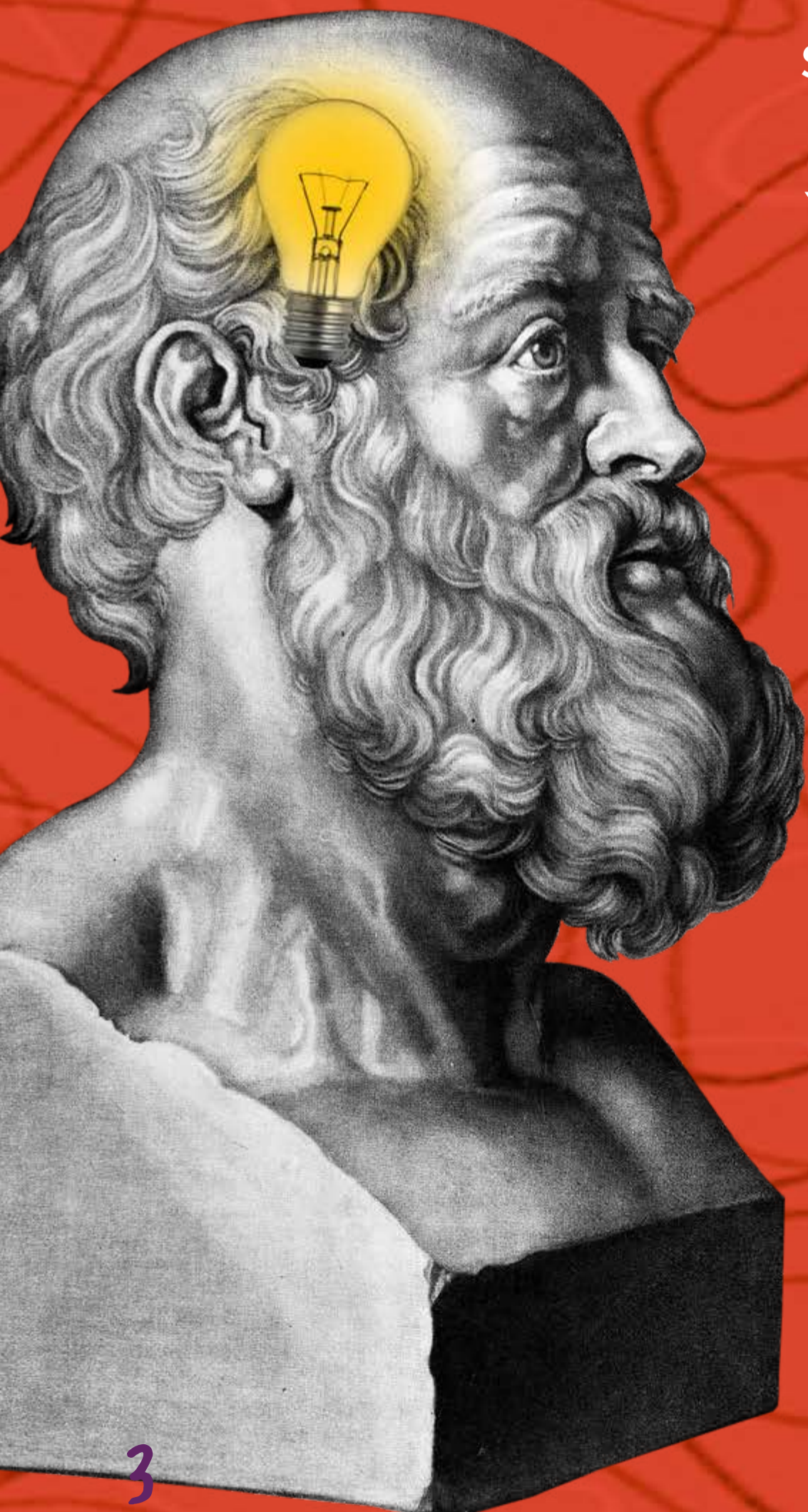
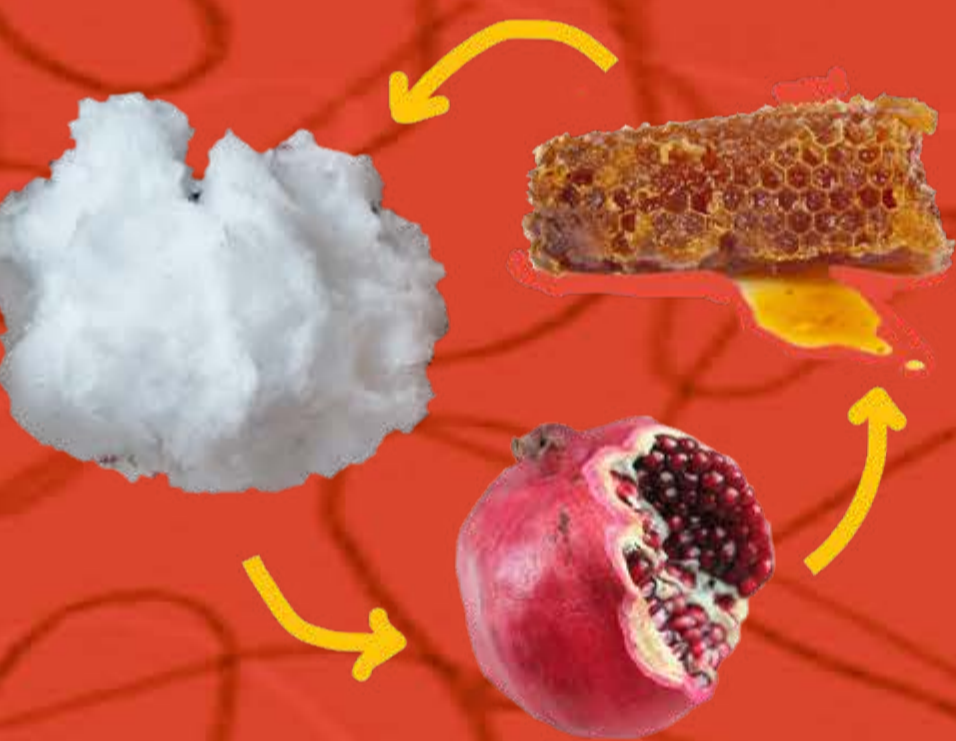
But how often do we treat the Bible like a plate of vegetables that our parents forced us to eat rather than a refreshing, sweet dessert?

You can savor Scripture by selecting a Bible study method that works for you, whether you're studying the Bible by yourself or in a group.

To make these studies a little sweeter, let's imagine each Bible study method in this guide as an ice cream flavor! It'll help you remember the methods and remind you that God wants you to enjoy studying his Word. And you'll probably be craving a pint of ice cream by the end!

FUN FACT:

The oldest form of "ice cream" dates back to the ancient Greeks who ate snow mixed with honey and fruit.



THE S.O.A.P. METHOD

A scoop of French vanilla

A scoop of French vanilla is appealing to pretty much everyone. It's a little rich, but smooth and satisfying, without being too heavy — just like our first method on the list: S.O.A.P.

S.O.A.P., created by Dr. Wayne Cordeiro, is a helpful acronym to remember as you read through the Bible: Scripture, Observation, Application and Prayer. It forces you to slow down and actively engage with God's Word, not just read it.

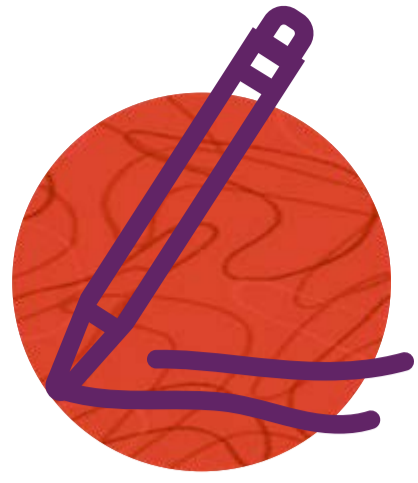


FUN FACT:

Thomas Jefferson is credited as the first American to write down an ice cream recipe. It was vanilla!



Ice cream
1/2 pint of good cream
1/2 pint of egg
1/2 pint of sugar
1/2 pint of yolk & sugar
cream on a fire in a w
first put in a sheet of Va



Scripture

Write out a verse or verses that impacted you. The act of writing out the text can impact you differently than just reading!



Observation

Think about what stood out to you in that verse/passage. What words are emphasized? What themes can you see emerging?



Application

Application is the act of making Scripture personal. As you examine what you observed from the text, it's time to discover how to apply it to your life.



Prayer

Ask God what he wants to reveal to you through his Word. You can even [pray Scripture back to him!](#)

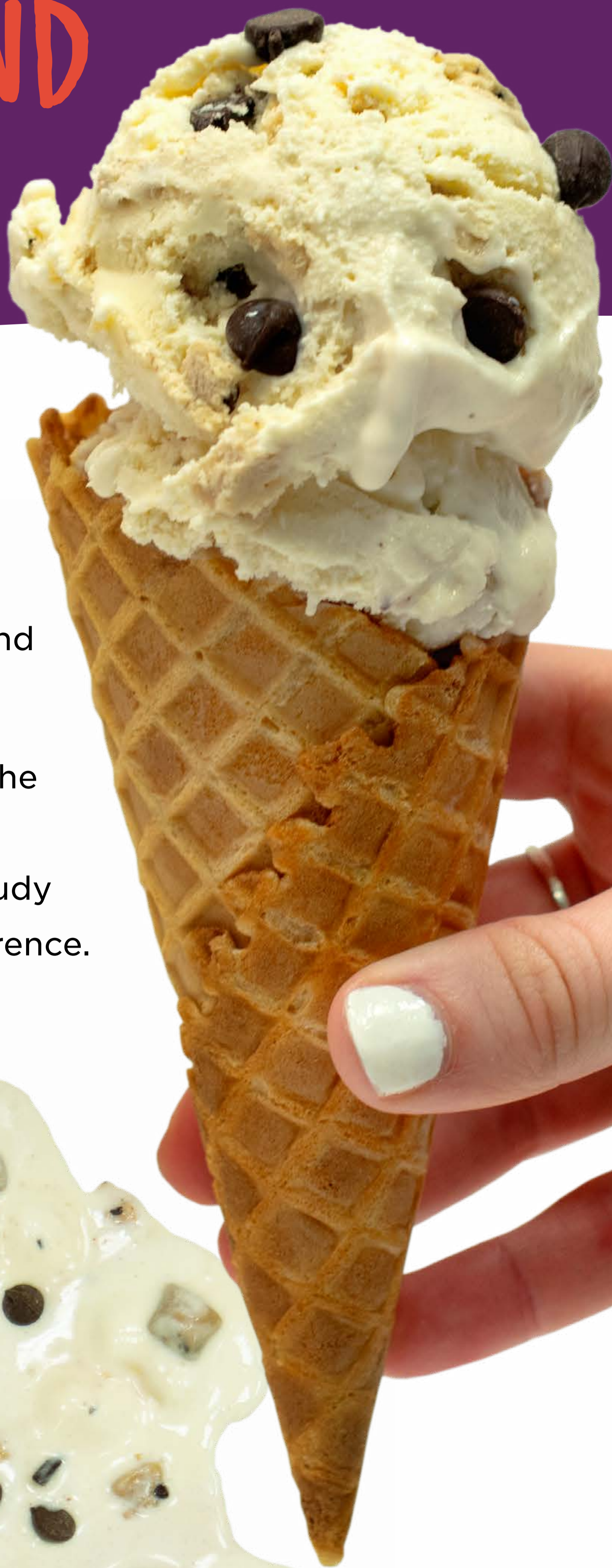


THE WORD HAND

A scoop of chocolate chip cookie dough

Chocolate chip cookie dough ice cream takes different delightful components and puts them together to form a delicious flavor. Because really, who doesn't love the combination of cookies and ice cream?!

Similarly, [The Word Hand](#) (developed by The Navigators) contains five complementary components. This method will help you study Scripture, using your hand as a visual reference.



FUN FACT:

The chocolate chip cookie was created by accident, when the chocolate chunks added by a baker didn't melt!



Hear

Listening to sermons or podcasts by godly teachers, pastors and speakers is an integral step in engaging with God's Word and his truth. You can usually find these on SoundCloud and YouTube!



Read

Whether you prefer a physical Bible, a Bible app on your phone (like [YouVersion](#)) or receiving daily Scripture readings via email, the important thing is that you read God's Word!



Study

Studying is one step beyond reading. It's this process that leads us from knowing about a Bible verse or passage to actually understanding it.



Memorize

[Memorization](#) is a key element of Scripture engagement. It's during life's challenges that we can find assurance, hope and encouragement through memorized verses.



Meditate

[Meditation](#) is represented by the thumb in The Word Hand. Thumbs help us hold onto things; when used in Bible study, meditation allows us to grasp God's Word so the Holy Spirit can transform us.



THE DEDUCTIVE STUDY METHOD

A scoop of butter pecan

Butter pecan ice cream is sweet and buttery. It's a little complex and has plenty to uncover (with those chunks of pecan and all), but in the end it's not too overwhelming. The same goes for the deductive study method ... minus the pecans.

This is commonly known as a "topical" study. Deductive basically means that you move from

generic ideas to specifics. So in a Bible study,

a deductive method encourages you to

take a topic or statement and look to

Scripture to find passages that speak

on the subject. One tool is [Bible](#)

[Gateway](#). Type in a word or phrase

from the passage you're studying (make

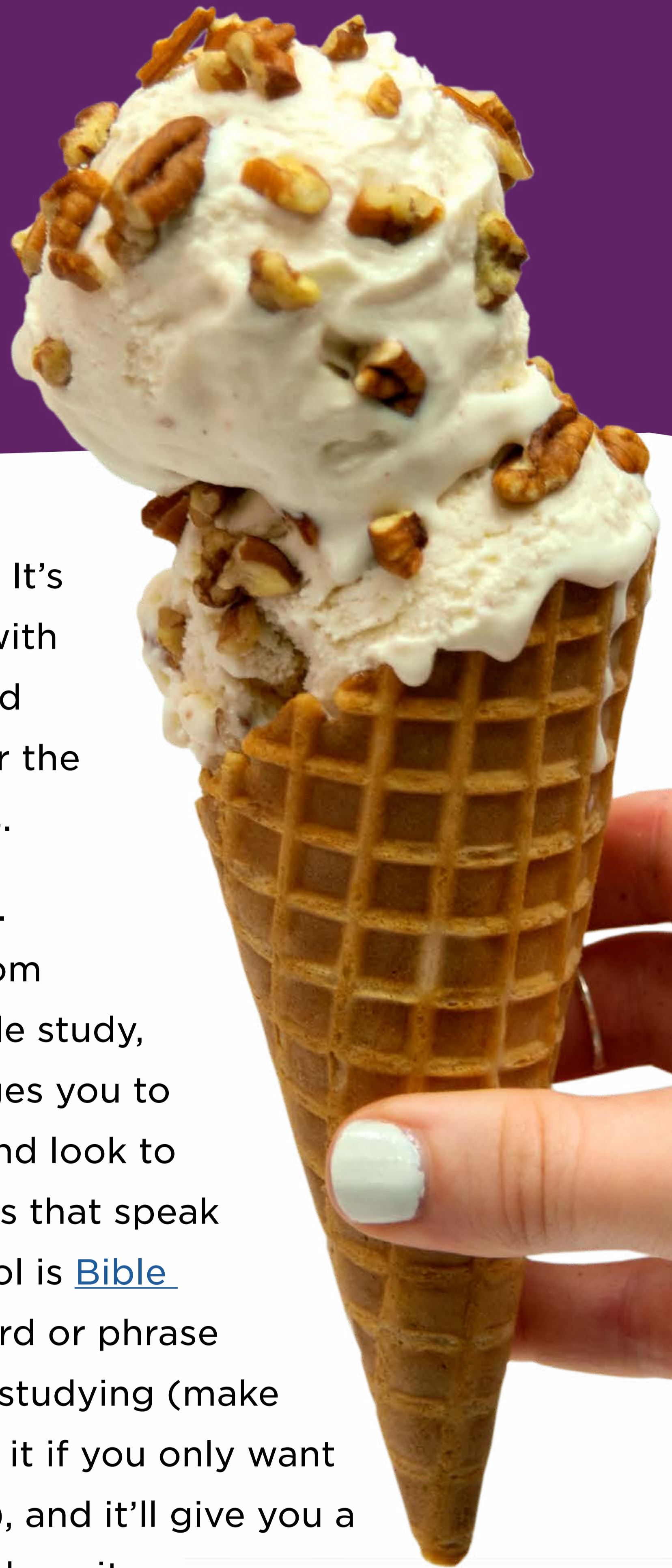
sure you use quotes around it if you only want

the words in that exact order), and it'll give you a

list of every verse in the Bible where it appears.

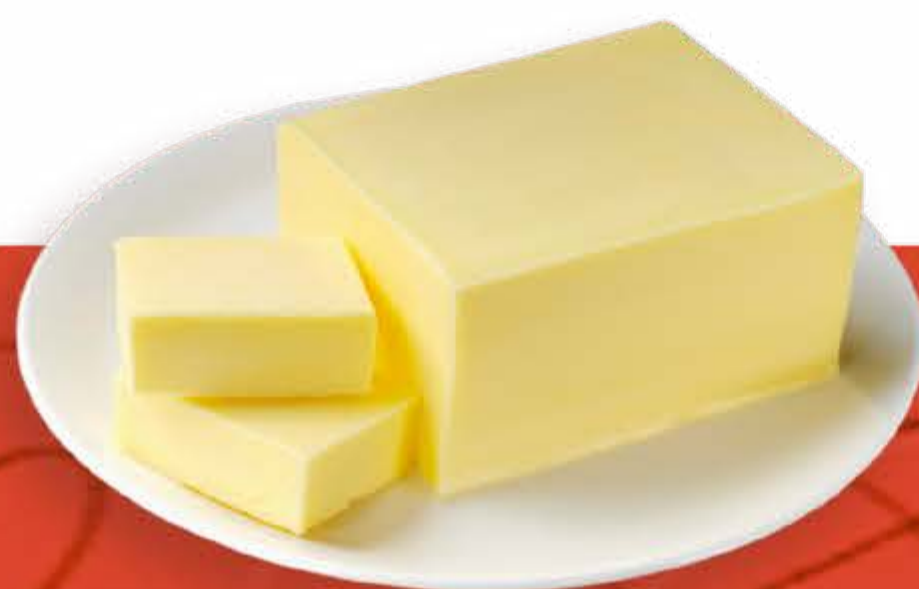
The benefit of deductive Bible study is that we're able to broadly study what Scripture says about a certain subject.

And this helps us understand God's character better.



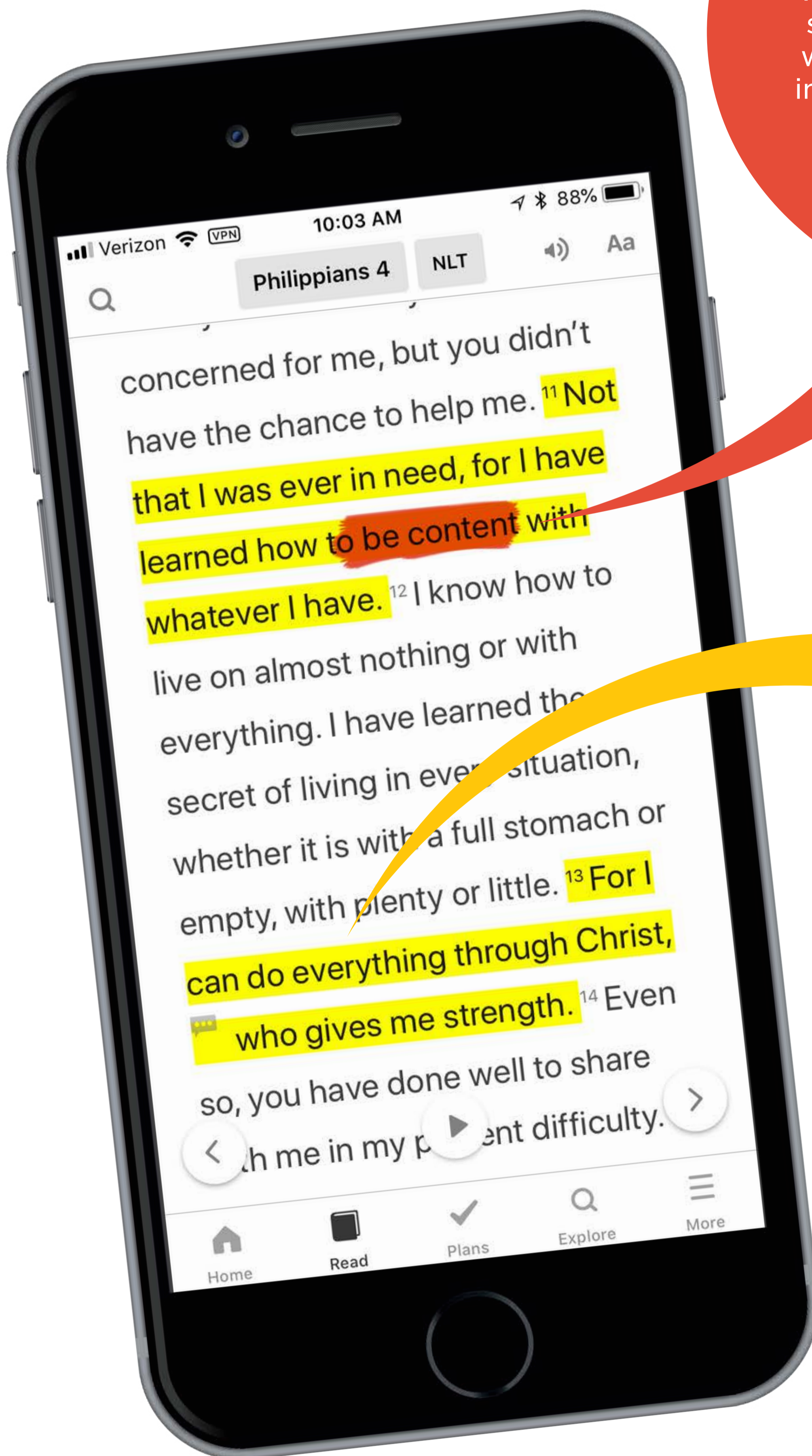
FUN FACT:

Rumor has it that butter pecan was created by accident when pecans fell into the ice cream mixture of butter and milk. It's now the third most popular flavor in the U.S!



It's important in deductive study to remember one thing: **Context matters.** One of the most tempting things when reading Scripture is to pick verses out of context that support or disprove a topic when we already have an opinion. Be careful to examine the verse or passage within the context of the surrounding text and other Scriptures.

You've made it halfway through reading this study guide. Have you paused at any point to get some ice cream yet?



“Philippians 4:13 is not really about who has the strength to play to the best of their abilities in a sporting contest. . . . This verse is about having strength **to be content** when we are facing those moments in life when physical resources are minimal.”

— Dr. Eric Bargerhuff
Bible Professor, Trinity College

The meaning of Philippians 4:13 then, is “I am able to be **content/endure** all things in him who empowers me.”

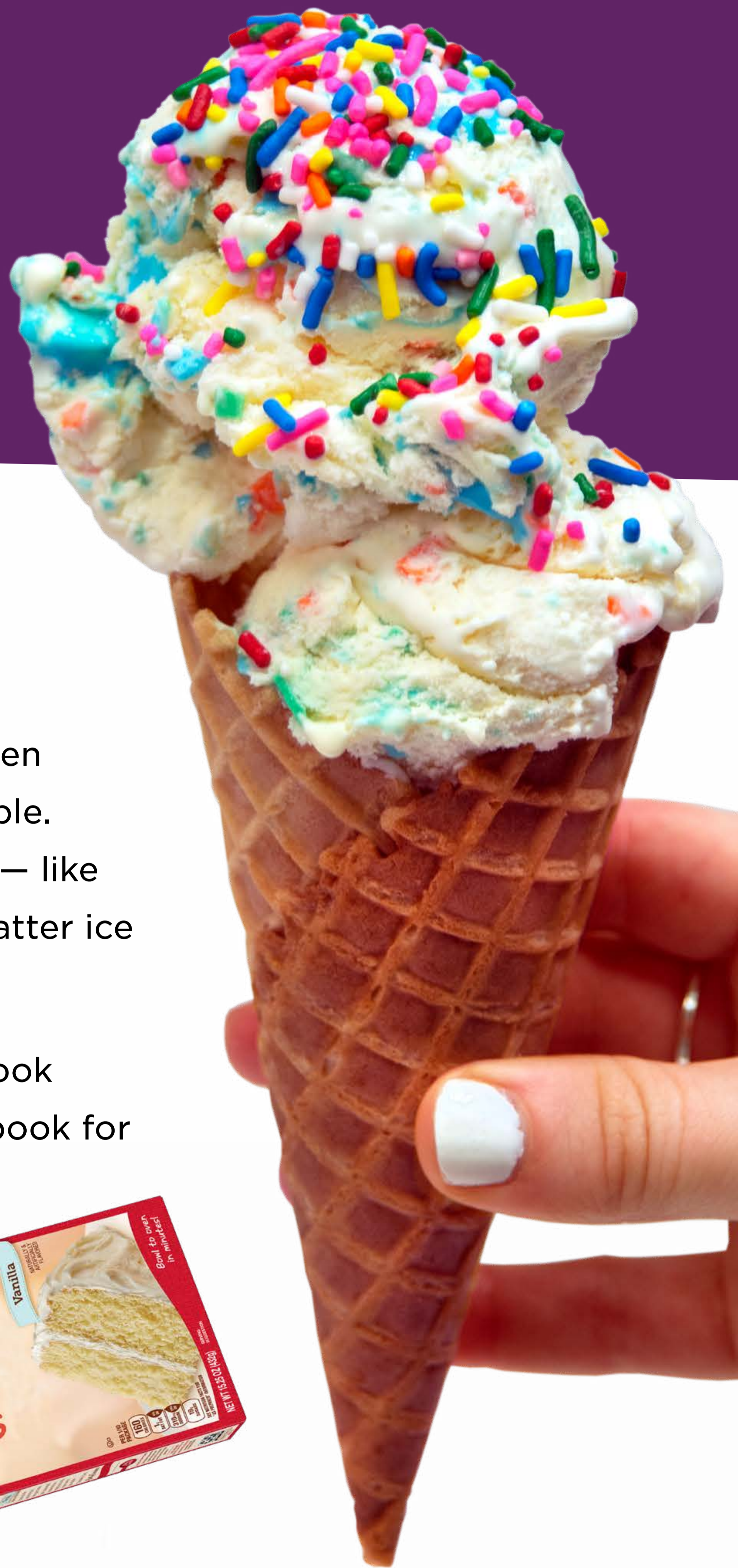


THE W.O.R.D. METHOD

a scoop of cake batter (with sprinkles!)

Erika Michelle developed the [W.O.R.D. Method](#) with pops of unique personal perspective and color to it. It was developed out of Erika's desire to deepen her (and your) understanding of the Bible. The end result is a study that is unique — like sprinkles atop a scoop of sweet cake batter ice cream!

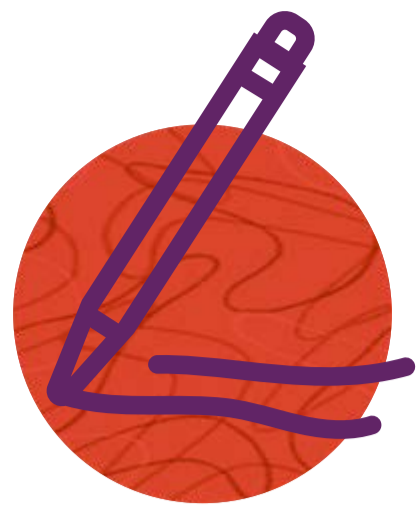
If you like to journal, but find a blank book intimidating, Erika Michelle has a workbook for 40 days of Scripture study.



FUN FACT:

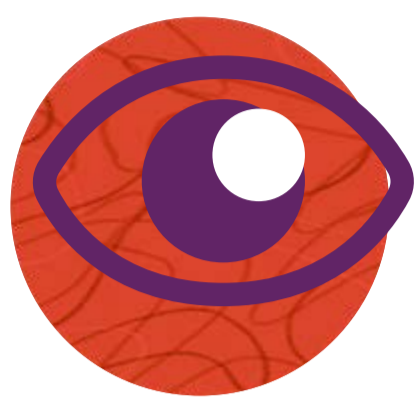
Yes, cake batter ice cream does contain cake mix!





Write

Write down the verse or passage that you're studying, and read over the text a few times.



Observe

Observe who wrote the passage, what audience they were writing for and the main message (or messages) the passage is conveying. Also look at what type of genre the passage falls under. Is it in a letter? A book of poetry? A book of the law?



Relevant

Erika Michele recommends asking these questions as you contemplate how the passage is relevant to your life:



How can I make this passage personal?



How can I apply it to my daily life?



Does the passage instruct, encourage or correct?



What changes in my life does this verse encourage me to make?



Declare

Pray by declaring the truth found in Scripture over your life!



5Rs BIBLE STUDY METHOD™

A scoop of rainbow sherbet

Rainbow sherbet is fun, vibrant, has multiple flavors and begins with “R” — just like each of the words in Alicia Michelle’s 5Rs Bible Study Method™! Start relishing God’s promises as you write out Scripture and understand the passage through five steps. Alicia Michelle even has resources for kids to get the whole family tasting the Word!

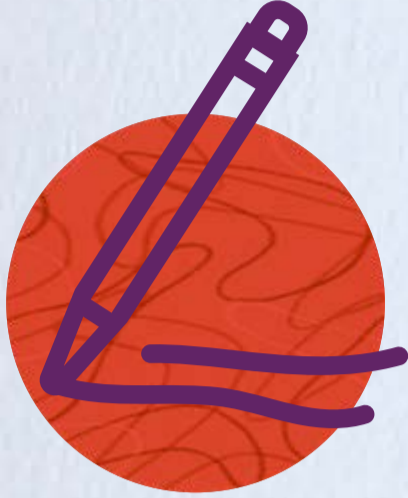
FUN FACT:

Sherbet is a combination of ice cream and fruit juice.



Read

Read the passage of Scripture.



Rewrite

Copy down the passage that you read (in whichever translation you prefer) onto a piece of paper/journal.



Restate

Now that you've written down the verse, write it again — but this time using your own words!



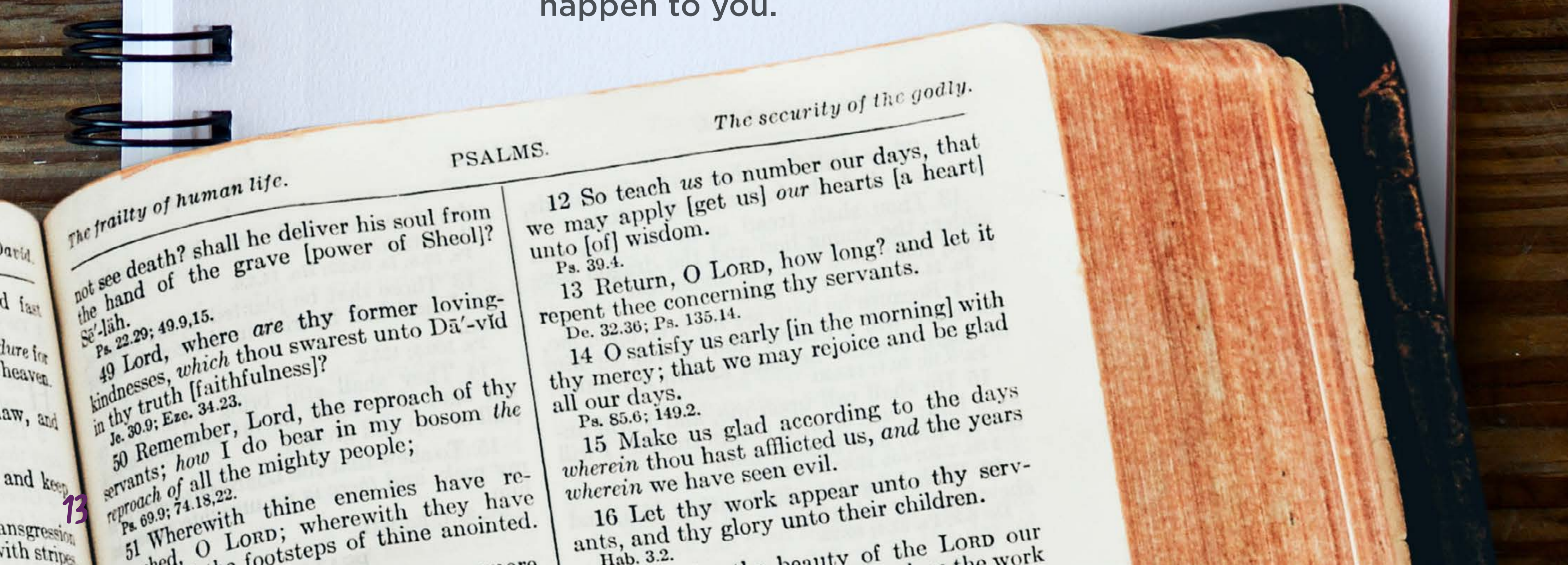
Relate

Listen to God's voice and think about what he is trying to communicate to you through the passage. How can you see it relating to your life?



Respond

Ask yourself how knowing this passage will change the way you live or approach things that happen to you.



PSALMS.

The security of the godly.

The frailty of human life.

not see death? shall he deliver his soul from the hand of the grave [power of Sheol]?
Se'-lah.
Ps. 22.29; 49.9,15.

49 Lord, where are thy former loving-kindnesses, which thou swarest unto Dā'-vid in thy truth [faithfulness]?
Je. 30.9; Eze. 34.23.

50 Remember, Lord, the reproach of thy servants; how I do bear in my bosom the reproach of all the mighty people;
Ps. 69.9; 74.18,22.

51 Wherewith thine enemies have reproached, O Lord; wherewith they have despised, O Lord; the footsteps of thine anointed.

12 So teach us to number our days, that we may apply [get us] our hearts [a heart] unto [of] wisdom.
Ps. 39.4.

13 Return, O LORD, how long? and let it repent thee concerning thy servants.
De. 32.36; Ps. 135.14.

14 O satisfy us early [in the morning] with thy mercy; that we may rejoice and be glad all our days.
Ps. 85.6; 149.2.

15 Make us glad according to the days wherein thou hast afflicted us, and the years wherein we have seen evil.

16 Let thy work appear unto thy servants, and thy glory unto their children.
Hab. 3.2.

... beauty of the LORD our ... the work

THE INDUCTIVE STUDY METHOD

A scoop of rocky road

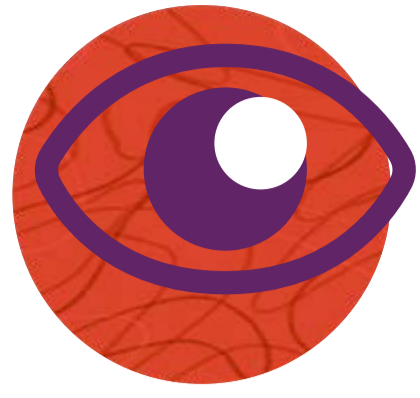
Like rocky road, this method is complex but rich — and it has three distinct components to it, just as rocky road has three main components (the ice cream, marshmallows and nuts). An inductive study is for those of you who really enjoy highlighting and analyzing — you know, people who read long books for fun and love to study.

So grab a bowl of rocky road, a journaling Bible and a notebook, and dig into these three inductive study steps:

FUN FACT:

This flavor may have been inspired by a candy bar of the same name: made of chocolate, marshmallow and nuts.



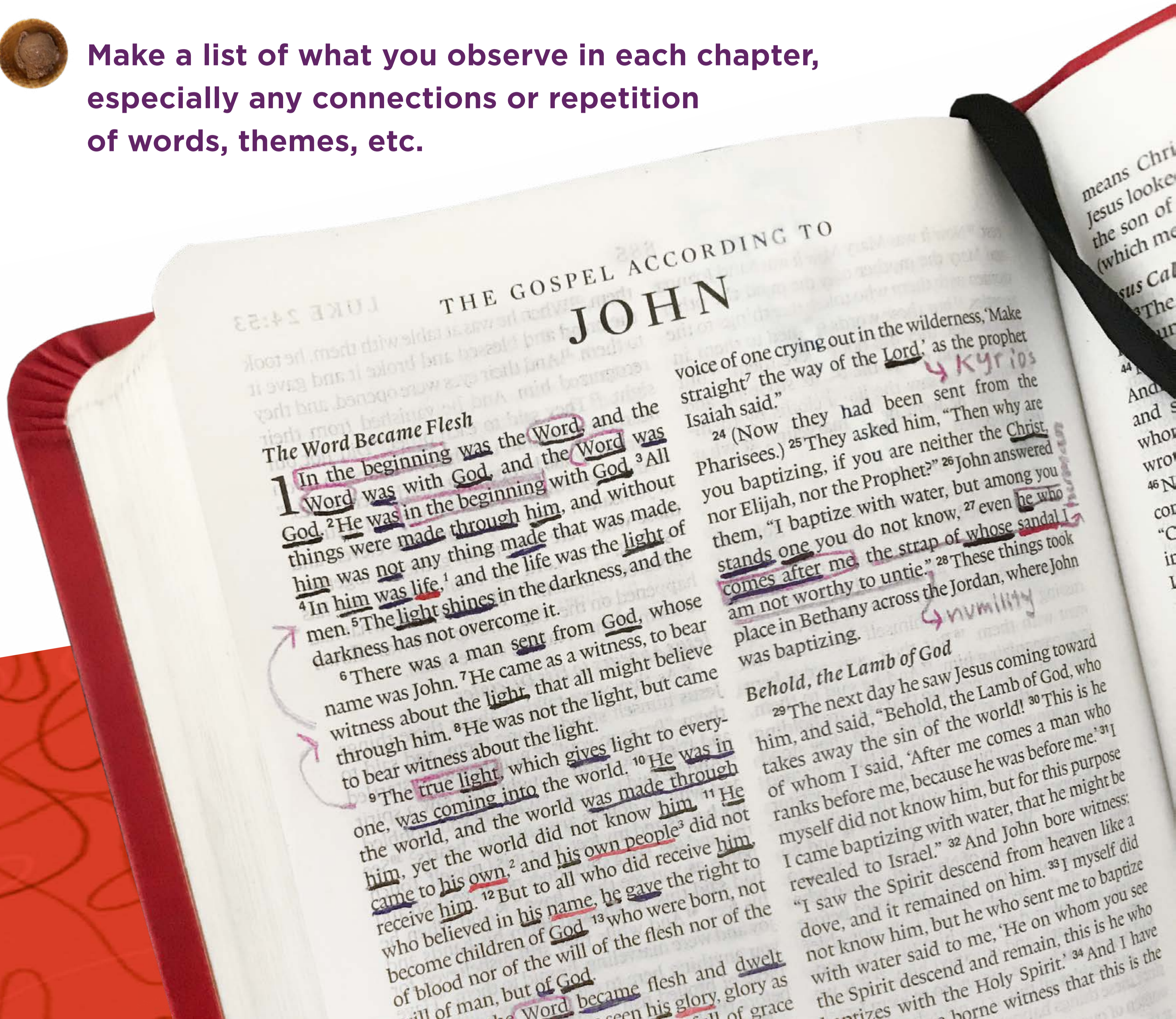


Observation

Observation is like the smooth, chocolate ice cream that composes rocky road. It's the foundation for the other steps. Observe what the text is saying. If note-taking or highlighting helps, invest in a journaling Bible. Also purchase a notebook to pair with your Bible for extra in-depth study.

If you choose to read one book of the Bible at a time, InterVarsity has some helpful tips:

- Ask **Who, What, Where, When, Why** and **How** every time you look at a passage or book of the Bible, and make a list of any facts you notice.
- Think about the main themes of each book, and see if you can group chapters in the book by theme. Write down any impressions you have of the book as a whole. Write a short title for each chapter if that helps too.
- Make a list of what you observe in each chapter, especially any connections or repetition of words, themes, etc.



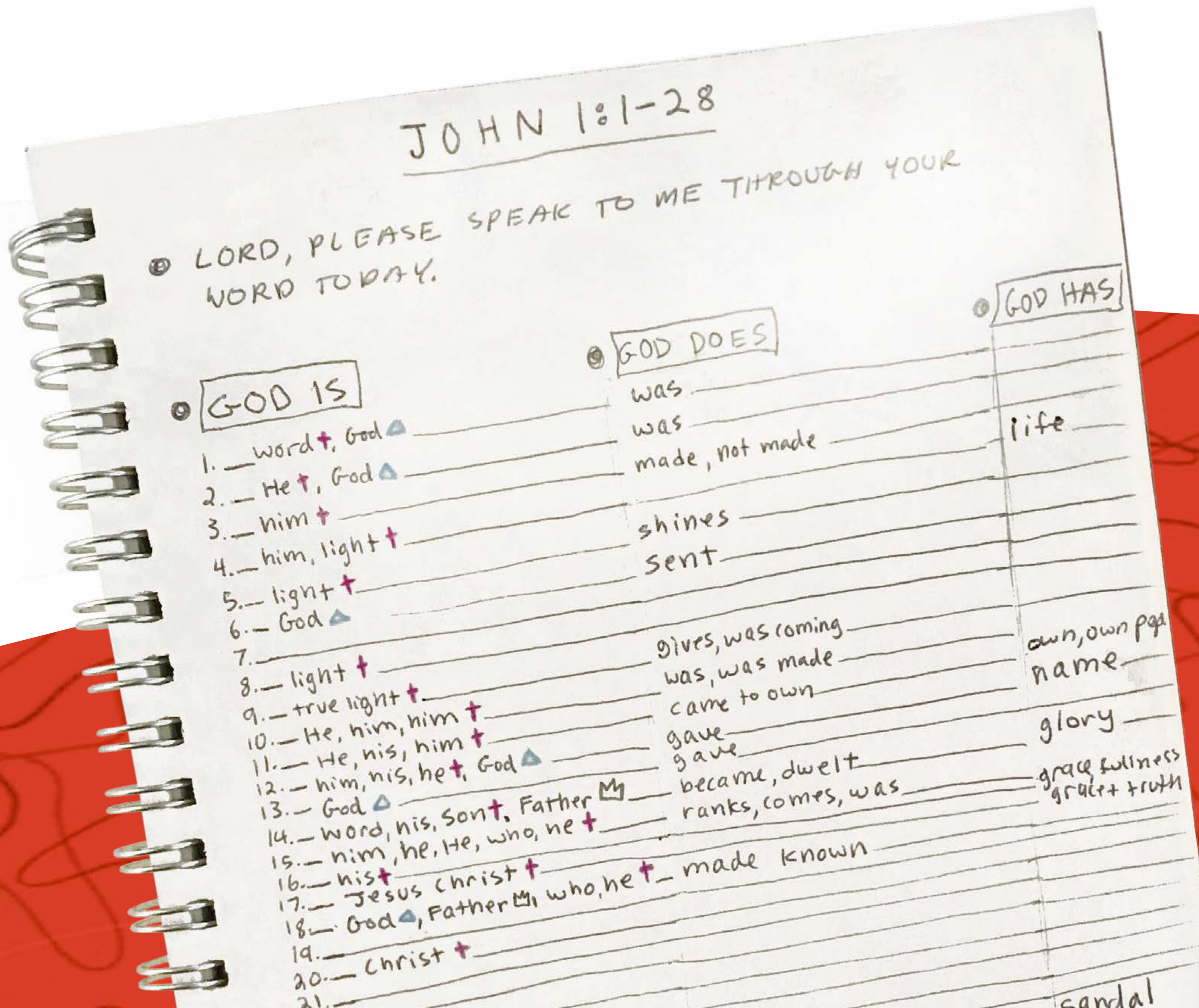


Interpretation

This step is like rocky road's crunchy almonds: It takes a little extra time to get through. Write down what the observations you've made tell you — this is interpretation.

Keep the context of the passage in mind when you interpret. Look at the passage, chapter or book as a whole rather than isolating a verse or phrase out of context. Use your notes to draw connections and meaning. Also remember these points:

- Start with the simplest, literal explanation before looking elsewhere.
- Compare Scripture with Scripture (it doesn't contradict itself).
- Recognize figurative language (i.e., similes, metaphors, parables, symbols).
- Use tools like Bible dictionaries to unlock the meaning of words.





Application

Like marshmallows, the application step is sweet; it helps you learn how what you've read applies to you.

Once you've observed and interpreted the text, think about how the principles apply to your life. Through prayer and [meditation](#), seek what God is communicating through the passage by asking:

- **What can I learn about God's character through the text?
What is challenging or convicting?**
- **What is encouraging?**
- **How does the text apply to the stage of life I'm in?**



PICK YOUR FLAVOR

The best thing about ice cream? It's enjoyable. The best thing about God's Word? It's enjoyable and good for you!

God has told us his Word is useful for teaching truth, helping us realize where we can improve in our lives and for steering us closer into relationship with him.

All Scripture is inspired by God and is useful to teach us what is true and to make us realize what is wrong in our lives. It corrects us when we are wrong and teaches us to do what is right. God uses it to prepare and equip his people to do every good work.

- 2 Timothy 3:16-17 (NLT)



God designed you uniquely with passions, talents, interests and skills that help you to connect with him and others. Maybe journaling is the best way for you to engage with God's Word. Or perhaps it's intensive study. Maybe it's self-reflection and meditation through prayer. Whether you choose butter pecan or rocky road, it's easy to match your style to one of these Bible study flavors for more meaningful engagement with God's Word.

Associating Bible study with ice cream might seem silly, but think of it as a reminder that God wants you to dive deep into the sweet richness of his Word.

*Are you
hungry yet?*



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articles and other helpful resources?

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