

## Reading Sacred Scriptures

*All scripture is inspired by God and is useful for teaching, for refutation, for correction, and for training in righteousness, so that one who belongs to God may be competent, equipped for every good work.*<sup>1</sup>

We should seek in the scriptures that which is spiritually profitable as well as what is beautiful in style and form. God speaks to us in scriptures in diverse ways, independently of who we are because *there is no partiality with God.*<sup>2</sup> Our imagination can sometimes hinder us when we try to embellish passages which should be interpreted with simplicity.



Read scriptures faithfully with humility and simplicity and you will profit from your efforts; read them to impress others with your knowledge and you foster arrogance.

Besides scriptures there are other writings that may seem simple yet are profound even if their authors are not well known. Consider the substance of what is being said not the renown of the author for many of the unknown ones have kept *their eyes fixed on Jesus, the leader and perfecter of faith.*<sup>3</sup>

Seek answers to your questions and carefully read and listen to the words of the prophets and the saints. Appreciate their words for these have been inspired and are written for good reason. *The wise by hearing them will advance in learning, the intelligent will gain sound guidance.*<sup>4</sup>

*For whatever was written previously was written for our instruction, that by endurance and by the encouragement of the scriptures we might have hope.*<sup>5</sup>

This article is based on Book 1, Chapter 5 of Thomas of Kempis' writing, "Imitation of Christ." It is not a translation, and there are many of those, but a personal reflection on his writing; if any of it helps give credit to Thomas of Kempis; if any of it fails the responsibility is mine. ( rfm)

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<sup>1</sup> 2Tim 3:16

<sup>2</sup> Romans 2:11

<sup>3</sup> Hebrews 12:2

<sup>4</sup> Proverbs 1:5

<sup>5</sup> Romans 15:4