

## Building friendship

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What's the Bible for? We asked dozens of writers to respond to this question in seven words or less, as well as to expand on their response in a few sentences. To see all of the responses together as they are posted, bookmark this [page](#).

### **Building friendship**

The Talmud says that scholars who sit alone and study the Torah become stupid. The Torah, instead, should be “acquired in company.” Our Jewish neighbors call the communal scriptural interpretation “Havruta,” which means friend. We build community by reading scripture together. But more than that, the Bible is an opportunity to grow in friendship with the interpreters throughout the centuries. We can become friends with Augustine of Hippo, Hildegard of Bingen, and St. Moses of Ethiopia as we read with them. Also the writers of scripture: Paul, too, can be your friend. (Like many of my friends, he can be aggravating and amazing in equal measure.) And if Paul, then God also, the object of all scripture. The Bible shows us how to become God's friend and, more importantly, to assure us that God is ours.