

## STUDY YOUR BIBLE USING HELPS:

What a wonderful day we live in for Bible study. No doubt with the many books in print and the many helps found that are computer friendly and user friendly, we live in the greatest and many would say the easiest time to dig deep into the rich resources available to believers today. But with all of that available there are probably fewer Christians studying their Bibles than ever before. That is why your interest in this class and this subject is so refreshing and important.

**QUOTE:** U.S. News gave America an F in religion, saying, among other things, "*The decline really began in the late nineteenth century as a result of the debate over which Bible to use, and that was instigated by religious people, [think of that!] not secularists. Another change was in the churches themselves when they started focusing on 'loving Jesus' rather than listening to Him. The Bible soon became kind of an ornament and source book rather than a book you actually read.*"

Obviously we will not be able to plumb the depths of the wealth of material available, but we will make a few suggestions for the serious student of God's holy Word.

**BIBLES:** In this class we do not consider anything but a King James Bible worthy of your study, so in spite of the proliferation of Bible "versions" out there, the venerable KJB alone is recommended and endorsed. However, there are several excellent King James or *AV1611 study Bibles* which we do recommend.

1. **The Defined King James Bible**, The Bible for Today Press, Collingswood, NJ (This is an excellent King James text with annotations next to archaic or little used words with definitions on the same page. Excellent for devotional use.)
2. **The One Year Bible**, Tyndale House Publishers, Inc., Wheaton, IL (This King James text is arranged in 365 daily readings to enable a believer to read through the Bible in a year.)
3. **The Rainbow Study Bible**, Rainbow Studies, Inc., El Reno, CA (Every verse in this King James Bible is color coded to alert the reader of verses dealing with history, prophecy, family, God, Sin, etc. The code is somewhat subjective, but overall it is a good study Bible which will help the student consider the possible intent and/or subject of each verse of Scripture.)
4. **The Defender's Study Bible**, World Publishing, Grand Rapids, MI (This is a very valuable resource for believers where the study notes are given from a creationist & scientific, as well as a devotional standpoint.)
5. **The Chronological Bible**, Regal Publishers, Inc., Nashville, TN (In this Bible the text is arranged according to the author's [Edward Reese & Frank R. Klassen] understanding as to the sequence of events and history of Bible times and when those events were recorded. For example, the book of Revelation and the events recorded there are dated as to the time of their writing, not the time the events may occur in the future.)
6. **The Scofield Reference Bible**, New York Oxford University Press (This study Bible has become, for many, the classic reference work on the Scriptures and has proven a fairly reliable study resource over many years [original copyright 1909]. The notes have established the Dispensational approach to Bible study and interpretation for Bible believers.)

**REFERENCE WORKS:** The recommended reference works below are generally available in regular book form or can be obtained for computer use.

1. **Strong's Exhaustive Concordance** has become the standard for most Bible believers. A concordance is an absolute necessity for the serious Bible student. Otherwise you might spend a lot of wasted time searching for the reference or topic you need. There are several other concordances available, e.g., Young's and Cruden's, each with slightly different features and all excellent tools. Of course many Bibles come equipped with abbreviated concordances in them.
2. **Bible Dictionaries:** There are many available, some better than others, but all useful for the discerning Christian. No doubt you may have a favorite. Nelson's and Unger's are good.
3. **Bible Encyclopedias:** The standard is probably the International Standard Bible Encyclopedia, but it leans slightly to the left theologically. *As with all man authored books, care must be exercised.*

4. **Bible Handbooks:** By far the best and most exhaustive from a Bible standpoint is Willmington's Guide to the Bible. Others include Unger's Bible Handbook and Halley's Bible Handbook.
5. **Commentaries:** The classic conservative and complete Bible commentary is by Matthew Henry. It is exegetical and devotional and covers all the books of the Bible and most of the verses. Commentaries by others abound, and all have biases which must be recognized. While written many years ago, it is basically sound and very helpful. Everyone has their favorite authors and your pastor is the best source for recommendations for you.
6. **Bible Atlas:** A good Bible Atlas is very helpful. It helps place the Bible in its geographical setting and provides reference points as to distance between places, location in relationship to sea ports, other countries, etc. Many Bibles contain limited maps of the areas mentioned in Scripture, but are usually inadequate.

As the wise writer of Ecclesiastes said: *"...of making many books there is no end; and much study is a weariness of the flesh."* This statement seems to discourage serious study, but that is not the end of his comments. He further states: *"Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep His commandments: for this is the whole duty of man."*

While the average "Christian (read "religious") bookstore" contains hundreds or thousands of books which are supposed to help the believer in his understanding and application of Scripture, in fact, very few are worthy of our time and effort. Every book authored by man contains erroneous and often dangerous information. Everything must be read with a discerning mind and compared to the inerrant Scriptures.

**NOTE:** You can find all or at least most of the above recommended material available for your computer. There are a number of excellent Bible programs available for those who are computer literate. This author uses Biblesoft's PC Study Bible and finds it useful and very comprehensive.

