Bible Student Toolkit

Recommended Bible Study Tools
For Those Who Desire To Truly Be Like The Bereans Of Acts 17:11

Please note: The links for the bibles and books listed below take you to Amazon.com. I am not promoting them but rather providing a link to descriptions and typical discounted prices. You may wish to buy elsewhere and perhaps save money by buying used at ebay.com or Christian Book Distributors or elsewhere. Amazon.com now offers used books for sale through independent vendors. Their book listings will display a link indicating that a used copy is for sale – if one is available.

"I have more understanding than all my teachers: for thy testimonies are my meditation." [Psalms 119:99]

Bibles for your toolkit:

The King James Bible – You can't study the bible without a bible. I recommend the KJV since it is a very good translation, one of the best English translations, even if you may think the English is a bit hard to understand. You may wish to get a bible with a flexible cover (leather or leatherette) for durability and one with large print (if you plan to read it a lot). Also, it can be helpful to get one with center column cross-references to other verses. It is best to avoid getting a "study" bible that has commentary notes although there is one KJV study Bible that comes from a very solid reformed Bible scholar named Joel Beeke. As for the "readability" of the King James bible, you will be able to understand it just fine if you read it enough. We have links to

articles that discuss and review bible versions at this page:

https://cominginthecloudsorg/bible-versions/

The “Cambridge” publishing company tends to have some of the best KJV bibles around. You can find out about them and other Bible publishers on this web page:

https://cominginthecloudsorg/about-bible/bible-study/book-distributors/

Young’s Literal Translation Of The Bible – If you want to know why you should obtain this English Bible, translated by Robert Young about 100 years ago, just read the introductory material to this Bible at this link:

https://cominginthecloudsorg/wpclouds7/wp-content/uploads/2011/03/youngs_ebook.pdf

You will see that this Bible is simply a more accurate translation than the KJV, whether you want to hear that or not. The more I look into the KJV the more it seems that the main reason why King James commissioned it to be translated was to get people to stop using the Geneva bible since the king did not like certain statements in the commentary in the Geneva bible. Not only that, the KJV translators had their human biases, and their work, being split among so many men, explains why certain Greek and Hebrew words were inconsistently translated into a wide variety of English words. Even so, the KJV is still very faithful to the most important of all doctrines, the doctrines of grace, unlike the modern English versions which contain the mistranslated phrase “faith in Christ” when it should read “faith of Christ” as properly rendered in the KJV (Gal 2:16 & Php 3:9).

The Geneva Bible – This bible preceded the King James Version. The king of England did not like some of the notes in the Geneva bible, in particular those that subjugated the authority of kings to the authority of God, so he commissioned the production of the “Authorized Version” which we now call the KJV.

Study Bibles for your toolkit:

Your safest choice for a study Bible is the one edited by Joel Beeke in the King James version:

King James Version Study Bible – (Reformation Heritage Books)

There a couple of other “fairly” reliable study Bibles available from “Reformed” authors. However, they are not offered in the King James version. MarArthur’s is far more detailed than Sproul’s. In any case, commentaries are not inspired by God so there are bound so be some issues that producers of Study bibles have missed the mark on.

NKJV Reformation Study Bible by R.C. Sproul & and Keith Mathison – This bible is available in hardcover and leather cover. It is available in the NKJV and ESV versions.

MacArthur Study Bible by John MacArthur – This bible is available in hardcover, paperback and leather cover. It is also available in two translations: NJKV and NASB.

Concordances for your toolkit:

Concordances are like an index to the words in your Bible. They help you find all the places in your Bible where a particular word is used. Concordances are not available for all Bible versions, only the more popular versions. Here are two good concordances for the KJV Bible:

Cruden's Complete Concordance by Alexander Cruden – A compact yet very helpful concordance for locating verses in the Bible.

Nave's Topical Bible by Orville J. Nave (groups verses by topic not by word so it can help you find verses easier than a concordance if you don't know all the exact Bible words pertaining to the subject you are studying.

Strong's Exhaustive Concordance Of The Bible – This concordance is the most popular of the concordances. This concordance is better at helping you find every English word in the KJV than the Young's. I DO NOT recommend the new "compact" version. It leaves things out that are in the original "monster" sized version. Strong's concordance requires you to go to the appendix to locate the original Greek or Hebrew word while Young's has the original "root" word right there with the English word in the main section.

Young's Analytical Concordance Of The Bible – this excellent resource, written by Robert Young, the author of Young's Literal translation of the Bible. His concordance is based on the KJV and organizes words differently than the Strong's concordance. It lists them by English words in alphabetic order as does Strong's, however, the English words are according to the original Greek or Hebrew **root** words so you can really know if it a word is the same "root" word in the original Greek or Hebrew.

Young's concordance also has a helpful listing of phonetic spellings of all the Greek and Hebrew along with all the English words each Greek or Hebrew word was translated to and the number of times each English word appears.

Interlinears for your toolkit:

There are a few Bibles that include the original Greek and Hebrew words above and below the lines of English text. This can be helpful when doing "word" studies to see how various words were translated out of the original languages. As with concordances, interlinears are not available for all Bible

versions, only the more commonly used Bibles.

Jay Green's Greek & Hebrew Interlinear Bible – This interlinear uses Green's own "Literal" translation of the Bible, not the KJV. However, since the English text is directly above or below the Greek and Hebrew text you can get a much better understanding of what the translators did when they translated the languages of the original manuscripts into English and you might actually learn some Greek and Hebrew in the process.

Study Guides for your toolkit:

There are various books and booklets describing "how" to study the Bible and interpret passages of scripture. There are several schools of thought on the proper way to interpret scripture. Family Radio is partly right about it. They emphasize comparing scripture with scripture, which is a good thing to do. However, they (Harold Camping in particular) goes a bit too far when saying that the Bible is its own dictionary. If you don't know English, you can stare all day at a book written in English, and it will not teach you English (or the meanings of the English words), even if that book is the Bible.

Bible Dictionaries for your toolkit:

Bible dictionaries provide information about specific words in the Bible. Often they provide a description of Bible names and places. Some Bible dictionaries have pictures of the object being described or a map of a place being named. Some dictionaries give an explanation of the meaning of a person's Hebrew name in the Old Testament. A few of the more popular Bible dictionaries include:
Smith's Bible Dictionary by William Smith
The New Strong's Complete Dictionary of Bible Words by James Strong
The New Unger's Bible Dictionary by Merrill Unger
Vine's Complete Expository Dictionary of Old and New Testament Words by W. E. Vine
Zondervan's Compact Bible Dictionary by T. Alton Bryant

Bible Study Software for your toolkit:

The Word From On-Line Bible – This excellent freeware bible software contains some of the best computer Bible study tools you can find even in the versions that cost a lot of money. It includes excellent verse cross-references (called the "treasury of scripture knowledge" module), Greek and Hebrew lexicons (essential if you wish to do serious word studies) along with the KJV text, MKJV text, Young's literal translation, and Easton's Bible Dictionary. ALL free for download at this link:

http://www.online-bible.com/index.html

I also recommend their very exhaustive commentary by John Gill which you

can download from here:

http://www.ccel.org/olb/

Biblemaximum.com – Lots of Bible translations online and downloadable

Bible Commentaries for your toolkit

Commentaries are books that attempt to interpret the Bible or parts of the Bible. There are LOTS of Bible commentaries on the market today. Some are very good and some are way off base on many important Bible doctrines. Some cover the entire Bible and some only address one book of the Bible.

"Where no counsel is, the people fall: but in the multitude of counsellors there is safety." [Proverbs 11:14]

For anyone interested in serious Bible study, good commentaries can be very helpful. They can point you to many verses related to a passage you are studying. They can help you apply a Bible verse to your life. They can also mislead you. It is best to be very careful of which commentaries you use. Not all commentators are "Reformed" and so they may have a wrong view of some very significant Bible doctrines, such as God's sovereignty and man's total depravity. The following commentaries are pretty reliable, yet they are not divinely inspired so keep that in mind as you utilize these Bible study aids.

Matthew Henry's Commentary For purchase
Matthew Henry's Commentary On-line
Calvin's Commentaries (22 Volumes) For purchase
John Gill Collection CD-ROM For purchase
John Gill's Exposistion Of The Bible at BibleStudyTools.com
John Gill's Exposition of the Whole Bible at StudyLight.org
John MacArthur Bible Commentary For purchase
Martin Lloyd-Jones Commentaries (Ephesians) For purchase

Don't forget to be a Berean and check out anything you read in a commentary!

Online Commentaries:

Crosswalk.com
BlueLetter Bible.org
Biblehub.com
SearchGodsWord.org
StudyLight.org
John Gill's Commentary in text format, for downloading