

RECOMMENDED STUDY HELPS

If you are serious about studying the Bible then consider building a library of resources to help you. The following resources are basic tools that will be helpful no matter what topic, book, or character you're studying.

Several recent translations of the Bible – Read your passage of study in more than one translation and compare them for greater understanding. Some good ones to try:

- New International Version
- New American Standard Bible
- Amplified Bible
- English Standard Version
- New Living Translation

Exhaustive Concordance – If you don't have any other tool, you need to have this index of every word in the Bible. Get one that corresponds to your primary translation. I use *The Strongest NIV Exhaustive Concordance*.

Bible Dictionary – Explains many of the words, topics, customs and traditions in the Bible. It also includes historical, geographical, cultural, and archeological information. A few to try:

- *Holman Illustrated Bible Dictionary*
- *Illustrated Bible Dictionary*
- *Tyndale Bible Dictionary*
- *Nelson's New Illustrated Bible Dictionary*
- *New International Bible Dictionary*

Topical Bible – Similar to a concordance but organizes by topic rather than words. A couple to try:

- *Nave's Topical Bible*
- *Zondervan NIV Nave's Topical Bible*

Bible Handbook – Combination of an encyclopedia and commentary in a concise form. It is arranged by Bible book and includes background notes, brief commentary, maps, charts, and more. Look for one of these:

- *Halley's Bible Handbook*
- *Holman Bible Handbook*
- *The New Unger's Bible Handbook*

Word Studies – Look up the original words and their meanings without knowing Greek or Hebrew. Here are a few resources to try:

- *Mounce's Complete Expository Dictionary of Old & New Testament Words*
- *The Complete Word Study New Testament*, by Spiros Zodhiates, AMG Publishers
- *The Complete Word Study Old Testament*, by Spiros Zodhiates, AMG Publishers

Commentaries – biblical scholars interpret and explain a particular text based on their study of background, language, etc. Keep in mind these are written by humans and not infallible. But here are some to try:

- *Tyndale Concise Bible Commentary*, Robert B. Hughes and J. Carl Laney, Tyndale. Provides biblical scholarship and commentary on every passage of the Bible in a user-friendly format (One volume)
- *The IVP Bible Background Commentary: New Testament*, Craig S. Keener, Intervarsity Press
- *The IVP Bible Background Commentary: Old Testament*, Walton, Matthews & Chavalas, Intervarsity Press
- *The Expositor's Bible Commentary*, Zondervan, Set of 12 volumes covers the whole Bible