

How to Study the Bible – Bible Study Tools

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R.C. Sproul: “Knowing Scripture”

Practical Rules for Biblical Interpretation

Read Your Bible

- Bible reading plans (YouVersion Bible app, weekly newsletter)
- Accountability

Study Bibles

Good for:

- Cross Reference
- Understanding certain words or phrases
- Variants
- Help understanding a passage

Caution

- Notes in Study Bibles are not Scripture

Good options:

- Reformation Study Bible
- ESV Study Bible

Commentaries

- Single volume: advantages: size/cost disadvantages: brevity, often one author
- Sets: various levels of depth advantages: more depth disadvantages: most sets will have weak volumes; more expensive
- Individual commentaries: advantages: more selectivity disadvantages: most expensive option

Full commentaries: free online: John Calvin, John Gill, Matthew Henry, Alexander MacLaren

Individual commentaries: Pastoral recommendation, Ligonier.org

Concordances, Bible Dictionaries, Encyclopedias, Word Studies

Concordance – alphabetical index of words with Bible references of occurrence

Dictionary/Encyclopedia – provide great detail on the words used in Scripture

Word Studies – considerations of tense, voice, etc. in helping to determine what the author means in a particular context

Atlases/Handbooks/Supplemental materials

- An atlas can help us to understand geographical issues in Scripture
- Handbooks often provide detail on cultural, geographical, and other considerations
- For some topics, more detail may be desired – e.g. the tabernacle

Grammar & Foreign Languages

It is very helpful to be able to understand the basics of the languages in which the Bible was written – particularly tense, voice, etc.

- Tenses – present, past (aorist, perfect), future, etc.
- Voice – active – the subject is doing the action; passive – the action is being performed on the subject

Bible Software

- Logos
- BibleWorks/Accordance

Websites/Apps

- www.e-sword.net
- www.biblestudytools.com
- www.biblehub.com
- www.monergism.com
- www.biblicaltraining.org
- www.solid-ground-books.com
- Ligonier app
- Sermon audio app

Next Up: What is God's Word? Understanding the Canon, Textual Criticism, & Translations