



# Pinehurst Post

*We exist to love Jesus and live for Him.*

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*We envision a congregation whose love for Jesus and one another leaves a clear and compelling witness for Christ.*

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*Ascribe to the Lord the glory due his name. Bring an offering and come before him; worship the Lord in the splendor of his holiness.*

1 Chron. 16:29



## Bible Trivia

What is the first jewelry mentioned in the Bible?

Answer from last month: the first weapon mentioned in the Bible was the sword wielded by the cherubim to keep the fallen Adam and Eve from returning to Eden (Gen 3:24)



## Bible Study Resources by Paul DeLong

Bible study has been encouraged by countless preachers and teachers throughout church history. It has been esteemed in importance along with daily prayer, regular church attendance, giving of our offerings, and of being of service to others. King David himself felt the need for understanding the Word of God when he prayed in Psalms 119:73: "Your hands made me and fashioned me; give me understanding, that I may learn Your commandments." This article will focus on the resources available to help us study the Word of God.

Ultimately, the greatest resources we have are the Holy Spirit, our desire to study the Bible, and the time that we have to do so. Jesus promised that He would send the Holy Spirit to His disciples, one reason of which was to guide them into all truth, and to disclose to them what belongs to the Son and the Father (John 16:13-15). We also need the desire to study the Bible personally and each day – Sundays are not enough. Finally, we must have the time and energy to study. This may be the most difficult aspect of Bible study. The time limitations imposed by the demands of daily life can be daunting. Each believer will have to decide for themselves how he or she can allocate the time for Bible study. Any time spent in honoring the Lord in Bible study is better than none at all.

As to the tangible resources - they are plentiful and beyond measure. Of course, to begin a Bible study we need a Bible. The Bible translation debate need not be a large distraction. There are many excellent and usable versions available. Some of these translations are the New King James Version, the Amplified Bible, the New International Version, the New American Standard Bible, the English Standard Version, and the most recent release, the Holman Christian Standard Bible. The New World Translation should not be

used, as the text has been corrupted to be aligned with the Jehovah's Witness doctrine. Bible paraphrases such as the New Living Translation and The Message are useful as giving clarification of what a particular passage is saying in modern language style. These, however, should not be used for deeper Bible study. My personal Bible translation recommendations are the NASB or ESV, as these are recognized as adhering well to the original Biblical writings while being easily readable.

A good study Bible is an excellent resource to have. In addition to the Biblical text, it will have Scripture cross-referencing, notes, and introductions to each Biblical section and each book. Good study Bibles, like the ESV or NIV Study Bibles, will have additional charts, maps, and other information and articles. You can expect to pay up to \$70 for a study Bible, but it is worth the investment. It should be bound well so that it will last you for many years of use. Some Bible publishers have printed Bibles that emphasize certain aspects of spiritual disciplines. Examples of these are the NIV *Life Applications Bible*, the **KJV Evidence Bible** (an apologetics-focused NT), the **HCSB Apologetics Study Bible**, the **NKJV Life Principles Bible**, and the **NIV Archaeological Study Bible**.

Interlinear Bibles are those that have the English translation alongside the Hebrew or Greek of the ancient languages. These are especially handy when it comes to understanding the interpretation of key words. In our Resource Center you can find the **Zondervan Parallel New Testament in Greek and English** and the **Hebrew-Greek Key Search Study**

**Bible** (New Testament) in the KJV. One need not be a Hebrew or Greek scholar to use these types of study aids.

The next important asset in serious Bible study is a comprehensive concordance. Concordances give Scripture references for every word in the Bible. They are used when we can remember only a word or short fragments of a Scripture that we are trying to locate. Several concordances are available, with the **Strong's Exhaustive Concordance** being the most popular. Concordances are also available to be used with varying Bible translations. The translation choices available for concordances might dictate the Bible translation you choose to work from. The concordance should have the additional feature of having a reference number for each word listed that corresponds to the Hebrew or Greek dictionaries at the back. You can also use the internet as means to looking up **S c r i p t u r e**. On [www.biblegateway.com](http://www.biblegateway.com), you can search for a word in 20 different English-language translations.

Another valued resource is a Bible commentary set. Commentaries will give you interpretations and additional thoughts from the work of learned men who have dedicated themselves to Bible study. Recommended commentaries are those by Adam Clarke; Matthew Henry; Jamieson, Fausset, and Brown; and Walvoord and Zuck. More recent commentary publications are Jon Courson's *Application Commentary* series, the IVP *Bible Commentary*, **Eerdmans' Commentary of the Bible**, the five-volume set of **Expositional Commentary** by Wiersbe, the 24-volume **L a y m e n ' s B i b l e Commentary**, (continued)

## Bible Study Resources *continued from front page*

and the 27-volume series by John MacArthur. Commentaries can be an important addition to your Bible study, but we must realize that these are still the interpretations of men. So the caution is that as you use them in your studies, make sure that the Holy Spirit bears witness that what the commentary is stating is Biblical and true. Any faithful commentator would have it no other way.

A good theological or doctrinal resource is necessary at some point for Bible study. This may sound like high-brow stuff, interesting only to Bible scholars and theologians. But we all need to study Biblical theology so that we understand God as well as understand what we believe. As Southern Baptists, our most immediate theological resource is **The Baptist Faith and Message**. For those who desire a more comprehensive doctrinal study, the *Survey of Biblical Doctrine* by Ryrie is recommended, as is the 3-volume set of *Systematic Theology* by Hodges, the single volume *Outlines of Theology* by the same author, **Foundations of the Christian Faith** by Boice, **Systematic Theology** by Grudem, *Major Bible Themes* by Chafer and Walvoord, the 16-volume *Laymen's Library of Christian Doctrine*, the 8-volume set of *Systematic Theology* by Chafer, and *These Things We Believe* by Turner. Single-subject theological studies are also available.

For those believers who are interested in learning how to defend the faith, a study of apologetics is essential. In an increasingly hostile culture, believers need to know how to answer the critics. This is not only beneficial to the critics, but will cement Christian beliefs in our own minds. Josh McDowell's *Evidence That Demands a Verdict* is well-known, as are his follow-up works *More Evidence That Demands a Verdict* and *Answers to Tough Questions*. Other more recent works include Lee Strobel's **The Case for Christ**, *Challenge and Response: A Handbook for Christian Apologetics* by Howe, **The Reason for God** by Keller, **Beyond Opinion** by Zacharius, and *Fundamentals of Our Faith* by Hobbs. C. S. Lewis is one of the best-known and respected apologists and his works *Mere Christianity* and *Christian Reflections* are highly recommended.

A Biblical encyclopedia can be very helpful by providing information about persons, places, events, and subjects mentioned in

the Bible. The Bible encyclopedia should include various charts, maps, illustrations, and photographs to highlight the topics being discussed. The Zondervan **Pictorial Encyclopedia of the Bible** is highly recommended.

Single volumes of the same genre that contain condensed information are called Bible dictionaries. Valuable Bible dictionaries include **New Unger's Bible Dictionary**, *The Revell Bible Dictionary*, the **Holman Bible Dictionary**, *The Layman's Bible Dictionary* by Martin, **Nave's Topical Bible**, and the *World's Bible Dictionary*. Another type of dictionary that is especially useful is **Vine's Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words**. This dictionary gives the Greek words, definitions, and some usages for the English words as used in the KJV translation.

Our Resource Center also has the 5-volume Zondervan's **Understand the Bible Reference Series** that is comprised of a Bible commentary, two encyclopedias, a dictionary, and a difficult questions volume. I list this set separately because it does not fit into any of the other categories of study materials.

Bible handbooks can be in multi-volume sets or in single volumes. They are similar to encyclopedias in the information presented, but the information is not listed in alphabetical order. Rather, the composition of these is by general subjects, such as "The Ancient World," "Pagan Religions," "Plants and Herbs," or "Books of the Bible," etc. Examples of these are Eerdman's *Family Encyclopedia of the Bible*; **Holman Bible Handbook**, the **Handbook of Bible Application**, *The Bible Almanac* by Packer, Tenney, and White; *The Complete Bible Handbook* by Bowker; and the popular **Halley's Bible Handbook**.

Another resource available to us at Pinehurst is the Sunday School material that we use. This material contains much valuable instruction for us. Lesson study in these is especially good the week before the lesson is presented in the classroom, for we then benefit from both personal and group study by doing this. Secondly, our Adult Sunday School Department has been ordering the Biblical Illustrator study booklets from LifeWay. These are very instructional, with good artwork, photographs, and superior teaching on various subjects. If you want to get your

copy, talk with the Adult Sunday School Director, Randy Sheppard. Along with the booklet, you can also order the CD that has the same material, but with added material on the same subjects from previous editions. You can also order the booklets and CDs directly from LifeWay if you desire.

So how do we acquire these resources? You can buy directly from a local Christian bookstore for recent publications. Second-hand stores may have out-of-print publications that are no longer available in retail outlets. A valuable resource that I have found for out-of-date books is the website [www.alibris.com](http://www.alibris.com). You can order from this website older publications that are available nowhere else. Christian book sales websites are: [www.christianbook.com](http://www.christianbook.com) and [www.lifeway.com](http://www.lifeway.com). Other websites can be located by doing web searches using "christian books" as a keyword search.

Speaking of the internet, you can do a web search for a word of the topic you are studying at the moment. You can also do this for individual Scripture verses if you like. For instance, I just did a Google web search for "John 3:16" and got 15.8 million hits in 0.23 seconds. That is more information than I could absorb in a dozen lifetimes, and that just on one Bible verse. Some websites that would be useful to you in your studies are [www.christiananswers.net](http://www.christiananswers.net), [ebible.org](http://ebible.org), [www.searchgodsword.org](http://www.searchgodsword.org), [bibletools.org](http://bibletools.org), [biblos.com](http://biblos.com), and [bible.christianity.com](http://bible.christianity.com).

Lastly, I should not neglect to mention the free study information readily available at our own Pinehurst Baptist Church. Our Resource Center has many of these books on hand. If you have limitations on shelf space, finances, or internet access, the Resource Center was created just for you. The works that I have listed here in the bold print are those that are available at our Resource Center. We at Pinehurst Baptist are blessed to have an excellent facility, and so have no logistical reason not to be spiritually literate in our faith. Let's dedicate ourselves anew to "grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord" (II Peter 3:17-18).