

Bible Resources for a Christian Library

William H. Gross – www.onthewing.org

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Below is a list of useful resource texts for a personal Christian library. Some items name the type of text, while others provide actual titles and authors. If you purchased all of these, you would drop a minimum of three thousand dollars – and that's if you obtained nothing but discounted and used volumes. There are electronic libraries that can provide many of these resources in a more useful format for a few hundred dollars.

There are even a couple of free bible-study packages that have a central search engine into which you may plug great numbers of out-of-copyright texts. You can even do original language study (Online Bible, e-Sword, Theophilus, etc.). Some of the best commercial versions of bible software for general use include WordSearch, PC Study Bible (best for the price), Quick Verse (Parson's), and the expensive Logos (Libronix engine). For *original language study*, the best electronic package is BibleWorks, followed closely by Logos Bible Scholar.

A friendly caution: If you haven't read the bible from cover to cover at least twice, don't begin to assemble this kind of library. "Unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man [the Word of God] and drink his blood [the Grace of God], you have no life in you." If you haven't committed yourself to living the life of Christ first, please don't get distracted by acquiring a bare knowledge of the Scripture that can only puff you up. Commit first to love, and in the process of loving, to learn more, so that in learning more, you may love more, and better. "As I have loved you, so you must love one another." Enjoy the feast!

Source Texts –

New Testament

- NA - Nestle-Aland
- WH - Westcott-Hort
- UBS - United Bible Societies (UBS)
- TR - Textus Receptus
- MT - Byzantine Majority Text
- SYR – Syriac Peshitta

Old Testament

- Septuagint – OT Greek translation of OT (c. 250 BC)
- Vulgate – Jerome – Latin translation of Bible (c. 400 AD)
- Masoretic Text
 - Ben Asher Hebrew Text – aka Leningrad, B19a, or "L"
 - Ben Chayyim Hebrew Text – aka Daniel Blomberg 1516, 2nd Rabbinic Bible 1524
- Jewish Publication Society
- Syriac Peshitta (c. 200 AD)
- BHS - Biblia Hebraica **Stuttgartensia**
- DSS - Dead Sea Scrolls (Dead Sea Scrolls Bible – Abegg, Flint, & Ulrich)

Apocrypha

Translations –

- Literal (word for word)
 - Lamsa (Syriac Peshitta)
 - King James Version (TR)
 - NKJV – New King James version (TR)
 - NET – New English Translation (eclectic with 62k translator notes)
 - NASB – New American Standard, also "updated" version (NA-UBS)
 - ESV – English Standard Version (eclectic from the RSV)
- Dynamic Equivalence (idea for idea)
 - NIV – New International Version (NA-UBS)
 - JB – Jerusalem Bible (Catholic)
 - J.B. Philips (NT only – UBS)

Paraphrased
LB - Living Bible
NLT - New Living Translation (accurate, yet very readable)
Interpretive - Inductive
The Message - Peterson

Tools –

Study Bible (e.g.)
Nelson's Study Bible NKJ,
NIV Study Bible,
ESV Study Bible,
NLT Study Bible,
Reformation Study Bible ESV (Sproul)
Commentaries
John Calvin
Matthew Henry (6 vol. or single)
John Gill
Matthew Poole
Crossway Classic Commentaries
NIV OT/NT Commentaries (3-vol set includes Matthew Henry)
Jamieson, Faussett, & Brown
Adam Clarke (excellent, but Arminian)
Torah
Mishnah
Tosefta (supplement to Mishnah)
Midrash
Talmud
Targum
More than Conquerors – Wm. Hendriksen (Revelation)
Triumph of the Lamb – Dennis E. Johnson (Revelation – *excellent!*)
Apocrypha
Legends of the Bible (JPS)
Nave's Topical Bible
Treasury of Scripture Knowledge – bible cross references

Original Language

Interlinear – Jay Green
Word Study
Robertson's
Vincent's
Vine's
Zodhiates
Hebrew Lexicon
Brown-Driver-Briggs
Greek Lexicon -
Grammars
Basics of Biblical Greek – Mounce
Basics of Biblical Hebrew – Pratico & Van Pelt

Concordance

Strong's – all words in bible by number –specifies original language word
Englishman's – all instances of a particular Strong's number

Harmonies

Synoptic Gospels
NIV/NASB Harmony of the Gospels – R. Thomas and S. Gundry

A Harmony of the Gospels – A. T. Robertson
Chronicles-Kings
A Harmony of Samuel, Kings, and Chronicles – Wm Day Crockett
Chronological – Narrated Bible
Reeses' Chronological Bible (KJV)
The Narrated Bible – F. LaGard Smith

Dictionaries - Encyclopedias

Bible Dictionary (Holman's is very good)
Bible Encyclopedia
Bible Handbook
Dictionary of Theology
Dictionary of Apologetics
Encyclopedia of Christian Apologetics - Geisler
Encyclopedia of Bible Difficulties – Gleason Archer

Maps

Holman Bible Atlas

Charts

Timeline Charts of the Western Church - Peterson

Theology

Creeds

Apostle's
Nicene
Chalcedon
Athanasian
Helvetic

Confessions

Smalkald Articles 1537
French Confession 1559
Belgic 1561
Westminster 1646
London Baptist

Orthodox Statements

Council of Orange 529
Canons of Dordt 1619

Catechisms

Didache
London Baptist
Heidelberg
Westminster Longer & Shorter
Spurgeon's

Systematic Theology

John Calvin – Institutes of the Christian Religion
Louis Berkhof
Wayne Grudem
Donald Bloesch (flawed theology)
Concise Theology – J. I. Packer (excellent)

Biblical Theology

Gerhard Vos

Interpretation: Hermeneutics (the rules)

E.W. Bullinger *How to Enjoy the Bible*
Vern Polythress – *God-Centered Biblical Interpretation*

Bob Smith's *Biblical Interpretation* (excellent introduction)
Milton S. Terry (seminary standard)
Bernhard Ramm (seminary standard)

History

Church History

Eusebius – Ecclesiastical History (ed. Cruse)
Philip Schaff (8-vol)
Early Church Fathers (38-vol)
Kenneth Scott Latourette (2-vol)
The Bible as History - Keller
Cairns (1-vol)

Biographies

Foxe's Book of Martyrs
The New Foxe's Book of Martyrs – updated by Harold J. Chadwick

Creeds

History of the Creeds – by Philip Schaff
Credo – by Jarislav Pelikan

Theology

Christian Tradition - Jarislav Pelikan

Web Sites

<http://www.onlinebible.net> – free electronic bible; original language study
<http://www.e-sword.net> – free electronic bible; original language study
<http://www.crosswalk.com/> - personal bible study, articles, and resources
<http://www.christianarsenal.com/index.htm> - articles and resources
<http://www.spiritandtruth.org/spirit/resource.htm> - various bible study resources
<http://www.ccel.org/> - historical documents
<http://www.pbc.org/dp/smith2/index.html> - Bob Smith, bible interpretation
<http://www.studylight.org/> - original language study
<http://www.godrules.net/library/vincent/vincent.htm> - NT word studies
<http://www.answersingenesis.org/TheWord/downloads/translations.asp> - digital bibles
http://www.biblicaltraining.org/classes/greek/greek_f.html - Learn Greek - Mounce
<http://www.godrules.net/bibles.html> - bible study var. translations; search engine
<http://www.searchgodsword.org/> - bible study var. translations; search engine
<http://www.anova.org/sev/atlas/hm/index.html> - bible atlas online
<http://www.gospelcom.net/eword/comments/> - classic bible commentaries, mixed theology
<http://www.graciouscall.org/books/library.shtml> - links to historic documents
<http://www.discerningreader.com/> - books, articles, resources for teens and above
<http://www.truthforlife.org/index.php> – Alistair Begg
http://www.desiringgod.org/library_index.html - John Piper
<http://www.gospeldefense.com/> - Bill Parker (Baptist - Reformed)
<http://www.equip.org/> - Hank Hanegraff
<http://www.reformed.org/> - Ctr for Reformed Theol. & Apologetics – harsh but good resources
<http://www.carm.org/> - Christian Apologetics & Research Ministry – doctrine and cults
<http://www.mbrem.com/> - Presby. Church in Am. Website – Calvinist resources
<http://www.virtualeseminary.net/> - virtual seminary – Reformed theology resources

Other Tools -

Cults

Kingdom of the Cults – Walter Martin – either Hanegraff's or Zacharias' edition
Challenge of the Cults - Rhodes

More on Apologetics and Evangelism

Easy

How to Give Away Your Faith – Paul Little
Know What You Believe – Paul Little
Know Why You Believe – Paul Little
God in the Dock – C. S. Lewis

More Challenging

New Evidence that Demands a Verdict – Josh McDowell
Case for Faith – Lee Strobel
Case for Christ – Lee Strobel
Can Man Live Without God – Ravi Zacharias
Abolition of Man – C. S. Lewis
Christian Apologetics – Geisler
Philosophical Foundations for a Christian Worldview – Moreland & Craig

Evolution

Darwin on Trial – Phillip Johnson
Reason in the Balance – Phillip Johnson
Darwin's Black Box – Michael Behe

Morality and Ethics

Kingdom Ethics – Stassen & Gushee (great book!)
Ethics – Bonhoeffer

I removed the section on *The Christian Life* (Life-changing books). Many exceptional books have been written in the past 2000 years; but their ability to change us must flow from the truth and wonder of Scripture itself. Also, their effect depends on where you are in your Christian walk – so it's highly subjective. So rather than offer you those, let me give you just one: *Alarm to Unconverted Sinners* by Joseph Alleine, written in 1671. If you can make it past that one unchanged, the others probably wouldn't help. Yes, I realize that's a bit of hyperbole – and perhaps it's another subjective choice on my part. Why not read it yourself? An updated language version is on my website.

Obviously this list is only a sampling. Solomon said, "of books there is no end" The bible continues to be the largest selling book in the world, and books about the bible continue to be the best-sellers. Every month there are more. To repeat my earlier caution, be sure the bible is your **primary** source, and your **primary** focus. All these others are intended to help you understand, grasp, and apply the truth of God. Let that be your motive in your outside reading. We're not trying to impress friends and strangers with *what* we know, but **Who** we know, and **how** we love...