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Large Print/Giant Print Bibles: Moving in the opposite direction, large or giant print Bibles expand the font and page size for easier readability, especially for the elderly or vision-impaired. Not very portable, though. Premium Bibles: Fancy, expensive Bibles usually with genuine leather covers (the interior pages are generally the same as standard or thinline Bibles). You'll pay a lot for them, but you'll last forever, and they make you feel like the cool kid with the velvet leather covers. Study Bibles: These include lots of additional resources like book introductions, topical articles, verse notes, maps, and more to deepen your reading experience. They can be overwhelming, but I recommend them — see below for why. Devotional Bibles: Like Study Bibles, but with notes and prompts specifically designed to encourage prayer and contemplation as you read. Journaling Bibles: These have extra space in the margins for making notes (or doodling). Bible Apps: These are apps (like Bible Gateway) that allow you to read the Bible on your mobile device, typically in a variety of translations and with additional personalization features like highlighting, note-taking, and verse favoriting. There's no more compact Bible than your smartphone! Audio Bibles: Just like an audiobook, but it's the Bible. Most translations have audio versions available. They can get pricey to buy in full, but there are apps like Bible Audio that (similar to reading apps) give you a selection of Bible versions for free or a few dollars a month. OK, I've said a few times that I recommend Study Bibles for most readers, and here's why. As a new Bible reader, you're likely to become confused or overwhelmed quickly. Won't a ton of extra material just make you more overwhelmed? Well, no. A good Study Bible — and it is important to choose the right one — will guide your reading by filling in missing context (like who wrote each book and when), clarifying confusing passages, and providing historical background. And of course, Study Bibles are just as good for long-time Bible readers (and even scholars). As you grow in your faith and understanding, the huge amount of information in them (and wide variety of types available) ensures you'll always have more to learn, contemplate, and pray about. Think of it as a miniature seminary on your bookshelf. Do you need a Study Bible to appreciate Scripture? Absolutely not. God's Word stands on its own. But a quality Study Bible can be immensely helpful as a guide throughout your Bible journey. They're popular for a reason! Here are a few Study Bible recommendations for beginning Bible readers: For more recommendations, including for more advanced Bible readers, see our full post on Study Bibles for every type of reader. It will probably come as no surprise that I'm a Bible maximalist. Why have just one Bible when you could have many? In truth, with so many options between translations, types, and formats, it's easy to get carried away. Owning lots of Bibles won't bring you deeper into God's Word — only reading them will. That said, it can be helpful to have a few editions (ideally in different translations, in case you want to compare) for use in different settings or situations. Here's what I recommend to best equip yourself for the journey: Pick a Study Bible — probably just one for now — for the reasons outlined above. Get a non-Study Bible — standard, thinline, compact, large print, journaling, whatever you like — for a more portable option, or for when you want to read without distraction. Install a Bible app on your phone. Personally, I prefer to read the Bible in hard copy — but ever since downloading Bible Gateway, I've been able to replace social media or news doomscrolling with a few minutes of Bible reading when I'm waiting or need a break. Optional: If you like audiobooks, get an audio Bible instead of or in addition to the Bible app. So, you've got your Bible (or Bibles) in your favorite translations and you're ready to dive in. Great! There's just one more step I strongly recommend first: establish a reading plan, and set reading goals. After all, just like any other habit — prayer, contemplation, exercise — starting out is easy. Sticking with it is harder. And just like any other habit, consistency is key. Having a preset roadmap for your reading is crucial for establishing that consistency. There are two parts to this step. The first is picking an approach; the second is determining a cadence. There are many different ways you can approach reading the entire Bible, the most common of which are: canonical order, chronological order, and OT/NT concurrent. Canonical Order: This is simply reading the Bible in the order established by the early church, starting with the historical books, then wisdom books, then prophets, and then into the New Testament. Chronological Order: Another option is reading the books chronologically, which is surprisingly complicated, because many books overlap (and sometimes we don't know when they were written or take place). But it can be done, and can be both a fascinating way to see the evolution of Israel's history and relationship with God, as well as a fun way to break up long chunks of history/prophesy and help keep them both fresh. OT/NT Concurrent: Another popular way is to combine daily readings from the Old Testament with shorter readings from the New Testament so you can see how they relate and interact, and diversify your reading experience. Whichever option you go with, it's common to read one Psalm per day (and sometimes a few verses of Proverbs) which has the double benefit of framing your daily reading with a Biblical prayer and breaking up the repetitiveness of reading all 150 Psalms at once if you are going straight through. Once you've decided on how you want to approach your reading, it's time to set a reading schedule and goals. The most common approach is to read through the entire Bible in one year, but if that feels too daunting, there are two-year plans available as well. You can set your own reading schedule by taking the number of pages in your Bible and dividing by the number of days you want to read (e.g., 365 in a year, or about 260 if you want to skip weekends). But rather than reinventing the wheel, you'd probably be better off using an already-existing reading plan. Many are widely available. Bible Gateway has over a dozen reading plans — including chronological, OT/NT, 90-day, and more — and we'll email you reminders, too (if you want). You can also sometimes find plans in the back of your Bible (especially in Study Bibles). Or for a fully guided experience you can opt for a daily-reading Bible, such as the Daily Scripture Bible (available in NIV and NASB) or Max Lucado's Grace for the Moment Bible (NKJV). Similar options are available in a few other versions, but not all, so you'll have to check for one in your chosen translation. As you embark on your Bible reading journey, there are a few things you should keep in mind. These will help to guide and inform your reading, especially when you're struggling with a complex, confusing, troubling, or just plain boring passage. The Bible was written roughly between 4,000 and 2,000 years ago in Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek. No part of it was written in English. In fact, "English" as a language didn't even exist back then! Whenever you crack open your Bible, you should always keep in mind that, no matter what you're reading, it is a translation. It's not the original. Now, that doesn't mean your translation isn't accurate. In most cases, Bible versions are produced by dozens of scholars working for years and building upon the previous work of hundreds of other scholars going back hundreds of more years. Any choice they make, they make it carefully, thoughtfully, and intentionally. You can trust your Bible. That said, any translator will tell you that most languages don't map perfectly on to one another. And that's all the more true when comparing ancient and modern languages. Most words and phrases can be translated multiple ways and still be accurate. That's why we have so many Bible translations in the first place! Any time you encounter a sentence or passage that you find confusing or uncomfortable, try checking it out in another translation (or several). It might help shed light on the different possible meanings of the text. Watch Out for Paratext "Paratext" is every part of the Bible (or any other book) that isn't the content itself. In the Bible, that's quite a lot! Some of it is obvious — like version or book introductions, notes and articles in your Study Bible, or translators' footnotes. But some of it is much more subtle. Most readers don't realize, for instance, that chapter and verse numbers are not part of the original Bible. They were added about 500 years ago by Bible translators and publishers after the invention of the printing press, to make cross-referencing easier. And they certainly do! But they also introduce artificial breaks and interruptions that aren't there in the original texts. In fact, in ancient times, they didn't use paragraphs — they barely used punctuation at all — so each book of the Bible was simply one long scroll of unbroken text. There are Bibles you can purchase (such as the new NIV Lectio Bible) that attempt to recreate this experience by stripping out chapters, verses, and section headings. It can be a deeply immersive and powerful reading experience. But I wouldn't recommend it for your first or only Bible. There's a good reason those paratexts were introduced, after all. They make the Bible immensely easier to read, reference, study, and share. But even so, it's worth remembering as you go that they are additions — not part of God's Word as it was first written. "Hermeneutics" is a technical term for the theories and methods of Biblical interpretation. Throughout history, readers of the Bible — Jews, Christians, and others — have approached the text in many different ways. The Bible even interprets itself in different ways! Ancient and medieval readers, for instance, often looked for "typology" or "anagogy" — hidden ways the Bible predicts future events, such as the coming of Jesus or the end times. Post-Reformation, modern readers have become increasingly interested in the historical situation and origins of the Bible. As you're just getting out on your reading journey, you don't need to know the intricacies of this history. (Like reading in the original languages, this is not beginner-level: it's a thing people get PhD's in.) But you should be aware that it is an ongoing conversation — even among traditional, orthodox Christians — and the plainest meaning of a passage isn't always the only way it should be understood. Jesus himself, of course, famously preferred teaching in parables. Once again, if you're perplexed by a passage you're reading (or even if you're not!), that's a great opportunity to do some deeper digging, such as in your Study Bible, and see what different scholars and theologians have said about it. At this point, you should be well on your way to becoming a regular Bible reader! Before you get too far, though, I have just a few more pieces of advice for you to consider. Above all, don't get discouraged! If you've noticed one theme of this article, it's probably that. I started out by saying that the Bible is intimidating. But even those who go in energized and excited often run around somewhere around Leviticus, or maybe Numbers — in fact, it's become something of a cliché among pastors and Bible teachers. There are different ways of dealing with those long-slog passages. One of them, as I suggested above, is to use it as an opportunity to do some research — read your Study Bible, explore resources in Bible Gateway Plus, and maybe find some amazing insights you had no idea about. (Hint: there's more to the endless genealogies than you might think.) But ultimately, if you've run into a place where your only options are to stop reading or skip ahead — by all means, skip ahead. Maybe skim a section. The entire Bible is holy — every word. But that doesn't mean every word will speak to every reader every time they read it. Far from it! Over the course of your lifetime, different parts will mean different things to you at different stages — and that's OK. That's one of the things that sets it apart ("set apart" is the original meaning of the Hebrew word for "holy," by the way) as Scripture: its depth is literally infinite. So if something isn't working for you right now, no matter which way you turn it, don't be ashamed to set it aside. Move on to the next section. You can always return to it later. If you do set something aside, be sure to note it down — maybe just draw a big question mark in the margin. Better yet, write down what's bothering you about it. Sometimes the simple act of taking a note can help you understand something better. But don't stop there! Take notes on your favorite passages, too. Highlight them, underline them, or — if (like me) you can't bear the thought of marking up your precious books — use a separate journal. Or a journaling Bible. Or just use Bible Gateway. We are called to work out our salvation with fear and trembling (Phil. 2:12), and wrestling with Scripture is one of the ways we do that. Writing down thoughts and reactions — positive or negative or mixed — is a great way to engage with the Bible. It helps you have an ongoing conversation with the Lord through his Word, as you return to it again and again over the years. And, as a bonus, it will be doubly meaningful if you someday choose to pass it on to your children or another loved one. Another — possibly even better — way to wrestle with Scripture is together. While reading a Study Bible is a great way to go deeper into the text on your own, doing a Bible Study with a group can help surface ideas and perspectives you never would have encountered by yourself. Indeed, the Bible was meant to be read in community. Jesus preached to crowds; Paul addressed most of his letters to "the assembly" in various regions. At a time when written works were exceedingly expensive and few people were literate, the primary way people received the Word was orally, either read aloud or told from memory. Today, thanks to vernacular translations, the printing press (not to mention Internet), and much better education systems, most of us can read the Bible for ourselves — and that's a huge blessing. But the advantages of doing so in Christian community are manifold. If there isn't a Bible Study group already meeting at your church, it's always a great idea to consult with your pastor about difficult passages, or even just general themes and ideas. God has called them explicitly for this purpose of tending to his flock — and that means you, besides. They generally have a lot of additional training and education on the Scriptures, and can point you in the right direction. If you don't have a church or pastor you trust on these issues — now's a great time to go and get one. How to choose a church is whole other topic, but just like with Bible versions, the best advice I can give is to try some out. Go to local congregations, get a feel for them, see what they're doing in your community, how they approach the Gospel, and how welcoming they are. Chances are, you'll know it when you find it. When all else fails and you just can't bring yourself to sit down and read the Bible — but still want to build a relationship with God — maybe it's time to try something different. Personally, I'm a theology nerd, so I like to start with reading a church theologian, who tend to reference the Bible a lot, so then I go and read the referenced Bible passages. Or you can simply pray about it: talk to God, tell him where you're stuck, and ask him to open the way. You can also try commentaries, devotionals, discussion groups, even board games! To those who knock, the door will be opened (Matt. 7:7). We at Bible Gateway truly believe the Bible is for everyone. Even so, we understand it can be intimidating to approach for the first (or even hundredth) time. But it doesn't have to be. I hope this guide has given you the resources you need to get started — or restarted, or just reenergized — on your Bible reading journey. Stay tuned to this space for lots more content to guide you on your way! The ESV Bible is a relatively new Bible translation that combines word-for-word precision and accuracy with literary excellence, beauty, and readability. The English Standard Version (ESV) stands in the classic mainstream of English Bible translations over the past half-millennium. The fountainhead of that stream was William Tyndale's New Testament of 1526; marking its course were the King James Version of 1611 (KJV), the English Revised Version of 1885 (RV), the American Standard Version of 1901 (ASV), and the Revised Standard Version of 1952 and 1971 (RSV). In that stream, faithfulness to the text and vigorous pursuit of accuracy were combined with simplicity, beauty, and dignity of expression. Our goal has been to carry forward this legacy for a new century. To this end each word and phrase in the ESV has been carefully weighed against the original Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek, to ensure the fullest accuracy and clarity possible. In making any necessary changes, we have sought to preserve the meaning of the original text. The words and phrases themselves grow out of the Tyndale-King James legacy, and most recently out of the RSV, with the 1971 RSV text providing the starting point for our work. Archaic language has been brought to current usage and significant corrections have been made in the translation of key texts. But throughout, our goal has been to retain the depth of meaning and enduring language that have made their indelible mark on the English-speaking world and have defined the life and doctrine of the church over the last four centuries. The ESV is an "essentially literal" translation that seeks as far as possible to capture the precise wording of the original text and the personal style of each Bible writer. It seeks to be transparent to the original text, letting the reader see as directly as possible the structure and meaning of the original. Click here to read more about the ESV translation philosophy.Now Available on BibleStudyTools PLUS: The ESV Study Bible was created to help people understand the Bible in a deeper way—that is, to encounter the timeless truth of God's Word as a powerful, compelling, life-changing reality. To accomplish this purpose, the ESV Study Bible combines the best and most recent evangelical scholarship with the ESV Bible text, which, as an "essentially literal" translation, is especially suited for Bible study. The result is the most comprehensive study Bible ever published—with completely new notes, maps, illustrations, charts, timelines, articles, and other features. Created by an exceptional team of 95 evangelical Christian scholars and teachers, the ESV Study Bible contains more than 2 million words of Bible text and insightful explanation and teaching—equivalent to a 20-volume Bible resource library. The English Standard Version is published with the permission of Good News Publishers. Customizable Background Music A diverse selection of musical styles, genres, and instrumental tracks from well-known Christian artists like Josh Garrels, Antoine Bradford, and many more, will help you meditate on God's Word as you read or listen to Scripture. Individual volume controls allow you to adjust the music and Bible audio separately. As God's Word to his people, the Bible exists to be read and understood. This is not to say such reading and understanding are easy. Indeed, some people have spent a lifetime studying the Bible and so are uniquely qualified to teach it to others. Yet anyone can, in God's mercy, cultivate a deep and ever-deepening knowledge of the Bible, as long as they pursue such knowledge wisely. This article identifies six keys to reading and understanding the Bible. Our Bible reading must be Spiritual, contextual, Christ-centered, reverent, communal, and repeated. Let us consider each of these in turn. Spiritual The Bible is a book written in many ways like any other, and can therefore be understood by anyone who is able to read. Yet the Bible is also unique, different from every other book, because it is inspired by God. The Bible is "breathed out by God" (2 Tim. 3:16). Its writers "spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit" (2 Pet. 1:21). To understand what is written, therefore, we must have our eyes opened by that same Holy Spirit. The Bible says, "The natural person does not accept the things of the Spirit of God, for they are folly to him, and he is not able to understand them because they are spiritually discerned" (1 Cor. 2:14). A person can be intellectually qualified and educationally equipped to read and understand the Bible, but if his heart is not spiritually alive then he will fail to truly benefit from reading the Bible. Left to ourselves, the Bible's contradiction of sinful living only evokes enmity from us. This is because "the mind that is set on the flesh is hostile to God" (Rom. 8:7). It is prejudiced against his Word and thus incompetent to read it in the way it was intended to be read. In order to read and understand the Bible, then, we must be regenerated (born again) by the Spirit of God. The Bible can certainly be read and understood at some level by those who have not been born again—indeed, the reading of the Bible may be the very means God uses to bring sinners to new life in Christ. Yet experiencing salvation produces in us both the ability to see spiritual truths in the Bible that we did not see before, as well as a new desire to submit to and follow its teaching. Along with being spiritually alive, we must also be dependent upon God himself as we turn to the Bible to read and study it. It is vital that we pray for light from heaven to understand its teachings, and also for God's grace to apply what we learn (Ps. 119:18). Contextual In order to read and understand the Bible we also need to have a growing knowledge of the Bible text and the times in which it was written. Remember that it is a book, and so there are aspects of understanding it that belong to the general principles of understanding any piece of literature. This includes reading any text in both its literary context and its historical context. First, consider the Bible as a piece of literature. It is important, when we come to read any section of the Bible, to be aware of the different kinds of writing that are found in it. The Bible consists of narrative, poetry, prophecy, and so on. Just as we would read a historical novel today in a different way than we would poetry, so it is with the Bible. We must read with a sensitivity to what kind of writing it is. Sensitivity to literary context also includes reading every text in the flow of the book as a whole, remembering the broad purposes for which that biblical author wrote. Second, we must be aware of historical context. The fact that various sections of the Bible were written during certain periods in history and in around the land of Palestine means that a growing knowledge of events in those periods in history, and of the land of Palestine, will enrich our understanding of the Bible. Much of what the Old Testament prophets wrote lands lightly on us if we are unaware of the might of Assyria, or Israel's longstanding friction with Edom. The parable of the good Samaritan means little if we do not understand who Samaritans were and why Jews despised them. Due to the historical distance between us and the authors of the Bible, readers of the Bible today will do well to sit under sound preaching and to consult various scholarly resources that help them in their personal study, such as commentaries and Bible dictionaries. Christ-centered Next, we must never forget the Bible's "big story." Specifically, it is crucial to understand that the whole Bible is about Jesus Christ—who he is and what he came to do. The Old Testament anticipates Jesus and the New Testament reveals Jesus. Every book somehow contributes to the Bible's message of a holy God's saving mercy in Jesus Christ. While not every Old Testament passage explicitly anticipates Christ, every text does move the story forward, a story that climaxes in Jesus. Jesus rebuked the Pharisees, devoted students of Scripture, for their failure to see him throughout the Old Testament. "You search the Scriptures," Jesus said, "because you think that in them you have eternal life, and it is they that bear witness about me" (John 5:39). Later, when Jesus was on the road to Emmaus after his resurrection, he began with Moses and all the Prophets and interpreted to two bewildered and depressed disciples everything that was said about him in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms" (that is, the whole Old Testament) would be fulfilled (Luke 24:44). As you read the Bible from Genesis to Revelation, you will notice that there is a coherent story line that holds it all together: the themes of this story line are creation, the fall, redemption, and restoration. These are not equal themes in the way the Bible treats them. Most of the Bible is given to unfolding the third of these, the great drama of redemption through Jesus Christ. But this redemption is set against the backdrop of creation and the fall, and this redemption will find its final completion in restoration and final judgment, when the original creation is restored to what it was originally intended to be. The Old Testament develops this story line, preparing for Jesus, and the New Testament fulfills this story line, portraying Jesus. The person and work of Christ, therefore, is what unites the entire Bible. As we read both Old and New Testaments through the lens of redemption in Christ, we will understand the whole Bible the way God wants us to understand it. Reverent We must also read the Bible reverently if we are to understand it properly. The Bible is God's Word to humankind, revealing heaven's great plan of salvation. Scripture therefore comes to us from above, calling for reverence. While human authors were graciously used in the writing of God's revelation, the Bible is not ultimately a book written by humans. It is a book from heaven. We are to follow in the footsteps of the Thessalonians, who, Paul says, "received the word of God, . . . not as the word of men but as what it really is, the word of God" (1 Thess. 2:13). As we read, then, we are to sit under the Word of God, not stand over it. We must "receive with meekness the implanted word" (James 1:21; compare John 12:48). When the commands of God contradict our own desires, we must submit to what God has revealed to us. This requires a deliberate humility to receive the Bible in its entirety, whatever it says. Such is the reverence called for by the sacred nature of Scripture. Communal The Bible is not meant to be read in isolation. To be sure, God has given each of his people an ability to read and understand the Bible individually. Indeed, the Christian who does not set aside time to regularly study Scripture alone will be greatly impoverished. Yet spiritual nourishment through Scripture is received not only in individual study but also through corporate study. The main way in which the Bible is received corporately is through the preaching of Scripture by those called and equipped to serve God's people in this way (Eph. 4:11, 2 Tim. 4:1-2). The Bible is also to be read and understood in other contexts, however, in which believers can discuss the text with one another in a mutually illuminating and sharpening way (Acts 13:15; 17:11; Heb. 4:11-12; 10:24-25). Repeated Finally, it should be emphasized that in order truly to understand the Bible with increasing depth over a lifetime, we must read the Scriptures repeatedly. The Bible is not a book to be read once and then placed on the shelf. As God's life-giving Word, it must be read and meditated on with great care over and over again (Ps. 119:15, 48). As we grow in our knowledge of the full landscape of Scripture, every verse within that landscape becomes clearer and more meaningful. Unlike other books, which we read and "finish," believers never truly "finish" reading the Bible. Just as we must eat physical food each day if we are to be physically healthy, so we must eat spiritual food each day if we are to be spiritually healthy. As the psalmist prayed, "My eyes are awake before the watches of the night, that I may meditate on your promise" (Ps. 119:148). Portions of the Bible should be committed to memory, so that even when we are without our Bibles we can draw forth God's Word and commune with him through it. Conclusion As we read the Bible under the illumination of the Spirit, with sensitivity to its literary and historical contexts, seeing Jesus as the point of the whole Bible, in sacred reverence, in a community of faith, and with meditative repetition, we will grow as faithful readers of God's Holy Word. One of the most memorable purchases I made as a reader was The Thessalonian's Bible in its original King James Version edition, complete with a blue leather cover. I still have it, of course, though it is now surrounded by a host of other Bibles on the shelf nearest to my desk. That study Bible opened the Word of God to me in a whole new way, helping me to make connections in the text and to see how subjects and themes run throughout the Bible. That was my introduction to a study Bible. The chain-reference notes in that Bible took me throughout the Scriptures, reading text alongside text. I recognized this as a great improvement on Bibles that contained only a minimal index and a few maps in the back. Today, there are several significant study Bibles, ranging from the most minimal, offering only cross-references, to others that offer the equivalent of several hundred pages of supplemental help.1. Read the text of the Bible first. Meditate upon the text and read it with care. Apply your own knowledge of the Bible in order to understand the particular text within its context and place in the biblical story-line. Consider and note other texts that come to your mind as directly related to this text. Read the text with full attention and conviction.2. Look carefully at the cross-references to the study Bible links to the text you are reading. Do not look only to the citations, but read the actual passages. This assistance is still the main contribution of a study Bible — making related and parallel passages more accessible. The first principle of interpreting the Bible is to interpret the Bible by the Bible. In other words, to allow the Bible to interpret itself text by text.3. As a third step, take full advantage of the notes, articles, and other helps printed alongside the text. In some cases, short articles will help in understanding contested issues or matters that might otherwise require a Bible dictionary or encyclopedia. Where appropriate, maps can be very useful, along with tables of measurement and similar points of reference. The very best of the study Bibles will also offer some level of commentary within the notes.Of course, it is the Bible itself that is inspired, inerrant, and infallible — not the study materials included in study Bibles. Therefore, judge the notes by the biblical text, and never the other way around. Where possible, use more than one study Bible to maximize this learning process.I am often asked for recommended Bible translations and study Bibles, so I offer this list hoping that some will find it helpful. For the sake of simplicity, I will recommend three excellent study Bibles representing the three translations I most eagerly commend:ESV Study BibleThe ESV Study Bible -- This long-awaited study Bible redefines the category in terms of its sheer heft. Its 2750 pages (plus maps) represent a massive resource for personal Bible study. Based on the English Standard Version [ESV] of the Bible, this is a truly worthy contribution to the world of the study Bibles. Under the direction of General Editor Wayne Grudem of Phoenix Seminary, the scholars who wrote and edited this study Bible have blended practical insights with keen theological reflection. The introductions to each book are well done, as is the pleasing and useful layout of the text and materials. This new study Bible will be warmly welcomed by those who pray to see more Christians grow in understanding the Bible. This is a study Bible for the serious Bible student and will serve any Bible reader well.MacArthur Study BibleThe MacArthur Study Bible -- This well-known study Bible flows from the preaching and teaching ministry of Dr. John MacArthur, one of the most respected expositors of our era. I find this study Bible consistently helpful. Dr. MacArthur's clarity and the simplicity of his explanations make this study Bible accessible to anyone, while the preacher or Bible teacher will find great usefulness as well. One key feature of this study Bible are his notes on the texts, especially the Old Testament, on which Dr. MacArthur has not yet written commentary in other forms. The MacArthur Study Bible, first released in the New King James Version [NKJV] of the Bible, is now (gladly) available in the New American Standard Bible [NASB] version.Apologetics Study BibleThe Apologetics Study Bible -- This unique project is a study Bible that devotes particular attention to the apologetic issues that are confronted within the Biblical text. Under the general editorship of Dr. Ted Cabal of The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, a team of scholars contributed, not only cross-references and the usual helps found in study Bibles, but also short articles on issues of current concern. The Apologetics Study Bible is based on the Holman Christian Standard Bible, another very trustworthy translation. It was honored to write one of the articles in this study Bible, and I commend it especially as a wonderful resource for students at the high school, college, and university levels. Those on the front lines of the apologetic confrontation will find great help here. There are other worthy study Bibles, but these are the three I most heartily recommend. Any of these would make wonderful gifts at Christmas or any time of the year.Photo credit: Unsplash

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