



## Supports to Guide Your Study

*People learn from one another, just as iron sharpens iron (Proverbs 27:17).*

I'll say it again, if all you study is the Bible, you have everything you need! However, God speaks to us in many ways, including through other people, writings, sermons, and the teachings of others. For example, Acts 8:26-40 describes how God prompted the apostle Philip to approach a man riding in a chariot along a desert road stretching from Jerusalem to Gaza. A dignitary from faraway Ethiopia was reading aloud from the prophet Isaiah in the chariot. "Do you understand what you are reading?" Philip asked him. The response: "How can I, unless someone explains it to me?" The man had been reading one of the prophecies about the coming of Christ, and Philip had the privilege of telling the Ethiopian the good news about Jesus. At that moment, Philip provided additional support for understanding God's Word (From <<https://www.biblegateway.com/blog/2016/02/how-to-use-bible-commentaries/>>). We all can learn from one another, teach one another, and grow together in understanding God's Word.

And while varying commentaries, books, sermons, etc., can be beneficial, we must also be cautious that we don't become reliant on others' translations or interpretations of God's Word. Be mindful that all other resources, tools or commentaries only serve to support or enhance our study, not replace it.

### Here are some tips for using other resources:

- Always begin with the Bible. I like the New King James Version (NKJV) as my starting point.
- Compare translations to gain a deeper, clearer or alternative meaning. I use a comparative study Bible or a Bible App such as YouVersion, which has a comparison feature.
- Have I told you how much I love to read? Yeah, I do. A lot. But for a time when I wanted to immerse myself in the Bible and connect my understanding and knowledge of God and His Word for myself, I didn't read other books or commentary. Once I felt more secure in my understanding of God's Word, I resumed reading other books.

Some lessons I learned when reading other books are as follows:

- When determining what to read or use, be sure the source is credible and reliable. Gather background information so that you understand the author's perspective.
- When using resources, **always, always, always** cross-reference it with the Word of God. Anything not in alignment with God's Word should be questioned or examined. I make it a habit of justifying through the Word of God why it's not true, strengthening my understanding of truth.
- Whenever an author states, "The Word of God says," or "In Matthew we find," or "Genesis 3:5 says," I always go to the Word and read it for myself. This practice helps me stay grounded in the Word, and it also prevents me from becoming lazy and accepting the interpretations of others.
- At the close of your study, draw your own conclusions. Ask questions such as
  - What do I strongly resonate with from this reading/study?

- What do I disagree with?
- What questions do I have?
- How has my understanding of the Bible been enhanced?
- How has my faith been strengthened?

There are numerous kinds of commentaries for different purposes, hundreds of thousands of books and guides, as well as thousands upon thousands of interpretations. And each type can serve a different purpose for different parts of your study. I can't possibly reference every commentary, book, Bible, etc., but what I will provide are those that have been most helpful to me in my growth journey.

### Virtual Bibles and Study Tools

- **YouVersion** – <https://youversion.com/> – This is my go-to Bible App. I love the "compare" feature of varying translations. I also like the Highlight Feature as well as the Notes feature. I also engage in some of the Study Plans, and the great thing is that you can study alone or with a group. I use this app primarily on my phone.
- **BibleHub** – <https://biblehub.com/> – I use this app as well, but primarily on my laptop. I can search texts easily and use the translations and the commentaries.
- **BibleGateway** – <https://www.biblegateway.com/> – I use this app as well, but primarily on my laptop. I can search texts easily and use the translations and the commentaries.
- **OpenBible** – <https://www.openbible.info/topics/> – I use this app to search the scriptures for particular words or topics.

### Bibles

- **The Hebrew-Greek Key Word Study Bible: KJV Edition, Hardbound (Key Word Study Bibles)** by Dr. Spiros Zodhiates (Editor), Dr. Warren Patrick Baker D.R.E. (Series Editor) – <https://www.lifeway.com/en/product/hebrew-greek-key-word-study-bible-kjv-P005128206> This Bible has been amazing for me. Biblical Hebrew words tell stories and to understand the story is to understand the meaning of the word (<https://theexplanation.com/from-dust-you-came-biblical-meaning/>). This Bible has been amazing for me. I learned so much about the need to understand the meanings of words, not just the English or contemporary meanings, but the original meanings or contexts in which the words were written. It's easy to use and has made the Word of God come to life in incredible ways.
- **The Original African Heritage Study Bible: King James Version Hardcover** – by Dr. Cain Hope Felder (Editor), James W. Peebles (Contributor) – <https://www.amazon.com/Original-African-Heritage-Study-Bible/dp/0529100673> This Bible has provided me another lens through which to study and understand the Bible from the perspective of Africa and descendants of Africa. It has answered numerous questions for me and raised many others. It has also helped me see "me" in the Bible for the first time.
- **The Chronological Study Bible: New King James Version Hardcover** – by Thomas Nelson (Author) – [https://www.amazon.com/gp/product/0718020685/ref=ppx\\_yo\\_dt\\_b\\_search\\_asin\\_title?ie=UTF8&psc=1](https://www.amazon.com/gp/product/0718020685/ref=ppx_yo_dt_b_search_asin_title?ie=UTF8&psc=1) This Bible has helped me see and read the Bible as a story, as a narrative. It has also provided context for the historical, cultural, social and political climate during Biblical times.

## Websites

- **Bibleref.com** – <https://www.bibleref.com/> – This online commentary provides insights into the Bible, verse by verse.
- **GotQuestions.org** – <https://www.gotquestions.org/> – This website answers some of the "big questions" about the Biblical narrative.
- **The Bible Project** – <https://bibleproject.com/> – This website provides videos, podcasts, blogs, and educational studies to help you better understand the Bible. These resources use various learning styles (audio, visual, written), making the Bible narrative simple and personal.

## Books

I have read countless books and have been inspired by many. And throughout the LIFE Lessons, I'll reference books that I found to be relevant to the particular topic or theme of the lesson. However, the books listed below guided my journey to knowing God more intimately and understanding His purposes for my life.

- **The 40-Day Surrender Fast Paperback – August 14, 2011**  
by [Celeste Camille Owens](#) From <[https://www.amazon.com/40-Day-Surrender-Celeste-Camille-Owens/dp/0983789509/ref=sr\\_1\\_1?keywords=book+surrender+fast&qid=1636391829&sr=8-1](https://www.amazon.com/40-Day-Surrender-Celeste-Camille-Owens/dp/0983789509/ref=sr_1_1?keywords=book+surrender+fast&qid=1636391829&sr=8-1)>
- **The Pursuit: 14 Ways in 14 Days to Passionately Seek God's Purpose for Your Life Paperback – December 1, 2015**  
by [T.C. Stallings](#) From <[https://www.amazon.com/Pursuit-Ways-Days-Passionately-Purpose/dp/1424551897/ref=sr\\_1\\_4?crd=2AQXTGNFPFQ8&keywords=tc+stallings+books&qid=1636391994&srefix=book+tc+stallings%2Caps%2C182&sr=8-4](https://www.amazon.com/Pursuit-Ways-Days-Passionately-Purpose/dp/1424551897/ref=sr_1_4?crd=2AQXTGNFPFQ8&keywords=tc+stallings+books&qid=1636391994&srefix=book+tc+stallings%2Caps%2C182&sr=8-4)>

## Journal

- The Christian Planner is my all-time favorite journal. I've used it for the past two years, and just ordered another. I only use it as a planner and journal of my spiritual growth and development, and not as a typical planner for work or your everyday living. The company also has other journals that may be of interest to you. - [https://christianplanner.com/collections/all?gclid=EA1aIQobChMI\\_Y6dipbX9AIVU-TICh3FwwODEAAYASAAEgl2h\\_D\\_BwE](https://christianplanner.com/collections/all?gclid=EA1aIQobChMI_Y6dipbX9AIVU-TICh3FwwODEAAYASAAEgl2h_D_BwE)