

## MY LIST OF ESSENTIAL TOOLS FOR BIBLE STUDY

Through my many years of preaching and teaching the Bible, I have developed, what I consider, essential tools to aid any Bible student in their quest for learning.

My list has changed over the years as digital format has entered my Bible study tool chest.

**A word of caution.** Only the Word of God is perfect. Many of the tools I use fall into the “not perfect” area. The goal should be to surround yourself with trustworthy resources. Just because an author is on the “Best Sellers” list does not mean the resource is trustworthy.

Some will suggest that the Bible is all you need for Bible Study. I would ask them to consider that the Holy Spirit is alive and active today. Men are still inspired by the truth of God’s Word, writing commentaries and Bible studies that enabling the student to dig deeper into the Word of God.

### MY LIST

This is my list of essential tools. Some of them can be purchased physically or digitally. I love the speed of my digital media, whether on my PC or smart phone, but nothing satisfies me as much as the smell and feel of written material. Just my personal preference. Also, written material allows you to have several tools spread out on your table or desk, enabling a beneficial study of a verse or text. However, I love the speed of access on my digital tools. Over my forty years of collecting Bible Study tools, I have in my inventory LOGOS Bible study software in which my library containing thousands of books and my office library contains hundreds of printed materials. Let me be clear, I have accumulated these tools. My suggestion to you is that greater than 80% of good bible study can be had with the following tools in your Bible Study Tool Box.

The list of six tools that I am presenting represents a solid investment for many years of happy and fulfilling Bible study.

1. **Non-reference Bible** – this bible is simply the Word of God without commentary, notes, and references.<sup>1</sup>
2. **Reference Bible** – A good reference Bible is simply that, a reference bible with no notes or commentary.<sup>1</sup>
3. **Pen, pencil, color markers, and highlighters** - I prefer writing and marking in my Bible. That way I don’t have to carry books and commentaries with me, I have written what the meaning of words, notes, and textual ideas.

Caution: ensure that marking pens and highlighters are made for marking in your bible. Bleed-through ruins your Bible. For highlighters, I prefer the “wax” type over the gel type, but that is just me. Also, when highlighting a verse, paragraph, or chapter in my bible using a “wax” type highlighter, I take a Kleenex and wipe the excess off so it doesn’t cause the pages to stick together when the bible is closed.

4. **A Bible Concordance** – A bible concordance contains, an alphabetical index of words used in the Bible, and the bible references for that word. Useful when trying to locate passages. There are many free Bible Concordances online. The two biggest sellers, and for good reason, is the “Young’s Analytical Concordance” and the “Strong’s Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible.”

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<sup>1</sup> I prefer a “Word for Word” translation

5. **Bible Dictionary** – Bible Dictionaries are just what the title says, a dictionary of Bible terms. They are reference work containing encyclopedic entries related to the Bible. People, places, customs, and doctrines. These are scholarly in makeup. Do you want to find out what a “jot and tittle” is in Matthew 5:18, use a Bible Dictionary.
6. **Bible Atlas** – The maps of today do not include the places of the Old and New Testament. Many places mentioned in the Bible are just ruins today. A Bible atlas will give you a bird’s eye view of the land that Abraham, Joshua, the Prophets, and Jesus walked.