

STARTER LIBRARY FOR PREACHERS

- 1 – Start with a good concordance of the translation from which you study, e.g.,
 - a- Strong's Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible By James Strong
 - b- Analytical Concordance to the Bible By Robert Young
- 2 - Multiple Translations of the Bible and harmonies of books where available (the Gospels; Samuel, Kings and Chronicles; topical proverbs; chronological Isaiah; chronological O.T. Etc)
- 3 - A good Bible Encyclopedia, e.g.,
 - The Zondervan Pictorial Encyclopedia of the Bible (5 vol).
 - The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia (Eerdmans).
- 4 - A good bible dictionary, e.g.,
 - a- Smith's Dictionary of the Bible (4 vol);
 - b- Intersociety Press publications series of Dictionaries:

This would include the Old Testament Pentateuch, Old Testament History, New Testament, New Testament background, Jesus and the Gospels, New Testament development, etc.
 - c- Nelson's Illustrated Bible Dictionary (1 Vol);
- 5 – Simple Word Studies
 - a- An Exhaustive Dictionary of New Testament Words (W.E. Vine) (or comparable volume)
 - b- Figures of Speech In The Bible (E.W. Bullinger, D.D.)
- 6 - A high quality bible atlas; e.g.,
 - a- Baker's Bible Atlas (Charles F. Pfeiffer)
 - b- Holman Bible Atlas (Thomas Brisco)
- 7- A General Introduction to the Bible (Geisler & Nix); This is the gold standard with which one should start, but others should be added when possible because good biblical introduction studies are fundamental to understanding and to proper interpretation. Some might include :
 - a- Introduction to the New Testament by Everett F. Harrison (Eerdman)
 - b- New Testament Introduction by Henry Thiessen (Eerdman)
 - c- Introduction to the Old Testament by Edward Young (Eerdman)
 - d- Old Testament Introduction by Gleason Archer
- 8 – At least one anthropological study, e.g.,
 - a- Manners and Customs of Bible Lands (Fred H. Morris)
 - b- Every Day Life in Bible Times (National Geographic)

- c- Anything by Alfred Edersheim will be comprehensive and accurate, but wordy.
- 9 - A good volume on Old Testament history (Choose well and one is enough.)
- a- Old Testament History (Charles F. Pfeiffer) Baker
 - b- Old Testament Times (William Hendrickson) Baker
 - c- Old Testament History (William Smith) College Press
- 10 - Cyclopedia of Biblical, Theological, and Ecclesiastical Literature (McClintock & Strong). *This is an old work, but it still offers much information that is useful. The work is over 100 years old. I believe it is still being printed. (12 Vol)*
- 11 - The study of Greek is a specialized field of study with limited value to the local evangelist, but a few volumes are helpful for one's personal growth and lesson preparation.
- a- A good Greek-English interlinear New Testament, e.g.,
The Interlinear Greek-English New Testament (by Samuel Bagster)
 - b- A good Greek-English Lexicon (some more complete and more accurate than others)
A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Early Christian Literature
By William F. Arndt & F. Wilbur Gingrich (adapted from Walter Bauer)
Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament
By Joseph Henry Thayer
 - c- One of several reputable Greek grammars
 - d- A set of Greek words studies, e.g.,
Word Pictures in the New Testament (A.T Robertson; 6 vol).
Word Studies in the New Testament (Kenneth S. Wuest; 3 vol)
Both of these men were Baptists. Robertson was considered the most authoritative Greek grammarian of his time and is still, by and large, the authority today. Wuest is useful and much good can be gained, but caution on salvation, once saved always saved, premillennialism.
- * For the advanced student : Theological Dictionary of the New Testament
By Gerhard Kittel & Gerhard Friedrich

COMMENTARIES:

Commentaries are a clear and present danger. They should be read ONLY AFTER one has completed his own personal study and they should be viewed ONLY as the interpretation / opinion of another man. They are fertilizer, never seed. I recommend purchasing individual volumes on each book in the Bible. Choose carefully from writers who have extensive credentials on that specific book or that section of the scriptures (Prison Epistles, etc.). Do not choose only those with whom you agree. Seek out a variety of viewpoints that will challenge you to think, to study and to grow. The Bible has the answers, commentaries are just fertilizer.

When choosing authors or sets of commentaries, bear in mind that no set is the answer book, but that they can be helpful in a variety of areas. For example: Barclay is not good for doctrine, but is excellent for background material. Lenski is good for textual analysis. The Sweet Series or College Press is good for Bible class preparation where depth is not essential.

Only the bible is from God. We must be ever mindful that all books written by men contain errors. Even the greatest scholars make mistakes. As well, try as one might, he can never completely overcome the fundamental prejudices produced by his life experience, by his training and by his previous studies. Therefore, one must take care to watch for the biases of the author when reading any book, even those written by men he trusts. This being true, it is helpful to know the training and the background of the author of the reference books one uses.

Some Standard Sets Are:

Pulpit Commentary (*an old work, but useful – very wordy*)

Keil & Delitzsch (*an old work, technical and still a standard work on the O.T.*)

Barnes Notes (*an old work, conservative Presbyterian, moderate Calvinist*)

Sweet Series (*brevity is the hallmark of this work, but it is not so brief they fail to deal with the substance of the passage*)

College Press (*Christian Church production; very good for the most part; conservative and with more depth than Sweet*)

Coffman (*In my view, a great commentary to “cut one’s teeth” on. This was my first set; I still like it a lot. If you are a serious student, you will “go past” his level of production to more serious works, but it is very good otherwise.*)

Matthew Henry – *good for expository thoughts and applications*

Word Biblical Commentary (*technical and neo-conservative to moderate in ideology*)

New International Greek Testament Commentary (*technical and reliable for grammar, word meanings, analysis of text*)

Lenski’ (“Interpretation of ...”) *good for textual analysis, but not for application*

Charles Barclay (Daily Bible Study Series) - *excellent for background material only*

Shield Series (*Very brief, good for a few quick gems, but not for in-depth study*)

Jamison , Fausset , & Brown Commentaries - (*brief, reliable, conservative*)

Gospel Advocate series (*Some in this set do not offer much depth and some do. Some brethren view these as outdated and traditional while others view them as a standard.*)

Reliable Rources For Books :

Scritpure Truth Book Company
P.O. Box 339
Fincastle, VA 24090

support@scripturetruth.com

www.scripturetruth.com

Christian Book Distributors

www.cbd.com

Mark McWharton

www.chulavistabooks.com

Apologetics Press

www.apologeticspress.org

Authors Recommended Some Preachers:

H. Leo Boles
Jack Cottrell
Everett Ferguson
F.W. Mattox
J.J. Turner
Thomas B. Warren

Wilbur Fields
William Smith
Don De Welt

Gleason Archer (*very good on Old Testament*)
F.F. Bruce (*New Testament scholar, evangelical, conservative*)
D.A. Carson (*New Testament scholar, evangelical, conservative*)
Alfred Edersheim (*Old Testament scholar, practical advice*)
Homer Hailey (*in my view any thing he has, get!*)
R.K. Harrison
F.C. Hogg
Theo. Laetsch (*Excellent on the prophets*)
C.S. Lewis (*a scholar often quoted by other scholars*)
R.C.H. Lenski (*very well known Greek scholar*)
Josh McDowell (*much good material on apologetics*)
Leon Morris (*conservative evangelical commentator*)
Gareth Reese (*a very good Christian church Bible professor*)
Merrill C. Tenny
Merrill F. Unger
Edward J. Young