



Bible Basics: A Guide to Selecting a Bible that Jives with Your Spiritual Style

There are thousands of Bibles to choose from these days. Having options is great, but sometimes they make choosing a Bible overwhelming and confusing. Grapevine Books of VPC is committed to guiding you through the Bible selection process. Where do you start? First, read through this guide. Second, come in and visit us. We have knowledgeable staff members on hand to assist you. We promise to make your decision-making process both purposeful and productive!

What Bible translation fits my purpose?

Bible translations range from the King James (KJV) with its “thys” and “thees” to more recent versions like Today’s New International (TNIV). Translations try to match in English the Greek and Hebrew texts. There are also contemporary or poetic paraphrases of the Biblical text available. These include the popular Eugene Peterson’s The Message and The Living Bible. No matter what your purpose, we suggest that you visit Grapevine Books and sift through our Bible collection. Center on a favorite scripture of yours, for example Psalm 23, and compare the textual differences in each Bible. Through which version(s) does God’s Word speak most clearly to you? Also check out the Bible Translation Comparison Chart in our store.

What study aides would enhance my Bible study time?

In a “study Bible” you will find maps, concordances, time lines, chapter outlines, and more. Footnotes abound on the side or bottom margins of the text. The options can seem overwhelming! But don’t panic. Consider the following: What are your spiritual goals and needs? Take a moment to write them down. For group Bible study many seasoned Christians like the Life Application Study Bible. Are you new to the Bible or seeking a closer connection to God? Check out The Message. Without verse numbers or study aides, some say it enables them to more deeply and spiritually experience God’s love in the text. Going on vacation or traveling overseas on business? A small trimline (skinny) or pocket Bible would be a smart investment.

One thing to keep in mind is that your Bible does not have to have everything in it. There are many Bible study dictionaries, concordances, study guides, and other reference materials you can either purchase at Grapevine Books or borrow from the Perkins Memorial Library. The internet also has a vast and wonderful supply of useful Bible sites. A list of the VPC staff’s favorite Bible websites is available at Grapevine Books.

What print sizes are available to make Bible reading easy on my eyes?

Here is one area where having choices is truly beneficial. Bible manufacturers have made a concerted effort to provide for a variety of reading levels and eyesight abilities. Print sizes are available in small, average, large, giant, and super giant. Most Bibles have average print size. Deciding on print size is a simple matter – just ask your eyes what they prefer!

Which Bible shape, size, and style is best suited for my lifestyle?

Gone are the days when the only options were the stately King James or Revised Standard in burgundy, blue or black. Designer Bibles are big business and manufacturers stylize Bible fashion lines to appeal to targeted audiences. For example, the teen Bible market is booming with hot sellers like “Biblezines” (scripture in magazine format) and compact metal encased Bibles. Wild color options include hot pink, neon green and soothing lavender. Basically, determining your Bible style is like buying a shirt. It all boils down to personal preference and practical usage. Of course, if you intend to use a Bible carrying case (great for housing your Bible and study tools as well as your car keys and money for a cuppa coffee), a chic designer Bible with an expensive leather binding may not be important. You might choose, instead, a less expensive soft cover made of imitation leather or paperback. In the bookstore we have many styles to choose from. We also have catalogs available from which you may choose a designer Bible that reflects your unique style and needs.

Putting It All Together

Congratulations! You are about to become the proud owner of a brand new Bible! At this point you should have a “favorites” list of Bible versions and styles. Jot down as a reminder your purpose for investing in a Bible and rearrange your “favorites” list in order of priority. These notes will bring clarity to the final decision-making process. If, however, some uncertainty remains, take time to pray for God’s blessing and ask a Grapevine staff member for assistance. Sometimes it is helpful to talk through the decision-making process with another person. We will, of course, assist you in every way we can throughout this Bible selection process.

A Final Remark: Now that you’ve found the Bible that is just right for you,
DON’T FORGET TO READ IT!!!

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MY BIBLE PREFERENCE PROFILE

(number your top choices 1-3)

Purpose Statement

I am investing in a Bible because _____

1. Bible Translations

- | | |
|--|---|
| ___ Contemporary English Version (CEV) | ___ New American Standard Bible (NASB) |
| ___ English Standard Version (ESV) | ___ New International Version (NIV) |
| ___ Good News Translation (GNT) | ___ New Living Translation (NLT) |
| ___ King James Version (KJV) | ___ New Revised Standard Version (NRSV) |
| ___ New King James Version (NKJV) | ___ The Message (MSG) |
| ___ New American Bible (NAB) | ___ Today's English Version (TEV) |
| | ___ Other |

2. Study Aides

- | | | |
|---------------------------|----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| ___ chapter introductions | ___ cross-reference system | ___ gospels comparison |
| ___ chapter outlines | ___ daily reading plan | ___ maps |
| ___ chronology of events | ___ dictionary | ___ parables of Jesus chart |
| ___ concordance | ___ explanatory footnotes | ___ parallel texts |

3. Print Sizes ___ small ___ average ___ large

___ giant ___ super giant

4. Bible Shape, Size, Color

SIZE ___pocket size ___ regular size ___large study size ___other

FORMAT ___ book ___ CD ___ audio/ video ___other

COLOR ___black ___blue ___burgundy ___ other

BINDING ___leather ___imitation leather ___hardcover ___paperback

SPECIALTY ___women's ___men's ___leadership ___recovery ___other

Notes to Myself:

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