

Bible Reading & Study Resources

PASTOR CARY'S PICKS

My Top 5 Favorite Online Resources

- **BibleProject.com** – *BibleProject is a nonprofit ed-tech organization and animation studio that produces 100% free Bible videos, podcasts, blogs, classes and educational Bible resources to help make the biblical story accessible to everyone, everywhere. Wonderful Bible study videos, graphics, and podcast! Check out the "How to Read the Bible" videos. Love, love, love this website!*
- **YouVersion.com** – *We [YouVersion] wholeheartedly believe a daily rhythm of seeking intimacy with God has the power to transform lives. That's why YouVersion creates biblically centered, culturally relevant experiences that encourage and challenge people to seek God throughout each day. It's through these experiences we create opportunities fit for anyone's daily routine, ultimately helping them form a spiritually-rich rhythm of seeking God intimately. This is an amazing Bible app! You have free access to so many complete English translations of the Bible, including the more popular ones like NIV, NLT, ESV, and NRSV (which are downloadable for free!). They also have a Bible app for kids as well as Bible reading plans, daily devotionals, guided prayer sessions, and much more. This app should be on every Jesus follower's desktop and smart devices!*
- **GotQuestions.org** – *GotQuestions.org is a ministry of dedicated and trained servants who have a desire to assist others in their understanding of God, Scripture, salvation, and other spiritual topics. We are Christian, Protestant, evangelical, theologically conservative, and non-denominational. We view ourselves as a para-church ministry, coming alongside the church to help people find answers to their spiritually related questions. While this website operates from a distinctly Reformed (or Calvinist) theological perspective, this rarely gets in the way of the wonderful answers they give to everyday kinds of questions about God and the Christian faith.*
- **Bible.org** – *The website is a nondenominational Bible-based site that exists to freely share the good news from God to the entire world so you can know the truth about life and eternity. Extensive Bible resources oriented to men, women, and children. These include Bible studies, reading plans, videos, and lots of articles dealing with issues and concerns of our day. Also the home of the NET Bible, a newer English translation of the Bible from the original languages complete with lots of textual notes from the translators.*
- **BlueLetterBible.org** – *Blue Letter Bible provides powerful tools for an in-depth study of God's Word through our free online reference library, with study tools that are grounded in the historical, conservative Christian faith. This is an amazing Bible study tools website that can be helpful to both beginner and theologian alike! There are more tools than I can list but they include commentaries, dictionaries, charts, maps, and even Hebrew and Greek grammars! And it's all free!*
- **RightNowMedia.org** – *Ok, this one's a bonus on my list since this wonderful subscription resource is given to all First Fulshear members (and their families and friends) at no cost! RightNow Media is like the Netflix of Christian Bible studies. You have access to over 10,000 Bible study videos from more than 100 leading Christian publishers and ministries that you can use for your neighborhood groups, personal development, and areas of life training like marriage and parenting. Lots of fun stuff for the kids too!*

My Top 5 Favorite Bible Study Tools

- **John Wesley's Teachings**, Thomas C. Odem, Volumes 1 – 4, Zondervan, 2014. Wonderful guide to the teachings of John Wesley by one of Methodism's prominent theologians.
- **Christian History Magazine**, Christian History Institute, christianhistoryinstitute.org. If you love history, you'll be impressed with this high-quality, informative, quarterly magazine from CHI. Covers various Christian history subjects relevant to the Church today. Recent coverage included *Women of the Reformation; How the*

Church Fostered Science & Technology; The Wonder of Creation; and, Francis Asbury—Pioneer of Methodism. Subscriptions are by donation.

- **Holman Illustrated Bible Dictionary**, C. Brand, E. Mitchell, et al., Holman, 2015. This is a super go-to resource when you come across a person, place, custom, or object in your Bible reading that you want to better understand. Over 6500 entries from Aaron to Zuzite and lots of pictures, maps, and charts.
- **Rose Book of Bible Charts, Maps, and Timelines**, Volumes 1-3, Rose Publishing, 2015. These resources are packed with full color, reproducible Bible maps, charts, summaries, and timelines to help you get your bearings on events and places described in the Bible as well as help you understand and interpret the Scriptures.
- **NLT Illustrated Study Bible, New Living Translation**, Tyndale House, 2015. This study Bible translated into contemporary English will help “open my eyes to see the wonderful truths of your instructions” (Psalm 119:18). It’s a Bible with extensive verse-by-verse notes, photos, charts, summaries, timelines, etc. And it’s all right there at your fingertips as you read the Bible! (The *NIV Study Bible* is also a great choice!)

My Top 5 Favorite Christian Books

- **The Complete C.S. Lewis Signature Classics**, C. S. Lewis, HarperOne, 2002. Seven of Lewis’ masterworks brought together under one cover (including *Mere Christianity; The Screwtape Letters; The Great Divorce; and, A Grief Observed*). If you aren’t already a big fan of this former atheist-now- Christian professor, these writings will turn you into one!
- **If God is Good: Faith in the Midst of Suffering and Evil**, Randy Alcorn, Multnomah, 2009. All of us will experience suffering in this world. Evil is real and all around us. How can a loving, powerful God allow these conditions to exist? Can there really be a God if suffering and evil exists? Alcorn digs deeply into these subjects, giving us hope and assurance along the way.
- **Organic Wesley: A Christian Perspective on Food, Farming and Faith**, William C. Guerrant Jr, Seedbed, 2015. A new favorite! John Wesley and the early Methodists were familiar with many of the same issues we face today. They recognized the importance of healthy diets, moderate consumption, the humane treatment of animals, and the ethical food sources. This book takes a close look at these issues today and the Wesleyan perspective that can guide us as we make our own food choices in a way that reflects our Christian values.
- **On Guard: Defending Your Faith with Reason and Precision**, William Lane Craig, David C. Cook Publisher, 2010. A great manual for helping you learn how to stand your ground and defend your faith with reason, winsomeness, and confidence. Filled with illustrations, sidebars, and memorable steps will equip you for any conversation with friends and family about the faith and why you believe.
- **Bonhoeffer: Pastor, Martyr, Prophet, Spy**, Eric Metaxas, Thomas Nelson Publisher, 2011. Highly regarded biography of Dietrich Bonhoeffer, pastor and theologian who was martyred by the German Nazi regime in 1945. Bonhoeffer’s extensive writings are still highly influential in the Church today.

My Top 5 Favorite English Bible Translations

There are many good, dependable translations of the Hebrew and Greek Scriptures of the Holy Bible into English, but these are the ones I prefer:

- **New International Version** (1984 edition), Zondervan.
- **New Living Translation**, Tyndale.
- **English Standard Version**, Crossway.
- **The NET Bible** (New English Translation), Biblical Studies Press.
- **The New American Standard Bible**, Lockman.

Here’s an article that helps explain the differences between different English versions and some things to think about as you choose your Bible: <https://newchristian.net/bibles-versions/>