Below is a list of useful resource texts for a personal Christian library. Some items name the type of text, while others provide actual titles and authors. If you purchased all of these, you would drop a minimum of three thousand dollars – and that’s if you obtained nothing but discounted and used volumes. There are electronic libraries that can provide many of these resources in a more useful format for a few hundred dollars.

There are even a couple of free bible-study packages that have a central search engine into which you may plug great numbers of out-of-copyright texts. You can even do original language study (Online Bible, e-Sword, Theophilus, etc.). Some of the best commercial versions of bible software for general use include WordSearch, PC Study Bible (best for the price), Quick Verse (Parson’s), and the expensive Logos (Libronix engine). For original language study, the best electronic package is BibleWorks, followed closely by Logos Bible Scholar.

**A friendly caution:** If you haven’t read the bible from cover to cover at least twice, don’t begin to assemble this kind of library. “Unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man [the Word of God] and drink his blood [the Grace of God], you have no life in you.” If you haven’t committed yourself to living the life of Christ first, please don’t get distracted by acquiring a bare knowledge of the Scripture that can only puff you up. Commit first to love, and in the process of loving, to learn more, so that in learning more, you may love more, and better. “As I have loved you, so you must love one another.” Enjoy the feast!

**Source Texts –**

New Testament
- NA - Nestle-Aland
- WH - Westcott-Hort
- UBS - United Bible Societies (UBS)
- TR - Textus Receptus
- MT - Byzantine Majority Text
- SYR – Syriac Peshitta

Old Testament
- Septuagint – OT Greek translation of OT (c. 250 BC)
- Vulgate – Jerome – Latin translation of Bible (c. 400 AD)
- Masoretic Text
  - Ben Asher Hebrew Text – aka Leningrad, B19a, or ”L”
  - Ben Chayyim Hebrew Text – aka Daniel Blomberg 1516, 2nd Rabbinic Bible 1524
- Jewish Publication Society
- SYR – Syriac Peshitta (c. 200 AD)
- BHS - Biblia Hebraica **Stuttgartensia**
- DSS - Dead Sea Scrolls (Dead Sea Scrolls Bible – Abegg, Flint, & Ulrich)
- Apocrypha

**Translations –**

Literal (word for word)
- Lamsa (Syriac Peshitta)
- King James Version (TR)
- NKJV – New King James version (TR)
- NET – New English Translation (eclectic with 62k translator notes)
- NASB – New American Standard, also “updated” version (NA-UBS)
- ESV – English Standard Version (eclectic from the RSV)

Dynamic Equivalence (idea for idea)
- NIV – New International Version (NA-UBS)
- JB – Jerusalem Bible (Catholic)
- J.B. Philips (NT only – UBS)
Paraphrased
   LB - Living Bible
   NLT - New Living Translation (accurate, yet very readable)
Interpretive - Inductive
   The Message - Peterson

Tools –
   Study Bible (e.g.)
   Nelson’s Study Bible NKJ,
   NIV Study Bible,
   ESV Study Bible,
   NLT Study Bible,
   Reformation Study Bible ESV (Sproul)
Commentaries
   John Calvin
   Matthew Henry (6 vol. or single)
   John Gill
   Matthew Poole
   Crossway Classic Commentaries
   NIV OT/NT Commentaries (3-vol set includes Matthew Henry)
   Jamieson, Faussett, & Brown
   Adam Clarke (excellent, but Arminian)
   Torah
   Mishnah
   Tosefta (supplement to Mishnah)
   Midrash
   Talmud
   Targum
   More than Conquerors – Wm. Hendriksen (Revelation)
   Triumph of the Lamb – Dennis E. Johnson (Revelation – excellent!)
Apocrypha
   Legends of the Bible (JPS)
   Nave’s Topical Bible
   Treasury of Scripture Knowledge – bible cross references

Original Language
   Interlinear – Jay Green
Word Study
   Robertson’s
   Vincent’s
   Vine’s
   Zodhiates
Hebrew Lexicon
   Brown-Driver-Briggs
Greek Lexicon
   Grammars
   Basics of Biblical Greek – Mounce
   Basics of Biblical Hebrew – Pratico & Van Pelt

Concordance
   Strong’s – all words in bible by number –specifies original language word
   Englishman’s – all instances of a particular Strong’s number

Harmonies
   Synoptic Gospels
   NIV/NASB Harmony of the Gospels – R. Thomas and S. Gundry
A Harmony of the Gospels – A. T. Robertson
Chronicles-Kings
A Harmony of Samuel, Kings, and Chronicles – Wm Day Crockett
Chronological – Narrated Bible
Reeses’ Chronological Bible (KJV)
The Narrated Bible – F. LaGard Smith

Dictionaries - Encyclopedias
Bible Dictionary (Holman’s is very good)
Bible Encyclopedia
Bible Handbook
Dictionary of Theology
Dictionary of Apologetics
Encyclopedia of Christian Apologetics - Geisler
Encyclopedia of Bible Difficulties – Gleason Archer

Maps
Holman Bible Atlas

Charts
Timeline Charts of the Western Church - Peterson

Theology
Creeds
   Apostle’s
   Nicene
   Chalcedon
   Athanasian
   Helvetic
Confessions
   Smalkald Articles 1537
   French Confession 1559
   Belgic 1561
   Westminster 1646
   London Baptist
Orthodox Statements
   Council of Orange 529
   Canons of Dordt 1619
Catechisms
   Didache
   London Baptist
   Heidelberg
   Westminster Longer & Shorter
   Spurgeon’s
Systematic Theology
   John Calvin – Institutes of the Christian Religion
   Louis Berkhof
   Wayne Grudem
   Donald Bloesch (flawed theology)
   Concise Theology – J. I. Packer (excellent)
Biblical Theology
   Gerhard Vos

Interpretation: Hermeneutics (the rules)
E.W. Bullinger How to Enjoy the Bible
Vern Polythress – God-Centered Biblical Interpretation
Bob Smith’s *Biblical Interpretation* (excellent introduction)
Milton S. Terry (seminary standard)
Bernhard Ramm (seminary standard)

**History**

Church History
- Eusebius – *Ecclesiastical History* (ed. Cruse)
- Philip Schaff (8-vol)
- Early Church Fathers (38-vol)
- Kenneth Scott Latourette (2-vol)
- The Bible as History - Keller
- Cairns (1-vol)

Biographies
- Foxe’s Book of Martyrs
  - The New Foxe’s Book of Martyrs – updated by Harold J. Chadwick

Creeds
- History of the Creeds – by Philip Schaff
  - *Credo* – by Jaroslav Pelikan

**Theology**

- Christian Tradition - Jaroslav Pelikan

**Web Sites**

- [http://www.onlinebible.net](http://www.onlinebible.net) – free electronic bible; original language study
- [http://www.e-sword.net](http://www.e-sword.net) – free electronic bible; original language study
- [http://www.crosswalk.com/](http://www.crosswalk.com/) - personal bible study, articles, and resources
- [http://www.christianarsenal.com/index.htm](http://www.christianarsenal.com/index.htm) - articles and resources
- [http://www.spiritandtruth.org/spirit/resource.htm](http://www.spiritandtruth.org/spirit/resource.htm) - various bible study resources
- [http://www.studylight.org/](http://www.studylight.org/) - original language study
- [http://www.godrules.net/library/vincent/vincent.htm](http://www.godrules.net/library/vincent/vincent.htm) - NT word studies
- [http://www.biblicaltraining.org/classes/greek/greek_f.html](http://www.biblicaltraining.org/classes/greek/greek_f.html) - Learn Greek - Mounce
- [http://www.godrules.net/bibles.html](http://www.godrules.net/bibles.html) - bible study var. translations; search engine
- [http://www.searchgodsword.org/](http://www.searchgodsword.org/) - bible study var. translations; search engine
- [http://www.anova.org/sev/atlas/htm/index.html](http://www.anova.org/sev/atlas/htm/index.html) - bible atlas online
- [http://www.gospelcom.net/eword/comments/](http://www.gospelcom.net/eword/comments/) - classic bible commentaries, mixed theology
- [http://www.graciouslycall.org/books/library.shtml](http://www.graciouslycall.org/books/library.shtml) - links to historic documents
- [http://www.discerningreader.com/](http://www.discerningreader.com/) - books, articles, resources for teens and above
- [http://www.desiringgod.org/library_index.html](http://www.desiringgod.org/library_index.html) - John Piper

**Other Tools**

- Cults
  - Kingdom of the Cults – Walter Martin – either Hanegraff’s or Zacharias’ edition
  - Challenge of the Cults - Rhodes
More on Apologetics and Evangelism

Easy
- How to Give Away Your Faith – Paul Little
- Know What You Believe – Paul Little
- Know Why You Believe – Paul Little
- God in the Dock – C. S. Lewis

More Challenging
- New Evidence that Demands a Verdict – Josh McDowell
- Case for Faith – Lee Strobel
- Case for Christ – Lee Strobel
- Can Man Live Without God – Ravi Zacharias
- Abolition of Man – C. S. Lewis
- Christian Apologetics – Geisler
- Philosophical Foundations for a Christian Worldview – Moreland & Craig

Evolution
- Darwin on Trial – Phillip Johnson
- Reason in the Balance – Phillip Johnson
- Darwin’s Black Box – Michael Behe

Morality and Ethics
- Kingdom Ethics – Stassen & Gushee (great book!)
- Ethics – Bonhoeffer

I removed the section on *The Christian Life* (Life-changing books). Many exceptional books have been written in the past 2000 years; but their ability to change us must flow from the truth and wonder of Scripture itself. Also, their effect depends on where you are in your Christian walk – so it’s highly subjective. So rather than offer you those, let me give you just one: *Alarm to Unconverted Sinners* by Joseph Alleine, written in 1671. If you can make it past that one unchanged, the others probably wouldn’t help. Yes, I realize that’s a bit of hyperbole – and perhaps it’s another subjective choice on my part. Why not read it yourself? An updated language version is on my website.

Obviously this list is only a sampling. Solomon said, “of books there is no end” The bible continues to be the largest selling book in the world, and books about the bible continue to be the best-sellers. Every month there are more. To repeat my earlier caution, be sure the bible is your primary source, and your primary focus. All these others are intended to help you understand, grasp, and apply the truth of God. Let that be your motive in your outside reading. We’re not trying to impress friends and strangers with what we know, but Who we know, and how we love…