

Which Bible is Right for You?

THE MOST IMPORTANT STEP IN PINPOINTING THE PERFECT BIBLE IS TO DETERMINE WHAT YOU WANT AND NEED.

The choice is easy once you've identified your specific requirements. The following three basic questions—who, how and what—are designed to help you in choosing the appropriate Bible.

Who is the Bible for?

How will the Bible be used?

- * For Bible study
- * For personal use or daily devotions
- * To carry to school, to church or when traveling
- * To use on the computer
- * To compare different translations

What is your translation preference? Examine the various translations listed below and see how they compare with one another. After you've established the translation you want, look for it in the Bible category your responses have directed you to.

BIBLE TYPES The following information describes several of the most popular kinds of Bibles currently available:

Study Bibles are a combination of Bible text and a library of Bible reference books in one volume. These reference books help reveal the meaning of Scripture through historical notes, cultural insights, theological observations, book introductions, charts, maps and cross-references.

Devotional Bibles are complete text Bibles with daily devotions. Most include inspirational stories designed to show the relevance of Scripture to the life situations of specific

groups of people.

Text Bibles contain the basic text of Scripture. **Reference Bibles** also include a cross-reference system so the user can compare one passage of Scripture to another, related passage.

Teen and Young Adult Bibles demonstrate the relevance of Scripture to the changing needs of teens in today's culture. Bible versions geared to young adults deal with contemporary issues and help young people apply biblical truths to their lives.

Children's Bibles meet the changing needs of children who want a Bible they can read and understand.

Specialty Bibles are for specific interests or needs. This category includes a wide range of options, from Bibles that focus on one topic, to Bible software, to Bibles that compare several different translations.

Spanish Bibles are now available in the best-selling NIV translation (Nueva Versión Internacional), the traditional Reina-Valera and the La Biblia al Día (Living Bible) in a variety of affordable formats and styles.

Parallel Bibles consist of different Bible translations placed side by side in one volume. Each page contains a Scripture portion from each of the versions so that the reader may easily compare the differences and similarities.

BIBLE TRANSLATIONS Several versions of the Bible offer a literal rendering of the Scriptures for those who want to study each word as it is translated from the original language. Others paraphrase the text in terms that are easy for those who are new to the Bible to understand. Still other versions are considered a "dynamic equivalent" or "thought for thought" interpretation, which may include elements of literal or "word-for-word" translation.

Following is a partial list of some of the most popular translations of the Bible:

New International Version (NIV)

A highly accurate and smooth-reading version in modern English that is literal where possible and “thought for thought” where necessary to help the reader understand. Published in 1978.

King James Version (KJV)

This version is thought by some to be difficult to read because of 17th century English vocabulary and word order. Published in 1611.

New King James Version (NKJV)

The NKJV offers wording that is easier to read than that of the KJV, but it’s somewhat choppy because it maintains 17th century sentence structure. Published in 1982.

Living Bible

The Living Bible is a popular, readable paraphrase that is in places quite interpretive. Originally, it was intended for personal devotional use only. Published in 1971.

New Living Translation (NLT)

This version uses vocabulary as well as language structures commonly used by the average went back to the original languages and sought to produce the closest natural equivalent of the message in natural, contemporary English. Published in 1996.

New American Standard Bible (NASB)

This version utilizes formal style but is more readable than the King James Version. Published in 1971, updated in 1995.

New Revised Standard Version (NRSV)

A contemporary, dignified version that uses generic language in referring to humans. Published in 1990.

The Amplified Bible

The text in this version is expanded and “amplified” by means of a system of brackets and parentheses. A popular translation, it is used to understand the hidden meaning of Greek and Hebrew words. Published in 1964 and updated in 1987.

The Message

This is an easy-to-read, modern-language paraphrase that was translated using the rhythms and tone of contemporary English. New Testament published in 1993, Old Testament 2002.

Contemporary English Version (CEV)

The English is clear and simple enough for a child to understand, but it has a mature style that adults can appreciate. Published in 1995.

God’s Word

This is a readable, accurate translation that employs natural English expressions to convey the meaning of the original languages. Published in 1995.

Taking the time to answer the questions listed above will help streamline your Bible-buying process. With so many great choices, you’re sure to find just the Bible you need!

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