

Want to grow deeper?

People grow in their Bible reading when they combine their spiritual hunger with guides who can help them (like scholars or pastors) and time and money.

Fortunately, we live in a technological age where you really don't need to enroll in a seminary to get incredible resources. So many great scholars now offer online courses, but you can also find them in books, podcasts, iTunes university etc. We live in a golden age of resource, why not spend some time and/or money on some of these resources below.

Also, **the biggest help in my own Bible Study was going from focusing on *content* to focusing on *context*.** If you find the content confusing, or you're not sure what it means, I recommend turning your attention to context. Cultural and literary context will help the content come to life for you.

In the list below, I have intentionally given more resources than any one person could explore. Just find the two or three that most hit your interest or point of need and go from there.

Overview of Bible Books, Genres and Themes:

Here are online resources that can offer **an overview of the whole Bible**. Each of these links help get an overall sense of the whole Bible and/or provide a brief summary of each book of the Bible. There is overlap between many of these resources – just click on a few and see what resonates with you.

1. **Steve Thomason** is an old friend of mine and is one of those very rare people who are equal parts fine pastor, scholar and artist. At his site [here](#), he offers a visual, creative approach to understanding more about the Bible. If you'd like a better understanding of what the Bible even is, you can find it on Steve's site [here](#).
2. **Phil Vischer**, creator of Veggie Tales is a fine thinker and of course a very creative communicator. Many adults have found his kids' video curriculum on the Bible to be helpful. While it is aimed at young children, the content is solid and with his trademark humor and songs, he makes learning a lot of fun. You can buy his DVDs or stream his videos [here](#).
3. **Chuck Swindoll** is one of the finest pastor/scholars of the modern era. [Here](#) is his site of resources to give you a brief summary of every Bible book.
4. Here is a link to a paragraph on [every book of the New Testament](#) and [every book of the Old Testament](#).

Keywords to help your search on iTunes, Youtube and other online areas. Not all scholars are created equal. Below is far from an exhaustive list, but here are some names you can simply type into a search box of your favorite media supplier and chase the lectures, interviews and sermons that these men and women offer:

Old Testament: John Walton, Eric Smith, Walter Brueggemann, Tremper Longman, Elizabeth Achtemeier, Fred Craddock.

New Testament: Ben Witherington, Craig Keener, Richard Hayes, Richard Buckham, N.T Wright (also known as Tom Wright.) Craig Blomberg, Shane Wood.

There are many, many other great guides and I am chagrined that I may be overlooking others, but the scholars above know how to write for and speak to church people.

Phew. That's a long list. I trust your sacrifice of time and money will yield good fruit for your efforts!

Good Books for Specific Topics

If you're looking to connect on a particular topic, try one of these:

1. Craig Keener and John Walton's [Cultural Background Study Bible](#) is one of the finest and is currently discounted for Kindle at \$5.99. If you don't own a Study Bible, this is your best next step and then once you purchase one, simply reading the extra material in it will help tremendously.
2. Scot McKnight's [Blue Parakeet](#) is the best resource I know for those who want to understand better *how* to study their Bible.
3. For an Old Testament overview, it is hard to beat Philip Yancey's [The Bible Jesus Read](#).
4. For specific Old Testament studies, I recommend Tremper Longman's [How To Read Genesis](#) and while anything by Walter Brueggemann is excellent, I really like [Cadences of Home](#), his treatment of the prophets and Exile.
5. I love the way Fred Beuchner writes about the Bible. No one writes the way he does and [Peculiar Treasures](#) is, itself a peculiar treasure in a world of devotional books. It is not scholarly, but will give you a fresh approach to Bible characters.
6. For those who want to focus on Jesus, Conrad Gempf's [Mealtime Habits of the Messiah](#) is both delightfully funny and profound. Will Willimon's [Why Jesus](#) is poignant and convicting.
7. I'm currently enjoying [Spirituality According to Paul](#) by Rodney Reeves. It is one of the most profound treatments of Paul I've read.

For those who are watchers or listeners more than readers, here is some good stuff for you:

1. N.T. Wright, probably the finest New Testament scholar of the last several hundred years, has excellent courses on his website. He also offers a weekly email theological thought. Click [here](#) to dig in more and don't let his ominous gaze on the website intimidate you, he's a friendly fellow in person with impeccable British manners.

2. After our 9am church gathering, Chad, one of our members told me about [The Bible Project](#). I confess I'd never heard of it, but I was intrigued by the description and snooped it out today. It is fantastic! Animated, clear and runs on donations. I am going to donate. Click around and enjoy some concise, well crafted summaries of books of the Bible. Thanks Chad!
3. Johnny Hill tipped me off to [Lanier Theological Library](#) and their wealth of online lectures. Check out Michael Card's 90 minute lecture on the distinctive of all 4 Gospels. Many know Card as a fine singer songwriter, but he is also a first class theologian. If his singing is not to your taste, his lecture starts around 12 minutes or so. The site has much great scholarship by visiting lecturers. These videos are more "scholarly" than other links I've provided. Sometimes digging deep with these men and women yields great nuggets.
4. [Simply Jesus](#) is an annual gathering in Vail, Colorado hosting brief talks focused on the person of Jesus. Some really great videos here of past talks.