

# Choosing A Bible Translation

Which Bible translation is the best to use? The answer is, "Several." In my opinion, it is good to read from several different Bible translations. It is amazing how easy it is to skim past things once a person has read through the same material several times from the same translation. Many times, reading from a different translation will bring new insights. Even though they often say the same thing, the simple fact that it is worded differently will cast the information in a new light.

However, it is also good to remember that some translations are better than others. Not all Bible translations are translated equally well! I am going to give a brief list of a couple of translations that I recommend, followed by a couple of translations that I do not recommend. Then I will give links to a couple of Web sites that offer excellent information on choosing a Bible translation.

***Note:** I do not give reasons for why I recommend or do not recommend certain translations. I recommend that a person check out translations for themselves using the resources that I have provided at the bottom of this article.*

List of translations that I do recommend:

1. NASB (New American Standard Bible)
2. ESV (English Standard Version)
3. AMP (The Amplified Bible)
4. HCSB (Holman Christian Standard Bible)
5. NIV (New International Version)
6. NLT (New Living Translation)

List of translations that I do not recommend:

1. RSV (Revised Standard Version) and NRSV (New Revised Standard Version)

2. The Message
3. TNIV (Today's New International Version)
4. NETBible

Links to Further Resources:

1. "[Which is the best Bible to use...](#)" – by Bro. Buddy of [Christian Challenge](#)
  - This is a blog entry written by Bro. Buddy, and it gives an excellent breakdown of the different kinds of translations that are available.
2. "[The Bible Researcher](#)" – by Michael Marlowe
  - This Web site is an excellent portal to all things related to Bible translation. The "[English Versions of Scripture](#)" has reviews of pretty much every major English translation on the market, and many minor ones as well.

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## [Additional Recommended Study Aids](#)

In a [previous post](#) I recommended a free Bible study suite. In this article I am going to recommend a few more Bible study aids that must be purchased but that I feel are well worth the money.

Additional plug-ins for e-Sword:

1. I recommend purchasing the [New American Standard Bible Study Set](#) for e-Sword. At a cost of only \$20 (as of this writing) it is a phenomenal value. The NASB translation of the Bible is commonly considered the most accurate English translation of the Bible available today, and the NASB Study Set for e-Sword includes the NASB with

integrated Strong's numbers to aid in studying the original Greek and Hebrew.

2. [The Complete Word Study Dictionary](#) is \$40 as of this writing, and it is the best purchase that I have ever made. It is an incredible Greek and Hebrew dictionary. See the link for more information.

Print ("hard copy") Resources:

1. If you are wanting to seriously understand the Greek New Testament then "[The Discovery Bible: New American Standard New Testament](#)" is a must-have! This is the best print resource that I have ever invested in. It is out of print now, but it can be [purchased through Amazon.com](#).
2. [The MacArthur Study Bible](#) is an excellent study Bible for taking with you to church. I recommend it in the NASB translation, but it is published with several different Bible translations, so a person can pick whichever one they prefer to read.

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## [Free Bible Study Suite](#)

Why pay for something when you can have it for free? I put together this list of free Bible study aids when I realized that there are many Christians (and non-Christians) who desire to know more about the Word of God, but think that they have to spend a lot of money or have a formal education before they can properly interpret the Bible. The resources that I have provided here will allow both the casual student and the serious one (and everyone in between) to study the Bible. Best of all, these resources are all free!

**Note:** *I am in no way affiliated with any of the software that*

*I list, or any of the Web sites that I recommend. Neither do I agree with everything that these resources say. There is enough variety here to let people see the different views that are out there and to formulate their own opinions.*

There are two components to this list. The first is a Bible study program called e-Sword. E-Sword is completely free, but there are many "plugins" that are available for it. Most of the plugins are free, so I have compiled a list of ones that I recommend people download. Downloading and installing all of these plugins will give a person an excellent library for studying the Word of God. The second component is a list of several Web resources that a person can bookmark and use for further study and reading.

**Note:** *e-Sword is for PCs and PocketPCs. Mac, Linux, and Palm users will need to find alternative software. However, this list can still serve as a useful guide, since most of the resources that I recommend can be found for free through other programs or Web sites.*

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2. Christian Classics Ethereal Library
3. e-Catena

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**Steps for Installing e-Sword and the Associated Plugins:**

1. Download and install the main e-Sword application from this link: <http://www.e-sword.net/downloads.html>
  1. **Note:** *The PocketPC version of the program can be downloaded from here:* <http://www.e-sword.net/pocketpc/index.html>
2. After the main program has been installed, go to the [Bible downloads](#) section and download the following translations (you can install each file as you download it, or wait until you have them all downloaded and then install them all at once):
  1. English Standard Version (ESV)
  2. King James Version (Red Letter)
  3. Good News Translation (GNB)
  4. God's Word (GW)
3. Go to the [Commentaries downloads](#) and download the following commentaries:
  1. Adam Clarke's Commentary on the Bible
  2. Albert Barnes' Notes on the Bible
  3. John Darby's Synopsis
  4. Jamieson, Fausset, and Brown Commentary
  5. Keil & Delitzsch Commentary on the Old Testament
  6. John Wesley's Notes on the Bible
  7. Vincent's Word Studies
  8. Treasury of Scripture Knowledge (Note: This is an electronic cross-reference)
  9. Scofield's Reference Notes
  10. Robertson's Word Pictures
  11. The Treasury of David (a commentary on the Psalms of David)
  12. The People's New Testament
4. Go to the [Dictionaries downloads](#) section and download the following dictionaries:
  1. Thayer's Greek Definitions
  2. Brown-Driver-Briggs' Hebrew Definitions
  3. Noah Webster's Dictionary of American English
  4. King James Dictionary
  5. Smith's Bible Dictionary

6. Easton's Bible Dictionary
  7. Fausset's Bible Dictionary
  8. International Standard Bible Encyclopedia
  9. Nave's Topical Bible
  10. R.A. Torrey's New Topical Textbook
5. (Optional) Go to the [Extras downloads](#) section and download any of the resources that you choose
    1. These are mostly books. I recommend downloading whichever ones you think you might like to read. I personally recommend "The Pursuit of God" by A.W. Tozer.
  6. (Optional) Go to the [Devotionals downloads](#) section and download any devotions that you would like
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### Web Links

e-Sword is really all that a person needs to seriously study the Word of God. However, here are a few more Web links that a person can bookmark. These will greatly enhance the resources of the serious student.

1. [Lightfoot's Commentary on the Gospel's](#)
  - John Lightfoot is a famous specialist in Hebrews. His commentary on the four Gospels is done from the perspective of the first-century Jew. Even though it was written almost 400 years ago, it is still one of the best commentaries available on the gospels.
  - **Note:** Lightfoot's commentary can be downloaded to your computer as a free SWORD plugin. This is not part of the e-Sword program. It is a separate program that can be found [here](#), and the Lightfoot plugin can be found [here](#).
2. [Christian Classics Ethereal Library](#)
  - This is a collection of Christian writings.
3. [e-Catena: Compiled Allusions to the NT in the Anti-](#)

## Nicene Fathers

- This valuable resource is a compilation of comments that the early church fathers made on Scriptures. It is broken down by chapter and verse. A person simply navigates to a passage that they are studying, and they can see a breakdown of what the early church fathers had to say about the passage.