



# BIBLICAL RESEARCH QUICK GUIDE

For Study Facilitators, Devotional Speakers  
and Women with Bible Questions

## WHEN TO USE THIS GUIDE

### Questions are opportunities.



- You are asked a deep theological question in Bible study.
- The devotion you are giving centers on a sensitive topic and you want a Biblical perspective.
- A friend asks tough questions about the Bible and your beliefs.
- You want to know more about the historic and cultural background of a Bible passage.
- You want to understand the meaning of a particular Bible verse.

## TYPES OF BIBLICAL RESEARCH

### Use resources that match your topics.



- Systematic theology books answer theological questions.
- Biographies and topical books by Christian thinkers answer sensitive questions on controversial topics.
- Apologetics sources answer the questions "Does God exist?" and "What is the meaning of life?"
- Bible dictionaries, atlases, and encyclopedias answer questions about history and culture.
- Commentaries, concordances, cross references, and lexicons help clarify the meanings of words and verses.

## FINDING CREDIBLE SOURCES

### Know the worldview behind your sources.



- Start with prayer. God wants you to know His truth. Ask God to help you set aside your opinions and seek His.
- Apply the test of time. Is the source historically accepted by Christian scholars? Does it represent historic Christian belief?
- Apply the test of authorship. Find out what the author believes by reading reviews of the source, or go to the author's website and look for a statement of faith.
- Apply the test of publication. Who is the publisher? Do they represent historical Christian principles or do they represent only a segment of Christian thought? Choose sources that speak to a broader Christian audience.
- Apply the essentials of the faith. Does the source uphold the basic doctrines of Christianity? Compare the source's teaching to an historic Christian creed such as the Apostle's Creed or the Nicene Creed.
- End with prayer. Thank God for his help and ask Him to keep you teachable.



**Research tip: ask your chaplain for a book recommendation!**

## TAKE YOUR TIME

### Some questions require more study than others



- Ask the questioner to give you time to research the answer.
- Set a goal for finishing research within a certain time frame. Let the questioner know when you will get back to her.
- Deeper questions take more research. Plan to give yourself a week or more on controversial topics.
- Researching for known facts is a shorter process. Plan for a few hours of study.



**Research tip: work with a friend and compare notes!**

## ACCESS THESE SOURCES FOR FREE

### Start with these recommended websites.



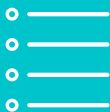
- Biblestudytools.com hosts commentaries, concordances, dictionaries, encyclopedias, and lexicons, as well as articles, videos, and blogs by well-known Christian leaders.
- Crosswalk.com hosts articles, videos, and podcasts on topics related for Christian living. Use the search tool to find material on your topic.
- Blueletterbible.org hosts Biblical word study software as well as commentaries, maps, timelines, and a list of creeds, catechisms, and confessions.
- Biblehub.com hosts searchable versions of the Bible and cross references for each verse.
- Oneplace.com provides a searchable database of podcasts and radio programs featuring Christian leaders speaking on a variety of topics.
- Rzim.org hosts a searchable collection of articles, videos, and podcasts created by apologists from around the world.



**Research tip: You might find an answer on YouTube or a podcast!**

## CITE YOUR SOURCES

### Give proper credit to your sources of information.



- Acknowledge your sources in spoken communication.
- Make a reference list for written communication using *Chicago Manual of Style* formatting.
- Books: Last name, First name. *Title of Book*. Place of publication: Publisher, Year.
- Digital books: Last name, First name, Title of Book. Place of publication: Publisher, Year. Web address where accessed.
- Online articles: Last name, First name, "Title of Article," *Name of Magazine* Issue number, Volume number (preceded by "no.") (Date): Web address or doi:
- Website: Last name, First name (if listed). "Name of Resource," last modified [Date], Web address.
- Podcast or Video: Last name, First name of creator. *Title of Work*. Additional contributors. Publishing organization. Publication date. Type of format, running time. Web address.



**Research tip: keep a list of helpful sources to use in the future!**

## CREDITS

Created for PWOCC Stuttgart, and used by permission of the author, Cynthia Stumme.

Sources:

"Chicago Manual of Style Online," last modified 2017, <https://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org>

"Evaluating Sources: How to Tell Which to Use and Which to Avoid," last modified 2020, <https://www.covenantseminary.edu/library/guide/evaluate-sources/>