

New Testament Survey Research Pathfinder

1. Begin with **Reference** for a basic introduction. You may find biblical background (including the historical, social, and geographical background) to your topic either by looking up the name of the book of the Bible or by looking up specific topics (women in the New Testament, prayer, money). Some suggestions include:

R 220.3 A539 Volumes 1-6

Anchor Bible Dictionary/ David Noel Freedman, editor. New York : Doubleday, 1992.

R 220.3 B167

Baker Encyclopedia of the Bible/ Walter A. Elwell, editor. Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1988.

R 220.3 I627 Vol. 1-4

International Standard Bible Encyclopedia/ Geoffrey W. Bromiley, editor. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1979.

R 220.3 S158 v. 1-5

New Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible/ Katharine Doob Sakenfeld, Samuel E. Balentine, Brian K. Blount, editors. Nashville, Abingdon Press, 2008.

R 220.3 Z87 v. 1-5

Zondervan Encyclopedia of the Bible/ Merrill C. Tenney, editor. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2009.

R 225.7 Z87 volumes 1-4

Zondervan Illustrated Bible Backgrounds Commentary/ Clinton E. Arnold, general editor. Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan, 2002.

2. You might also need other informational books about **Bible backgrounds**. Here are a few that may be helpful:

*225.9503 D554

Dictionary of New Testament Background/ Craig A. Evans, Stanley E. Porter, editors. Downers Grove, Illinois: InterVarsity Press, 2000.

220.830685 F198

Family in the Bible: Exploring Customs, Culture, and Context/ Richard S. Hess and M. Daniel Carroll, editors. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2003.

220.93 F855m

Manners & Customs of the Bible/ James M. Freeman. Plainfield, NJ: Logos International, 1972.

220.93 G723

New Manners and Customs of Bible Times/ Ralph Gower. Chicago: Moody Press, 1987.

220.95 M442

Manners and Customs in the Bible/ Victor Harold Matthews. Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson, 1991.

220.95 T472

Handbook of Life in Bible Times/ J. A. Thompson. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1996.

225.7 K26

The IVP Bible Background Commentary: New Testament/ Craig Keener. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1993.

225.95 B433

A Guide to the New Testament World/ Albert A. Bell. Scottsdale, PA: Herald Press, 1994.

225.95 S783

The New Testament in its Social Environment/ John E. Stambaugh and David L. Balch. Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1986.

3. Then check **commentaries** on your scripture passage. Complete sets are in the reference room, but individual volumes are also cataloged in the general collection. Generally, you should look for volumes in a vetted commentary series with a general editor. Read both from the introduction to the commentary and with regard to your specific chapter and passage. Check several different commentaries for a variety of approaches.

These series are recommended.

R 220.7 A539

The Anchor Bible Commentary. William Foxwell Albright and David Noel Freedman, editors. Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1964.

R 220.7 W924

Word Biblical Commentary. David A. Hubbard, Glenn W. Barker, general editors. Waco, Texas. Word Books, 1982-2000.

R 225.7 T987t

The Tyndale New Testament Commentaries. R. V. G. Tasker, general editor. Grand Rapids: Mich. Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co, 1961, 1988.

Also look for volumes from these series:

New International Commentary on the New Testament (Eerdmans)
The IVP New Testament Commentary Series (InterVarsity Press).

When looking for individual commentary volumes, check in the stacks between 222 and 228, where they are arranged following the same order as the books of the Bible.

For instance, if your passage is in:

the gospel of John, look in the stacks at 226.5

the epistle to the Hebrews, look for 227.87

4. For sermons, papers, and projects where specific application is required you may find the following resources helpful.

NIV Application Commentary Series (Zondervan)

Life Application Bible Commentary Series (Tyndale).

The Pulpit Commentary (Eerdmans)

5. Research for upper level papers should also include research in refereed journals. Search for books, passages, and theological topics. Sources that should be consulted include:

*ATLA – this is the premier Biblical and theological database, hosted by EBSCO. It includes an index to journal articles, book reviews, and collections of essays in all fields of religion with ATLA's online collection of major religion and theology journals. Many (but not all) are available in full text. Access it through the library's website (<http://fwbbclibrary.wordpress.com>).

CPI—is the Christian Periodical Index, hosted by EBSCO, with practical but less scholarly articles from various Christian magazines and journals. You can combine this database search with ATLAS for a broad scope of material. Access it through the library's website (<http://fwbbclibrary.wordpress.com>).

JStor – is limited for Biblical and theological topics but should still be consulted as some broader journals which include Biblical or theological studies are indexed here but not in ATLA. Again, access it through the library's website (<http://fwbbclibrary.wordpress.com>).

TREN – is a library of over 10,000 theological thesis/dissertation titles representing research from as many as 70 different institutions. The database also makes available conference papers presented at annual meetings of several academic societies, including the Evangelical Theological Society (1,129 papers), American Society of Church History (150 papers), and the Society for Pentecostal Studies (75 papers), among others. Access it through the library's website at <http://fwbbclibrary.wordpress.com>.

*You may find this resource especially helpful.