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REFERENCE HELPS – LESSON 1

INTRODUCTION

As you read your bible your comprehension of what you read can be increased in two basic ways.

The first way is as Holy Spirit applies it to your heart (human spirit – the inner man) and to your soul (the mind's reasoning or natural understanding).

The second way is that you can help yourself. You do this by using other reference resources other than the bible to increase your knowledge. In this short series we will examine these resources.

A way to expand your view of scripture is to cross reference a verse or passage with one or several other bible versions to compare what they say. However, you need to be careful as to which ones you use as they often have pitfalls. We saw this in the Modern Bible Translation series we just completed. Nonetheless, you can often get a better grasp of a scripture by comparing them with the KJV or NKJV.

There are numerous other reference resources that will expand your knowledge or your understanding beyond what you can get from any English bible version. One reason is that the Greek or Hebrew word that is translated into English may have a different meaning from that of our English understanding of words today.

To check the meaning of a particular word you will need a bible concordance. The concordances are keyed with numbers exclusively to the KJV, so if you have a word you wish to check in a modern version, you will have to look up the verse in the KJV to see what word it uses for the modern word in question. You then take the KJV word and look it up in a concordance to get the true meaning and a better understanding.

Concordances, bible dictionaries, bible handbooks, bible commentaries, and other types of written materials can all be helpful in gaining a fuller understanding of scripture. In this series we will look at each of these types and make some recommendations.

Be aware, however, that books written by various authors can be a dangerous mine field. Some are good, but some are horribly off base.