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Chapter 2 addresses the aspect of Divine sovereignty and human responsibility. Here Packer says, “Our aim in the present study is to think out the nature of the Christian’s evangelistic task in the light of their agreed presupposition that God is sovereign in salvation. Now we need to recognize right at the outset that this is no easy assignment.”

We cannot explain the tension between Divine sovereignty and human responsibility. What should we do with the antinomy? “Accept it for what it is, and learn to live with it.” “The particular antinomy which concerns us here is the apparent opposition between divine sovereignty and human responsibility. Or, putting it more biblically, between what God does as King and what he does as judge.”

“Scripture teaches that as King, He orders and controls all things, human actions among them in accordance with His own eternal purpose.” “As judge he holds every man responsible for the choices he makes and the course of action he pursues.”

“God’s sovereignty and man’s responsibility are taught us side by side in the same sentence.” “So God’s sovereignty is reality, and man’s responsibility is a reality.” “God made us responsible moral agents, and He will not treat us as anything less.”

As I believe, we are responsible for making the Gospel known to all. It is Christ’s commandment. “Go and make disciples.” Matthew 28:18.

Reflections from Calvary

February 2012

The Pastor’s Pen

Study Bibles and Studying the “Word of Truth” for Yourself
by: Pastor Jonathan Wass

“Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needed not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the Word of Truth” - 2 Timothy 2:15

C. I. Scofield, in his pamphlet on interpreting the Bible entitled *Rightly Dividing the Word of Truth*, explains that, “Many Christians freely confess that they find the study of the Bible weary work. More find it so, who are shamed to make the confession.” This statement displays the heart of a man who possessed a passion for helping individuals discover and study the Bible for themselves. Scofield, upon noticing the challenge of studying the Word, endeavored to create a series of notes that would later become the first modern study Bible.

As a pastor, I obviously find great joy in studying the Word, but that does not mean that studying the Word is always an easy task for me. There are about seven key challenges to our study when we approach the Word. Many of these challenges can be overcome with the use of a good study Bible. We will examine these challenges and the resources available within modern study Bibles that can help you overcome these challenges.

First, there is **the chronological challenge**. We live approximately 2000 years after the completion of the Bible. Over time the manners and customs that were the norm in the Biblical world have changed. Take courtship and marriage for example; today these are practiced radically

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Upcoming Events

Sundays, 2/5-2/26
February Foundations:
Every Sunday of February
during the morning
service.

Saturday, 2/18
Reaching Our Jerusalem
Outreach at 10:30 AM

Saturday, 2/14
Release Time Bible Class
at 1:00 PM

Thursday, 2/23
Deacon Meeting at 7:00
PM

Saturday, 2/25
Youth Group: Christian
Film Night at 7:00 PM

Saturday, 3/10
Ladies Seminar (See
brochure at the
information table)

Sunday, 3/18
Bethany Handbell Choir at
Evening Service

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differently from the practices of the Biblical world. How we understand the birth of Jesus, the wine miracle, and Jesus's many wedding analogies are greatly challenged by our chronological distance from the Biblical world. This is where a good study Bible will be tremendously helpful to your personal Bible study. For instance, Matthew 1:18 speaks of Joseph being betrothed to Mary. A good study Bible might help to explain how betrothal is significantly different from our concept of engagement.

Second, there is **the genre challenge**. Each book of the Bible, though part of the whole, is an independent work. Therefore, the Psalms should be interpreted differently from the Gospels. The Proverbs should be interpreted differently from the letters of Paul. A good study Bible will typically include an introduction to each book of the Bible and an explanation of its genre. The study Bible might even give examples of how one genre should be interpreted differently from another genre.

Third, there is **the quotation challenge**. The Bible is full of allusions, quotations, and cross references. For instance, the original readers of Matthew likely would have been thoroughly acquainted with the Old Testament. Matthew regularly alludes to and quotes from the Old Testament in building his argument. However, the church is a predominately Gentile organism today, and we are not as well acquainted with the Old Testament as we should be. A good study Bible will include extensive cross-references and notes about why the Biblical writer is referencing another passage.

Fourth, there is **the structure challenge**. The Bible is a magnificently organized book. The Biblical authors were not intellectually challenged writers, rather they were great literary artisans. The Bible is full of literary structure and complexity. A good study Bible will demonstrate how each chapter of a book fits into the overall argument of the book. A study Bible may do this in several ways: the study Bible might include an outline of the book, a paragraph explaining the argument of the book, use headings to show the author moving from point to point, or choose to explain the flow of the book in the study notes.

Fifth, there is **the keyword challenge**. The Biblical authors regularly use keywords or phrases to address certain themes or ideas. Knowing these keywords can be helpful as you read through the Scriptures. A good study Bible will occasionally include lists of the keywords or themes of a book in the introduction or notes. As you study, you might want to make note of or circle these words within your Bible.

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The Testimony of

The Christian Life and Testimony of Mrs. Evelyn Hoover

h *Hebrews 11:39 "And all these, having obtained a good testimony through faith..."*

e As we read last month, Pastor Roy Hoover and Mrs. Evelyn Hoover have been attending our church for approximately ten years now. In that time we have become well acquainted with Mrs. Hoover as she has been actively serving as our piano player, Sunday School secretary, and in various other roles.

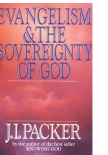
S More important, however, than her participation in church is knowing how she accepted the Lord as her Savior. Mrs. Hoover accepted the Lord as her Savior at ten years of age following a special tent meeting in Marshfield, Wisconsin. She actually rode by horse and buggy to get to the meeting! Following the message the preacher gave an invitation, and Mrs. Hoover went forward and accepted the Lord Jesus Christ's work as payment for her sins. Because there were no immersing churches in the area, Mrs. Hoover was not baptized until she and Pastor Hoover were married.

n Last month we also learned about the Hoover's years of missionary service. Mrs. Hoover obviously played a significant role in her husband's ministry throughout those years. I am sure Mrs. Hoover would love to tell you about the many other joys, blessings, and challenges of missionary service. We should be sure to learn from and honor those who have remained faithful in the Lord's service as Paul instructs in Titus 2:3 "...that they admonish the young women to love their husbands, to love their children, to be discreet, chaste, [...] that the word of God may not be blasphemed."

Reading Review

By: Pastor Roy Hoover

Evangelism and the Sovereignty of God by J.I. Packer



J.I. Packer explains the foundational truth of the sovereignty of God over the entire universe and man's responsibility for acting. Packer also states that every believer is under "order" to spread the good news.

Packer begins, "Evangelism is my proper subject, and I am to speak of it in relation to the sovereignty of God." In the introduction, J.I. Packer states, "...always everywhere the servants of Christ are under orders to evangelize, and I hope that what I shall say now will act as an incentive to the task." Packer states in the first chapter- "I do not intend to spend any time at all proving to you the general truth that God is sovereign in His world."

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Sixth, there is **the geography challenge**. Surprise! The Bible was not written within the USA! You all knew that! However, did you know that the climate, seasons, topography, city layout, and travel are all significantly different from our day? A good study Bible will address these issues in the notes. The more recently published study Bibles include newer maps that have been created from extensive study of the Bible lands. Some even use satellite images to enhance the accuracy of their maps. For instance, having these maps on hand can help you to understand how Joshua moved and advanced his troops to secure tremendous strategic advantage in his battles.

Seventh, there is **the timeline challenge**. Every book of the Bible, and every story of the Bible, is situated along a Biblical timeline. This is actually part of what led C.I. Scofield to invent the “modern” study Bible. Scofield recognized that there are several key issues to understanding the Bible relative to the timeline of the Bible. He noted that there are seven distinct “dispensations” that divide the Bible into seven distinct time periods. These time periods, Scofield explained, “... are marked off in Scripture by some change in God’s method of dealing with mankind [...] in respect to two questions: of sin, and of man’s responsibility.” Along with the idea of dispensations comes an understanding of the Bible in relationship to the Kingdom, the rapture, the judgments, the difference between Israel and the Church, and many other issues of the Biblical timeline. A good study Bible will help you understand this timeline through the use of notes, charts, graphs, and articles.

A caution must be stated in regard to this “timeline challenge.” That caution being that there are essentially two schools of thought regarding this timeline. Scofield (along with your pastor) believed in what is known as dispensationalism. Within the more recently published study Bibles, you will find a more dismissive attitude towards dispensationalism and an advocating of a theological system known as covenant theology. While many godly men believe in covenant theology, you should be aware that your pastor and his preaching are at odds with covenant theology in a number of places. I, as your pastor, would encourage you to be very careful in choosing and using a study Bible which does not give a “fair hearing” to dispensationalism.

With these things in mind, page four includes a comparison of the most commonly available study Bibles. If you are in need of a good study Bible, I would encourage you to use these comparisons to help you make an informed decision.

Works Consulted:

1. C. C. Ryrie, *Ryrie Study Bible*. (Chicago: Moody, 1994).
2. C.I. Scofield. *Scofield Study Bible*. (Oxford: Oxford Press, 2002).
3. C.I. Scofield. *Rightly Dividing the Word of Truth*. (Chicago: Bible Institute Colportage).
4. Crossway Bibles. *The ESV Study Bible*. (Wheaton: Crossway, 2008).
5. J. MacArthur. *MacArthur Study Bible*. (Wheaton: Crossway, 2001).

Study Bible Comparison



	Scofield Study Bible	Ryrie Study Bible	MacArthur Study Bible	ESV Study Bible
Cost Hardcover/ Gen. Leather	~\$20 / ~\$45	~\$30 / ~\$70	~\$30 / ~\$70-75	~\$30 / ~\$70-75
Translations Offered	KJV, NKJV, ESV, NASB, NIV	KJV, ESV, NASB, NIV	NKJV, ESV, NASB	ESV
Theological Perspective	Dispensational	Dispensational	Mostly Dispensational	<i>Leans</i> towards covenant theology. Explains some dispensational perspectives.
Strengths	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clearest presentation of dispensationalism • Notes are extensive and thorough • Good introductions to each book 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dispensational • Includes some excellent articles on theology, history, etc in the back of the Bible 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Probably has the best introductions out of the four study Bibles • The notes are very good in most areas • Extensive cross-references 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Very good full color maps, charts, and drawings • Introductions to each book are very helpful. • Solid book outlines • Notes are extensive and thorough.
Weaknesses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Somewhat dated • Supports the “gap theory” in Gen. 1:1 • Cross-references not as thorough as other study Bibles • Maps are older and harder to examine. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Notes are not as thorough. • Most maps are not topographical and the charts are “simpler”. • Introductions are shorter than average. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MacArthur is not dispensational in all areas. • Maps and charts are monochrome versions of the ESV Study Bible maps. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leans towards covenant theology • Tries to be fair to dispensationalism, but doesn’t always accomplish this. • Text in notes is small. • Big and Heavy
Notes Rating (1-5)	4.5	4.25	4.25	3.75
Maps & Charts Rating (1-5)	3.5	3.25	3.75	5.0
Overall Rating (1-5)	4.0	3.75	4.0	4.25

***Note:** There are several other study Bibles available today. I chose these four since they are the four most commonly used in churches like ours. Some other study Bibles include: *The Literary Study Bible*, *The Reformation Study Bible*, *The Archaeological Study Bible*, *The Life Application Study Bible*, *The Thompson Chain Reference Study Bible*, and many more.