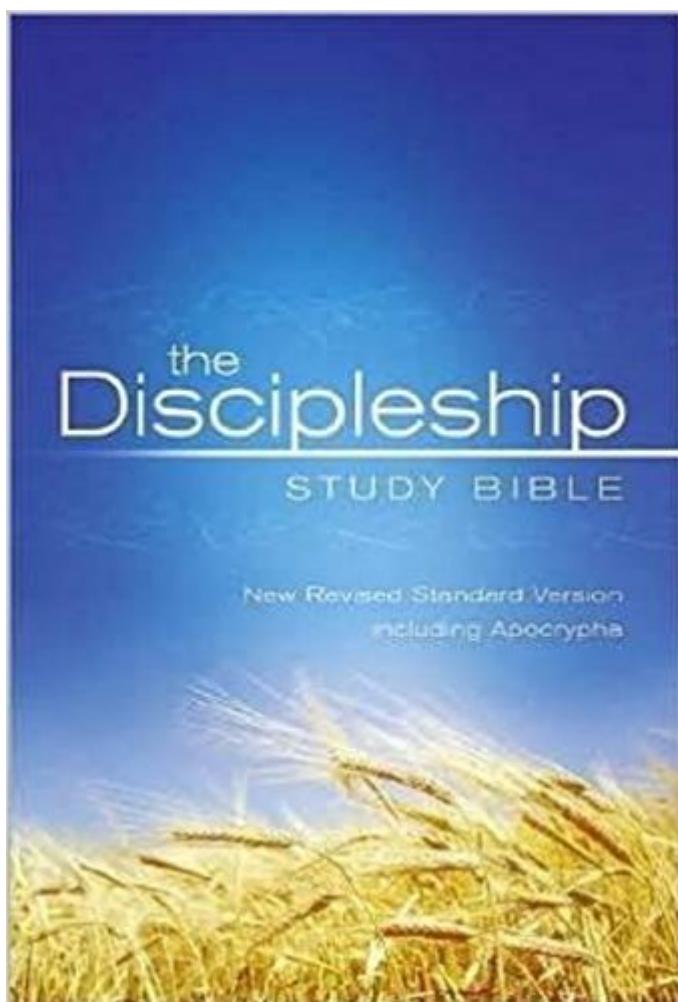


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# The Discipleship Study Bible: New Revised Standard Version Including Apocrypha



## **Synopsis**

Other NRSV study Bibles provide factual information about the biblical text, but don't include extensive guidance for Christian living. The Discipleship Study Bible is unique in offering both. Its annotations emphasize the personal and communal implications of the Bible for today without sacrificing the tools needed for understanding the ancient texts on their own terms. In combining these approaches to Bible study, a group of gifted writers, editors, and scholars have produced a truly comprehensive resource that includes introductory essays to each book of the Bible by top-notch contemporary Bible scholars; the complete text of the New Revised Standard Version, including Apocrypha; a chronology of the events and literature of ancient Israel and early Christianity; a concise concordance; and eight pages of color maps.

## **Book Information**

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## **Customer Reviews**

Bruce C. Birch is Dean and Woodrow W. and Mildred B. Miller Professor of Biblical Theology at Wesley Theological Seminary in Washington, D.C. He is a contributing author to volume II of the New Interpreter's Bible and The Old Testament: A Theological Introduction. Brian K. Blount is President and Professor of New Testament at Union Theological Seminary and Presbyterian School of Secondary Education in Richmond, Virginia. He is the coauthor of Preaching Mark in Two Voices and Making Room at the Table and the author of Can I Get a Witness?, all available from WJK. Thomas G. Long is the Bandy Professor of Preaching at Candler School of Theology, Emory University, in Atlanta, Georgia. He is one of the most popular preachers in the United States today.

He is the author of several books, including *The Senses of Preaching* (WJK), *Preaching and the Literary Forms of the Bible*, and *Whispering the Lyrics: Sermons for Lent and Easter*. Gail R. O'Day is A. H. Shatford Professor of Preaching and New Testament at Candler School of Theology, Emory University, in Atlanta, Georgia. W. Sibley Towner is Professor Emeritus of Biblical Interpretation at Union Theological Seminary and Presbyterian School of Christian Education in Richmond, Virginia. He is the author of *How God Deals With Evil* and *David*, a volume in the Interpretation commentary series.

I like this bible, and would recommend it over many bibles I've seen in the 'bible section' of Christian bookstores, although for me it is probably not my first choice in study bibles. I like good footnoting, and the Discipleship Study Bible has helpful footnotes. I like that it has a mix of application-style footnotes with contextual footnotes. My go-to study bible is the New Interpreter's Study Bible and the New Oxford Annotated Bible before that. Those two tend to have more contextual footnotes and less of the discipleship/application kind of notations. This is a good moderate response to the Life-Application series of footnoted bibles, which tend towards a more evangelical explanation of passages and how to apply them to life. These notes are a good bridge between the two. I like the concordance that is included, and the maps are good for bible study use. The articles at the start of each book are helpful contextual and scholarly overviews, and add to the reading of scripture. I like that it includes textual footnotes for alternate options on translations or choices from various ancient manuscripts. I still default to my New Interpreter's Study bible for the way I like to conduct and participate in bible studies, but I have already recommended the Discipleship Study Bible to folks who don't want the Life Application viewpoint, and want more historical and textual criticism. This is a solid all-around study bible, if that's what you're going for.

Those Christians I know whom I also respect as intellectuals often refer to the NRSV. So, I have for some time been interested in purchasing an NRSV version, since every version in our house is the NIV. However, my frugal nature was keeping me from buying yet another Bible: how different could the translations really be for a lay person like myself? I realized that I wanted not only a new version (I keep hearing about this Tobit character...), but also a new approach to the notes that accompany the text. I could handle the platitudes from the notes in my Life Application Study Bible no longer; my frustration after reading a controversial verse, only to find that there was no note to accompany it, had finally come to a head. So, after reading a few reviews, I ordered this one. The authors of the Discipleship Study Bible claim that study Bibles tend to fall into two categories:

academically-oriented Bibles or life-application Bibles (such as all those Bibles which are geared toward certain groups: teens, women, African American, etc...). The problem with the academic Bibles (according to the authors) is that they can provide too much obscure information to be useful to those of us who are not historians. The problem with the application Bibles(according to me) is that they can nauseate you with thoughtless cliches and platitudes, while neglecting to comment on those verses which can be shocking. The authors explain that the Discipleship Study Bible seeks to strike a balance between these two groups.I have only read 1 and 2 Samuel in this Bible, but have thus far found the authors to be successful in striking that balance: without overloading me with confusing or inane details, this Bible gives me excellent background information on not only customs of the time and place, but also how Books, such as 1 and 2 Samuel, for instance, came to be recognized as Books, as well as a brief explanation into what controversies have arisen throughout the Church's history in making decisions about what should constitute a particular book. They often provide insights into how the arrangement of verses and/or texts creates rhetorical meaning. They also openly admit that some episodes might be shocking to modern readers; they attempt to shed light on these instances, but do not feel the need to explain them away, packaging some of the world's great mysteries with a neat, tidy--and totally dishonest--bow. Here is an example of a particularly good note in the Discipleship Study Bible:2 Samuel 7:1-17"...This oracle of promise for an enduring dynasty of David (v. 16) is one of the cornerstones of Davidic or royal theology that sees in the ongoing line of David a new evidence of God's saving grace in Israel. Some have seen here a covenant with David, extending and reshaping the covenant with Moses on Sinai. Others, however, have seen this chapter as crass political propaganda, seeking to absolutize the political power of Davidic rulers. There can be no doubt that this text has ideological interests seeking to legitimate Davidic rule. But this text is also a witness to a divine power beyond the power of kings--a divine power which nevertheless takes the risk of engagement with political and public realities. Even kings may be chastised (v. 14, and prophets regularly do so), but God will insist on ongoing relationship to the arenas of power, lest religion become a disinterested and unengaged spiritual practice apart from the realities of the world. The dynastic oracle of promise to David has had an important theological role in the history of the church. Particularly since the Protestant Reformation, this text has been seen as the introduction of the reality of God's unconditional grace into the language of biblical faith...We are invited to consider the birth of Jesus in connection with God's engagement with the political issues of justice and power seen in the promise to David..."This note--a particularly long one--goes on to explain that the text is often used as the "basis for the development of messianic hopes" and that is it now an Advent reading.The same section, in another

study Bible, says this: "This chapter records the covenant God made with David, promising to carry on David's line forever. This promise would be fully realized in the birth of Jesus Christ. Although the word covenant is not specifically stated here, it is used elsewhere to describe this occasion (23:5, Psalm 89:3, 4, 28, 34-37)." Hope this review helps. I'm learning a lot from this Bible, and I'll be buying another one for my sister.

The NRSV has been my translation of choice since publication. This assembly of the translation with notes and suggestions has vastly improved its usefulness for personal and group studies. I'm a Presbyterian pastor and use it myself, but more important, for me, is that when members use this translation with helps, our studies deepen and improve. I give copies to families starting out on the Christian life. They can use it and love it. For those who want to study scripture with challenging questions, this is your Bible.

This is a lovely bible. The New Revised Standard Version is a great version of the bible for those whose focus in biblical study is Christ's love, and the annotation in the Discipleship Study Bible is a really all encompassing guide to reading the sometimes challenging text.

The explanations at the beginning of the chapters are quite good. Some of the annotations seem a stretch and sometimes one wants more explanation than is provided, or none is provided. However, with a book like this one, that is life in the swamp.

Good version as it includes the Apocryphal books.

I was very happy once I got my order

The best translation that I have encountered. The editor's footnotes really explain God's word, and apply the writings to today's world.

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