

What To Look For In A Bible

Occasionally someone will ask me what translation I recommend. Obviously, I tell them to find a readable and reliable translation. I prefer the New King James, the New American Standard, and the English Standard Version. That is not to say the American Standard and King James are not reliable translations but they have some drawbacks due to sentence structure and archaic words. Who uses the word "concupiscence" today? By the way, it means long for that which is forbidden. The King James can be understood, but it takes effort and young people do not understand what certain words mean. So, it needs to be readable and understandable, not paraphrased or read like a comic strip.

Let me add, you should look for a translation that a young person can use. Do not buy a Bible that you want your child to have for the next thirty years. Children are hard on books to start with, but hopefully they will wear it out with use. This year's Bible will eventually be replaced. Do not buy a Bible that is complicated. There are some with so many "aids" that it is hard to distinguish the articles provided by the publisher from the actual Bible text. Most young children believe everything in their Bible is the word of God. It is confusing to say part is the word of God and other parts are not. Do not buy a Bible with cross references and a concordance. If you want a good concordance then I can recommend one, but most Bible concordances are very limited and some are even slanted toward Premillennialism.

Do buy a Bible with large print. I recommend this for anybody but especially for the real young or the older user. A Bible with some Bible maps I have found useful but do not spend a lot of money just for Bible maps. For young people I like the traditional column of verses with the numbers on the left margin. A child knows that verse 20 is directly below verse 19. Some translations are in paragraph format, which make it harder to find verses. As a child grows, they will be able to find verses in a paragraph but for young children it is really hard. Frankly, I like the English Standard Version as far as readability and reliability but it is in paragraph format. Therefore, I still

recommend the New King James or New American Standard Bible but have grown more accustomed to the New International Version and like it to. There are many more available but I am not familiar with many of them.– Dennis Tucker