

# Words of Truth

## Your Bible May Contain Many Errors!

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The title of this article would easily allow me to write about false versions of the Bible (NIV, NLT, NASB, ESV, etc.), incorrect translations of words, etc. However, this article is not going to deal with these things, though they are serious problems (Revelation 22:18-19). What I want us all to learn from this article is that some of the so-called “study helps”, in most Bibles, really can become study hindrances. You would think that we would realize that center column references, topical headings, dictionaries, concordances, etc. are not inspired truths. Yet, while we may know this, we can also fall prey to them when they’re wrong. I know that I have erred in that way in the distant past. I had to repent of that. I have found that many of the references in Bibles I have are wrong. In fact, I have gotten to the point where I search to buy text only Bibles to avoid even seeing these errors (I am not saying you have to).

In this article I want to begin with why this subject is something we need to strongly consider. We know that the word of God is pure (Psalms 12:6, Psalms 119:140, and Proverbs 30:5-6). The words of Bible publishers are not necessarily pure. I will show some examples of these problems from a Nelson Reference Bible that I have here at my house. Let’s begin with why we should be concerned.

### Why Should We Beware Of Our Center Column References, Etc.?

We know that false teachers are wolves in sheep’s clothing (Matthew 7:15-20). What more subtle way is there than to teach error right on the same line that the word of God is printed? You open your Bible and feel safe. False teachers know that. Who would think that a false teacher exists right in the midst of the most trusted book we have? False teachers like to creep in among us (Jude 4). False teachers know that all they have to do is twist the truth a little to get people to be lost (II Peter 3:16-17). Remember, false teachers do not need to teach a whole other doctrine, they only need to pervert the truth to make it into error (Galatians 1:6-12).

Center column references in Bibles often have you turn to other Scriptures. Sometimes those Scriptures will have the same word or phrase in them. Does that mean that same word means those two Scriptures are teaching the same thing? For example, the word “baptism” appears in Colossians 2:12. A study of the Scriptures shows this is referring to being buried in water as an action unto salvation (Romans 6:3-6 and Acts 2:38). The word baptism also appears in Luke 20:4, referring to the baptism of John. Now, both the baptism of John and baptism into Christ were done in water (Matthew 3:13-16). Yet, these two baptisms are significantly different. The baptism of John was unto repentance (Acts 13:24) and does not save us (Acts 19:1-5). Being baptized into Christ does save us (Galatians 3:27 and I Peter 3:20-21). The same word and very similar circumstances doesn’t mean you’re talking about the exact same thing. These types of incorrect references occur often in Bibles. Many of these incorrect references cause people to make erroneous conclusions. Let’s notice some examples.

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## Some Examples Of Erring References By Bible Publishers

Let me state that I am not aware of all of the errors in center columns, etc. I am just going to flip through and find some to use as examples. I currently use a Bible that has no center column references, so my work here is not to be considered as an exhaustive study. I have opened a Nelson Giant Print KJV to page 1336. At the top of the page it says, “The End of the World”. Yet, page 1336 is not really talking about the end of the world. The page ends at Matthew 24:24. Reading through the context you’ll find that Matthew 23:36-Matthew 24:34 are Scriptures discussing things that would occur in Jerusalem, during the generation of the people Jesus was talking to in the first century. The same thing happens again on page 1373. The top of the page says, “The Second Coming”. However, the majority of that page is talking about events in Jerusalem, during that generation (Mark 13:30). People that teach error on the Second Coming of Christ easily fall prey to these false topical headlines.

As I was flipping through this same Bible, I came across this title on page 1302: “Jesus Fulfills the Law”. I am familiar with Matthew 5:12-30, which is the text that appears on this page. However, I thought I would study through it afresh. On this page I read this: *“Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil. For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled”* (Matthew 5:17-18). According to Nelson Publishers, the Old Law was done at this point. Yet, according to the Scriptures, the Old Law did not pass until after Jesus died (Colossians 2:13-14 and Hebrews 9:15-17).

Let’s now consider some errors in the center column. I have opened the Bible I have here to page 1694 which contains Revelation 20:1-21:2. The last reference on this page is (as Thomas Nelson Publishers decided) tied to Revelation 21:2. That reference is Isaiah 52:1. Let’s compare both verses: *“Awake, awake; put on thy strength, O Zion; put on thy beautiful garments, O Jerusalem, the holy city: for henceforth there shall no more come into thee the uncircumcised and the unclean”* (Isaiah 52:1). *“And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband”* (Revelation 21:2). This Bible publisher has decided to tie these two verses together because Jerusalem is called the holy city in both verses. How’s this dangerous? The holy city of Jerusalem in Isaiah 52:1 is the physical city of Jerusalem (Nehemiah 11:1). The Holy Jerusalem in Revelation 21:2 is the SPIRITUAL Jerusalem, which is the church (Hebrews 12:22-23). If one takes Revelation 21 to be talking about the physical city of Jerusalem, the whole context changes and becomes distorted.

On page 808 the Bible I have turned in has a star next to Psalms 22:1. The star is supposed to represent a prophesy about Jesus. If Psalms 22:1 is prophesying that God the Father will forsake Jesus, then Jesus is a liar. Jesus said that He would not be forsaken (John 8:28-29 and John 16:32). Jesus never sinned (Hebrews 4:14-16 and I Peter 2:21-22; cf. I Peter 1:18-19). Jesus would have had to sin to be far from His Father (Deuteronomy 31:16-18, Proverbs 15:8, Proverbs 15:29, Proverbs 28:9, Isaiah 59:1-3, Micah 3:4, John 9:31, and I Peter 3:12). The center column is WRONG AGAIN!

### Conclusion

If you’re using a Bible with references in it, know that they can be wrong even if they “seem” right. As we noted when studying through the Psalms, because it says, “A Psalm of David” at the top of the page, that doesn’t mean it is. A Bible Publisher is not the source of truth. We are expected to rightly divide the truth through our studies (II Timothy 2:14-18), not trust other sources to tell us what verses mean!