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THE EFFECT OF STUDY BIBLES ON BIBLE STUDY

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September 28, 2012

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SAINT LOUIS, MISSOURI

THE EFFECT OF STUDY BIBLES ON BIBLE STUDY

A MAJOR APPLIED PROJECT SUBMITTED TO
THE DEPARTMENT OF DOCTOR OF MINISTRY STUDIES
IN CANDIDACY FOR THE DEGREE OF
DOCTOR OF MINISTRY

BY
REV. MATTHEW J. HOEHNER

SAINT LOUIS, MISSOURI
28 SEPTEMBER 2012

This Major Applied Project is dedicated to my beloved children, Joel and Elise Hoehner.
“Continue in what you have learned and have become convinced of, because you know those
from whom you learned it, and how from infancy you have known the holy Scriptures, which
are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus.”
2 Timothy 3:14-15

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Sola Gloria Dei

ABSTRACT

Hoehner, Matthew J. "The Effect of Study Bibles on Bible Study." D. Min. MAP, Concordia Seminary—St. Louis, 2012. 170 pp.

The purpose of this project is to gain a clearer understanding of the impact study Bibles have on the application of Scripture. Along with identifying what study Bible resources are being used, this study provides greater insight into how students are using study Bibles. The process of this project begins with a theological study of the nature and function of Scripture in the context of 2 Tim. 3:10–17. The project continues to examine these theological principles of the Scriptures in the context of study Bibles. The project involves instruments to assess, both qualitatively and quantitatively, the influence study Bibles have on Bible study. The qualitative research took place primarily through the tool of naturalistic observation of students' use of the study Bibles.

CHAPTER 1

THE PROJECT INTRODUCED

The Problem of the Project

In the home, at congregational Bible studies, and even in classrooms readers of Scripture use study Bibles to inform their study. Though study Bibles are widely used, it is unclear how the resources of the study Bibles affect a person's understanding of the biblical text. The problem this project seeks to address is how the input of study Bible resources affects the outcome of one's Bible study.

Understanding the use and effect study Bibles have on Bible studies is also important for Rev. Hoehner, as he serves as pastor at Messiah Lutheran Church in St. Louis. When five men met at a local coffee shop for Bible study, three of the five men were using study Bibles; the two who were not using study Bibles were pastors. Now if the two pastors could not attend the study, how would the study group use the study Bibles to answer their questions, and how might the additional study Bible resources inform and form their study of the Bible? Moreover, how are these study Bibles functioning in personal Bible studies in the homes of individuals of the congregation? If indeed the input of study Bibles affects the outcome of one's Bible study, pastors ought to spend some time investigating study Bibles to know how their people are being influenced by various study Bibles, so they can discern the proper use of these resources as they seek a clear understanding of Scripture.

The use of study Bibles is directly related to the teaching ministry of Rev. Matthew Hoehner, as he serves as an adjunct instructor for Concordia University Wisconsin in St. Louis. Students enrolled in the course on the Gospel of Luke are assigned the *NIV Self-Study Bible*¹ as their primary text. For some, this is their first encounter with the Gospel of Luke, and so one would assume that students may be using the various resources of the study Bible in order to understand the contents and message of the Gospel of Luke. As a teacher, Rev. Hoehner maintains that it is important that the instructor is familiar with these resources. The materials in the study Bible represent the input of many different theologians both lay and professional. Because these insights are bound to the biblical text, the study Bible itself serves as an “adjunct instructor,” addressing many questions and issues that arise in the biblical text. As Valerie Hotchkiss points out, “translators and editors often express—intentionally or not—their own doctrinal allegiances and theological views.”² Furthermore, whether the additional information of the study Bible is intended to be informative or formative, it expresses a specific hermeneutical view of the text, which will affect one’s reading of the biblical text. All of this is not to suggest that the teacher or pastor should shut out all other views but his own. However, a responsible pastor has an awareness of the other resources and their input as they relate to the Bible study.

Along with his advisor, Dr. David Schmitt, professor at Concordia Seminary in St. Louis, Rev. Hoehner has studied the recently released study Bibles (*Lutheran Study Bible* (ELCA), *ESV Study Bible*, and *The Lutheran Study Bible* [LCMS]) in preparation for a presentation on this topic at the Concordia Seminary Theological Symposium in September, 2010. Thus aspects of this study served the church in providing further information concerning the use of Scripture in the context of study Bibles. Though making resources more accessible by attaching them to the

¹ For the sake of this experiment half of the class will use *The Lutheran Study Bible ESV*.

Scripture can positively enhance the study of the Bible, it was clear from this study that study Bibles take different approaches to addressing the biblical text with additional resources.

The Purpose of the Project

The purpose of this project is to gain a clearer understanding of the impact study Bibles have on the application of Scripture. Along with identifying *what* study Bible resources are being used, this study may provide greater insight into *how* students and parishioners are using study Bibles. It will also alert pastors and teachers to the influence study Bibles are having on those using them with respect to their application of Scripture. Thus the project may provide a heightened awareness of the input of study Bibles and how it affects, both positively and negatively, one's reading and study of Scripture.

This project intends to assess what resources in a given study Bible are used by students in their study of the biblical text (specifically the Gospel of Luke). Are students, for example, using the study notes, essays, or cross references? In addition, the researcher will assess how these resources, both informative and formative, affect the outcome of one's application of the text as they convey the message of Scripture in a Bible study, i.e., a devotional study of the text.

Having identified what resources are being used and how they are being used, there may be some derivative outcomes of the project. The teacher, for example, may identify specific needs students have in understanding the text, as well as gain an awareness of certain resources that are used more often by the students to ascertain the meaning of Scripture. In addition, by observing how students use the study Bible to create their own Bible study, the researcher, in consultation with his advisor, will assess how the additional resources of the study Bible's stated goals are being met. It is hoped that this specific experiment may motivate others to examine further the

² Valerie R. Hotchkiss, "Bible Landscapes," *Insights* 108, no. 2 (Spring 1993): 41.

use of study Bibles to understand perhaps the relationships between study Bibles and Bible study on a broader scale.

The Process

The process of this project begins with a theological study of the nature and function of Scripture in the context of 2 Tim. 3:10–17. Chapter 2, “The Project in Theological Perspective,” lays the biblical foundation of this MAP by examining St. Paul’s instruction to Timothy, a young pastor, concerning the Holy Scriptures:

Σὺ δὲ παρηκολούθησάς μου τῇ διδασκαλίᾳ, τῇ ἀγωγῇ, τῇ προθέσει, τῇ πίστει, τῇ μακροθυμίᾳ, τῇ ἀγάπῃ, τῇ ὑπομονῇ, τοῖς διωγμοῖς, τοῖς παθήμασιν, οἷά μοι ἐγένετο ἐν Ἀντιοχείᾳ, ἐν Ἰκονίῳ, ἐν Λύστροις, οἷους διωγμοὺς ὑπήνεγκα καὶ ἐκ πάντων με ἐρρύσατο ὁ κύριος. καὶ πάντες δὲ οἱ θέλοντες εὐσεβῶς ζῆν ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ διωχθήσονται. πονηροὶ δὲ ἄνθρωποι καὶ γόητες προκόψουσιν ἐπὶ τὸ χεῖρον πλανῶντες καὶ πλανώμενοι. Σὺ δὲ μένε ἐν οἷς ἔμαθες καὶ ἐπιστώθης, εἰδὼς παρὰ τίνων ἔμαθες, καὶ ὅτι ἀπὸ βρέφους [τὰ] ἱερὰ γράμματα οἶδας, τὰ δυνάμενά σε σοφίσει εἰς σωτηρίαν διὰ πίστεως τῆς ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ. πᾶσα γραφὴ θεόπνευστος καὶ ὠφέλιμος πρὸς διδασκαλίαν, πρὸς ἐλεγμὸν, πρὸς ἐπανόρθωσιν, πρὸς παιδείαν τὴν ἐν δικαιοσύνῃ, ἵνα ἄρτιος ᾦ ὁ τοῦ θεοῦ ἄνθρωπος, πρὸς πᾶν ἔργον ἀγαθὸν ἐξηρητισμένος (2 Tim. 3:10–17).

Whereas Paul informs Timothy of the nature of all Scripture, he also speaks of the formative function of the Scriptures in the ministry of the Church. Thus the written Word of God, received within a community of faith, is able to make one wise unto salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. Moreover, it serves to form the man of God through teaching, rebuking, correcting, and training for righteousness for the explicit purpose of equipping him for every good work. This MAP presents an exegetical study of this prescriptive text of Scripture to further understand the nature and function of the Scriptures.

First, the theological study examines Paul’s words concerning the nature of the Scriptures in 2 Tim. 3:10–17 (i.e., what they are). Paul’s statement that “all Scripture is God-breathed” will be examined in light of 1 and 2 Timothy. The study will expound on the nature of the Scriptures according to three categories: the reception of the text within a community of faith, the Christ-

centeredness of the text, and the divine inspiration of the text. The study will address these categories in the order they appear in the text. In addition, the study will reference the Lutheran Confessions concerning the nature of the Scriptures.

This theological understanding of the Scriptures is relevant to this project, as the Scriptures are literally bound to the resources of the study Bibles. That is, the reader receives the biblical text embodied in a book containing resources representing the views of others. Though perhaps done for practical reasons and with good intentions, there could be consequences (some unintended) to the “bondage of the Word.” As the project examines the effect study Bible resources have on Bible study, one recognizes that by its own declaration, the Scriptures are not just any text, but the Word of God. The understanding of the divinely inspired nature of the Scriptures should influence what the study Bibles bind to this sacred text and how the study Bibles function, whether informatively or formatively. Thus neither those studying the Scriptures nor those entrusted as servants of the Word should ignore how additional comments affect one’s reading of the biblical text.

Next, the exegetical study will examine the formative function of Scripture according to 2 Tim. 3:10–17 (i.e., what they do). Paul states that the Scriptures are able to make one wise unto salvation. In addition, they teach, rebuke, correct, and train one for righteousness, in order to equip the man of God for every good work. Each of these functions will be explored briefly, with some reflection of Paul’s ministry as conveyed in his epistles. Understanding the intended function of the Scriptures will be helpful in evaluating the function of study Bibles and how people use them to study the Scriptures.

Chapter 3, “The Nature and Function of Scripture Expressed in Study Bibles,” continues to examine these theological principles of the Scriptures in the context of study Bibles. Chapter Three will investigate how the material production of study Bibles has embodied or ignored

these theological principles concerning the nature and function of Scripture as expressed in 2 Timothy. In addition, it will then examine the nature and function of the Scriptures according to four recent study Bibles.

The historical review of the rise of study Bibles describes the origin and recent popularity of study Bibles and how it either reflects or ignores Paul's understanding of Scripture conveyed in 2 Timothy. More has been written concerning the marketing motivation of these Bibles than the influence they may have on the reader. John Bombaro views the use of study Bibles as an appeal to niche markets as a triumph of post-Kantian subjectivity over premodern objectivity (or more importantly over biblical Christology). This in turn leads to the "individual as self-feeder and arbiter of the truth."³ Sales demonstrate that study Bibles meet the need of the market, but the question remains do they meet the needs of the Bible study? A review of recent study Bible literature addresses the phenomenon of these specialized study Bibles. This section provides an overview of the expanded production of study Bibles and a discussion of the formative function of these Bibles that bind study notes to the Scriptures.

Having laid this historical context of study Bibles, the chapter then examines the nature and function of the Scriptures in the context of four recently published study Bibles (*The ESV Study Bible* by Crossway; *Lutheran Study Bible* by Augsburg; *Concordia Self-Study Bible* by CPH; and *The Lutheran Study Bible* by CPH). This study will focus on explicit statements in the study Bible text. How do study Bibles view the biblical text and how do they view the relationship between their additional resources and the biblical text? How do the study Bibles embody the biblical text? An examination of the four study Bibles explores these questions.

³ John Bombaro, "Bible Inc." *Modern Reformation* 19, no. 4 (July/August 2010): 29.

Chapter 4, “Analyzing the Use of Study Bibles for Bible Study,” describes the design of the field research. The project involves instruments to assess, both qualitatively and quantitatively, the influence study Bibles have on Bible study. The qualitative research took place primarily through the tool of naturalistic observation of the students’ use of the study Bibles. During the course of a five week class, the students prepared a one page Bible study message for each of the two assigned texts (Luke 16:19–31; 24:13–35). These texts were chosen because they both speak concerning the Scriptures and are surrounded by many of the study Bible resources (e.g., essays, sacramental icons). Dr. Schmitt and Rev. Hoehner then examined the devotions to assess whether the study Bible resources may have had an influence on the outcome of the study. Both examiners identified the focus, function, and form of each Bible study without clear knowledge of which study Bible was used in the process of writing the study. (To accomplish this each Bible study was numbered for each student. The study Bible used could only be identified on the survey. Thus by matching the number on the survey and the Bible study one would be able to determine the study Bible behind each Bible study.) Once the evaluation process was complete, the examiners matched up the Bible studies with the corresponding surveys to determine the study Bible used by each participant. At that time, the examiners compared their findings with study Bible input to assess whether any of the resources in the study Bible might have influenced the outcome of the Bible study. This process intended to guard the examiners from reading study Bible resources into the students’ work. Moreover, for the sake of clarity, the students were asked to state the main point of their Bible study in one sentence at the top of the page.

At the end of the class quantitative data were collected through a survey. This survey employed a Likert scale to identify what resources the students used and the frequency of their

use. The survey also included some follow-up questions to provide further qualitative data concerning the role the study Bible played in the students' Bible study.

Chapter 5, "Evaluating the Effect of Study Bible Resources on Bible Studies," presents the data from the survey with regards to the students' impressions of their use of the study Bibles. In addition, it presents the assessments of Dr. Schmitt and Rev. Hoehner concerning their naturalistic observations of the study Bibles' impact on the Bible study. This chapter includes a summary of themes raised in each instrument followed by concluding remarks from the field research.

Chapter 6, "Summary and Conclusions," draws conclusions from the theological, bibliographic, and field research with regards to the effect of study Bibles on Bible study. The first set of conclusions applies to the broader context of ministry. These conclusions include recommendations for both contexts of ministry (i.e., teaching and congregational use) and state unanswerable questions not addressed by this project with the hope that others will further the investigation of the use of study Bibles.

The project also includes appendices that primarily consist of the data, that is, copies of the Bible study messages produced by students (both for Luke 16 and Luke 24), along with the surveys assessing the students' use of the study Bible throughout the course and their evaluation of its usefulness.

The Bible study messages represent the outcome of the students' study of the biblical text. Copies of the Bible studies allow the reader to evaluate the data and the assessment of the writer and his supervisor in determining the effect the study Bible may have had on the outcome of the Bible study. Numbers identify participants so that the students' names do not appear on the Bible study messages for the sake of anonymity.

Completed surveys also appear in the appendices, as each student was asked to complete the questions to assess his or her use of the study Bible. This enables the reader to view the data from which the conclusions of the project were derived. Like the Bible study messages, numbers identify the participants for the sake of anonymity.

In addition to the data collected, a sample of the consent form, which all participants signed, is included in the appendix.

Project Parameters

As the project approaches this topic of the effect of study Bibles on Bible study, it does so with a few assumptions. An underlying assumption of this study is that outside resources will influence one's use of the biblical text whether the resources are intended to be informative (e.g., a note explaining a word) or formative (e.g., a prayer). Another assumption is that the two different translations used in the study Bibles (i.e., NIV and ESV) would not influence the outcome of the Bible study of the chosen texts in any significant way.

With regard to the theological study, it is assumed that St. Paul is the author of 2 Timothy. Moreover, that the epistle is the inspired Word of God, and thus serves as the source and norm of Christian teaching and life. In addition, it is assumed that the Holy Spirit is at work in the study of the Scriptures, but one recognizes that His work cannot be measured by field research.

The field research is limited to a class of ten adult students working towards their bachelor degree at Concordia University Wisconsin, in St. Louis. The course on the Gospel of Luke was completed in four-hour classes over the period of five weeks. The evaluation of the influence of study Bibles resources on the Bible studies of the students is limited to the naturalistic observations of Dr. Schmitt and Rev. Hoehner and the data collected from the survey filled out at the end of class. The Bible studies reflect their study of only two texts: Luke 16 and Luke 24.

The survey gathers both quantitative and qualitative data as it employs both a Likert scale and open ended questions.

CHAPTER 2

THE PROJECT IN THEOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE

Long before study Bibles existed, the question of the use of Scripture was something the church addressed. Even as early as the apostolic writings of St. Paul, one finds direction regarding such matters. This study of the nature and function of Scripture begins in Paul's Second Letter to Timothy with an emphasis on 2 Tim. 3:10–17:

Σὺ δὲ παρηκολούθησάς μου τῇ διδασκαλίᾳ, τῇ ἀγωγῇ, τῇ προθέσει, τῇ πίστει, τῇ μακροθυμίᾳ, τῇ ἀγάπῃ, τῇ ὑπομονῇ, τοῖς διωγμοῖς, τοῖς παθήμασιν, οἷά μοι ἐγένετο ἐν Ἀντιοχείᾳ, ἐν Ἰκονίῳ, ἐν Λύστροις, οἷους διωγμοὺς ὑπήνεγκα καὶ ἐκ πάντων με ἐρρύσατο ὁ κύριος. καὶ πάντες δὲ οἱ θέλοντες εὐσεβῶς ζῆν ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ διωχθήσονται. πονηροὶ δὲ ἄνθρωποι καὶ γόητες προκόψουσιν ἐπὶ τὸ χεῖρον πλανῶντες καὶ πλανώμενοι. Σὺ δὲ μένε ἐν οἷς ἔμαθες καὶ ἐπιστώθης, εἰδὼς παρὰ τίνων ἔμαθες, καὶ ὅτι ἀπὸ βρέφους [τὰ] ἱερὰ γράμματα οἶδας, τὰ δυνάμενά σε σοφίσει εἰς σωτηρίαν διὰ πίστεως τῆς ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ. πᾶσα γραφὴ θεόπνευστος καὶ ὠφέλιμος πρὸς διδασκαλίαν, πρὸς ἐλεγμὸν, πρὸς ἐπανόρθωσιν, πρὸς παιδείαν τὴν ἐν δικαιοσύνῃ, ἵνα ἄρτιος ᾦ ὁ τοῦ θεοῦ ἄνθρωπος, πρὸς πᾶν ἔργον ἀγαθὸν ἐξηρτισμένος.

As others have pointed out, it is fitting that in his last recorded letter Paul describes the nature and function of Scripture.⁴ Moreover, it is an appropriate topic of concern as Paul instructs Timothy, a young servant of the Word, who is encountering false teachings.⁵ Paul writes concerning the Scriptures which were made known to Timothy initially by his mother and grandmother and later by Paul himself. Though in the context of this epistle the term “Scriptures” refers to the Old Testament,⁶ the Word of God is not limited to the Old Testament.

⁴ Michael P. Middendorf and Mark Schuler, *Called by the Gospel* (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 2007), 341.

⁵ 2 Tim. 2:17.

⁶ Philip H. Towner, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2006), 582, cites Philo and Josephus, noting their uses of the phrase “holy Scriptures” designating technically the Jewish Scriptures or some

As attested throughout the New Testament, God would send and inspire others to write His word, including Paul, an “appointed herald and an apostle and teacher” (2 Tim. 1:11; 2 Pet. 3:15). Thus it is appropriate to apply Paul’s words to the larger canon of Scriptures, consisting of both the Old and New Testaments.

Paul’s words to Timothy help the reader understand both the nature of the Scriptures (what they are) and the function of the Scriptures (what they do). A close investigation of these matters will provide the guidelines to assess study Bibles in their view and use of the Scriptures.

Nature of Scripture

Paul’s words to Timothy highlight three characteristics of the nature of Scripture: the reception of the text within a community of faith, the Christocentricity of the text, and the divine inspiration of the text. These aspects (reception, content, and origin) help one to understand what these sacred texts are, that is, what the essential qualities of these sacred texts are.

Scripture Is Communication within the Communion of Saints

Human Communication

In response to false teachers, it is interesting that Paul does not begin by telling Timothy, “but you know your Scripture,” or in contemporary fashion, “the Bible tells you so.” Rather, Paul writes, “You, however, know all about my teaching, my way of life, my purpose, faith, patience, love,...what kinds of things happened to me...”⁷ In short, Paul’s initial response to the false teachers is, “Timothy, you know me.” Later in verse 14, he instructs Timothy to continue in what he has learned and of that which he has been convinced. However, it is striking that Paul grounds this instruction not in the divine nature of Scripture, but in Timothy’s knowledge of

part of them.

⁷ 2 Tim. 3:10–12.

those from whom he learned it. Paul's words highlight the fact that by nature Scripture is a human means of communication. That is, the messenger, the message, and the receiver of the message are all fully human.

The Scriptures do not come directly from God above, but through the pen of men who embody the message themselves as they convey the word in their own language and style.⁸ Moreover, the prophets and apostles embodied the words in their lives as they suffered for the sake of the gospel. To use one of Paul's own examples, Moses endured the uprising of Jannes and Jambres, men with depraved minds who opposed the truth (2 Tim. 3:8). Furthermore, the Scriptures of the Old Testament did not come to Timothy directly from the heavens or in his independent search for the truth, but they came to him embodied in the lives of his grandmother and mother and eventually Paul and others. Thus knowledge of the messenger and his or her use of the Scripture becomes an essential part of the communication of this word. Paul is not the only voice out there, nor is he the only one using Scripture. This is one of the problems Paul addresses in this letter to Timothy, as false teachers seem to be all around (2:17; 3:6–7). Moreover, their deceptive ways are increasing among the people (2:13). For this reason, as Paul charges Timothy to be prepared, he directs Timothy to personal examples of himself (Paul) and those from whom he learned the Scripture.

Communication of the Holy Spirit

All of this is not to say that the communication of the Scripture is solely a human act or that any community can rightly communicate the message of Scripture. Rather, this act of

⁸ *The Inspiration of Scripture* (Saint Louis: Commission on Theology and Church Relations, 1975), 8, addresses the matter: "Nothing in the Holy Scriptures indicates that when God chose human beings to be His instruments through whom He spoke and wrote His Word to men, He used them in such a way that they were deprived of their individuality and identity. The Holy Spirit took men as they had been shaped by all their circumstances, cultural influences, educational opportunities, and natural capacities and placed them into His service to speak 'from God.'" (2 Pet. 1:21).

communication happens in the context of the communion of saints, that is, those who have been called, gathered, and enlightened by the Holy Spirit. This is to say that the Spirit sanctifies the communication of the Word and the community in which it is shared. Therefore, while the Scripture is fully human it remains in the context of the Spirit's sanctifying work according to the rule of Christ, visible in the communion of saints.

Paul expresses this sanctifying aspect as he clearly states in his letters to Timothy and elsewhere in his epistles that the Spirit is at work within him (2 Tim. 1:14). In addition, Paul's purpose is grounded in the Lord's directive and divine purpose (2 Tim. 1:1, 9). Furthermore, in verses 10–13, Paul cites nine characteristics for Timothy to follow. As this list of virtues is positioned in direct contrast with the vices mentioned earlier (3:2–5),⁹ it represents characteristics that manifest the fruitful activity of the Spirit in Paul's life. His teaching, for example, derives from the Spirit of the Lord who has called and sent him (1 Tim. 4:1; 1 Cor. 11:23). Furthermore, Paul explicitly describes the attributes of faith, patience, and love as fruits of the Spirit (Gal. 5:22; cf. 1 Tim. 1:16, 6:11).

The mention of endurance leads to the final two items that represent events rather than attributes as they give witness to the activity of the Spirit. Paul himself once a persecutor of the faith (1 Tim. 1:13) has experienced persecution for the proclamation of the gospel message.¹⁰ In verse 11, Paul gives concrete examples of his persecutions citing experiences in Antioch, Iconium, and Lystra. Thus like the prophets and the Lord Jesus himself, Paul's Spirit-filled ministry is met by hostility from the world. These experiences also draw attention to Paul's sufferings, the last item in this list of characteristics. Paul associates his sufferings with his apostolic calling as he participates in the sufferings of Christ (1 Tim. 1:12; 2:9–10; cf. 2 Cor.

⁹ Towner, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, 570–71.

1:6,7; Phil 3:10; Col 1:24). Throughout Acts and the Pauline epistles one finds many examples of Paul's suffering; however, in the context of 2 Timothy he makes specific reference to imprisonment (1:12; 2:9–10) and desertion (4:10, 14, 16) along with the mention of “being poured out like a drink offering” (4:6). Notably Paul does not point to his success but his suffering to make the case for his life in Christ. He could have highlighted his miracles, success in raising funds or church planting, and even his position among the apostles; instead he points to persecution as a witness of living within the rule of Christ.

In addition to the suffering, Paul cites the fact that he had endured the trial having been rescued by the Lord (3:11). For Paul, life in Christ is about more than Paul's conflict with any one opponent or false teacher, it is matter of God's kingdom in Christ (4:1; 1 Tim. 6:13–16). Paul's personal experiences play a part in the much larger narrative of God's plan of salvation. It is within that grander view that Paul is confident that the Lord has and will deliver him from all attacks and will safely bring him into his heavenly kingdom (4:17–18). Thus his deliverance also stands as a testimony to the Spirit's activity in his life (cf. Phil 1:19).

In addition, Paul notes that the Spirit resides within Timothy (1:14; 2:7). Having described the work of the Spirit in his own life throughout the epistle, Paul encourages Timothy to follow in a godly life, encouraging him to bear the fruits of the Spirit in gentleness and love (1 Tim. 1:4). Moreover, Paul encourages Timothy to join in his suffering for the gospel, enduring hardship (1:8; 2:3; 4:5). Paul charges Timothy with the ministry of preaching, correcting, rebuking, and encouraging others in view of the Christ's rule in the world, that is, Jesus' appearing and His kingdom (4:1–2).

¹⁰ Ibid., 572.

From Paul's letters to Timothy one can deduce that the communication of the Scriptures is taking place in the context of a Spirit-filled community of faith, that is, the communion of saints. Though the letter is addressed to a specific person and church within a specific location, Paul's words remind the readers that this communion is a part of something much larger. This communion transcends the social location of Ephesus, as it transcends time and place united in God's ultimate plan of salvation for the world. Though all participants involved in this communication of the Scripture are fully human, it is understood by those involved that the Holy Spirit is active in both the messenger and the receiver of this precious word producing the divinely desired effect.¹¹

Scripture Is Christ Centered

Paul's charge to Timothy to adhere to that which he has been taught is grounded not only in the godly lives of those who taught him, but also in the ability of the Holy Scriptures to make one wise unto salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. Paul writes: “καὶ ὅτι ἀπὸ βρέφους τὰ ἱερὰ γράμματα οἶδας, τὰ δυνάμενά σε σοφίσει εἰς σωτηρίαν διὰ πίστεως τῆς ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ.” (3:15) This all important salvific purpose of the Scriptures is centered in Christ, for it is through faith in Christ Jesus that one is saved.¹² Simply put: the content of the Scriptures can be summed up in Christ (John 5:39; Luke 24:27, 44–47).

Just as Timothy knows Paul and those who taught him, he knows “τὰ ἱερὰ γράμματα.”¹³ This term appears nowhere else in the New Testament. However, Philo and Josephus' use of the

¹¹ The Spirit's connection to the message in terms of its origin will be discussed below.

¹² George W. Knight III, *Commentary on 2 Timothy* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1992), 444, notes that in the context of the NT σωτηρίαν is used to speak of the spiritual deliverance that Christ brings from bondage to sin.

¹³ It is uncertain whether the article is part of the original text. Perhaps here it is added to further qualify the nature of these writings. However, with or without the article, the term has been used to convey the same meaning (see Knight, *Commentary on 2 Timothy*, 443).

term suggests that “holy scriptures” refers to the Old Testament in Greek speaking Judaism.¹⁴

The noun γράμμα is used primarily in the Pauline Epistles, Luke, and Acts, with only two appearances in John.¹⁵ The word refers to various types of writings from a letter in the alphabet (2 Cor. 3:7) to promissory note (Lk. 16:6). Thus the modifier ἱερὰ is necessary to clarify that these are sacred writings, as the adjective expresses an association with God.¹⁶ Thus Paul seems to be pointing Timothy to the “holy Scriptures” of the Old Testament.

In contrast to the false teachers who are unable to acknowledge the truth (3:7), Paul states that the holy Scriptures are able to make one wise for salvation. While the term σοφίσαι refers to instruction, Paul’s choice of words here highlights three factors in Timothy’s situation that are associated with wisdom: the instruction of the young; Christ; and wisdom’s place in the midst of persecution.

Paul writes: “καὶ ὅτι ἀπὸ βρέφους τὰ ἱερὰ γράμματα οἶδας, that is, these Scriptures were making Timothy wise early on in his life, even his childhood. Whereas, the term σοφίσαι only appears one other time in the New Testament,¹⁷ it is used 22 times in the LXX, and as one would expect, primarily in Sirach and the Wisdom literature. This instruction of the young in wisdom is seen throughout wisdom books like Proverbs (1–8). Moreover, the Psalmist writes: “ὁ νόμος τοῦ κυρίου ἄμωμος ἐπιστρέφων ψυχὰς ἢ μαρτυρία κυρίου πιστὴ σοφίζουσα νήπια” (Psa 18:8 LXX).¹⁸ In Sirach 47:14, the author speaks of Solomon saying, “How wise you became

¹⁴ Martin Dibelius and Hans Conzelmann, *The Pastoral Epistles*, trans. Philip Buttolph and Adela Yarbro; ed. Helmut Koester (Philadelphia, PA: Fortress, 1972), 119.

¹⁵ Jerome D. Quinn and William C. Wacker, *The First and Second Letters to Timothy* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2000), 748.

¹⁶ Knight, *Commentary on 2 Timothy*, 443.

¹⁷ In 1 Pet. 1:16, it is used in a pejorative manner.

¹⁸ See also Ps. 111:10.

in your youth...” (ὡς ἐσοφίσθης ἐν νεότητί σου). Thus Paul’s words “making you wise” may call to mind the role Scripture plays in a child’s life, as in the case of Timothy.

The second aspect of the term “σοφίσαι” comes out in the New Testament writers’ acknowledgement that Christ is wisdom. Luke, a companion of Paul, seems to highlight the young Jesus’ growth in wisdom with the narrative of the young boy’s visit to the temple courts where he would have studied the Scriptures (Lk 2:40, 52). Furthermore, later in Luke Jesus proclaims concerning himself that in typological relationship to the wisdom of Solomon, one “greater than Solomon is here” (Lk 11:31). To the church in Corinth Paul contrasts the wisdom of the world and the wisdom of God, climactically stating that Christ is the power and wisdom of God (1 Cor. 1:25). Thus to make one wise is to make one “Christ-like” (2 Tim. 3:12).

The third aspect of “making one wise” is the role of wisdom within the context of persecution. It is clear that Timothy and his community are facing persecution and for that reason they will need to be made wise. Two Old Testament men known for their wisdom, Joseph and Daniel, lived in the context of suffering and persecution. Moreover, in the context of Jesus’ conversation concerning the persecution of God’s people, he speaks repeatedly of wisdom. In Luke 21, for example, he states: “For I will give you words and wisdom that none of your adversaries will be able to resist or contradict” (Lk 21:15).¹⁹ As wisdom incarnate, Jesus suffers persecution and even death on a cross. Yet, it is precisely in this event that God’s wisdom overcomes persecution and brings salvation to the world.

In contrast to the false teachers who deny the power of the gospel (2 Tim. 3:5), Christ’s life, death, and resurrection reveal the salvific power of the Scriptures. Paul uses the term σωτηρίαν only twice in the Pastoral Epistles in contrast to sixteen times in the other Pauline

¹⁹ See also Luke 11:49.

letters. The term is used ten times in Luke and Acts.²⁰ The prepositional phrase εἰς σωτηρίαν expresses the salvific goal of the Gospel expressed both in the OT and in Paul's teaching.²¹ Even though salvation is a broad term, Paul highlights certain points within the Pastoral Epistles. He teaches that God wants all to be saved (1 Tim. 2:4) and this involves saving people from sin (1 Tim. 1:15) and death (2 Tim. 1:10). In addition, like Luke, Paul speaks of salvation as a present reality, something people have now (2 Tim. 1:8–10), and something that remains to be fully seen (2 Tim. 4:8).²²

God's salvation now and yet to come are summed up in Jesus the Christ. Within the Pastoral Epistles, Paul teaches that Jesus Christ was appointed and sent to the world to be the means, the mediator, and the manifestation of God's salvation. Christ provided the means of salvation for sinners by giving himself as a ransom for all men (1 Tim. 2:6; Titus 2:13,14). As a result, Christ is now the one and only mediator between God and man (1 Tim. 2:5). Moreover, as Luke describes in his Gospel, Paul explicitly states in his epistles that Jesus Christ is the manifestation of God's salvation. The verb Ἐπεφάνη is used in Titus (2:11; 3:4) referencing the historical appearance of Jesus. Furthermore, five of the six New Testament uses of the term ἐπιφάνεια are found in the Pastoral Epistles. This noun, in most cases, is applied to Jesus' second coming or manifestation as Savior and judge (1 Tim. 6:14; 2 Tim. 4:1, 8; Titus 2:13), though 2 Tim. 1:10 uses the term to speak of Jesus' historical appearance.²³

²⁰ Quinn and Wacker, *The First and Second Letters to Timothy*, 749.

²¹ For other examples of εἰς σωτηρίαν, see Acts 13:47; Rom 1:16; 10:1, 10; 2 Cor 7:10; Phil 1:19; and 2 Thess 2:13.

²² This understanding of salvation corresponds with Luke's teaching of salvation. See Arthur A. Just Jr. *Luke: 1:1–9:50* (St. Louis; Concordia Publishing House, 1996), 106, who states; "The theme that dominates Luke-Acts is that salvation through Jesus is for everyone."

²³ Larry W. Hurtado, *Lord Jesus Christ* (Grand Rapids; Eerdmans, 2003), 516–17.

Therefore the Scripture itself does not save, but rather leads one unto (εἰς) salvation, i.e., Jesus, the Savior (1:10; Titus 1:4; 2:13).²⁴ This salvation proclaimed by Scripture comes by the means of faith in Jesus Christ. In verse 15, the article τῆς specifies the direct object of the faith, namely Christ (cf. 1:1, 10; 1 Tim. 1:1–2).²⁵ Whether one reads the prepositional phrase to modify the activity of making one wise or the salvation itself makes little difference because it happens through Jesus Christ. As the Christ event fulfills the Old Testament, this gospel brings grace, mercy, and peace from God to those who hear it and believe it (2 Tim. 1:2, 13; 2:1, 10).

Moreover, the Lutheran confessions recognize and affirm the Christocentric nature of the Scriptures. The Apology of the Augsburg Confession states: “All Scripture should be divided into these two chief doctrines, the law and the promises”²⁶ and, throughout the Lutheran Confessions these two doctrines are grounded in Christ.

With regard to the law, the Confessions echo Paul’s point as they proclaim that Christ is promised of the law,²⁷ foreshadowed by the law,²⁸ and where the Scriptures speak of the law Christ is enclosed.²⁹ In addition, the prophets witness to Christ and the law leads one to him.³⁰

²⁴ Ibid., 515, notes the verbal overlap between God and Jesus within the Pastoral Epistles. “Savior is a title given to God (1 Tim. 1:1; 2:3; 4:10; Titus 1:3; 2:10; 3:4) and Jesus (2 Tim. 1:10; Titus 1:4; 2:13; 3:6).”

²⁵ Ibid., 444.

²⁶ Robert Kolb and Timothy J. Wengert, ed., *The Book of Concord: The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2000), 108:5.

²⁷ Ibid., 166.

²⁸ Ibid., 261.22; 264.34ff.

²⁹ Ibid., 172.

³⁰ Ibid., 586.24

Moreover, Christ is the Lord of the law,³¹ he is the end of the law,³² he expounds the law spiritually,³³ and Christ is the one who has freed us from the curse of the law.³⁴

With regard to the promise (i.e., the Gospel) the Lutheran Confessions state that its content is the forgiveness of sin through Christ.³⁵ This gospel promise does away with anyone who would be righteous through love, works, or anything else without Christ.³⁶ Moreover, echoing Paul's words to Timothy, the Confessions state that this promise of salvation is grasped only by faith in Christ.³⁷ Thus whether they speak of the law or the promise, Christ is at the center of the message of the Scriptures.

Scripture Is God-breathed

Last but certainly not least, Paul's words reveal the divine nature of the Scriptures, speaking not only of the origin of these scriptures but of their authority to equip the man of God for service. Paul writes: “πᾶσα γραφή θεόπνευστος καὶ ὠφέλιμος πρὸς διδασκαλίαν, πρὸς ἐλεγμόν, πρὸς ἐπανάρθωσιν, πρὸς παιδείαν τὴν ἐν δικαιοσύνῃ,” (2 Tim. 3:16).

This verse, which is often cited in reference to the doctrine of inspiration, has a great deal of syntactical ambiguity, forcing one to slow down and appreciate Paul's words even more. To begin, George Knight notes that θεόπνευστος is a biblical hapax and that this compound word with a verbal adjective ending –τος could be active or passive. If taken in the active sense, it speaks of Scripture economically, that is, the Scripture breathes out the Spirit of God. If this is a

³¹ Ibid., 564.15

³² Ibid., 125.30; 172

³³ Ibid., 411.182

³⁴ Ibid., 146.179;505.2;591.23

³⁵ Ibid., 127.43; 137.102; 165; 167

³⁶ Ibid., 138.110; 153.219; 280.17

³⁷ Ibid., 127.43; 131.69,70 (cf. 2 Tim. 3:15).

passive verbal form, then it speaks of Scripture epistemologically, indicating that Scripture's origin is the breath of God.³⁸

Knight references the uniform patristic support for the passive reading. In addition, he points out that verbal compounds ending in -τος with θεός normally express an outcome produced by God (e.g., 1 Thess. 4:9).³⁹ Thus with regards to the nature of Scripture Paul's use of the word "θεόπνευστος" seems to highlight the divine origin of Scripture. In other words, every scripture is from the breath of God.

Philip Towner acknowledges that the rules of grammar allow for some ambiguity in the interpretation of the opening phrase of 3:16, πᾶσα γραφή θεόπνευστος καὶ ὠφέλιμος. Three factors lead to the ambiguity. First, the adjective πᾶσα can be translated "all" or "every" depending on whether it modifies a collective noun or one that represents items individually.⁴⁰ Second, γραφή could refer to a scripture (most likely within the Old Testament) or the collective Old Testament. Third, the omission of the verb between "every [all] scripture [Scripture]" and the adjectives θεόπνευστος ("God-breathed") and ὠφέλιμος ("useful") makes the function of these adjectives uncertain. Though the verb "to be" is assumed, it is unclear whether both adjectives serve as its predicate. Whereas the second will be in the predicative position, θεόπνευστος could potentially be read as a predicative adjective along with "useful" or as an attributive adjective modifying γραφή ("every [all] God-breathed Scripture is useful...").

Addressing the first two points, Towner argues convincingly that γραφή denotes an individual passage or writing from the Scriptures, rather than referring to the Scriptures as a collective whole. He bases his conclusion on Paul's and other New Testament writers' use of the

³⁸ Knight, *Commentary on 2 Timothy*, 446.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, 446.

⁴⁰ Towner, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, 585, cites examples for "all" (Matt. 3:15; 28:18; Acts 1:21; Rom.

term to speak of a specific individual scripture passage (cf. 1 Tim. 5:18).⁴¹ In addition, Towner notes the immediate context of Paul's use of specific texts within this epistle.⁴²

Unfortunately, the phrase *πᾶσα γραφή* does not occur anywhere else in the NT to help ascertain the meaning of these words. However, when *πᾶς* is joined to an anarthrous noun, it is usually understood as "every" though this rule is not absolute.⁴³ While one might reason that *πᾶσα* should be read as "every" rather than "all" based on the understanding of *γραφὴ*, the Holy Scriptures mentioned in the previous verse provide the context for these text. Thus it seems Paul is referring to every text of the Holy Scriptures. As a result, commentators like Knight see no significant variance between the collective understanding "all" and the distributive reading "every," for in the end *θεόπνευστος* applies to all the writings in the Holy Scriptures.⁴⁴

The third point of grammatical ambiguity involves the adjectival use of the word *θεόπνευστος*. As the subject *γραφὴ* refers to the Scripture in a distributive rather than collective manner, one's reading of this adjective may allow for a significant variance. For the function of *θεόπνευστος* is either predicative (Every scripture is God-breathed and useful) or attributive (Every God-breathed passage of Scripture is useful). Thus under the attributive use one might conclude that Paul here is referencing those specific passages within Scripture that are inspired, implying that others may not be inspired. Though this understanding of the inspiration of Scripture may resonate with modern biblical scholars or 2nd and 3rd century Gnostics, it is

11:26; Eph. 2:21; and Col. 4:12) and for "every" (John 1:9; Eph. 3:15; and Heb. 9:19).

⁴¹ Mark 12:10; Luke 4:21; John 7:38; Rom. 4:3; Gal. 3:8; and James 2:23.

⁴² Towner, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, 587, notes Paul echoes specific OT texts and stories in this epistle (cf. 2:19; 3:8–9, 11; 4:14, 17–18).

⁴³ Knight, *Commentary on 2 Timothy*, 445.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 445.

inconsistent with the New Testament writers' use and understanding of the OT Scriptures.⁴⁵ Moreover, Paul's assertion about the holy Scriptures earlier seems to indicate a power that pervades the collective work making one wise unto salvation.

The syntactical ambiguity here cannot be clarified by merely grammatical rules, for the construction of *πᾶς* followed by a noun and then an adjective is used to convey both attributive and predicative meanings within Paul's epistles.⁴⁶ Some argue that because the focus here is on the usefulness of Scripture, the term *θεόπνευστος* is added on attributively in the same way "holy" modifies writings in verse 15.⁴⁷ But to take this position one must read *καὶ* as "also," which seems to be unnecessary in the sentence structure. Yet, the natural understanding of *καὶ* functioning as a conjunction seems to suggest that "God-breathed" and "useful" should be joined together and read in the same manner, both attributively or predicatively.⁴⁸ As a result, one understands *θεόπνευστος* in the predicative sense as it is joined with another clearly predicative adjective as is the case in 1 Tim. 4:4. Thus Paul states, "Every scripture (within the context of the Holy Scriptures) is God-breathed (i.e., originates from God) and useful..."

The divine origin of these scriptures implies that they have the authority to equip the man of God in the following fourfold manner described for the purpose God has for him. That is, just as the salvation for which the holy Scriptures make one wise comes through faith in Christ (i.e., Christ is the ultimate source of salvation), the usefulness of every scripture derives from its divine source. For it is God who ultimately teaches, rebukes, corrects, and trains one in

⁴⁵ Nowhere in the New Testament is there any indication that the writers viewed only specific passages of Scripture to be inspired. Paul's use of the phrase "every scripture" speaks to the function of the text.

⁴⁶ Towner, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, 588, references 2 Tim. 3:17; and 4:18 as examples of the attributive reading and 1 Tim. 4:4 for the predicative reading.

⁴⁷ Dibelius and Conzelmann. *The Pastoral Epistles*, 120.

⁴⁸ Knight, *Commentary on 2 Timothy*, 447.

righteousness through the means of these scriptures. Thus as the term θεόπνευστος is applied to the Scriptures it not only clarifies their source but highlights their authority in the lives of God's people.⁴⁹ Paul consistently notes this divine authority when referring to the Scriptures whether he is addressing their role in making one wise unto salvation or their role in equipping the individual for every good work. Thus the divine origin of the Scriptures is important for both the passive and active righteousness it creates in the life of Christian.⁵⁰

Reflecting on these words one finds that Paul's instruction of the nature of Scripture reflects both the divine and human characteristics that come together in Christ for God's salvific purpose; God's Word embodied in human flesh. Paul's words to Timothy provide a threefold expression of the nature of Scripture: communication within the communion of saints, Christ-centered content, and divinely created (i.e., God-breathed). Though perhaps not definitive, this threefold understanding of Scripture provides a helpful guideline to assess the use of the biblical text by various study Bibles. Later this paper will examine whether the selected study bibles recognize and acknowledge these essential characteristics in their description and use of the biblical text.

Function of Scripture

Having explored the nature of Scripture within the context of Paul's words to Timothy, now this study continues to examine the function of Scripture, that is, what it does.

⁴⁹ Paul refers to this divine authority throughout his letters (e.g., 2 Thess. 4:8).

⁵⁰ Kolb and Arand, *The Genius of Luther's Theology*, 25, concerning the two kinds of righteousness state: "The passive righteousness of faith provides the core identity of a person; the active righteousness of love flows from that core identity out into the world." Robert Kolb describes the distinction between the two kinds of righteousness as the "nervous system" running through the body of Christian teaching as presented by the reformers. Luther refers to the two kinds of righteousness as "our theology" in his Galatians Commentary (1535). Luther clarified the distinction between our passive righteousness, which is bestowed on us by God through creation and redemption in Christ, and our active righteousness that describes our relationship with others in the world. This distinction keeps one's works out of the discussion of our salvation; it also allows one to see the inseparable nature of these two kinds of righteousness, as one's active love for others flows from his or her passive righteousness in Christ.

Primary Function of Scripture

Whereas Paul states the primary function of the holy Scriptures is to make one wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus, he continues to identify a subordinate function of the Scriptures, that is, to equip the man of God for every good work. Whereas the first function is related to the passive righteousness bestowed on one by God, the second expresses the Scriptures' role in the active righteousness at work in the believer. This subordinate relationship rests on the fact that the one being equipped is not just anyone, but the man of God. Thus his identity precedes his performance. Moreover, Paul clarifies how the Scriptures are used to function in this manner by identifying four specific functions or applications of the Scriptures.

One can surmise that salvation in Christ is the primary purpose of the Scriptures based on Paul's instruction earlier in the letter and throughout his epistles. In 2 Tim. 1:9, Paul explains that this salvation in Christ is God's very own purpose. Moreover, Paul continues to explain that this grace was given in Christ before the creation of the world (Eph. 1:4). Furthermore, this salvific purpose moves Paul to endure hardship, suffering, and every good work (2:10). In his letter to the Romans, Paul expresses the role of Scriptures in bringing one to salvation through faith in Christ stating: "Consequently, faith comes from hearing the message, and the message is heard through the word of Christ" (Rom 10:17). Thus God produces faith in a person by means of the Scriptures' proclamation of Christ to the end that one is wise for salvation.

Subordinate Function of Scripture

Paul continues to expound on how Scripture equips the man of God for every good work. In other words, just as Scripture makes one righteous through faith in Christ, it is also useful for activating that righteousness in him. Explaining how Scripture is useful in equipping one for good works, Paul lists four specific functions or applications of Scripture (teaching, rebuking, correcting, and training in righteousness).

πᾶσα γραφή θεόπνευστος καὶ ὠφέλιμος πρὸς διδασκαλίαν, πρὸς ἐλεγμὸν, πρὸς ἐπανάρθωσιν, πρὸς παιδείαν τὴν ἐν δικαιοσύνῃ, ἵνα ἄρτιος ᾖ ὁ τοῦ θεοῦ ἄνθρωπος, πρὸς πᾶν ἔργον ἀγαθὸν ἐξηρτισμένος. (2 Tim. 3:16–17)

Though this list of the functions of Scripture may not be necessarily a comprehensive list, it seems to be pedagogically formed, rather than some random list. As Philip Towner points out there seems to be a chiasmic structure to this selection of words, reflecting the process by which one directs and delivers one from false teaching into a life sound in the faith (2 Tim. 2:24–26; Titus 1:13).⁵¹ The chiasmic structure is set forth as the list addresses both positive and negative beliefs and behaviors in the pattern of A-B-B-A.⁵²

First, the term “teaching” (διδασκαλίαν) seems to describe instructing by means of content.⁵³ Here Paul states the Scripture is useful for the activity of teaching positive or true beliefs. This might include teachings concerning God, humankind, and their relationship with one another. Not only is teaching a predominant concept in the Pastoral Epistles, in Romans 15:4, Paul explicitly states, “For everything that was written in the past was written to *teach* us, so that through endurance and the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope.”⁵⁴ Furthermore, the many Old Testament references used by New Testament writers support Paul in this use of Scripture (e.g., Heb. 1:5–14, et al.).

Throughout his epistles Paul uses the Scripture to teach true beliefs. Teaching the Romans concerning the topic of faith, he cites Habakkuk 2:4. When Paul teaches the Corinthians about stewardship and the goal of equality, Paul finds it profitable to reference Exodus 16:18.⁵⁵ When

⁵¹ Towner, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, 592.

⁵² Knight, *Commentary on 2 Timothy*, 449, makes the distinction between creed and conduct.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, 449. See also 1 Tim. 1:10

⁵⁴ See also Titus 1:9.

⁵⁵ 2 Cor. 8:13–15.

teaching the Ephesians about Christ and the church, Paul uses Genesis 2:24.⁵⁶ These are just three of the many examples of Paul using the Scriptures to teach the truth to people. Furthermore, this use of Scripture corresponds with Jesus' use of the Old Testament to teach others (e.g., Luke 24:26, 27; 45).

Paul also finds the Scriptures useful for rebuking. In contrast to teaching proper beliefs, the term “rebuking” (ἐλεγμὸν) may refer to admonishing negative or false beliefs. Whereas this is the only use of the term “ἐλεγμὸν” in the New Testament, it is a cognate with the ἐλέγχειν of Titus 1:9, 13; 2:15; and 2 Tim. 4:2. Some suggest that “one could infer that the setting right and pointing to repentance implied by this rebuke/correction/proof, are to proceed from the OT Scripture itself.”⁵⁷ Thus, whereas the second term corresponds to the first as it speaks of content or belief, it differs as it addresses the negative rather than teaching the positive.

Paul instructs Titus to “hold firmly to the trustworthy message as it has been taught” not only to encourage others in sound doctrine, but also to refute those who oppose it (Titus 1:9). Paul illustrates this use of Scripture in 2 Tim. 2:19, as he cites Numbers 16:5 in rebuke of Hymenaeus and Philetus, who with their teachings have wandered away from the truth (2:18). In Paul's rebuke of the notion that the Jews are more righteous than the Gentiles (Rom. 3:9ff.), he finds it useful to cite scriptures throughout the Old Testament to make his point.⁵⁸

Once again Paul is not the only New Testament writer to employ the Scriptures in this manner. The Gospel writers record Jesus using Scripture in this way to rebuke the devil (Luke 4:4). Later Jesus rebukes the Sadducees' false belief or lack of belief in the resurrection with the

⁵⁶ Eph. 5:31.

⁵⁷ Quinn and Wacker, *The First and Second Letters to Timothy*, 763.

⁵⁸ Paul finds it profitable to cite Ps. 5:9; 10:7; 14:1–3; 36:1; 53:1–3; 140:3; Eccles. 7:20; and Isa. 59:7,8.

use of Exodus 3:6. Thus Paul, along with others in the New Testament, uses the Scriptures not only to teach true beliefs, but also to rebuke wrong beliefs or teachings.

Next, the term “correcting” (ἐπανόρθωσιν) may refer to altering one’s negative behavior. Thus the focus shifts from using Scripture to address belief or content to behavior or conduct. The chiasmic construction continues by addressing negative behavior. Like the previous term, ἐπανόρθωσιν is a New Testament hapax. However, Knight notes that this type of correcting refers to one’s conduct, as seen in the extra biblical use of the term.⁵⁹

Paul speaks of this corrective function of Scriptures in First Corinthians 10:1–13, as he explains the direct application of the things of the Old Testament Scriptures to the lives of his present audience, that is, examples from the Old Testament warn others to correct their behavior. Moreover, Paul illustrates this use as he addresses the church in Corinth concerning the open sexual immorality within the congregation by correcting its toleration of sin with the words of Deuteronomy 17:7: “Expel the wicked man from among you.”⁶⁰ Later he cites Genesis to correct the behavior of joining in with prostitutes (I Cor 6:16–17).

As Paul writes to Timothy, he describes the godless behavior of people in the last days, including: loving themselves and money, boasting, being disobedient to parents, being unforgiving, slandering, and living without self-control, among other things (3:1–7). Paul’s correction of false teachers and their godless ways comes by means of a reference to the account of Jannes and Jambres’ opposition to Moses, eluding to their final destructive outcome (2 Tim. 3:7–9).

Christ too understood Scripture to function in this corrective manner. In his account of the rich man and Lazarus, the rich man pleads for a miracle to be performed so that his brothers might

⁵⁹ Knight, *Commentary on 2 Timothy*, 449.

correct their ways and not suffer the same condemnation. However, the only correction offered to them is the Scriptures, that is, Moses and the Prophets (Luke 16:27–31). Thus Scripture is used not only to address what one thinks, but what one does.

The chiasmic list of functions of Scripture draws to an end with the phrase “training in righteousness” (παιδείαν τὴν ἐν δικαιοσύνῃ), which seems to describe instructing one in conduct. That is, the Scriptures are useful in guiding one to positive behavior.

The idea of “παιδεία” was central in Greco-Roman culture. Through this training the child would grow in virtue with the goal of becoming civilized (i.e., self-controlled, upright, serious).⁶¹ Within the biblical context, training children was the role of the father or head of the household, as Paul instructs fathers to bring their children “up in the training (παιδεία) and instruction of the Lord.”⁶² Thus the father is called to train his children, as Yahweh fatherly trained the children of Israel (cf. Septuagint Hosea 5:2; Hebrews 12:9). This may at times involve discipline but the emphasis here is to guide one to perform in the proper manner.

Here “righteousness” (δικαιοσύνη) refers to right conduct. This “righteousness” can be experienced as visible uprightness of behavior (2 Tim. 2:22).⁶³ Its inclusion in this list helps one to recognize that Paul is not referring to righteousness in the sense of justification, but rather the active righteousness that flows from the passive righteousness that one receives apart from the Law (Rom 1:17).⁶⁴

⁶⁰ 1 Cor 5:13.

⁶¹ Towner, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, 591.

⁶² Eph. 6:4.

⁶³ Towner, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, 591.

⁶⁴ Quinn and Wacker, *The First and Second Letters to Timothy*, 764, describe this “righteousness as the ‘actualization’ of God’s free gift of righteousness in the personal history of each believer.”

Paul's use of Scripture within his epistles illustrates this pedagogical function. In Ephesians 6:1, Paul trains children to obey their parents with the use of the fourth commandment, "Honor your father and mother that it may go well with you and that you may enjoy long life on the earth."⁶⁵ In his first epistle to Timothy, Paul trains the church to honor their elders citing a passage from Deuteronomy 25:4 along with perhaps Jesus' own words recorded in Luke 10:7: "The elders who direct the affairs of the church well are worthy of double honor, especially those whose work is preaching and teaching. For the Scripture says, 'Do not muzzle the ox while it is treading out the grain,' and 'The worker deserves his wages.'"⁶⁶ In this way, Paul's use of Scripture corresponds with Jesus' pedagogical use of the Scripture, guiding others to the proper behavior of loving God and their neighbor (e.g., Matt. 22:37–39).

Paul's teaching and use of Scripture seem to support various applications or uses of these holy texts. In addition, Paul uses the same text in various ways. Whereas, for example, Paul uses Isa. 45:23 to correct the Romans who are judging one another (Rom. 14:10–13), he references the same text when teaching the Philippians concerning the attitude of Jesus (Phil. 2:5–11). A clearer example of the same text being used in various manners is Paul's and James' use of Genesis 15:6. Whereas Paul uses the text to teach the truth of justification by faith (Rom 4), James employs the Scripture to correct the wrong behavior of those who fail to care for the needy while claiming to have faith (James 2:14–24). This highlights one's need to not only have knowledge of the uses of Scripture but also the knowledge of one's hearers in order to know how to use the Scripture appropriately.

Finally, the *ἵνα* clause in 2 Tim. 3:17 explains that the purpose for using Scripture to teach, rebuke, correct, and train in righteousness is "so that the man of God may be thoroughly

⁶⁵ Deut. 5:16.

equipped for every good work.” Thus one might conclude that Paul’s argument about the Scripture’s inspiration and usefulness is less academic and more practical, as its chief purpose is to equip the man of God for every good work.⁶⁷

Some contend that the phrase “ὁ τοῦ θεοῦ ἄνθρωπος” should be applied generally to all God’s people, while others view it as a technical term applying to specifically Timothy in the apostolic ministry. Whereas the context of this epistle seems to suggest Paul is writing to Timothy concerning his role as a teacher and evangelist in the church (2 Tim. 2:2, 15; 4:5), this is no reason to preclude the function of Scripture in the lives of all God’s people, equipping them for good works particularly since Jesus and Paul use it in this manner in their preaching and teaching of God’s people (Eph. 6:17; Rom. 10:14–15).

In conclusion, Paul’s charge to Timothy informs one both of the nature and function of Scripture, what it is and what it does. The nature of Scripture can be expressed in a threefold manner for it is communicated within the context of the communion of saints, Christocentric in content, and divine in its creation. While Scripture’s primary purpose is to make one wise unto salvation through faith in Christ, it also functions in the fourfold manner of teaching, rebuking, correcting, and training for righteousness for the purpose of equipping God’s people for every good work. The next section will address how study Bibles reflect and or ignore the nature and function of Scripture as expressed in 2 Timothy.

⁶⁶ 1 Tim. 5:17,18.

⁶⁷ Towner, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, 591. For those who think “ὁ τοῦ θεοῦ ἄνθρωπος” should be applied generally to all God’s people, see Marshall, 796; Lock, 111; Spicq, 789; and Hanson, 153. For those who view it as a technical term applying to specifically Timothy in the apostolic ministry, see Quinn-Wacker, 771, Kelly, 204; Fee, 280; and Towner, 593.

CHAPTER 3

THE NATURE AND FUNCTION OF SCRIPTURE EXPRESSED IN STUDY BIBLES

In the previous chapter the examination of Paul's words to Timothy concerning Scripture revealed important aspects of its nature and function. The nature of Scripture is one that is communicated within the context of the communion of saints, Christocentric in content, and divinely inspired. While Scripture's primary purpose is to make one wise unto salvation through faith in Christ, it also functions in the fourfold manner of teaching, rebuking, correcting, and training for righteousness for the purpose of equipping God's people for every good work.

This chapter will continue by investigating the recent history of study Bibles and the specific study Bibles important for the research of this project. The goal is to observe how the recent material production of study Bibles represents or ignores these theological principles concerning the nature and function of Scripture as expressed in 2 Timothy. This chapter will provide a brief overview of the rise and status of study Bibles in light of these issues along with a description of how various study Bibles address the same text (i.e., Luke 16:19–31). The chapter concludes with an in depth study of four recently published study Bibles (The ESV Study Bible by Crossway; Lutheran Study Bible by Augsburg; Concordia Self-Study Bible by CPH; and The Lutheran Study Bible by CPH), examining their view of the nature and function of Scripture and manner in which it is expressed in their treatment of Luke 16:19–31.

A Word on the Bondage of the Word

In the Middle Ages, Bibles contained commentaries in the margins along with illustrations, pictures, and translations. Some manuscripts even provide tables containing lists of parallel passages within the Gospels.⁶⁸ Though some, like King James, called for the production of a Bible without any additional materials in the margins, the desire to produce and possess Bibles containing more than the biblical text remained strong.

Today's study Bibles, though no comparison to the artistically crafted medieval Bibles, can be just as colorful and packed with even more information to illuminate the Holy Scriptures. Glossaries, indexes, maps, outlines, and notes are just a few of the many additional contents that accompany the biblical text.⁶⁹ Moreover, some now include CDs and access to even more information on corresponding websites.⁷⁰

With the rise of study Bibles in the last two decades, surprisingly little has been written on these Bibles bound with commentary. Study Bibles are rarely reviewed.⁷¹ Annual articles in *Biblical Archaeology Review* provide inventories and general comparisons of study Bibles without dealing with the application for Bible study. The flood of study Bibles in the past few decades has made it difficult even to keep up with these comparisons, let alone measure the impact they have on readers.

Perhaps even the resources and notes help to draw attention to a subtle shift in the nature and the function of study Bibles. With the mass of information combined with the biblical text, it seems the lines of distinction blur between biblical commentaries and study Bibles. The Matthew

⁶⁸ "Review of Study Bibles," *The Biblical Archaeology Review* 20, no. 2 (1994): 68.

⁶⁹ Ibid. See "Review of Study Bibles" for a listing of characteristic found in 51 study bibles.

⁷⁰ The *ESV Study Bible* provides access to a website filled with information that goes beyond the boundaries of bound book.

⁷¹ Lloyd Bailey, "Study Bibles: A Comparison," *Quarterly Review* 6, no. 4 (Winter 1986): 44.

Henry Study Bible (Riverside-Word), for example, has condensed a 300 year old, 7,000 page commentary into one study Bible. Ironically, while more and more information is added to the biblical text, the general readership has become less and less biblically literate. Knowledge about the community in which the text was communicated, its central content, and its authoritative origin within the general readership fades in comparison to Paul's expression of the nature of Scripture in 2 Timothy. Thus study Bibles are filled with comments to help the reader along. Included in some of the comments are applications for the reader's life. The *NIV Life Application Bible* explicitly states that purpose in its title, intending to help the reader apply the text to his or her life.

Still, some have cautioned against this movement toward application, suggesting the prescriptive task of drawing implications and applications from the text should remain in commentaries and sermons, while study Bibles should function solely in a descriptive manner.⁷² However, this might be wishful thinking, as Valerie Hotchkiss points out, "translators and editors often express—intentionally or not—their own doctrinal allegiances and theological views."⁷³ Furthermore, whether the additional information of the study Bible is intended to be informative or formative, it expresses a specific hermeneutical view of the text, which will affect one's application of the text.

Lloyd Bailey believes that "niche Bible publishing has transformed the way people read and regard the sacred text."⁷⁴ Whereas specialized versions of the Bible appeared with the *Thompson Chain Reference* (1908) and the *Scofield Bible* (1909), niche Bible refers to the

⁷² See Donald F. Deer, "Report on Swahili Study Bible Workshop" *The Bible Translator* 39, no. 2 (1988): 238.

⁷³ Hotchkiss, "Bible Landscapes," 41.

⁷⁴ Mark Fackler, "The Second Coming of the Holy Writ: Niche Bibles and the Manufacture of Market Segments," *New Paradigms for Bible Study*. (London: T&T Clark, 2004), 71–88.

phenomenon begun in the late 1980's, in which a Bible translation is packaged with additional resources to appeal to a fraction of the Bible-buying market.⁷⁵

As others have noted, the titles of many Bibles tell you more about the buyer than the Bible,⁷⁶ as the Holy Scriptures are packaged for a specific demographic. Whereas a Bible was once considered to be useful for all people at all times of life, various study Bibles suggest the need for a specialized Bible for each individual and every specific time in one's life. Whereas Timothy knew the Holy Scriptures from infancy (2 Tim. 3:15), now one finds the specialized production of children Bibles and Youth Bibles. The *Youthwalk Devotional Bible*, for example, surrounds the biblical text with devotions directed to its intended teenage audience and their daily experience. *The Women's Study Bible* (2009),⁷⁷ for example, targets a specific gender and addresses corresponding needs and concerns. Still others are produced to speak to a specific race, as is the case with the *Aspire: The New Women of Color Study Bible* (2007). Other Bibles speak to one's vocation, for example, *The Businesswoman's Bible* (1989). Still others are produced with a specific topic in mind such as *The Financial Stewardship Bible* (2011) or the *Archaeological Study Bible* (2005).

And while the title often reflects the buyer, the content often reflects the editor. Mark Flacker points out that while most Bibles are purchased by women, most Bibles are still produced by men.⁷⁸ Thus, in a seemingly gender neutral Bible such as *The Leadership Bible* (1998) resources lean heavily toward the male perspective. When adding writings from leaders,

⁷⁵ Ibid., 71.

⁷⁶ David Schmitt, "Use of Scripture in Recent Study Bibles" (paper presented at the Concordia Seminary Theological Symposium, Clayton, MO, September 21, 2010).

⁷⁷ Catherine Clark Kroeger and Mary J. Evans, ed., *The Women's Study Bible* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009).

⁷⁸ The same could be said of youth Bibles written by adults.

for example, there are 13 written by men for every one written by a woman.⁷⁹ In addition, The Lutheran Study Bible expresses the view of its Lutheran Editor and publisher. Thus, one finds a Bible combined with Martin Luther's Small Catechism and notes throughout the Bible referencing Luther's view on the text.

Since the biblical text is being packaged in additional resources driven strongly by the interest of the intended reader and the editor, one should consider how the nature and function of Scripture is represented in these texts. Most articles about study Bibles deal with the marketing aspect and ignore the hermeneutical impact these tools have on one studying the biblical text. John Bombaro views the use of study Bibles as an appeal to niche markets as a triumph of post-Kantian subjectivity over pre-modern objectivity.⁸⁰ This in turn leads to the "individual as self-feeder and arbiter of the truth."⁸¹ Whereas the sales demonstrate that study Bibles meet the need of the market, the question remains do they meet the needs of the Bible study?

Consider how some of the aforementioned study Bibles address the account of the rich man and Lazarus in Luke 16:19–31. The *Archaeological Study Bible* addresses some cultural points in the text, providing historical context and understanding for concepts. It informs the reader, for example, of the significance of the purple garments and the meaning of "Abraham's side."⁸² Concerning "hell" note 16:23 directs the reader to the note in Matthew 5:22, which then directs the reader to a full page essay on hell.⁸³ The approach is informative with no intent to apply the text to one's life. Moreover, the study notes provide no further teaching concerning Christ.

⁷⁹ Ibid., 72.

⁸⁰ Thus publishers are more concerned with giving people what they want, a comfortable application, rather than what they need, God's will and purpose for their lives, regardless of how uncomfortable that might be.

⁸¹ John Bombaro, "Bible Inc." *Modern Reformation* 19, no. 4 (July/August 2010): 29.

⁸² Walter C. Kaiser Jr., ed., *Archaeological Study Bible* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2005), 1701.

⁸³ Ibid., 946.

The *Youthwalk Devotional Bible* provides an entire page adjacent to the text titled, “We’re to Use Wealth, Not Abuse It.”⁸⁴ The devotion begins with the narrative of a game show host asking two youth why they want money. Mark wants to use it for himself, while Elizabeth plans to give to charity and pay for her education. The devotion then invites the reader to look at 1 Tim. 6:17–19 to learn the importance of putting one’s hope in God and not money. The devotion concludes by encouraging the reader to consider how he or she is using money, with a final look at Luke 16:10–15 to hear “Jesus’ views on wealth.” The devotion is moralistically focused on the how youth should use wealth.

The *Women’s Study Bible* has only one note pertaining to the Luke 16:19–31. The note summarizes the text in three short lines, apparently because there are no women in the narrative.⁸⁵ In contrast, much is written about Jesus’ word concerning divorce with application to women and expansive notes address 17:20–37 where Jesus speaks of Lot’s wife.⁸⁶ Thus it seems that if the text has no connection to women little attention is given to it in the notes. Here the study Bible functions in an extremely literalistic manner with the biblical text. Rather than exploring how the words of Luke 16 would be appropriated by women in their study, it only engages the text when a woman is mentioned in the text. Thus the biblical study is limited to explicit references to women rather than encouraging women to study when reading all of Scripture. Apparently, the Scripture that is considered significant for women is Scripture that actually mentions women rather than all of Scripture as it is incorporated into a woman’s spiritual life.

⁸⁴ Bruce Wilkinson, *Youthwalk Devotional Bible* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1992), 1110.

⁸⁵ Kroeger and Evans, *The Women’s Study Bible*, 1232.

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, 1233.

The Financial Stewardship Bible highlights verses 19–25 of the text in green.⁸⁷ This suggests that this portion of the narrative addresses attitudes and heart issues that relate to money and possessions, principles of management, or serves as an example of those who get it right or wrong.⁸⁸ The latter seems to be the emphasis with the rich man and Lazarus. The highlighted words draw the reader’s attention to a moralistic point in the text, ignoring other aspects of the narrative like the importance of listening to Moses and the prophets. Along with the previous examples, this demonstrates again how niche Bibles fail to provide a holistic treatment of the biblical text and rather fragment the message of the text by highlighting specific topics related to the topicality of the bible or the interest of the intended reader.

This small sample of the material production of study Bibles seems to suggest the exalted role of the intended reader in the formation of these Bibles—most likely because the reader is the consumer. That is, study Bible materials have been constructed according to certain aspects of the intended reader, whether it be one’s age, race, or gender or interest (e.g. archaeology). Thus the market driven approach seems to have led to Bibles that are packaged in a manner that tells one much more about the potential buyer than the person of whom the biblical text speaks, namely Jesus Christ. As a result, the message attached to the Word of God seems to speak more about the works of man (i.e., moralism) than the works of God in Christ (i.e., the Gospel). Moreover, the focus on the individual further isolates the Christian from the community as it categorizes the reader’s experience with the biblical text rather than highlighting Scripture’s normative role in the beliefs and behaviors of all people at all times.

⁸⁷ Elizabeth Presutti, ed., *The Financial Stewardship Bible* (New York: American Bible Society, 2011), 1084.

⁸⁸ Elizabeth Presutti, ed., *The Core Reflect and Respond Section* (New York: American Bible Society, 2011), 12.

The study now moves from the overview of the recent history of study Bibles to the literature review for this particular project, as it examines the nature and function of the Scriptures in the context of four recently published study Bibles (The ESV Study Bible by Crossway; Lutheran Study Bible by Augsburg; Concordia Self-Study Bible by CPH; and The Lutheran Study Bible by CPH). This study will focus on explicit statements in the study Bible text. It will seek to clarify the understanding of the biblical text and how it relates to the additional resources as presented by the study Bibles. Attention will also be given to the manner in which the study Bibles present the biblical text with additional commentary. A comparison of the four study Bibles' treatment of the same text (Lk 16:19–31) will illustrate the various approaches.

ESV Study Bible

A team of 95 evangelical Christian scholars created the *ESV Study Bible (ESVSB)* in 2008 to help people understand the Bible in a deeper way, that is, “to encounter the timeless truth of God’s Word as a powerful, compelling, life-changing reality.”⁸⁹ The introduction of the study Bible draws a clear distinction between the nature of biblical text as the “very words of God to us” and the nature of the study notes, “which are merely human words.”⁹⁰ Furthermore, it states explicitly that: “the words of the Bible are infinitely more valuable than the words of the notes.”⁹¹ The introduction continues to expound on the nature and function of the biblical text with supporting references from Scripture. The words of the Bible are described as the words of the Creator, truthful, pure, powerful, and wise and righteous. God’s people are directed to read them with reverence and awe and with joy and delight. Through these words God gives eternal

⁸⁹ Lane Dennis, ed., *ESV Study Bible* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles, 2008), 9.

⁹⁰ Ibid.

life and nourishes one's spiritual life in this present world.⁹² Here, the text alludes to both the primary and subordinate functions of Scripture mentioned in 2 Timothy.

Study notes and many other study Bible resources provide information about the background of the text, explanation for difficult phrases and words, and connections to other parts of the Bible. Essays on various thematic and doctrinal topics are placed at the end of the Bible to separate them from the biblical text, again highlighting the distinction between the biblical text and the commentary. Though it is clearly stated that the doctrinal view of the study Bible is classic evangelical orthodoxy, overall the study notes are designed to inform the reader about the text, while there is some application to one's daily life. However, from the beginning to the end of the study Bible, one is encouraged to focus on the words of the Bible, "asking God to speak through his Word to the situation of our life and to draw us near to himself."⁹³

The additional resources are viewed as functioning in the teaching role that has existed through the history of the church, going back to Paul, Phillip, and even Moses. The author of each article and set of study notes is clearly stated in the beginning of the Bible.⁹⁴ It is with this understanding that the *ESVSB* hopes to provide explanation and teaching to help people come to a deeper understanding of God's Word and the gospel, and to provide a resource for the edification of God's people around the world.⁹⁵ Here, one finds recognition of the reception of Scripture within the communication of the communion of saints, both past and present. In contrast to the Lutheran Study Bibles it reflects the collaborative effort of Christians beyond a

⁹¹ Ibid.

⁹² Ibid.,

⁹³ Ibid., Note the contrast here to those study Bibles that are created for a specific situation in life (e.g., youth).

⁹⁴ Ibid., 13–18.

⁹⁵ Ibid., 10.

specific denomination.⁹⁶

The *ESVSB* clearly states the nature of Scripture in a congruent manner with Paul's instruction to Timothy, acknowledging its divine inspiration, Christocentric content, and recognizing the communication within the communion of saints and the role of teachers. It also recognizes the function of Scripture to bring salvation through faith in Christ and equip the people of God, though not in the same terms used in 2 Timothy.

With regards to the treatment of Luke 16:19–31, the *ESVSB* clearly identifies Wayne Grudem (General Editor) and Thomas Schreiner (NT Editor) as the sources of the study notes for Luke. The notes are predominately informative (e.g. note 19–20 explains regal splendor of purple clothes). Worth noting, the account is described as a parable (n 16:19–20). Thus readers are cautioned not to press details for doctrinal significance concerning the afterlife (n. 22–23 and n. 24). Concerning the conversation between heaven and hell, the note states that “nowhere else in Scripture is there any indication that there will be personal communication between those in heaven and those in hell.”⁹⁷ Here, one sees the use of Scripture to argue against an aspect of the account in the text with respect to its doctrinal significance. Thus other Scripture passages are used to teach with regards to a specific belief about the nature of the afterlife.

The appeal to Scripture indirectly demonstrates the authoritative view of the divinely inspired Scriptures. For the notes do not lean on reason, but the Word of God. Moreover, the Christocentric nature of the text comes out in a reading of the notes as the notes speak to the fact that Moses and the prophets all testify to Jesus as the true Messiah.

⁹⁶ For example, Lutheran scholars like Walter A Maier III and Paul Raabe provided the notes for Nahum and Obadiah.

⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, 1992, Here the principle of Scripture interprets Scripture is used to address uncertainty in the text.

Lutheran Study Bible (ELCA)

The *Lutheran Study Bible (LSB)*, published by Augsburg Fortress in 2009, will be the next study Bible under examination. The introductory section of the *LSB* presents the view of Scripture foundational for this study Bible, along with a description of its nature. The opening lines state the scriptural view of the work:

Lutherans share with other Christians this foundational understanding: The Bible is the Word of God, and through it God's Spirit speaks to us to create and sustain Christian faith and fellowship for service in the world. The Bible shapes our lives individually and together as the church of Christ. The 'Confession of Faith' in the Constitution of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America states: "This church accepts the canonical Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments as the inspired Word of God and the authoritative source and norm of its proclamation, faith, and life. (2.03)."⁹⁸

Grounded in this view of the Scriptures that recognizes the divinely inspired nature of the Word along with its function of shaping the lives of individually and corporately, the ELCA developed a new study Bible. Yet, it is noted that the creation of this text originated out of the "Book of Faith" initiative of 2007 that invites all to "Open Scripture. Join the Conversation." While this may be recognition of the communication that takes place within the communion of saints, it might also imply that the understanding of these formative Scriptures is open to discussion.⁹⁹

The introduction continues to describe the nature of the study Bible as a means to display the gifts of the church (i.e., influential teaching theologians) and insights for the sake of those who study God's Word. Thus the study Bible is meant to be a study guide to the Scriptures

⁹⁸ Tim Larson, ed., *Lutheran Study Bible* (Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 2009), 15.

⁹⁹ Ibid., 1881, The notes for 1 Cor. 6:9–11 provide a discussion of the terms *μαλακοὶ* and *ἀρσενικοῖται* entering recent scholarship's view that this is not speaking of homosexuality in contrast to the traditional understanding. Moreover, a discussion note asks the question: "How do Paul's views on sex and marriage here compare with the best moral reflection in our culture and the experiences of the faithful today?"

utilizing the gifted theologians of the church and the “best of modern scholarship.”¹⁰⁰ In addition, to Lutheran scholars, one might also consider how the study Bible integrates Luther himself, as a scholar. The *LSB* provides a section in the middle of the Bible entitled, “Martin Luther on the Bible.” This section addresses a variety of topics including how Luther read the Bible, law and gospel, the Bible as the Word of God, and Scripture interprets Scripture. Though at times the words of Luther are cited in these articles, overall the content is made up of secondary sources rather than primary sources. In contrast, consider the study Bibles of the LCMS. The *CSSB* while heavily influenced by Lutheran contributors and editors, references Luther almost entirely through primary sources cited in the introduction section of most books. The more recent *TLSB* shares words of Luther throughout the study notes. Furthermore, whereas the *LSB* has an article on the Luther’s Small Catechism, *TLSB* includes the Small Catechism, along with a section explaining what is Lutheran about the study Bible.

In the *Lutheran Study Bible*, an article on Martin Luther’s use of the Bible explains how Luther used the principles of law and gospel to understand Scripture, believing that these were not his own invention, but that they originated in the Bible itself.¹⁰¹ In speaking of Luther’s use of the law, the article expresses its function of “teaching, curbing evil, and providing a standard of righteousness that guides human life.”¹⁰² Moreover, it is stated that the law functions to drive people to the promise of the gospel. Defining the gospel as the gracious promise of God in Christ, the article continues with words from Luther concerning the relationship between Christ and the Scriptures: “The Scriptures,” Luther stated, “must be understood in favor of Christ, not against him. For that reason they must either refer to him or must not be held to be true

¹⁰⁰ Ibid.

¹⁰¹ Ibid., 1521.

¹⁰² Ibid., 1522.

Scriptures.”¹⁰³ Thus Luther’s view that Christ is the center of Scripture is clearly stated as a voice in the conversation.

The conversation continues with study notes that are placed along the margins to guide the reader. The study notes displayed throughout the work are few in number in comparison to other study Bibles but the editors have classified the notes so that readers are aware of their various functions. The notes have a variety of functions that are designated by specific icons.

“**World of the Bible** notes explore people, places, events, and artifacts that are mentioned in the Bible. These may also describe how a particular book may have been written and what literary form it takes.

Bible Concepts notes focus on ideas and theological insights. Here one will find connections between how such concepts are expressed in different books and how OT themes influence the NT.

Lutheran Perspectives notes are introduced by a key question that connects a Bible verse or passage with Lutheran theological perspectives, teachings, or practices.

Faith Reflection questions encourage individuals and groups to think about and discuss the meaning of some Bible texts or study notes.”¹⁰⁴

These categories of notes identified by specific symbols allows the reader to pick and choose what type of notes he or she wants to read. If the reader is not Lutheran, for example, he or she might choose not to bother reading the Lutheran Perspective notes.

A review of Luke 16:19–31 will help illustrate how the biblical text is incorporated into the study Bible. There are only three comments in the margin with regards to this text. Richard W. Swanson is clearly identified as the author of these notes. All three notes are designated as

¹⁰³ Ibid.

“World of the Bible” notes. The note for verse 19 explains the royal and Roman significance of the purple colors of the rich man’s clothing. It continues to explain the social circumstances in which land owners were turned into servants by Roman colonizers. Swanson infers that the hearers would not feel sorry for the rich man. In verse 20, the note states that the Greek name “Lazarus” may be translated as “thrown at the rich man’s door.”¹⁰⁵ Finally, the note for verse 24 emphasizes that the man gives commands even from Hades, yet will not speak directly to Lazarus. The notes seem to be informative, providing what might be referred to as cultural clarity. Still, the emotional draw is to connect the reader with Lazarus, whereas Jesus spoke this story to the Pharisees, who loved money, men who would have identified with the rich man.

Overall the *LSB* states its understanding of the Christocentric and divinely inspired nature of Scripture, while recognizing the communion of saints in which it is communicated.¹⁰⁶ Yet, the example of Luke 16 demonstrates how difficult it can be to put these principles to practice in all texts, for Christ is not central to the notes of this text. Moreover, through its citation of Luther, the study Bible articulates the function of Scripture congruent with Paul’s words to Timothy. Evaluating how well each commentator demonstrates these principles in his or her work is beyond the boundaries of this paper, but should be considered when using the study Bible.

Concordia Self-Study Bible

Concordia Publishing House published the *Concordia Self-Study Bible* (CSSB) in 1986. The General Editor, Robert Hoerber, notes in the introduction that all Christian churches claim to

¹⁰⁴ Ibid., 16.

¹⁰⁵ It is unclear where Swanson gets this understanding of the name. Most understand Lazarus to be a cognate of Eleazar. The note provides no evidence for this interpretation; thus the reader is left to take Swanson’s word for it.

¹⁰⁶ This communion, however, is limited to modern theologians and Martin Luther. Moreover, what input to the conversation should be given weight and on what grounds are considerations when conversing over the meaning of the text.

have biblically based teachings. However, differences remain in doctrine due to various interpretations of God's Word. Thus he encourages readers to be informed about which teachings of Scripture govern the interpretation that distinguish each edition.¹⁰⁷ This is a very helpful guide to what others might see as an open conversation.

Hoerber identifies the governing doctrines of the *CSSB* as the Grace of God; Through Faith Alone; Scripture Alone; Law and Gospel; Word and Sacrament: Means of Grace; and Christology.¹⁰⁸ The identification of these teachings seems to reflect the Christocentric nature of Scripture, as Hoerber explains that all of these teachings are grounded in the person of Christ. Moreover, Hoerber speaks to the aspect of the Bible being received within the context of the communication of the communion of saints as he speaks of the various human authors over the span of 1,600 years who wrote the text and all the Christian churches that receive and interpret them.¹⁰⁹ In addition, in the section on the means of grace, he highlights the role of the Holy Spirit in that communication, stating that "it is absolutely essential, therefore, to recognize the Word of God and the sacraments as the means of grace through which the Holy Spirit functions in the life of the church and the individual Christian."¹¹⁰ The divinely inspired nature of Scripture is explicitly stated in the section concerning "Scripture Alone." There he states, "God's written Word is in a class by itself, completely different from all other books." Citing 2 Tim. 3:16, he states, "God is the author of all of Scripture."¹¹¹

With regards to the function of Scripture, Hoerber claims that all Christian doctrine and admonition must come from Scripture, citing again 2 Tim. 3:16 to clarify Scripture's use for

¹⁰⁷ Hoerber, *Concordia Self-Study Bible*, xvi.

¹⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, xvi.

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, xviii.

¹¹⁰ *Ibid.*, xix.

teaching, rebuking, correcting, and training in righteousness. In addition, he notes that Scripture teaches the source of salvation is in Christ.¹¹² Thus, in Hoerber's introduction, one finds a description of the nature and function of Scripture parallel to that of Paul's words to Timothy, even grounded in the text from 2 Tim. 3:16.

The *CSSB* has a variety of resources including introductions and outlines to each book of the Bible, text notes, a cross-reference system, parallel passages, a concordance, charts, maps, essays, and indexes.¹¹³ The original source of many of these resources is *The NIV Study Bible* which was reworked by Concordia Publishing House to present "a Lutheran edition of *The NIV Study Bible*."¹¹⁴ *CSSB* added paragraphs to the introductions to highlight God's grace in each book and add Luther's commentary.

Nearly 20,000 study notes were first prepared by 50 evangelical Bible scholars, who spent seven years developing the notes. Concordia Publishing House then edited the notes to reflect different doctrinal views regarding millennialism, sacraments and Jews' inevitable salvation.¹¹⁵ The notes are intended to help explain important words and concepts, interpret difficult verses, draw parallels between specific people and events, describe historical and textual contexts of passages, and demonstrate how one passage sheds light on another.¹¹⁶ The chief contributors of the study notes for each book are clearly identified. Thus the Study Bible recognizes those involved in this communication of God's Word.

¹¹¹ *Ibid.*, xviii.

¹¹² *Ibid.*

¹¹³ *Ibid.*, xiii.

¹¹⁴ John Jeske and David P. Kuske. "The NIV Study Bible and Concordia Self-Study Bible, A Review," <http://www.wlsessays.net/files/JeskeStudy.pdf>, (October 1, 2012).

¹¹⁵ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁶ *Ibid.*

A review of its treatment of Luke 16:19–31 reveals eight study notes along with some biblical references. Lewis Forester is identified as the major contributor for the note section of Luke. Like the ESV Study Bible, the notes are informative in nature. The notes, for example, address the symbolism of the purple linen of the rich man and the understanding of Abraham’s bosom as a functional equivalent to the home of the righteous.¹¹⁷ Note 16:20 points out that if this is a parable, this is the only one in which Jesus uses a name.¹¹⁸ Note 16:30 highlights Abraham’s words: “someone from the dead.” Here, it is observed that while the text may intend to suggest Lazarus as the one who would be raised, the context of Luke’s account seems to suggest Abraham was speaking of Jesus’ resurrection. This is an example of the Christocentric reading of the text. Moreover, the same note speaks to the function of Scripture and that when it is rejected, no evidence will change one’s mind. Overall the notes seem to inform the reader about the concepts of the account, while highlighting Christ’s role in the text and the grander narrative of Luke. Whereas the Christocentricity exists in the notes, it is not marked explicitly with a symbol to draw the reader’s attention as in *TLSB* and *LSB*.

The Lutheran Study Bible (LCMS)

In the introduction of *The Lutheran Study Bible (TLSB)*, Editor Rev. Edward Engelbrecht emphasizes the divine nature of Scripture as he speaks of the lively and life-giving nature of God’s Word with a long quotation from Martin Luther’s Large Catechism. Here already we are seeing more explicit references to Luther in comparison to the early *CSSB* also published by Concordia Publishing House. Within the quote, Luther states that “the Word is so effective that whenever it is seriously contemplated, heard, and used, it is bound never to be without fruit...For

¹¹⁷ Ibid., 1581, see note 16:22.

¹¹⁸ Ibid., 1581. Later the account is referred to as a “story” (see note 16:30).

these words are not lazy or dead, but are creative, living words.” Luther, it is said, saw that God worked to bless and guide His church through this means of grace.¹¹⁹ Engelbrecht continues by stating that Lutherans do not view the study of the Bible as merely an intellectual exercise. Rather, “study is meditation on God’s Word, an act of devotion.” This idea of a prayerful study was the chief motive for the editors and writers of this study Bible.¹²⁰

The intent was to create a study Bible that accomplishes the following:

1. Presents justification by grace alone, through faith alone, in Christ alone, as the chief teaching of Scripture.
2. Properly distinguishes and applies Law and Gospel.
3. Emphasizes God’s work through the means of grace.
4. Functions from a “Scripture alone” point of view and presents a “Scripture interprets Scripture” approach to using the Bible.
5. Equips the laity for works of service, with a particular focus on evangelism in their various vocations/callings in life.
6. Presents a uniquely Lutheran study Bible that features genuine Lutheran notes and comments throughout, references the Lutheran Confessions where appropriate, focuses on the Small Catechism for helps and explanations, citations from Luther throughout, and materials to aid daily devotion and prayer.¹²¹

¹¹⁹ Edward A. Engelbrecht, ed., *The Lutheran Study Bible* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 2009), xi.

¹²⁰ Ibid.

¹²¹ Ibid.

These goals clearly reflect the Christocentric nature of the biblical text and are in line with the function of Scripture as expressed in 2 Timothy, that is, to make one wise unto salvation through faith in Christ and equip people for service. Furthermore, these goals are reflected in the study notes which are designated by icons according to their function:

1. *Law and Gospel Application Notes* summarize sections of Scripture, applying both law and gospel for the reader and providing a petition or praise to guide the reader into prayer, since studying the Bible is always a devotional act for Lutherans.
2. *The Trinity Icon* marks passages about the triune God and Old Testament messianic prophecies.
3. *The Word and Sacrament Icon* marks passages about the means of grace.
4. *The Mission Icon* marks passages about spreading the Gospel.¹²²

Whereas the study notes in the CSSB have no special symbols attached to them and the LSB has a symbol attached to each of its notes to designate the function of the note, TLSB seems to employ the symbols to guide the reader. That is, the symbols often move the reader from an overview of the text to a more specific theme related to the text, and then finally to the application of the text in prayer.

In addition, the study notes incorporate numerous insights from the Book of Concord and Church Fathers. Engelbrecht explains that the Church Fathers are not added as source of doctrine, but rather as good counsel of faithful older pastors.¹²³ Here, like both the *LSB* and *ESVBS*, *TLSB* seems to recognize the role of teaching the Scriptures, expanding the faculty to those in the past. Moreover, around 600 laypeople, church workers, and scholars from around the

¹²² Ibid., xxii–xxiii.

¹²³ Ibid., xii.

world contributed to this edition, recognizing the community of saints in which the communication of God's Word takes place.

In developing *TLSB* 400 lay people and church workers from around the world were invited to read the ESV and submit questions. The input of these questions influenced the preparation of the study notes. Thus instead of the teachers developing the guide as in the *ESVSB*, the laity determined the direction of the study notes in a significant way.

Furthermore, unlike the *LSB*, *ESVSB*, and *CSSB*, *TLSB* does not clearly identify the author of the study notes. Rather, it lists those who served as consultants for various books of the Bible and provides a list of study note writers, including professors, pastors, commissioned ministers, and laymen. Unfortunately, it is difficult, and sometimes impossible, to determine the source and author of various comments and notes. One does not know whether the comments were made by a layperson, pastor, or professor. Whereas the *LSB* lifts up its theologians as gifts and *ESVSB* provides credentials for its contributors, *TLSB* blurs all the voices of the communion of saints into one ambiguous cloud of commentators filtered through the supervision of the editor. The result is that the older voices such as the church fathers are raised up and clearly identified along with quotes from the confessions, while the identification of the present voices of the church is hidden except for those who contributed to articles.

Along with Luther's Small Catechism, which is placed in the beginning of the Bible, the nature and function of the study notes in *TLSB* illustrate its more formative approach in comparison to the *LSB*, *ESVSB*, and *CSSB*. It clearly attempts to form the reader in the Lutheran Confessional view of Scripture.

Take for example its treatment of Luke 16:19–31. Note 19–31 states that use of the personal name "Lazarus" indicates a realistic situation. Consequently, note 23 suggests that the story provides a glimpse of the afterlife, though other passages of Scripture are needed to gain a

clear and comprehensive teaching of the afterlife. While this is a much different understanding than the *ESVSB* which cautions against gleaning details of the afterlife from this “parable,” this clearly represents the Scripture interprets Scripture principle with the appeal to Scripture to gain a clear and comprehensive teaching.

For verse 24 the study note cites Scripture and the Church Fathers to expound on the aspects of hades. From Ps 106:18 the note highlights the words: “as the flame burns up the wicked.”¹²⁴ In addition, this note cites Augustine’s reflection on these words of Scripture: “Proud in the world, in hell a beggar. For that poor man did attain to his crumbs; but the other attained not to the drop of water.”¹²⁵

There is a Word and sacrament note for v. 31, which makes a connection to another Lazarus in Scripture who was raised, emphasizing that people still did not believe (Jn 11). It further states that repentance and faith are produced by the Word of God and concludes by citing the *Formula of Concord, Article XI* for the explanation of why some are not saved.¹²⁶

In addition, there is a Law and Gospel note for vv. 19–31 stating that Jesus challenges the belief that earthly blessings are a sign of God’s eternal favor.¹²⁷ Instead it states that Jesus “teaches us to heed his Word now while faithful mercy can be shown.” A prayer concludes by asking the Lord to teach us to read and trust His gift of the Word and speak of God’s grace.¹²⁸ Here, the Scriptures are used to lead the reader into prayer and an appreciation for the Scriptures. However, the message rebuking the lack of concern for the poor is not addressed.

¹²⁴ Here the Psalm’s reference to the event of Numbers 16 reinforces the idea the wicked will burn up in flames.

¹²⁵ Engelbrecht, *The Lutheran Study Bible*, 1751.

¹²⁶ *Ibid.*

¹²⁷ This seems to be addressing the theology of glory.

¹²⁸ *Ibid.*

In addition to the study notes, adjacent to the text *TLSB* provides a full page essay titled, “What Happens When We Die?”¹²⁹ Along with direct references to the text, the placement of this article seems to highlight the theme of the afterlife in this text. The article seems somewhat fragmented as it addresses a number of related themes. The article, for example, teaches of the separation of the body and soul, soul sleep, glory and condemnation at judgment day, and everlasting life with Christ. In an attempt to answer the stated question, the article describes the separation of body and soul at death using Freudian terms such as “ego.” However, the use of this passage of Scripture in an article that describes the separation of body and soul is ironic, considering that according to the narrative in the afterlife Lazarus has a finger and the rich man a tongue. In the discussion on soul sleep, the article infers that it is the man’s “soul” that prays that Lazarus would relieve his suffering and warn his brothers.¹³⁰ This however, is not supported by the text. Though the essay does seem to jump around citing passages throughout Scripture, it remains Christ centered in its message of the afterlife. Still, one must wonder if this tangential essay distracts the reader from the point of Jesus’ story. In contrast, the *ESVBS* places doctrinal and thematic essays at the end of the biblical text. Thus, the formatting of the *ESVBS* encourages the reader to remain focused on the text, while providing additional information related to the theme at the end of the Bible.

With a better understanding of the formation and function of study Bibles, the study now turns its attention to what resources are actually being used by students and how these resources affect their understanding of the text.

¹²⁹ Ibid., 1750.

¹³⁰ Ibid.

CHAPTER 4

ANALYZING THE USE OF STUDY BIBLES FOR BIBLE STUDY

The last chapter demonstrated the market driven use of study Bibles, and yet it remains unclear how the resources of the study Bibles affect a person's understanding of the biblical text. The problem this project seeks to address is how the input of study Bible resources affects the outcome of one's Bible study. This chapter describes how the project was designed to address this problem. Moreover, it describes how this project accomplishes its stated purpose to gain a clearer understanding of the impact study Bibles have on the application of Scripture. Along with identifying *what* study Bible resources are being used, this study seeks to provide greater insight into *how* students and parishioners are using study Bibles.

The Design of the Study

To gain a clearer understanding of the impact study Bibles have on the application of Scripture, the researcher designed an experiment involving a class of ten adult students working towards their bachelor degree at Concordia University Wisconsin, in St. Louis. In the experiment students were asked to interact with assigned study Bibles throughout their course on the Gospel of Luke.

The instructor randomly assigned study Bibles to the class so that half the class received *The Lutheran Study Bible*, while the other half of the class used the *Concordia Self-Study Bible* assigned in the course syllabus. The hypothesis driving this experiment was that through the use of different study Bibles in the same assignment, one could possibly draw out distinctions in the

work that might clarify the influence of a specific study Bible on one's devotion.¹³¹ In 2 Timothy, three aspects of the nature of Scripture were highlighted: the communication of the community, the content, and the origin or author of the message. As the study Bibles were examined in chapter 3, it was clear that they differ in regards to aspects of their nature. While they have many similarities, the authors of the resources and how they are identified differs from one study Bible to the next. Moreover, the study Bibles differ in their purpose and in the way the biblical text and resources are presented (e.g., *The Lutheran Study Bible* uses icons to identify notes focused on a certain theme or application). Thus, the theological and literature study of this experiment suggests a comparison of the use of two study Bibles could provide substantial evidence for their impact on the reader.

In order to measure *how* the students used the study Bibles, students were asked to prepare a one-page devotion for each of the two assigned texts (Luke 16:19–31; 24:13–35). These texts were chosen by the researcher because they both speak concerning the Scriptures and are surrounded by many of the study Bible resources (e.g., essays, sacramental icons). The students were given a week to complete the assignment. For each assignment the students were required to provide a summary of the text, to describe the contemporary setting in which the devotion would be shared, and to write a one-page devotion corresponding to the text. Moreover, the students were to clearly identify the main point of the devotion in one sentence at the top of the page. The summary of the text served the purpose of identifying how the student read the text, that is, what aspects of the narrative did each reader highlight and what type of vocabulary did he or she use to describe it. The purpose of identifying the contemporary setting was to

¹³¹ One of the students chose to use the *Archaeological Study Bible*, and thus a third study Bible shows up in the research, while the focus of the project remains on two aforementioned study Bibles.

acknowledge that the message can be influenced by the intended hearer. A message written to college students who are concerned about their financial situation, for example, would likely be different than a message shared with a young child who seems to be too materialistic. The assignment required the students to identify their main point in one sentence to clarify the intended focus of the devotion. This focus statement highlights the predominant way in which Scripture had meaning for the student within his or her context of life.

The devotional assignment as a whole highlights the theological teaching that the Scripture is communicating within the communion of saints, as the people involved, both the author of the devotion and intended hearers, influence the proclamation derived from the text. Moreover, the devotion invites the participants to engage in more than meditation on the text, but instead provides a context in which a student would find reading the notes useful for the sake of developing a message.

Since there are more factors than just the study Bibles that influence Bible study, the project utilizes various tools to attempt to isolate the influence of the study Bibles. The survey, for example, questions the participants about their use of the study Bible and their understanding of the role it plays in their use of Scripture to further measure how study Bibles are used. Moreover, the Likert Scale on the survey measures what resources are being used by the participants. We continue now with a full explanation of these research tools and the methodology of the project.

Research Tools and Methodology

At the end of the class quantitative and qualitative data were collected through a survey designed by the researcher to assess what resources the students were using from the study Bibles and how they used them. Having received all of the completed devotions, the researcher handed out a survey to the class on the last night of the course (see Appendix Three). This survey

employed a Likert scale to gather quantitative data identifying what resources of the study Bibles the students used and the frequency of their use. Students were asked to rate the level of use of various resources including: notes, maps, cross references, essays, timelines and introductions before each book. The students were asked to rate their level of use as often, regularly, sometimes, almost never, or never. The researcher collected all ten of the completed forms from the class. The data were then compiled to measure the overall use of these materials by the class.

The survey also included some follow-up questions to provide further qualitative data concerning the role the study Bible played in the students' Bible study. There were seven questions exploring the students' use of the study Bible and their perceived usefulness of the text. The first question: "What resources of the study Bible did you use in your study?" follows up on the Likert scale to help clarify what resources the students used for their study. The second question: "What was the primary purpose you consulted the study Bible aids?" attempted to clarify the motivation behind the use of the study Bible. Questions 3–5: "Did the study Bible answer your questions or meet your needs? Were there any issues that were not addressed by the study Bible to your satisfaction? Did the study Bible clarify the biblical text?" were designed to gauge the perceived value of the study Bible resources. Question 6: "Does the study Bible enable you to study the Bible without a teacher or pastor?" was designed to measure the students' perceived understanding of the role the study Bible plays in their engagement with the biblical text. This is especially important in light of the theological understanding of Scriptures' nature as explored earlier. That is, based on Paul's words to Timothy (2 Tim. 3:10–12), the knowledge of the messenger and his or her use of the Scripture becomes an essential part of the communication of this word. Finally, question 7: "How would you describe the impact the study Bible had on your study of the Bible?" was used to assess the students' perceived understanding of the impact

of the study Bible. This can be compared to the observed impact of the study Bible measured through the assessment of the devotions.

The students identified themselves on the survey by an assigned number, maintaining the anonymity of the participants while providing a means to compare surveys with corresponding devotions. In addition, each student identified what study Bible was used on the top of the survey. This allows the researcher to assess variations in the level of use for certain resources as it relates to the specific study Bible used.

In addition to the survey, Dr. Schmitt and Rev. Hoehner then examined the devotions to assess whether the study Bible resources may have had an influence on the outcome of the study. Both examiners identified the focus, function, and form of each Bible study without clear knowledge of which study Bible was used in the process of writing the study. The focus is what the student is trying to say in the devotion.¹³² The focus represents the content of the devotion often expressed as the one sentence main point at the top of each devotion. The function of the devotion reflects its goal, what is it trying to accomplish or what it is trying to do.¹³³ In order to standardize the findings, the researchers used the four functions derived from the 2 Tim. 3:16 (i.e., teaching, rebuking, correcting, and training in righteousness) to categorize the results of their analysis of the devotions. When using the term “form” the researchers refer to the organizational plan for deciding what kinds of things will be said and done in a the devotion and in what sequence.¹³⁴ The form is the rhetorical structures used to communicate the message. For this part of the analysis the researchers chose to identify the form based on seven standard rhetorical unit constructions: narration, serial depiction, image, character, dialogue, and

¹³² Thomas G. Long, *The Witness of Preaching* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox, 2005), 108.

¹³³ *Ibid.*, 108.

¹³⁴ *Ibid.*, 118.

explanation.¹³⁵ Dr. Schmitt has many years of experience both teaching and assessing focus, function, and form at Concordia Seminary. Rev. Hoehner was trained in these aspects of homiletics under Dr. Schmitt and has more recently taught this subject matter in the SMP courses at Concordia Seminary and in courses at Concordia University Wisconsin, in St. Louis. Thus, both Dr. Schmitt and Rev. Hoehner are qualified to assess the devotions and consider the influence of study Bibles using these criteria.

To accomplish the analysis, each Bible study was numbered for each student. The study Bible used could only be identified on the survey form. Thus, by matching the number on the

¹³⁵ David Schmitt, "Methods of Development (Rhetorical Units)" (lecture, Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, January, 2009), describes seven common rhetorical units used in proclaiming the gospel. "A. Narration: this method develops an idea or experience by offering the hearers a story wherein the idea or experience is placed into action. In narration, there will usually be temporal movement for the hearers and a conflict that is brought through climax to resolution. Often, the focus of the rhetorical unit is connected to the climax of the story. In narration, the preacher needs to manage the use of concrete details carefully, so that hearers are not distracted from the focus that is being developed. B. Serial Depiction: this method develops an idea or experience by offering the hearers a series of examples that clarify and reinforce the idea through repetition. In serial depiction, the preacher has the opportunity to cover a wide range of experience, demonstrating how this focus is apparent in a variety of situations or contexts. Often these examples are connected by a simple refrain. The preacher needs to order these experiences carefully, however, so that there is some development, logical (e.g., ordering from corporate to personal) or experiential (e.g., climactic ordering), in the sequence of examples and so that no one example overpowers all of the others. C. Image: this method develops an idea or experience by associating it with a central image for contemplation. In developing an image, the preacher offers the hearers concrete details that enable visualization. Sometimes a story may lie behind an image and give the image force because of the event that it relates to. In such cases, however, the image remains central and the story secondary. In contrast to narration, there is often no temporal development in the use of an image. Instead, the hearers are focused upon a static moment in time. If one were to use the language of film, a story is the movie itself and an image is a single frame. The image gains significance from the context in which it is placed, from the use to which it is put, or from the transformation it undergoes in the process of development. D. Character: this method develops an idea or experience by viewing it from the stance of a particular individual. The hearers are able to enter into the life experience of an individual and consider how this idea or experience manifests itself in daily lived experience. Development by character offers the hearers a living witness of the focus of that rhetorical unit. The value of this method is that it personalizes the focus and relies on hearer empathy to generate a personal association with the idea or experience. E. Dialogue: this method develops an idea or experience by placing it within a conversation enacted by the preacher and overheard by the people. Often this conversation takes the form of disagreement (e.g., a debate or series of questions and answers) or agreement (e.g., a collaborative endeavor of mutual discovery wherein each speaker makes significant contributions to the dialogue) and places into conversational speech the anticipated reactions of one's hearers. Luther was particularly adept at placing his proclamation of the gospel in dialogue form as Christ or the Christian encounters Satan and answers him with a testimony of faith. F. Explanation: this method develops an idea or experience through the use of logical explanation. Using reason, the preacher offers the hearers a series of statements that hold together by the logic of definition, classification, cause-effect, comparison/contrast, process, problem-solution, analogy, or example and explanation. Thus, any of the logical means by which an entire sermon can be ordered can also be used as a means for developing one particular moment within that sermon."

survey with the Bible study one would be able to determine the study Bible behind each Bible study. Once the evaluation process was complete, the examiners matched up the Bible studies with the corresponding surveys to determine the study Bible used by each participant. At that time, the examiners compared their findings with study Bible input to assess whether any of the resources in the study Bible might have influenced the outcome of the Bible study. This process intended to guard the examiners from reading study Bible resources into the students' work. Moreover, for the sake of clarity, the students were asked to state the main point of their Bible study in one sentence at the top of the page.

The field research of this experiment is limited to a class of ten adult students working towards their bachelor degree at Concordia University Wisconsin, in St. Louis. The course on the Gospel of Luke was completed in four-hour classes over the period of five weeks. The evaluation of the influence of study Bibles resources on the Bible studies of the students is limited to the naturalistic observations of Dr. Schmitt and Rev. Hoehner and the data collected from the survey filled out at the end of class. The Bible studies reflect their study of only two texts: Luke 16 and Luke 24. The survey gathers both quantitative and qualitative data as it employs both a Likert scale and open ended questions.

The methods of this study were specifically chosen to limit validity threats to the experiment.¹³⁶ Randomization, for example, was used in the selection of the study group. The Concordia class assembled represented a diverse group with regards to gender, age (30 year range), race (white and African-America), and religious background (e.g., Lutheran, Roman Catholic, Baptist, non-Christian et al.). This diversity ensures that the devotions were not all

¹³⁶ Joseph Maxwell, *Qualitative Research Design: An Interactive Approach* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, Inc., 2005), 106, asserts that to enhance the validity of qualitative research one cannot rely entirely on a specific method, but one must address validity threats in an intentional manner.

driven by the participants' "Lutheran" or other religious understanding. Moreover, the various study Bibles were handed out randomly to participants so that half the class used the *NIV Self-Study Bible* and half used *The Lutheran Study Bible*. Thus, it was possible for a Roman Catholic to be using *The Lutheran Study Bible*. While randomization controls an infinite number of rival hypotheses, additional steps were taken to reduce the effect of research bias and reactivity, that is, the influence of the researcher on participants involved in the experiment.

To reduce researcher bias the researcher prolonged the experiment through repetition, enriched the data, and gathered respondent validation. Though the course was only five weeks, within this time the experiment of devotion writing and analysis was repeated to provide more data and create data that are more direct and less dependent on inference.¹³⁷ Both a survey and naturalistic observation were employed to enrich the data providing a firmer grounding for conclusions. In addition, the questionnaire systematically solicits feedback from participants about the perception of the impact of study Bibles. This then allows the observation of the researchers to be weighed against the perception of the participants. With regards to the naturalistic observation, two researchers were involved to compare their findings with each other. Moreover, the overall triangulation of these methods, that is, the diverse range of individuals and variety of methods, reduces the risk of chance associations and of systematic biases due to a specific method, while allowing for better assessment of the explanation reached through the experiment.¹³⁸

To reduce reactivity, the text assigned for the devotion was not addressed in class until after the assignment was complete. Rev. Hoehner, for example, did not teach the lesson on Luke

¹³⁷ Ibid., 107.

¹³⁸ Ibid., 112.

16, until the devotions were received. This ensured that his teaching didn't directly impact the students' understanding and application of the text.

Narrative of the Implementation

An examination of the nature of the field research and the data collected provide insight to this project. The field research for the project followed this chronological process and implementation.

This experiment took place at Concordia University Wisconsin, in St. Louis. Rev. Hoehner taught a course on the Gospel of Luke in four-hour classes over the period of five weeks in July of 2010. There were ten students in the class.

The researcher began the first night of class by inviting the class to take part in an experiment, that is, a study of study Bibles. Having received the class's general verbal consent, the researcher passed out a formal consent form detailing the participant's involvement in the project (see Appendix Four). The form informed the students that they would write two devotions utilizing the study Bible and fill out a survey assessing their use of the study Bible throughout the class. The form explained that the participants' names would not be reported with their response. In addition, the form clearly stated that participation in this research was completely voluntary and that participants could withdraw at any time during the study.

When the researcher received all the signed forms from the class, he handed out five editions of *The Lutheran Study Bible*, that he had purchased, to five random students in the class. The assigned text for the class was the *Concordia Self-Study Bible*. Thus, five of the students were equipped with *The Lutheran Study Bible*, while the other five had the *Concordia Self-Study Bible*.

During the course of the five week class, students prepared one-page devotions for each of the two assigned texts (Luke 16:19–31; 24:13–35). The first devotion was due the third night of

class, while the second assignment was due on the fifth and final night of class. The students were given a week to complete each assignment. For each assignment the students were required to provide a summary of the text, describe the contemporary setting in which the devotion would be shared, and compose a one-page devotion corresponding to the text. Moreover, the students were to clearly identify the main point of the devotion in one sentence at the top of the page. The researcher collected and graded the devotions of the students.

On the last night of the class, quantitative and qualitative data were collected through the survey designed by the researcher to assess what resources the students were using from the study Bibles and how they used them. The researcher collected all ten of the completed forms from the class. Later, after the course had finished, Rev. Hoehner compiled the data to measure the overall use of these materials by the class.

Dr. Schmitt and Rev. Hoehner then examined the devotions to assess whether the study Bible resources may have had an influence on the outcome of the study. Both examiners identified the focus, function, and form of each Bible study without clear knowledge of which study Bible was used in the process of writing the study. Once the evaluation process was complete, the examiners discussed their findings and then matched up the Bible studies with the corresponding surveys to determine the study Bible used by each participant. At that time, the examiners compared their findings with study Bible input to assess whether any of the resources in the study Bible might have influenced the outcome of the Bible study. Finally, Rev. Hoehner gathered the findings to draw the final conclusions from the project.

CHAPTER 5
THE PROJECT EVALUATED

Having discussed the methodology of this project, this chapter will present the findings of the research with the purpose of ascertaining what resources are being used and how they are used in order to better understand how study Bibles affect the outcome of Bible study. The Likert Scale and follow up survey questions will clarify what the students are using, while the naturalistic observations of the researcher will speak to how students are using the study Bibles and the influence that use has on their reading Scripture.

Survey

Likert Scale Results

First we will consider the data collected from the surveys completed by each of the participants. The objective here was to ascertain what resources were used most often by the students.

Table 1: Study Bible Resource Usage

(All Users)	Often	Regularly	Sometimes	Almost Never	Never
I used the study Bible notes.	5	3	2		
I used the study Bible maps.			4	4	2
I used the study Bible cross references.		3	5		1

I used the study Bible essays.	1		4	3	2
I used the study Bible timelines.		1	3	3	3
I used the introduction section before each book.	3	6	1		

The data suggest that among all the participants the study Bible notes and the introduction sections were most often used, while the maps and the timelines were used almost never or never. Notably, the essays were also used infrequently even though there was a large essay placed on the page adjacent to the text of Luke 16.

Table 2: NIV Self-Study Bible Resource Usage

(NIV Self-Study Bible)	Often	Regularly	Sometimes	Almost Never	Never
I used the study Bible notes.	1	1	2		
I used the study Bible maps.			1	1	2
I used the study Bible cross references.		1	2		1
I used the study Bible essays.				2	2
I used the study Bible timelines.			1		3
I used the introduction section before each book.	1	3			

Notably in the cohort of students who used the *Concordia Self-Study Bible* there is less use of resources overall. Furthermore, in comparison to *The Lutheran Study Bible* there was much less use of the introduction section and study notes. Still these two sections remain the most used resources of the study Bible, while timelines and essays were used the least. This could certainly be due to lack of essays near the text studied.

Table 3: The Lutheran Study Bible Resource Usage

(The Lutheran Study Bible)	Often	Regularly	Sometimes	Almost Never	Never
I used the study Bible notes.	3	2			
I used the study Bible maps.			2	3	
I used the study Bible cross references.		1	4		
I used the study Bible essays.			4	1	
I used the study Bible timelines.		1	1	3	
I used the introduction section before each book.	1	3	1		

Within the cohort that used *The Lutheran Study Bible (TLSB)*, it is clear that the introduction sections and the notes were the most used resources, as 100% of participants stated that they used the notes often or regularly and four out of five stated the same about their use of the introduction. Moreover, the data seem to suggest that those who used *TLSB* were more engaged with the resources than those who used the *Concordia Self-Study Bible*. One would

expect to see this difference in the level of use reflected in the effect the various study Bibles had on the devotions.

Table 4: Archaeological Study Bible

(Archaeological Study Bible)	Often	Regularly	Sometimes	Almost Never	Never
I used the study Bible notes.	1				
I used the study Bible maps.			1		
I used the study Bible cross references.		1			
I used the study Bible essays.	1				
I used the study Bible timelines.			1		
I used the introduction section before each book.	1				

The use of the *Archaeological Study Bible*, though an anomaly, reflects the same usage as the others. The notes, introduction, and essays are marked as most often used.

The strength of this survey is that it identifies what the students were using and measures the perceived frequency of that use. Glossaries, indexes, maps, outlines, and notes are just a few of the many additional contents that accompany the biblical text in study Bibles.¹³⁹ With so many different resources in the study Bibles it is important to focus on what is actually being

¹³⁹ “Study Bible Review” *Biblical Archeology Review* 21 (1995): 72-76 provides a listing of characteristic found in 51 study bibles.

used to assess the effect these resources have on a person's use of the text. Moreover, along with *Biblical Archeology Review*'s inventories of study Bibles, the comparison of study Bibles in chapter three demonstrates that not all study Bibles are alike by nature. Thus, with different characteristics and resources, it follows that they may not function in a similar manner. In addition, the survey enriches the data utilizing another tool to measure outcomes and allows for a comparison between the students' perceived use and the results of the naturalistic observations.

Along with certain strengths, the researcher recognizes some weaknesses with these observations drawn from the survey. For one, a resource's level of influence cannot be definitively determined solely by frequency of use. That is, just because a student uses one resource more than the others does not necessarily mean that the resource is more influential with regards to the student's understanding of the text. Furthermore, some resources simply did not apply to the chosen text. In the study of Luke 16, for example, there was no need for the participants to consult a map or a timeline. Still, overall it seems that what the participants are using most often in their study Bibles are the study notes and introduction sections with some use of cross references (See Appendix Three).

Results of Additional Survey Questions

Along with the Likert scale, participants were asked directly what resources they used in their study of the text. In addition, to gain an understanding of what the participants were using, the survey questions seek to uncover the motivation of the use, the perceived value of the study Bibles, the perceived role of the study Bibles, and the perceived impact of the study Bibles. Thus, the survey questions the participants about their use of the study Bible and their understanding of the role it plays in their use of Scripture to further measure how study Bibles are used.

To provide an overview of responses, each question on the survey is stated below along with the corresponding responses from the students identified by their assigned number. The first question was asked to follow up the Likert scale in order to identify specifically what resources the students were using.

Question 1: What resources of the study Bible did you use in your study?

Responses:

1. TLSB: "Footnotes, notes for anything I had questions about or thought was unclear"
2. TLSB: "the footnotes (notes)"
3. ASB: "Concordance, archaeological articles, and historical notes"
4. CSSB: "Cross reference"
5. CSSB: "I used mainly the notes and maps and I referenced the intro to Luke."
6. CSSB: "I used the bible notes and cross references as well as the Concordance in the back of the book."
7. CSSB: "Footnotes of NIV study Bible, index to subjects, and concordance"
8. TLSB: "Mostly the introductions and notes (including prayers)"
9. TLSB: "I liked the chapter verse specific references at the bottom."
10. TLSB: "I used the notes."

The responses support the Likert scale findings, demonstrating that the study notes are what the participants used most frequently. 90% students mentioned their use of the study notes, while the second and third most used resources were the concordance (30%) and the cross references (20%). Based on this information, in the naturalistic observation of Rev. Hoehner and Dr. Schmitt, one would expect to see the study notes influencing the devotions to a certain degree. This question also draws attention to the use of the concordance in the back of the study Bibles, a resource not identified on the Likert scale.

The next question was asked to gain a better understanding of the motivation behind using the study Bible resources.

Question 2: What was the primary purpose you consulted the study Bible aids?

1. TLSB: "see previous"
2. TLSB: "to make sure I was on the right thought process"
3. ASB: "For background information; to obtain contextual understanding"

4. CSSB: "for reference"
5. CSSB: "Typically to get a better understanding of what was written or maybe what may be a difficult idea"
6. CSSB: "I used the aids to gain a better understanding of the meaning in the text."
7. CSSB: "To find quickly where things were or to help assist with a reference"
8. TLSB: "To gain a broader understanding or more context."
9. TLSB: "To get Clarification of certain scripture"
10. TLSB: "To receive a better understanding of the text."

Overall the motivation expressed in the responses is to seek a better understanding or clarification about the text. 70% of the students stated this purpose. Here the resources serve the informative function of a teacher. However, note student two used the notes as a way to gauge whether he/she was on the "right thought process." Thus, at least in one case, the study Bible became the arbiter of truth to some degree.

Questions three through five were asked to assess the perceived value of the study Bibles in the preparation of their Bible studies.

Question 3: Did the study Bible answer your questions or meet your needs?

1. TLSB: "for the most part occasionally I would consult a commentary if it didn't, but usually the notes were very helpful."
2. TLSB: "for the most part, yes. If not I gathered what I needed plus more in class."
3. ASB: "yes"
4. CSSB: "yes/no"
5. CSSB: "Most of the time it helped make sense out of hard subjects. Sometimes it also helped me find how certain aspects of the Gospel related to OT writings."
6. CSSB: "For the most part. I'm sure there would not be room to explain how everything is referenced in the time for example an explanation of the Hebrew word and how it would be translated."
7. CSSB: "Most of the time."
8. TLSB: "At times I felt the context was helpful, but at other times it was a distraction. When I felt distracted by the notes I would pick up a text only version and just pray, read and reread."
9. TLSB: "It presented a different perspective of the subject which broadened my understanding."
10. TLSB: "Most of my questions were answered."

While three different texts were used, none of the participants questioned the reliability of the notes. Though student eight notes the negative effect the notes had on his or her study as they distracted from the biblical text. 100% of the students found the study Bible beneficial for meeting their needs. Overall the students valued the study Bibles' ability to answer their questions and provide additional information, recognizing that more could always be added. Question 4 follows up to ascertain if there are any specific issues of interest that were not addressed by the study Bibles.

Question 4: Were there any issues that were not addressed by the study Bible to your satisfaction?

1. TLSB: "no"
2. TLSB: "Not that I can think of. I think the bases are covered very well and very well thought out."
3. ASB: "No"
4. CSSB: "no"
5. CSSB: "Occasionally the notes would reference other books of the Gospels and instead of making something clearer only restated what may have been difficult to understand."
6. CSSB: "no"
7. CSSB: "There was but I do not remember what I was looking up and could not find. It was in the concordance."
8. TLSB: NA
9. TLSB: "None that I can think of."
10. TLSB: "Not really. There were some parts that were hard to understand, but most of it worked out well."

For the most part, the students feel the questions were answered by the study Bibles. However, student five raised the concern that sometimes the additional information did not clarify the issue but instead repeated that which was unclear.

Question 5: Did the study Bible clarify the biblical text?

1. TLSB: "yes"
2. TLSB: "Yes, it goes into great detail and the cross references were helpful in clarifying. I find it much easier to follow too, when what Jesus says is in red print."
3. ASB: "yes"

4. CSSB: “Yes”
5. CSSB: “Yes – often it clarified meanings of words or helped me understand why certain words were used over other words.”
6. CSSB: “for the most part—see above”
7. CSSB: “Yes, It was very helpful.”
8. TLSB: “More in context then message”
9. TLSB: “Mostly”
10. TLSB: “Yes”

The repetitious nature of questions 3–5 seems to solidify the perceived positive effect the study Bibles had on the students’ study. However, it would have been helpful to have the students give examples of how the study Bible clarified a text for them. Then one could assess better whether the clarity was a matter of historical context and semantics or Christ-centered gospel proclamation. From the responses, one finds that not only do the notes clarify the context and meaning of words, but even the printed form of the text (i.e., the red print identifying Jesus’ words) helps the reader follow along to understand the text.

The next question was asked to gain a better understanding of the perceived role of the study Bibles. As the resources are used to enlighten and clarify the text, enabling one to better understand the text, do the readers recognize the teaching function of these notes? Do they see the notes as sufficient guides to understanding the biblical text or one of many resources?

Question 6: Does the study Bible enable you to study the Bible without a teacher or pastor?

1. TLSB: “Yes, although again I find commentaries helpful as well.”
2. TLSB: “Yes, I believe so. However, I do like hearing about the Bible from a higher authority who has greater knowledge.”
3. ASB: “Yes, but it is profitable to discuss Scriptures with others to gain different perspectives.”
4. CSSB: “yes”
5. CSSB: “It can for some self-study; however, to really get a full or better understanding a teacher or pastor would be able to better give deeper meaning to the Gospel. “
6. CSSB: “Yes, but a teacher or pastor would be able to help you understand the text more fully.”
7. CSSB: “Yes, but the teacher gives more info I didn’t read and puts it all together and gives a different point of view.”
8. TLSB: I study on my own with or without the notes. I would say it enhances.”

9. TLSB: “to a degree”
10. TLSB: “I think it would give a pretty good general understanding. But some things you would just need explained by someone.”

Seven out of the ten expressed that whereas the study Bible is a helpful resource, a teacher or pastor could provide additional meaning to the text. This additional information includes a different perspective, a deeper meaning to the Gospel, and greater knowledge from a higher authority. Student two seems to infer that he/she views a teacher or pastor as a higher authority, but for the most part there is no question concerning the authority or accuracy of the study Bible’s contribution, or for that matter the identity of the author of the notes. This lack of concern for the source of the information does not reflect Paul’s words to Timothy highlighting the importance of knowing who is teaching and the divine source and authority of the text. Rather the readers seem to assume that the study Bibles are correct regardless of who wrote the notes.

The final question was used to assess the students’ perceived understanding of the impact of the study Bible. This can be compared to the observed impact of the study Bible measured through the assessment of the devotions in the next section.

Question 7: How would you describe the impact the study Bible had on your study of the Bible?

1. TLSB: “It made the Bible more accessible and understandable especially by providing the needed context.”
2. TLSB: “Having the study Bible enabled me to understand other perspectives that I may never thought of before.”
3. ASB: “It amplified my study, expanded themes, and introduced ideas not previously noticed.”
4. CSSB: “enlightening”
5. CSSB: “It definitely helped in the final paper in finding passages. It was also useful in seeing the differences in translations from my Catholic Bible and a Lutheran translation.”
6. CSSB: “Without the study bible it would be hard to understand many of the meanings behind the text, especially the parables.”
7. CSSB: “It clarified many items I was unsure of.”

8. TLSB: "I'm torn because I feel at times I find myself looking more to the notes to explain rather than praying that God would open my heart to understand."
9. TLSB: "It gave a wider perspective and uses generally helpful."
10. TLSB: "It helped out a lot. I found a lot of information that helped me with gaining a better explanation."

Overall the students felt the study Bible had a positive impact on their study of the text. Many of the comments speak to the study Bible's function in clarifying certain aspects of the text and providing other perspectives. Thus, the resources provided teaching instruction, a function highlighted in the introductions of the four study Bibles. Student eight shared a concern over being preoccupied with the notes to the neglect of the biblical text and prayer. This may speak to the force of influence the notes has on one's understanding of the text and it reflects the word of caution provided in the introduction of the *ESV Study Bible*, which makes a clear distinction between the notes and the biblical text and encourages the reader to focus on the biblical text as God's Word. Based on these comments one would expect to find that the input of the study Bibles will affect the outcome the students' study of the biblical text.

Naturalistic Observation of Devotions

Having considered the evaluations from the persons involved in the project, the study now turns to the naturalistic observation of Rev. Hoehner and Dr. Schmitt. Through the task of writing devotions, the project takes the student beyond just personal meditation and reflection to a situation in which the student assumes the role of an interpreter in relation to others, encouraging him or her to use the resources of the study Bible even more. This section of the project was evaluated by the researchers.

Rev. Hoehner and Dr. Schmitt each analyzed the twenty devotions identifying the focus, function, and form of each devotion while looking for indications that the study Bibles might have influenced the devotion. Special attention was also given to the Christological nature of the devotions as it relates to the focus. When they met to discuss their findings, it was clear that

certain aspects of the devotions pointed to the study Bible used by the student. The researchers without knowing which study Bible was used in the devotions were able to guess the study Bible used with a high rate of accuracy. Vocabulary and themes drawn from the notes were two of the strongest factors that led to the identification of the sources. This study continues with a summary of observations discussed by the researchers.

Devotions Based on Luke 16:19–31

Devotion 1

Both researchers correctly identified the *TLSB* as the source of devotion one. The key indicator of influence is the theme of God’s Word as a source of faith and repentance. The focus statement, highlighting God’s Word is more than enough to bring about faith and repentance, reflects the words in note 16:31 of *TLSB*, marked by a Word and Sacrament symbol. In contrast, the *CSSB* makes no reference to the faith and repentance in relation to the word. The use of this text to highlight the function of Scripture is emphasized in *TLSB* and seems to drive the focus of the devotion rather than a focus on caring for the poor.

The focus is on the work of God rather than work of man and overall the devotion is coherently developed around this point. The devotion highlights the connection of Christ and the gospel. This provides a Christocentric emphasis to the message. The devotion explains that His miracles were acts of compassion and mercy. Moreover, by referencing Paul in I Corinthians, the student warns against demanding signs, and instead points to the “foolishness” of the message of Christ crucified. This connection seems to have occurred without any clear influence of the study Bible resources, including the cross references.

The devotion does a number of things. One function of the devotion, for example, is that it rebukes the belief that miracles produce faith and teaches the belief that the Holy Spirit works faith through the Word of God. In addition, it corrects those unbelievers who deny the working

of God in the presence of miracles. Finally, the devotion trains Christians to speak the word of God to others, in the presence of miracles or not.

The predominant form of the devotion is narration, that is, it tells the story of a friend's resistance to seeing God's work of healing in his life. Though narration is also the form used in the text, it cannot be determined whether this influenced the form of the devotion. In addition, the devotion also uses the form of explanation by contrast as it contrasts how the rich man desires to see his brothers converted with how God works through his word.

Devotion 2

Both researchers correctly identified the *TLSB* as the source of this devotion. Again the key indicator of influence is a thematic connection between the focus statement of the devotion and one of the study notes. Note 16:25 states, "Contrasts between this life and eternal life, and how we perceive them, are the essence of the account." Devotion two begins by contrasting material positions in this world with the everlasting joy of God's eternal home.

In contrast to the first devotion, the focus is on one's use of money. Thus, there is a moralistic focus to this message. The devotion is void of any reference to Christ. The story is said to speak to the "powerful truth of God's law." Later the devotion expresses that God's care for His people is contingent on whether one is a good steward.

The devotion attempts to correct the bad behavior of those who do not share material wealth with those in need. It also teaches God's gift of wealth and the desire for stewardship of it, while training the hearer to give to the less fortunate.

The student uses an image of a money tree to convey the message, much like the *TLSB* uses images to convey messages in the introductory sections. Yet, there is no direct connection made between the image and the content of the devotion. The student shares a narrative of her growing up to explain the importance of serving God and sharing with others. In addition, the

devotion speaks to the contrast between the ways of the rich man and the ways of God. The student also uses the method of character to express her desire to teach children God's grace and law.

Devotion 3

Both researchers incorrectly identified the *CSSB* as the source of the third devotion of Luke 16, while the student used the *Archaeological Study Bible*.¹⁴⁰ However, it is possible that the student used the *CSSB* as well, since he was assigned it through the class. The key indicator noted in the observation was the reference to Matthew and Revelation with regards to the description of hell. These two references are cited in study note 16:27 in *CSSB* and are aligned with the focus of the message that hell is real and lifestyle will affect our destiny. Note 16:28 explains that after his experience in hell, the rich man showed concern for others. This is reflected in the devotion as the focus shifts from the reality of hell to our need to care for the poor.

The devotion lacks a true Christ-centered message. Jesus is referenced as a character in the narrative and as one who taught more about hell than heaven. Thus the devotion has a moralistic focus emphasizing one's need to give to the poor to avoid the reality of hell. This focus on hell may be influenced by the notes of the *ABS*. Concerning "hell" note 16:23 directs the reader the note in Matthew 5:22, which then directs the reader to a full page essay on hell.

The devotion teaches the belief of the reality of hell to correct the behavior of neglecting the poor. In addition, it corrects the hearer's infatuation with the rich and lack of care for the poor and trains one to live in care for the poor because of the desire to avoid hell.

¹⁴⁰ Dr. Schmitt was not aware that any students had used a study Bible other than the *CSSB* and *TLSB*.

Though there are some possible connections to the *CSSB*, there is one clear indicator of the student's use of the *ASB*, that is, his reference to purple and fine linen as symbols of wealth in the first line of the devotion. Whereas the other study Bibles make a similar point, here the wording is almost identical to that of the *ABS*. Thus, sometimes the influence of the study Bible can be as simple as word usage. Though the devotion doesn't convey its point in the most logical manner, it seems to be attempting to explaining the cause (lifestyle) and the effect (heaven or hell) to move the reader to care for others, specifically the poor. In addition, the devotion uses serial depiction to teach about the nature of hell citing various passages of Scripture. Moreover, the devotion uses explanation through the contrast of how Jesus speaks about the rich man and how he speaks about Lazarus and through the contrast of how we treat the rich and the poor. The devotion concludes with a series of exhortations of ways in which we can live in light of the threat of hell.

Devotion 4

Both researchers correctly identified the *CSSB* as the source of this devotion. The focus of the devotion is that God commands us to love our neighbor, expressed through lending a helping hand when necessary. God desires us to give to the poor from our possessions. Though God's unconditional love is mentioned, the devotion lacks any word of Christ or the gospel. The devotion focuses on a person's work as the "deciding factor" of where one will spend eternal life.

The devotion teaches God's command to love others and the true way to value material possessions. In addition, it corrects one's selfishness and trains the hearer in the behavior of helping others in times of need.

With regards to the form of the devotion, explanation (Question/Answer) is used to ask the question concerning the relationship of wealth and the character of a person. The answer given is

that wealth itself is not the issue but the use of that wealth is, and this has implications for the afterlife. Explanation also occurs through describing cause and effect, that is, God has commanded us to care for the poor (cause) and will judge us on the last day when we fail to do this (effect). Finally, the researchers observed that serial causation was used to explain the reasons we should give to the poor (i.e., God commands it, God warns us of judgment for not doing it, God promises that others will care for us if we do this, and God has given us an example in his unconditional love).

Devotion 5

Dr. Schmitt correctly identified the source of this devotion as the CSSB, while Rev. Hoehner chose TLSB. Along with a predominate focus on the use of wealth without any comment on the word of God creating faith and repentance, this devotion uses the term “paradise” which is used only in note 16:22 of the CSSB.

The focus of this devotion is that although we may be rich in this life, ignoring the lessons of the prophets and Jesus (in this case understood to be a life of following God’s will and caring for others) can have eternal consequences. Thus the focus is on a person’s work rather than God’s work. There is no gospel proclamation in the devotion. Christ is depicted as the lesson giver, with the focus on a person’s work to help others so that one can enjoy Paradise.

The devotion rebukes the false belief that material wealth is a sign of a godly life. It also corrects a false confidence in one’s present pious actions. In addition, it trains the hearer to follow the ways of Christ in action in caring for those who are needy in the world.

With regards to the form, the devotion develops the character of the rich man to take the reader into the possible mindset of the rich man to associate the man’s experience with that of the hearer. This is done to reveal hypocrisy, that is, pride in one’s good actions and yet failure to do what God commands.

Devotion 6

Both researchers correctly identified the *CSSB* as the source of this devotion. One indication of the source is the use of the word “paradise” which may derive from the *CSSB* note 16:22. This is the only note in either study Bible that refers to heaven as paradise in this text. In addition, the message and the summary of the text both refer to the story as a parable. This too may have been influenced by the *CSSB* which is at least open to that understanding, while *TLSB* states that this is not a parable.

The focus of the devotion is that sin is found not only in what we do, but also in what we do not do. Thus it has a moralistic message focusing on a person’s work over the work of God. Though the devotion does speak of Christ as the commandment teacher and references his life, death and resurrection for us, it depicts him as an example of how to live closer to God by keeping the commandments, and does not proclaim him as one’s savior. Without any proclamation of the gospel the devotion ends on a low note recognizing the failure of people to listen even in light of the resurrection.

The devotion teaches that the misuse of one’s wealth is a sin of omission and that God desires us to use our wealth in care for others. In addition, it rebukes the false teaching that being rich leads to damnation. It also corrects people who do not listen to God’s word and are too tired or selfish with their possessions to help others. Finally, it trains the hearers to use their gifts to love others.

The form of the devotion is developed using the method of explanation by analogy to frame the devotion by asking people to imagine a person raised from the dead and speaking to them. It then closes by revealing that this person is Jesus and he speaks to them today. This may reflect note 16:30 of *CSSB* which explains that Jesus may have been speaking of his own resurrection in the text. *TLSB* also makes this point, but is not as explicit (*TLSB*, note 16:31).

Explanation by question and answer is used to lead the hearer to consider the implications.

Explanation by classification was observed as the devotion classifies sins as sins of commission and sins of omission. The devotion concludes with character development as it retells the story of the parable focusing on the character of the rich man. In addition, serial depiction is used to convey the commandment to love others.

Devotion 7

Both researchers correctly identified the *CSSB* as the source of this devotion. The use of Scripture, specifically a reference to Luke 6:21, seems to be linked to the cross reference in 16:25. This reference to Luke 6:21 does not exist in *TLNB*.

The focus of this devotion is expressed as “what goes around comes around,” that is, if we show mercy, God will show mercy to us. If we do not show mercy, God will not show mercy either. Thus the devotion has a moralistic focus without a clear proclamation of God’s gracious work. While the devotion speaks of God’s forgiveness of sins, it seems to suggest that it is all contingent on one’s performance. Though Jesus is mentioned frequently, his role of teacher or commandment giver predominates.

The devotion teaches the hearer to treat others with kindness, so that they will be rewarded by God. It also trains Christians to make the most of every opportunity to practice love for others.

Though lacking coherence, the form of this devotion incorporates serial depiction to make the point that God is watching everything we do. Again it is used to depict the reality of Satan, judgment, and the impending coming of Christ so that one makes every moment count in terms of actions one can do in mercy to others.

Devotion 8

Both researchers correctly identified the *TLSB* as the source of this devotion. In the story the use of words concerning the man “clothed in purple and fine linen” seems to indicate the influence of *TLSB* as the words mirror note 16:19 and the ESV translation of the text. Moreover, the focus of the devotion seems heavily influenced by the notes of *TLSB*, specifically the sacramental note for 16:31, as it expresses the importance of the word.

The opening states that we all need a Savior because of our sin of living for this world and the Holy Spirit works on our hearts through His word to enable us to have faith in Jesus as our Savior. Thus the focus is on God’s work of creating faith and saving people through Christ. This devotion depicts Jesus as the savior of all in contrast to simply a teacher or commandment giver. Furthermore, it clarifies how Jesus saves us from the fiery fate by his own blood. Here the student uses the text to do more than just warn the hearer of the fate of the rich man. In addition, he points to Jesus as the one who saves.

The devotion teaches that all need a savior from the sin of living for this world and that one can only believe in Jesus through the Holy Spirit’s work through his word. Thus the function also follows note 16:31. The devotion also trains one to open the Bible and listen. In addition, it teaches that God reveals his will through the Bible and the reality of hell. It corrects those who deny their sin of living only for this world and their need for a savior and trains people to read the Scriptures and listen to God.

This devotion uses the method of explanation to lead hearers through a string of questions highlighting the problem of sin to finally end with the solution, i.e., listen to God’s word. Serial depiction is used to provide a series of examples that show our wealth. The examples move from common situations for most Americans to a personal example of collecting guitars. Finally, explanation by problem/solution was used in reading the parable and applying the parable to life

in light of the problem of sin and judgment and the solution of God's grace made known in Jesus Christ through the word of the Scriptures. One also notes that the student does refer to the story of the text as a parable in contrast to the statement in TLSB that this is a "realistic situation" (note 16:19–31).

Devotion 9

Both researchers correctly identified the TLSB as the source of this devotion. Although the devotion does use the term "paradise" (which is found later in the Gospel of Luke but does not occur in the text) which occurs in the CSSB note 16:22, there still seems to be more evidence for the use of TLSB. Some of the indications of this source are the translation cited for Scripture references and specific terminology throughout the summary and devotion. The use of ESV throughout the devotion seems to suggest the use of TLSB. In addition, the summary speaks of the "story" rather than the "parable," a point made by the TLSB in note 16:19–31. Moreover, the devotion highlights the chasm "that cannot be traversed," a point made by note 16:26 in TLSB.

The focus of the devotion is that as we give to others, so we shall receive from God in the end. Thus the real emphasis is on a person's work rather than the gracious work of God in Christ. Jesus is only mentioned once as the story teller who warns about the outcomes of those who do not care for others by explaining the outcomes of Lazarus and the rich man. Though Scripture is cited throughout the devotion, it is void of any expression of the salvific gospel message in Christ.

The devotion teaches that one who does not give in this world will not get blessing in eternity. Moreover, it teaches that God's will is that we care for others and that God's judgment is upon those who do not care for others. The devotion also corrects those who are not caring for the poor and trains the hearer to take advantage of opportunities to help those in need.

The devotion uses explanation to convey that our lack of giving to the poor (cause) leads to not getting God's blessing in eternity (effect). The researchers also observed the method of explanation being used in the teaching of the story to convey the message that with our death comes the end of our opportunity to give to others (cause) and that leads to our making the most of the opportunities now (effect).

Devotion 10

Both researchers correctly identified the *TLSB* as the source of this devotion. Some key indicators of this source are the use of terms and themes. The devotion refers to the story multiple times without using the term parable, a point made in *TLSB* note 16:19–31. In addition, the summary and devotion emphasize the afterlife which is a theme addressed in a full page article adjacent to the text in *TLSB*. Moreover, the summary highlights the fixed chasm that could not be crossed, as does note 16:26 in *TLSB*.

The focus of the devotion is that we are not judged by what we have on earth, but what we do with the things we have. This moralistic focus emphasizes a person's work, rather than God's gracious work, with regards to where one goes in the afterlife. There is no reference to Jesus and the emphasis is completely centered on one's performance as the key factor to determine one's future in the afterlife.

The devotion teaches the difference between heaven and hell and that one's action on earth can determine one's afterlife. It attempts to correct the lack of concern for the poor because of materialism and selfishness and trains one to care for the poor with one's material possessions.

The student uses character as she focuses upon the selfish and spoiled nature of a girl that the student knows. Later the student describes her intention to use narrative to tell the story of the rich man and Lazarus to the child. Finally, the student describes her intention to explain the story in terms of the effects of caring for the poor and not caring for them in reference to eternal life.

Devotions Based on Luke 24:13–35

Devotion 1

Both researchers correctly identified the TLSB as the source of this devotion. The observers noted the Christocentric emphasis that comes from note 24:26 in the TLSB and also the summary note 24:13–35 labeled with a law and gospel icon, while the CSSB lacks similar notes with an explicit Christocentric emphasis. Moreover, the devotion ends by down playing the role of a commentary or study Bible, while emphasizing the work of the Holy Spirit. This may reflect the quote of Augustine found in note 24:27 labeled with a word and sacrament icon. Augustine highlights the need for Christ to open our ears and understanding that one might rightly read the Scriptures.

The focus of this devotion is that Jesus is the key to understanding Scripture and he opens our eyes to the truth. Jesus is described as our savior and the main character of God's love story. Moreover, he is the one who opens the Scriptures so that others might know God's plan of salvation.

The devotion teaches that Jesus is the lens through which we read and understand God's Word. It also corrects the misreading of Scripture, either reading it outside of the larger story or reading God as an angry God by isolating single passages. Finally, it trains one to read Scripture by the Holy Spirit as a story of God's love in Christ.

The form of the devotion begins with character development of a parent seeking Bible for child. Explanation by comparison and contrast is used to draw the distinction between learning the Scriptures as disjointed stories and learning the bigger picture of God's salvation in Christ. In addition, serial depiction offers various misreadings of the Bible. Finally, explanation by cause and effect is used to express how Jesus opens one's understanding of God through the word.

Devotion 2

Both researchers correctly identified the TLSB as the source of this devotion. This devotion seems to reflect TLSB in its recurring emphasis on humor and irony. The study note for 24:13–35 suggests that this passage contains irony and humor. The content of the devotion reflects this irony and humor as it basically quotes this line in the summary. Moreover, the form of the devotion reflects this emphasis as it uses an analogy of telling a joke in the application.

The focus of the devotion is that Jesus walks beside you and me on good days and even bad days. He is a true friend through trials and tribulation. As he is present among us, he reminds us that he died for our sins and gives us eternal life. Moreover, the devotion states that he freely gives patience, love, and forgiveness. Thus the focus is rightly placed on Jesus' works for the salvation of others.

Along with teaching that Christ is always present, the devotion teaches the hearers to understand Jesus and the gifts he gives freely—patience, love, and forgiveness. In addition, it corrects those who are looking for answers in the wrong places. Finally, it trains people to live in hope.

The devotion uses the image of one not getting the punch line until after the fact. Thus the study note referencing humor seems to have affected the form of the devotion as well. The method of explanation by analogy is used to compare the discovery of Jesus to the delayed getting of a joke.

Devotion 3

With a clear reference to the *Archeological Study Bible (ASB)*, Rev. Hoehner identified the source as the *ASB*. Dr. Schmitt also noted the reference questioning the source, though he did not know one of the students had used it instead of the other assigned study Bible. The *ASB* study note is cited to bring clarity to the nature of crucifixion.

The focus of the devotion is that we have hope in a compassionate, truly risen savior. However, Jesus is depicted as a moral example and teacher rather than a savior. Though Jesus' crucifixion is explored in detail, its salvific purpose is never mentioned; most likely it is assumed. Thus the focus is ultimately on a person's work rather than on God's work in Christ.

The devotion teaches that Jesus is truly risen from the dead and seeks to corrects the lack of hope that our society has in face of global crises. Moreover, it trains people in witness – to be compassionate like Jesus and to speak in love.

Dialogue is used to understand the empty tomb. Explanation is a method the devotion uses to compare Jesus' compassionate response to the two on the road to our ideal response to share the good news with others. In addition, character is used to retell the story with an emphasis upon the intentionality of Jesus. The study is somewhat disjointed in terms of the emphasis on the cross, that is, it brings the crucifixion material in without much connection to everything else. Still explanation by definition was observed as the method used to define the crucifixion literally by reference to history and then spiritually by reference to a bible passage.

Devotion 4

Both researchers correctly identified the CSSB as the source of this devotion. The study note for 24:19 has a stress upon their lack of faith and this may be what causes the devotion to focus on the lack of faith rather than lack of understanding.

The focus of the devotion is to have faith in God's word no matter how dim the situation may appear. This is grounded in the closing statement that expresses that, even though we lose sight of God at times, God said he will never forsake us. Though this last sentence proclaims the promise of God, overall the devotion has a moralistic focus emphasizing what a person needs to do.

The main function of the devotion is to teach the hearer to have childlike faith in God's word. The brevity of the student's devotion did not provide for much analysis. However, the devotion uses the image of a child trusting parents to convey the trust one should have in God's word.

Devotion 5

Both researchers correctly identified the CSSB as the source of this devotion. The theme of freedom from bondage and the term "kingdom of the Jews" seems to suggest a connection to study note 24:21 which emphasizes the freedom from bondage to Rome and the Jewish nation. This kingdom emphasis is also expressed as the student speaks about living through the new laws of Jesus.

The focus of the devotion is that, while we know the story of Jesus, we do not fully comprehend it. Though the gospel of what Jesus has done for us is added on to the end of this devotion, the real emphasis is on our failure to see Jesus in our lives and our need to do something, that is, break bread with Jesus and open our eyes to him.

The devotion teaches the forgiving work of Jesus and corrects the blindness of not seeing Jesus in one's life and not following his teaching. In addition, it trains the hearer to break bread with Jesus and live with him every day. And so, the hearers are to open their eyes and see the goodness that is Jesus.

The devotion uses the method of explanation to compare the hearer to the two disciples in their ignorance to recognize Jesus' presence in their lives. Moreover, it uses serial depiction to describe ways we fail to see Jesus in our lives. Finally, character is used to retell the story with an emphasis upon the experience of the two men and their blindness.

Devotion 6

Both researchers correctly identified the CSSB as the source of this devotion. Because so much attention is given to the Eucharist, it is notable that there is no evidence of a response to note 24:30 in TLSB which states that this most likely is not a reference to the Sacrament because only one part was given. Thus the observers conclude that the CSSB was probably the study Bible used.

The focus of the devotion is that Jesus is recognized through the breaking of bread. Though the devotion expresses disappointment with the lack of recognition of Jesus' presence, it does convey Jesus' continued presence in the Holy Eucharist.

This devotion teaches the hearer to appreciate that Jesus is really present in the Eucharist. In addition, it rebukes people for not recognizing Jesus in various ways and trains people to see and respond in devotion to the presence of Jesus.

Narrative retells the story of John Paul's visit. Explanation by analogy is used to highlight the significance of Jesus' presence in the Eucharist in relation to the visit of the Pope and Jesus' visit through the Sacrament. The question is asked: if there are crowds and excitement over the Pope's visit, why is there not the same response to the Lord's presence through the Eucharist? Serial depiction offers a series of examples of how people do not recognize Jesus when he comes. The method of explanation is used to compare and contrast the presence of Jesus with our reception, addressing both the positive and the negative aspects.

Devotion 7

Both researchers correctly identified the CSSB as the source of this devotion. The CSSB study note for 24:16 uses the exact language of "divine intervention" used in the summary to explain why they did not recognize Jesus. Note 24:31 emphasizes their eyes were opened, perhaps leading the student to follow that theme in her devotion.

The focus of the devotion is Jesus opened the eyes of those who failed to see that which had happened fulfilling the Scriptures. The devotion clearly proclaims that Jesus' death makes it possible for one to have a good life. Thus, Jesus is the one who provides us a change for the better.

With regards to function, the devotion corrects those with negative attitudes and trains the readers to open their eyes to the new life they have through Jesus and be the person they want to be.

Narrative is used to tell the story of a mother helping her daughter see the negative expression that she was conveying. Then explanation by analogy is used as the story of a mother opening her eyes to a more positive experience in life is compared to Jesus opening the disciples' eyes to his presence. Through serial depiction examples are given of the ways in which we can make a change for the better, for example, going to college or following the words of the Lord.

Devotion 8

Both researchers correctly identified the TLSB as the source of this devotion. Key indicators of this source are the references to Jesus interpreting all the Scriptures in the summary, which is a point made by note 24:27 and 24:13–35. This is not highlighted in the notes of the CSSB. In addition, note 24:32 emphasizes the disciples "holy joy", a point conveyed in the summary of the devotion. It was also observed that the introductory notes to the gospel of Luke have an emphasis on catechesis and community, along with notes that deal with meals in Luke (page 1718). Note 24:13–35 of TLSB also brings to mind teaching, meals, and saving light. This may be the cause of the student's emphasis on meals as a place for conversation that enlightens.

The focus of the devotion is that the act of gathering together in Jesus' name and having conversation helps us grow in our relationship with him and provides an opportunity for others to hear and believe. The devotion seems to highlight the importance of Christian fellowship while

not explicitly proclaiming the saving act of Christ. The devotion concludes with the statement that God's word will show us the way and with an exhortation to draw near to him together so that he will draw near to us. While the focus is on fellowship, the fellowship is clearly grounded in Christ.

This devotion teaches the importance of Christian fellowship in the presence of God and that God works through such conversation to form us and to equip us for mission. It also trains Christians to draw near to share Christ-centered conversation.

The devotion shares the image of a personal experience of Christ-centered fellowship with one another. The narrative of how God works for formation and mission through conversation with friends serves as the overall structure of the devotion reflecting the fellowship in the gospel reading.

Devotion 9

Both researchers correctly identified the TLSB as the source of this devotion. The law and gospel application note for 24:13–35 of TLSB seems to highlight Jesus' presence with his people at all times, a key theme of the devotion. It was also observed that possibly the emphasis in the study note for 24:13–35 on Luke's use of irony and humor may have colored this devotion as the student offers a vision of Jesus who has all knowledge and yet is involved in our lives where we are limited in what we see and know.

The focus of the devotion is that Jesus was there and is here for eternity whether one believes it or not. The message highlights the truth of the Risen Jesus' presence in our lives.

The function of the devotion is that it teaches the truth of Jesus' resurrection and God's presence. In addition, it rebukes unbelief in Jesus' omnipresence. Finally, it trains the hearer to make a decision for Jesus.

The form of the devotion is structured around the dialog between one who believes and one who does not believe in Jesus' presence in one's life. Within the dialog the narrative of Jesus with the disciple on the road is retold.

Devotion 10

Both researchers correctly identified the TLSB as the source of this devotion. Key indicators of this source include the study note for 24:21 in TLSB. It explicitly pairs delivering Israel from Rome with not realizing the cross was the means of redemption: something mirrored in the student's devotion. The CSSB note, in contrast, explains the phrase "redeem Israel" as the deliverance of the Jewish nation from Rome and establishing God's kingdom. In addition, it was observed that the study note for 24:17 emphasizes the standing still as a moment of being astounded and the student conveys this point in the summary stating, "the men were in awe..." Furthermore, the student references the role reversal from guest to host as Jesus breaks the bread, a point made in note 24:30.

The focus of this devotion is that distractions can prevent us from seeing the reality of things, but Jesus will make a way for us to be comforted. In addition, the devotion describes the true redemption that occurred through Jesus' death on the cross.

This devotion rebukes slowness in heart to believe in Jesus' resurrection and teaches that Jesus will comfort people in love. It also corrects one from allowing distractions to take one's attention away from Jesus. In addition, it trains us to see things as they are because of Jesus.

The method of explanation by cause and effect is used to convey the message that one's selfish unbelief causes one to not see the true redemption that is taking place. In other words, distractions cause us not to see Jesus.

Summary of Devotion Observations

The naturalistic observations of Dr. Schmitt and Rev. Hoehner provide further insight to what study Bible resources the students were using and how they were using them. Based on their observations, the researchers were able to identify the study Bible used by the student 97% of the time.¹⁴¹

With regards to what the students were using, the full page article in *TLSB* had seemingly no influence on the devotion suggesting little or no use. In contrast, the researchers observed that overall the study notes had the biggest impact on the devotions in this project suggesting a greater amount of use. This corresponds with the data from the Likert scale and survey above.

With regards to how the students are using the resources, the study notes seemed to inform the terminology used and sometimes even the style of the devotion. The note in *TLSB* describing the humor and irony of the Luke text seemingly had an impact on the form of one of the devotions. This influence was the key indicator used by the researchers to determine the study Bible source of the devotion. Besides influencing the terminology, the greatest impact the study Bibles seem to have on the devotions is the focus of the message and Christological emphasis. Without guidance in this area the devotions conveyed a moralistic focus with an emphasis on a person's work as seen in most of the devotions that used the *CSSB*. Moreover, without guidance, Christ predominantly is depicted as a commandment giver and example, rather than savior.

St. Paul explained to Timothy that the holy Scriptures were able to make one wise for salvation through faith in Christ. However, from this study one observes that the message of salvation in Christ is not always expressed when the Scripture is shared. While some devotions had a gospel focus, emphasizing God's work in Christ, others had a moralistic focus which

¹⁴¹ This does not include Devotion three, since Dr. Schmitt was unaware of the use of the ABS.

focused on human work. Those who used *TLSB* were 45% more likely to have a focus that emphasized God’s work in Christ than those who used the *CSSB*. 70% of the devotions that used the *TLSB* had a gospel focus, whereas only 25% of the devotions that used *CSSB* had a focus emphasizing God’s work in Christ. Within the devotions based on Luke 16, 40% of *TLSB* devotions had a gospel focus, while 100% of the *CSSB* had a moralistic focus. With regards to the devotions based on Luke 24, 100% of the *TLSB* devotions had a gospel focus, while only 50% of the *CSSB* devotions had a gospel focus. This seems to suggest that based on these observations, *TLSB* achieved its goal of emphasizing God’s work through Christ.¹⁴² In contrast, though the *CSSB* states the doctrines on which it was founded, including Christology, faith alone and word and sacrament,¹⁴³ these doctrines were not communicated through the resources in a way that demonstrated any influence on the reader who then expressed his or her understanding of the text in his or her own devotion.¹⁴⁴

Table 5. Results of Naturalistic Observations of Devotions

Devotion	Study Bible Use	Source Identified by Schmitt	Source Identified by Hoehner	Gospel Focus	Moralistic Focus
Luke 16: Devo 1	TLSB	Yes	Yes	X	

¹⁴² Engelbrecht, *The Lutheran Study Bible*, xi.

¹⁴³ Hoerber, *Concordia Self-Study Bible*, xvi.

¹⁴⁴ This may be due to the influence of The NIV Study Bible. See John Jeske and David P. Kuske. “The NIV Study Bible and Concordia Self-Study Bible, A Review,” <http://www.wlssays.net/files/JeskeStudy.pdf>, (October 1, 2012).

Luke 16: Devo 2	TLSB	Yes	Yes		X
Luke 16: Devo 3	ASB	No	No		X
Luke 16: Devo 4	CSSB	Yes	Yes		X
Luke 16: Devo 5	CSSB	Yes	No		X
Luke 16: Devo 6	CSSB	Yes	Yes		X
Luke 16: Devo 7	CSSB	Yes	Yes		X
Luke 16: Devo 8	TLSB	Yes	Yes	X	
Luke 16: Devo 9	TLSB	Yes	Yes		X
Luke 16: Devo 10	TLSB	Yes	Yes		X
Luke 24: Devo 1	TLSB	Yes	Yes	X	
Luke 24: Devo 2	TLSB	Yes	Yes	X	
Luke 24: Devo 3	ASB	No	Yes		X

Luke 24: Devo 4	CSSB	Yes	Yes		X
Luke 24: Devo 5	CSSB	Yes	Yes		X
Luke 24: Devo 6	CSSB	Yes	Yes	X	
Luke 24: Devo 7	CSSB	Yes	Yes	X	
Luke 24: Devo 8	TLSB	Yes	Yes	X	
Luke 24: Devo 9	TLSB	Yes	Yes	X	
Luke 24: Devo 10	TLSB	Yes	Yes	X	

The use of multiple texts strengthened the study by enriching the data to ensure that the lack of gospel-focused messages is not a result of a specific text that lacks any such message. Moreover, the fact that two researchers were involved supports the findings. The fact that both researchers were able to identify the source almost every time, suggests that within this project the study Bibles had some influence on the devotions. The diversity of the group also ensures the outcomes are not driven by distinction in race, gender, or religion.

A weakness of the analysis is that one cannot completely account for outside influences. The student's religious background, for example, could have significant impact on the outcome

of the devotion. The Catholic faith of student six, for example, was apparent in the writing of both of her devotions. In fact, the role one's religion played in the formation of the devotion was one factor that the research needed to take into account more seriously. Religious formative practices are referenced in the devotions. One of the devotions, for example, highlights a parent giving a child a Bible; another emphasizes the gathering of believers. This may indicate that the religious community is indeed still present in the reading of Scripture. Whereas the study notes seem to focus on the interpretation of words and situations in the text, the religious community at times drives the application of the text. Moreover, one's focus may arise from the study notes, while one's application at times arises from religious community and/or spiritual formative experiences.

An additional outside influence is the Luke course. The instructor's lesson on the metanarrative or key themes in Luke (e.g., the poor) may have affected the outcome to the devotions. Even though the devotions were written before the text was addressed in class, the knowledge gained in the course could have informed the devotion and potentially could have been the cause for the rise in gospel focuses. In addition, it would have been helpful to have some students use no study Bible to compare and contrast the outcomes. Finally, a larger sample size would help to provide better analysis and support for the finds.

In the end, the data suggest that, within this project, study Bibles did affect the Bible study, that is, the devotions. On a very basic level the study notes seemed to affect the terminology and sometimes the style used in the devotions. But on a more profound level, the researchers observed the study Bible's influence on the focus of the message, sometimes determining whether the message would have a gospel focus or a moralistic focus. Finally, religious community and formative religious experiences (which were not well accounted for in this study) may have influenced the application of the focus to life.

CHAPTER 6

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

In this chapter the researcher will summarize the outcome of the study Bible project and draw conclusions about its implications for ministry and further research.

In the home, at congregational Bible studies, and even in classrooms, readers of Scripture use study Bibles to inform their study. Though study Bibles are widely used, it has been unclear how the resources of the study Bibles affect a person's understanding of the biblical text. The purpose of this project has been to gain a clearer understanding of the impact study Bibles have on the application of Scripture. Along with identifying *what* study Bible resources are being used, this study has provided greater insight into *how* students are using study Bibles.

Long before study Bibles existed, the question of the use of Scripture was something the church addressed. Even as early as the apostolic writings of St. Paul, one finds direction regarding such matters. In 2 Timothy, Paul's charge to Timothy informs one both of the nature and function of Scripture, what it is and what it does. The nature of Scripture can be expressed in a threefold manner for it is communicated within the context of the communion of saints, Christocentric in content, and divine in its creation. Furthermore, while Scripture's primary purpose is to make one wise unto salvation through faith in Christ, it also functions in the fourfold manner of teaching, rebuking, correcting, and training for righteousness for the purpose of equipping God's people for every good work.

With this biblical foundation, the researcher of this project set out to examine the use of study Bibles today. Along with a study of the recent rise in production of study Bibles, the project examined study Bibles with regards to their nature and function. In addition, the students'

experience in using study Bibles to create devotions was analyzed through a survey and the naturalistic observation of the researchers.

Based on this study it seems that the study Bibles did influence the students' Bible study. Regardless of the version of study Bible, the data from the survey and the naturalistic observation suggest that the study notes are what students are predominately using to enhance their understanding of the text. The students indicate in the surveys that, of all the resources in the study Bibles, the study notes were used most often. The consistency of the Christological gospel focused messages deriving from the use of *TLSB* or the lack thereof in the devotions using the *CSSB*, suggests that the content and form of the study notes played a significant role in the outcome of the focus of the devotions. Still, the study Bible is not the only influence on one's Bible study, as the study also found that one's application at times arises from one's religious community and/or spiritual formative experiences.

Contributions to Ministry

On the basis of this research the project affirms that the study Bibles affected the outcome of the Bible study, that is, the devotions. This contribution to ministry suggests that special attention should be given to these texts and what they bring to the understanding of the reader. A pastor or teacher should be aware of which study Bible his or her students are using to inform their understanding of Scripture, with a special focus on the study notes. This heightened awareness is also important as the reliability of the study notes and even the source of the resources is not always questioned by those using the study Bibles. Moreover, some students in this study looked to the study Bible as an authority of truth. Paul's words to Timothy remind us of the important role the messenger plays in clearly communicating the gospel focused message in Christ, whether that communication takes place through print or in person.

Within the broader context of ministry, this project provides an example of how study Bibles are being used. With the rise of study Bibles in the last two decades, surprisingly little has been written on these Bibles bound with commentary. Study Bibles are rarely reviewed.¹⁴⁵ What has been written about study Bibles focuses on the motivation behind the publication of these texts and the comparison of resources within the texts rather than on the effect these study Bibles have on the readers. The flood of study Bibles in the past few decades has made it difficult even to keep up with all these comparisons, let alone measure the impact these Bibles have on readers. Thus, this study provides a look at what is actually being used by readers rather than just comparing resources that exist in each study Bible text. Moreover, instead of drawing inferences from the market driven production of these study Bibles, this project illustrates how readers are using study Bibles and how they perceive their use of them. For example, the project demonstrates how the students' use of the study notes has seemingly affected the focus of the devotion message. Moreover, through the survey one sees that students appreciate the study Bible's ability to increase their understanding of the text, but at times some felt distracted from the biblical text by the resources.

One way this project contributes to the field of research is that it provides the means to test some of the inferences and conclusions set forth by scholars in the area of study Bibles. John Bombaro suggests that the use of study Bibles is an appeal to niche markets signaling a triumph of post-Kantian subjectivity over premodern objectivity (or more importantly over biblical Christology).¹⁴⁶ Affirming this view, within this project a student chose to use the *Archaeological Study Bible* rather than the two required texts. This speaks to the individualistic drive to choose one's own study Bible. Notably the devotion of this student lacked a

¹⁴⁵ Bailey, "Study Bibles: A Comparison," 44.

Christological focus, while highlighting the reality of hell. However, this study also revealed that some view the study notes of the study Bible as the arbiter of the truth rather than themselves. Still others continued to rely on the Holy Spirit even in light of the resources surrounding the text. Thus, though Bombaro's comments may reflect something about the act of purchasing or choosing a specific study Bible, this study offers evidence that is contrary to the idea that study Bibles lead to an understanding that the individual is the arbiter of the truth.

On the basis of this project, the researcher would agree with Valerie Hotchkiss' point that "translators and editors often express—intentionally or not—their own doctrinal allegiances and theological views."¹⁴⁷ While the Lutheran study Bibles are upfront with their theological view, their preferences and allegiances are also apparent in how they express certain teachings. Notably *TLSB* has decided to cite the source of comments derived from church fathers and the confessions but not identify the contemporary sources of the study notes. Thus, the emphasis is placed on the church fathers and the confessions, while the knowledge of those who have contributed to the most influential portion of the resources is lost. Two specific examples of this are the note in *TLSB* stating that Jesus' story in Luke 16 is not a parable and the note in Luke 24 highlighting the humor and irony that is found in the text. In both cases, the notes influenced devotions, however the contributor remains unidentified. The result is that the overall guiding views and allegiances can only be traced to the editor because the reader does not know the contributors of the study notes. Not only does this practice devalue the contributors, it may also lead the reader to assume that the notes are correct because the study Bible says so. This seems to ignore St. Paul's charge to Timothy to remember those who taught him the Scriptures.

¹⁴⁶ John Bombaro, "Bible Inc." *Modern Reformation* 19, no. 4 (July/August 2010): 29.

¹⁴⁷ Hotchkiss, "Bible Landscapes," 41.

With this in mind, it is the researcher's hope that publishers would recognize the need to identify all contributors for the sake of this communication of the gospel within the communion of saints. The influence a religious community and spiritual formation through one's relationship with others (e.g., a mother giving her child a Bible) can be seen in the application of the text in some of the devotions, affirming Paul's words to Timothy concerning knowing those who taught you. Moreover, whereas the survey suggests students seek additional understanding from pastors and teachers concerning the biblical text, there was little concern about the source of the study Bible resources or their reliability. For this reason, it is hoped that pastors and teachers would guide their students to pursue an understanding of the person behind the print. For whether in person or in print, the individual may have an influence on one's understanding and application of the Scriptures, just as much as an adjunct instructor.

Contributions to Personal and Professional Growth

As the researcher reflects on his experience of conducting this study, he has a greater appreciation for the gifts that Christ has given his church, that is, the pastors and teachers who equip the people of God to grow in their faith and knowledge of the Lord. Whether in print or in person, they are essential to ensuring the gospel of Christ is clearly proclaimed. Though study Bibles can serve as an effective learning tool, the students' responses in the survey support the researcher's understanding that one cannot replace a pastor or teacher through print. Their ability to communicate with the community within its specific context is crucial. Moreover, the impact of one's religious community and spiritual formative experiences was recognized in the naturalistic observation, again highlighting the importance of the relationships that surround the reading of the writings.

This study has also helped the researcher to recognize how important relationship is to the proclamation of the Gospel. In the midst of false teachers, Paul does not point Timothy directly

to the text but rather charges him to remember those who taught him. Word and deed are both essential parts of one's witness. This is also reflected in the function of Scripture as it addresses both beliefs and behaviors, confession and conduct. Thus, training a man of God for good works has a lot to do with the instructor living as a man of God.

Professionally this experiment has raised the researcher's awareness of the influence study Bibles and other outside sources may have on one's Bible study. Therefore, he recognizes the importance of having a broad knowledge of study Bibles, especially those used within one's class or congregation. In addition, the researcher recognizes the need to inform others about the role of study Bibles and how these tools can be used appropriately.

In addition, this experience has reminded the researcher of the need for clear proclamation of the gospel. Each time he teaches at course at Concordia, he is stunned by how many people, even Christians, do not have a clear understanding of the gospel. They know that Jesus died on the cross for them, but even with Lutheran study Bibles in hand the message remains entirely moralistic. As pastors and teachers we must work hard to clearly teach and preach so that more people know that the sum of the gospel is not "you better do this" or "you need to do something better" but rather that God has done something better for you in Christ. It is this wisdom that gives the sure and certain hope of salvation in Christ Jesus, while giving all glory to God.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the project the researcher makes the following recommendations to those involved with the use of study Bibles.

Because study Bibles have an impact on the Bible study of those using them, pastors and teachers should spend some time reviewing popular study Bibles, with a special focus on the Bibles their students or parishioners are using. It is recommended that they study three key areas: the introduction of the study Bible, the introduction for each book of the Bible and the study

notes. Based on this study, these resource areas have the greatest effect on how students are using the text.

Furthermore, the researcher recommends that pastors and teachers should talk with their students about study Bibles and the proper way to use them, highlighting the three essential aspects of the nature of Scripture. Addressing the fact that the Scriptures are communicated within the context of the communion of saints can provide an opportunity to underscore the need to know the source behind the additional resources. Speaking of the Christ-centered nature of Scripture will help others have a proper focus and lead them to see the primary function of the text, to make one wise unto salvation in Christ Jesus. Moreover, addressing the divine inspiration of the Scriptures will provide the context to draw distinctions between God's Word and the additional resources, regardless of whether they are the words of contemporaries or confessional church fathers. Pastors should be encouraged to use study Bibles within a group study of the Bible, demonstrating the proper use and understanding of the study notes. While celebrating the gifts of the church that have provided this easily accessible information for the edification of the reader, one can also caution the group about assuming every note must be authoritatively infallible.

In addition, the researcher recommends that all publishers consider clearly identifying the authors of the notes when possible. Not only does this give proper acknowledgement to the gifts of the church and contributors to the study Bible, but it also allows the reader to know who is guiding them. In a world with increased access to opinions and scholarship, both good and bad, this is more important than ever.

The study of study Bibles is fertile ground for additional research. Though somewhat small in its scope, to my knowledge, this is the first study to demonstrate that study Bibles do affect one's Bible study. As this study has provided evidence to support perhaps a common

assumption, it also has opened the door for further investigation in this area of research. Much more could be learned through additional research by increasing the sample size, comparing a greater variety of study Bibles, and enhancing the investigation with more comprehensive surveys and observations. In addition, it would be helpful to compare students using study Bibles with those using a clean text without study Bible resources. Moreover, attending to two factors, faith community and spiritual formation, one might be able to examine how these influence the application of the text. It is hoped that this specific experiment may motivate others to examine further the use of study Bibles to understand perhaps the relationships between study Bibles and Bible study on a broader scale.

Study Bibles can serve as somewhat of a laboratory in which one can study the use of Scripture from many different angles, from hermeneutics to homiletics and everything in between. This is important to note as the landscape of biblical resources is in the midst of another great shift with the technology revolution. Most likely the rise of web-based resources, easily accessible through light weight computers, will have an effect on the study Bible industry. The *ESV Study Bible*, for example, is already online with additional resources. Yet, even as these massive manuscripts of print may fade away with the dawn of the iPhones and iPads, the biblical principles in the study remain the same and carry over to all studies of Scriptures.

Lest Google become the final authoritative interpreter of Scripture, readers ought to always acknowledge Christ as the guiding light of their understanding of Scripture as stated in the study notes of *The Lutheran Study Bible*:

“God, who has given us the Scriptures to make us ‘wise for salvation’ (2 Tm 3:15), opens our eyes to believe Jesus. ‘Lord Jesus Christ, with us abide, For round us falls the eventide. O let Your Word, that saving light, Shine forth undimmed into the night.’ Amen. (LSB 585:1)”¹⁴⁸

Sola Gloria Dei

¹⁴⁸ Engelbrecht, *The Lutheran Study Bible*, 1770.

APPENDIX ONE

LUKE 16 DEVOTIONS

Devotion 1: Luke 16:19-31

Student 1

Summary: A picture is painted for us of a wealthy man who has every earthly comfort, and a poor beggar named Lazarus who begs at his gate. The rich man in his life has no concern for the well-being of others, and Lazarus is denied even the scraps from his table. They both die, and the tables turn. Lazarus is in heaven with Abraham, and the rich man is in agony in hell. The rich man looks up and sees Lazarus with Abraham, and begs for Lazarus to dip his finger in water and come down to cool his tongue. Abraham says this is impossible because of the great divide separating them. The rich man then thinks of his brothers, and asks if Lazarus can appear to them so they might believe. Abraham says that if they have not listened to the OT scriptures, seeing someone rise from the dead will not change their unbelief.

Contemporary setting: This devotion is going to be written for a group of American college students. College students are often concerned with their financial situations, and think that simply because they don't have any "extra" money to throw around, they don't need to help others when the opportunity arises. Also, college students are taught to be skeptical about religion and God, and many think they would have an easier time believing if God revealed Himself to them through some miracle. Jesus addresses both of these issues in His parable.

Devotion: God's Word is more than enough to bring about faith and repentance in someone's life.

I was on choir tour in Ghana a few years ago, when one of my classmates fell ill. This classmate was an agnostic, struggling with the possibility of the existence of God and looking for answers. The only thing holding him back was the amount of hate and suffering in the world, and if there was a God, he should put a stop to all of it. We debated back and forth on this issue daily, but he just couldn't take that step of faith. Then, into our second week there, he got a serious eye infection. He was completely blind in the eye and was in a great deal of pain, and there weren't any doctors around to give him anything that might help. We all prayed over him, and our director was going to arrange for a flight back to the United States. I remember asking God to miraculously heal him, in hopes that this classmate would come to see Him as a merciful healer and great ruler over all things. God heard our prayers, and by morning the infection had completely cleared and he could see again. I tried to help him to see God's hand in this, but my classmate brushed the whole experience off and remained in his unbelief.

In the parable, the rich man in hell does not wish the same agony on his five brothers, and asks for Lazarus to be sent to his father's house. He hopes that they might see such a

wondrous sign and believe. But Abraham says that if Moses and the Prophets aren't enough to stir up faith in them, they will not believe upon seeing Lazarus rise from the dead. So often we think that if God simply proved Himself to us or to others, faith would come easily. However, this is far from the truth. Paul in his letter to the Corinthians warns against demanding signs, and instead points people to the "foolish" message of Christ crucified. Faith is a gift of the Holy Spirit, and the Holy Spirit works through the Word of God as it is spoken and proclaimed. Miracles do not produce saving faith.

Jesus worked many miracles during His earthly ministry, but these were works of compassion and mercy. Often people were miraculously healed *because* they had faith in God and believed in the teachings of Scripture. But the miracles of Jesus were always accompanied by the proclamation of the Gospel. We must learn to trust that the Word of God is active and living, full of the power of the Holy Spirit. It never comes back empty, but always accomplishes the will of God. As Christians, we are called to boldly proclaim the Good News to all people. Even if our proclamation is not accompanied by miraculous healings and signs, God's Word is always powerful enough to get the job done.

Luke 16:19-31
Devotion

By
Student 2
Concordia University Wisconsin

Rev. Matt Hoehner
Gospel of Luke

July 22, 2010



Luke 16:19-31 DEVOTION

Money and material objects may bring happiness and joy to an individual's life here on Earth, but God's eternal home will be far more pleasing and an everlasting joy. Remain faithful to your Lord and you will be granted His promise of eternal life. Understand that loving money more than God is not being a servant to your Lord.

Luke speaks the truth of God's promise, which is exemplified through the parable of *The Rich Man and Lazarus*. The point Luke conveys to his audience, is that the rich man had everything and more here on Earth, but refused to help a poor sinner like himself. God recognizes those who live lavishly, but do not consider the less fortunate. He would want His people to share the wealth and "do to others as you would want done to you." On the other hand, God wants us to receive His earthly blessings as a sign of His eternal favor, only if it is not taken to the extreme level of forgetting His law.

Amongst many families today, parents lack the capability to teach their children the importance of sharing. This may be as simple as donating time to charities or community service. Children continue to be rewarded with toys and technology, but the message of God ceases to exist. This should be an obligation to raise children in the eyes of God and not the eyes of money.

Imagine money growing on trees. What a wonderful sight. At any time of the day you could go out in your backyard and pick money as if you were picking apples or peaches at an orchard. As a child, things were tight in our household; my mother gave up her career as a nurse to be a stay-at-home wife and mother, while my father was a hardworking farmer. He provided for us as a family and we were happy. Most of my friends were spoiled, but my parents told me

I was spoiled, but not in the same way. My friends had flashy toys and clothes, but they did not know the love God had for them and may never know because money and material objects blinded this view.

Today, I want to raise my children with the same understanding of God's grace and mercy that my parents taught me and the power of God's Law. The story of *The Rich Man and Lazarus* speaks the powerful truth of God's Law. One can have all the material objects and wealth, but if the wealth is not shared, God considers this to be an unrighteous wealth. In Luke 16:13, it states,

"No servant can serve two masters, for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and money."

This unfortunately is prevalent in our society. Everyone seems to want and need an abundant supply of money, but forget the important need of giving to the less fortunate. God will take care of His people as long as "we are good stewards only of which God loans us." Christ became poor for us so we could live an eternal life in His Kingdom.

Student 3
Rev. Matthew Hoehner
The Gospel of Luke
22 July 2010

Luke 16: 19-31

Summary: This is a story about hell and its reality. Only moments before, the Pharisees had been sneering at Jesus' story about money; this is a parable directed at those who are selfish with their wealth. It is also a warning to us about the path of worldliness and sensuality. It gives encouragement to those who suffer daily around our planet.

The parable begins with a wealthy man who enjoys all the pleasures of life. A sickly beggar, named Lazarus, resides outside the rich man's home. The beggar dies and goes to heaven. The rich man dies and goes to hell. Separated by an expanse, the rich man can see Lazarus, who leans intimately near Abraham, a leading figure of Hebrew history. The rich man addresses Abraham requesting a drop of water to relieve his suffering from fire. Abraham cannot answer the rich man's request due to the expanse, but also reminds him that he had his pleasures in his lifetime, while Lazarus suffered. The rich man is also denied the opportunity to warn his family members who still reside on earth; Abraham reminds him that they have God's teachings to warn them.

Contemporary Setting: In America, we live in great wealth compared to the world. It would not be difficult for us to relate to the rich man. My readers would be friends and family, who primarily live in mid-America, ages teen to older adult, familiar with owning a home and cars, and work in a middle class economic group.

The Main Point: Hell is real and lifestyle will affect our destiny.

Our earthly situation. Purple and fine linen were symbols of wealth; we can picture the rich man with a table full of food, brought by servants, perhaps surrounded by laughing friends who honored him by name and enjoyed on a daily basis. However, Jesus offers no name for him, giving him not the honor. Jesus gives the beggar a name, perhaps someone the audience knows. Lazarus receives no relief of his suffering; only the dogs lick his wounds. When a movie star comes to town, do we not gasp, say his/her name, and desire the chance to see him/her? What about the man under the interstate bridge tonight? Do we know his name? How about the thousand children who will perish today, because there is no food or drinkable water?

As Americans, we seem to be confused about wealth. Having not the latest flat-screen TV or other electronic device, we cry in complaint. Note that Lazarus never complained. A visit to any third world country puts our whining to shame.

Hell is real. Jesus taught about hell more than He did about heaven. This story describes a fire filled hell that produces great agony. Scriptures describe hell as a furnace of fire and place of darkness (Matthew); a lake of fire and place of filth (Revelation); a place of sorrows in Psalms. Note how the rich man desires only a drop of water for relief, while Lazarus had desired the droppings from the rich man's table. Jesus tells us there is an eternal separation between heaven and hell, with no relief, resolution, or warning others. Hells inhabitants will know its reality, that death does not end it all, and no mercy remains.

Lifestyle. We must be sensitive to the poor of our world. We must not be selfish with belongings; they come from God anyway. Live as if today is our last, share in any way possible.

The Devotion of Lazarus

By

Student 4

Rel 383 The Gospel of Luke

Concordia University – Wisconsin

Rev. Matt Hoehner

22 July 2010

Gospel of Luke

22 July 2010

Summary

There were two men one rich and the other poor; the rich man was not concerned about anyone but himself. The poor man slept at the rich mans front door longing for help. Both men died, the rich man went to hell and the poor man went to heaven. The rich man went to hell because of his selfishness to help his neighbor who was in need.

Audience

Those who are in position to assist others, but refuse to do so due to their own selfishness and greed.

Devotion

God tells us in one of his commandments, love thy neighbor and that means to lend a helping hand if and when necessary. When you disobey this commandment you are sinning against God. Your actions on earth will be looked upon when judgment day arrives.

Some individuals have been fortunate to have all the worldly material goods such as money, clothing and cars while some individuals have not had the opportunity of experiencing those material items. There are some individuals who have acquired wealth and have fallen, but does that make one person better than the other?

In the gospel of Luke 16:19-31, the rich man was an example of how many fortunate individuals today treat individuals who are less fortunate. The word of God teaches us not to honor material items for these items are only temporary and give you satisfaction while you are here on earth.

God also tells us to lend a helping hand to our neighbors in their time of need for you may need that neighbors help one day. Many fortunate individuals today are selfish and do not

feel the need to help others. These individuals are the ones who do not understand God words.

The rich man did not go to hell because he was rich; he went because he fails to help his neighbor which is a sin against God. We are all equal in God's eyesight and have the same opportunity to follow His teachings and live according to His word no matter how rich or poor we are. God is not a selfish God; He loves and He gives unconditionally so why is it that we can not do the same?

What you do and how you live your life in the natural will be a deciding factor of where you will spend your eternal life.

Student 5
Luke 16: 19-31 Devotion

Summary

Lazarus is a poor man, a leper who longs to be taken care of by a rich man. Lazarus, in fact is so downtrodden that he is willing to eat whatever is left over from the rich man's table. Lazarus has so many sores in fact that dogs come and lick his wounds, which would mean that the man is most likely unable to really protect himself from the dogs.

Both Lazarus and the rich man die, Lazarus is taken to Heaven by the angels, while the rich man probably is buried in a rich man's tomb and finds himself in the torment of Hell. When the rich man sees Lazarus in Heaven with Abraham the rich man first begs for Lazarus to quench his thirst and when rebuked asks Abraham to send Lazarus to his brothers so that they can learn what fate awaits them when they die. But Abraham tell the rich man that they have good examples from Moses and the Prophets, and if they do not heed their lessons they certainly will not heed the warning of a person that rises from the dead.

Audience

I am speaking to a group of parishioners from my church. I had overheard them boasting a bit about how good of Catholics they are because they go to church on Sundays and give more than is expected to the parish. I offer up the reading not as a rebuke, but as a reminder that being a good Catholic or Christian is not just about following the rules of the church, but also being sure to live in Christ's footsteps.

Devotion

In the story of the rich man and Lazarus, Jesus drives home an important lesson: Although we may be rich in this life, ignoring the lessons of the prophets and Jesus can have dastardly consequences when we pass from this earth!

Every day the rich man lived what he considered a quality life. Most likely he was a high priest and believe that he lived a pious life. He most likely prayed regularly, and taught the lessons of the prophets. He may have even thrown scraps to the beggar Lazarus, and may have afterward boasted about how he fed the man. He may have even allowed Lazarus to stay outside of his gate even though he was unclean, instead of kicking him off of the curb to beg somewhere else.

Never once did the rich man consider taking the man into his house and have his wounds clean or care for him. The rich man probably even told others to be kind to their fellow man, but never once did he consider taking Lazarus in and nursing him back to health. He probably never thought twice that he should care of his neighbor in such a manner. Without a doubt the rich man probably felt as though he was living the pious life, and his worldly gifts were a sign that God was smiling upon him.

In death the rich man still does not get the lesson. When he sees that Lazarus is on Abraham's side in Heaven, in paradise, he asks that Abraham allow Lazarus to come to him and cool his tongue with just a touch of water. First, the rich man still seems to refuse to speak directly to Lazarus, and secondly there is no indication that Lazarus would not go to the rich man and comfort him, Abraham simply says Lazarus cannot go to the rich man, it is simply not allowed.

While it seems that both the rich man and Lazarus' fate were sealed when they died, the rich man still asks that Lazarus be sent to the rich man's brothers to warn them of their fate, but

Abraham is clear in his refusal. Certainly the brothers had proper examples from Moses and the Prophets and yet they fail to lead devout and pious lives, someone who rises from the dead will not be able to convince them either.

We need to take Jesus' lesson to heart. Too often we believe that while we live comfortable lives, and go to Mass on Sundays that we are being pious. But if we fail to see that there are those around us, maybe here in this room, or next door that need serious help, then we are failing the teachings of Jesus. To be so self absorbed or self righteous will be detrimental to us when we leave this earth. We do not know our own time, so it is best now to follow the lesson of the rich man, do not just preach how to live a pious life, lead by example, and help the Lazarus's in our lives, and we will get to enjoy Paradise with Jesus and the Angels.

Student 6

Devotion 1: Luke 16:19-31

Summary: In the parable of Lazarus and the rich man, Jesus tells us about two men. One man is rich in life and wants for nothing in this world. The other, Lazarus, has nothing. Lazarus lives right outside the rich man's home but still the rich man is able to ignore his needs. In death, the roles are reversed and the rich man is tormented in Hell while Lazarus enjoys a life in Paradise with Abraham, the father of the Jewish people. Now it is the rich man begging for mercy from Lazarus, but it is not possible. The rich man believes that if Lazarus could rise from the dead and warn his brothers, they can change and ask forgiveness for their sins and avoid the torment.

The people listening to Jesus did not understand He was talking about His own resurrection. Jesus knew that even though He would die and rise from the dead so that all mankind can be saved, many will still reject the Word of God and will live life as they please with no regard to how their actions may affect others.

Contemporary Setting: This reflection is intended for middle school aged students. This age group has attended Sunday school, possibly participated in Vacation Bible School, and probably working towards Confirmation so they are familiar with many of Jesus' parables. This parable is very suitable for this age groups life experience. In today's society, it is all about what you have and keeping up with everyone else. With the American people in general being well off, it is important for the students to understand the importance of sharing their gifts with others. There are many people in need of assistance and sometimes very little help available. Today society tells us that as long as we follow the laws, or don't get caught, we can do anything we want with no consequences. Children need to learn from early on that sin is not just being caught doing something bad, sin also includes not being proper stewards of the gifts that have

been given to you. Many might read this parable and assume that Jesus is saying that it is a bad thing to be rich. This is not the case. The true message is that it is how rich you are spiritually that counts. If society takes this teaching to heart, the world would be a much better place with neighbor helping neighbor. We would see peace in the world instead of hate and much less pain and suffering.

DEVOTION 1: LUKE 16:19-31

(Week #2)

by

Student 7

Rev. Matthew Hoehner

The Gospel of Luke/REL383

July 22, 2010

DEVOTION 1: LUKE 16:19-31

It does not matter how people look, how poor they are, or how disgusting of a disease they have; those who have faith in God and treat others with kindness will walk with Him in heaven. Those who do not practice the ways of the Lord and treat others unkindly will find their place in hell. God will have no forgiveness for you if you have no mercy for others.

This devotional speaks to the Thursday night ladies' bowling league in Pacific, Missouri. Many of the women talk behind other bowler's backs, give snobby looks, and ignore those who are not part of their friendship circle.

What Comes Around Goes Around

When good people are treated badly by others undeservingly, God is watching. When you are not accepting of others, God is watching. When you put yourself before others; God is watching. God is always watching so be on your toes.

I am sure you can think of many times when you could have offered help to someone you saw struggling with a problem or just needing a friend to talk to. There are many of us who have looked the other way because it was felt that there was too much going on at that point in our lives to offer a helping hand to someone in need. Jesus said in Luke 14: 13-14, "But when you give a banquet, invite the poor, the crippled, the lame, the blind, and you will be blessed. Although they cannot repay you, you will be repaid at the resurrection of the righteous". This verse tells us to let others into your heart no matter what you might think of them. Do not turn the other cheek. Do not think unkind thoughts, put yourself above others, or be greedy. Open your heart to others. When they shout insults at you, smile and say, "Thank you, friend, I'll remember your valuable suggestions and work on that". Do not let God see you treat others badly when you have the opportunity to forgive. Make others feel special. Make them feel wanted. Make a friend and you will always have a friend in Jesus. You may find yourself needing God's help someday and He will not be there for you; just as you turned your back on your fellow neighbor. He wants you to walk with Him in heaven so make God proud of the fact that you are His child.

I want to emphasize how important it is to be on your best behavior at all times because you are also being watched by another. Satan is waiting for you to mess up and will jump at the chance to take you into his world. Prepare yourself because the Lord is coming. Now is your time to prove yourself. Be kind to others and help them understand the ways of the Lord. Listen to the words of Jesus (Luke 6:21), "Do to others as you would have them do to you". You are always welcomed in the house of the Lord. Learn from the teachings of the Son of God. God wants you to walk with Him in heaven. It is not a hard task to accomplish. It is not a job that has to be done. It is something worth waiting for. Treat others with kindness and you will be rewarded by God. Believe in God and He will forgive your sins. Spread your kindness and help others so you can walk with the Lord in heaven. God has a place for you with Him as long as you are ready when the time comes. The time is now.

“Devotion 1- *Luke 16:19-31*”

by
student 8

Rev. Matthew Hoehner BA, M.Div., STM

REL 338 – The Gospel of Luke

26 July 2010

Summary: “The Rich Man and Lazarus” is a sharp warning against living only for the immediate wants and desires of this world. The rich man, clothed in purple and fine linen is living a kingly life in this world. However, he has no concern for the poor beggar at his gate. He doesn’t take the time to consider what it is to love anybody except himself and the company of his worldly friends. He calls on his father Abraham which suggests that he is aware of God’s law and the covenant that God has with his people, yet he has chosen not to live in accordance with it. He has not loved God or his neighbor and is reaping the fruit of condemnation which he has sown.

It is also made clear that we have but one life to live, albeit for eternity. What happens after our mortal life on this earth is done is not separate but directly connected. Salvation is here for us all by the loving mercy and grace of Jesus Christ. Yet there are those who would reject that grace by refusing to accept the work of the Holy Spirit in their hearts. Moses and the prophets show us the law that convicts us of our sin and the need for a savior to redeem us from it. If we don’t recognize our need for saving grace, how can we accept the grace that saves?

Contemporary Setting: The contemporary setting is everyone who lives in this world today. None of us are free from sin and none of us are without the need for the saving grace in Jesus. More specifically I believe it is a call to seek God’s will for our lives and not that of our own. The target audience would be anyone who is not living according to God’s will as revealed to us in His Word. As I personally consider who this message could be shared with, I would first think of those who have yet to confess their faith in Jesus Christ as their Savior and who are living lives of obviously unrepentant sin. It’s important to say that sharing this is not so that I might feel superior or more pious in some way, but only that they might hear the Word of God and in so doing come to know Him.

The Main Point: The purpose of this devotion would be to show the readers that we are all in need of a Savior from our sin of living for this world, and we can only believe that Jesus is that Savior by the work of the Holy Spirit on our hearts through His Word.

Have you ever had to wonder where your next meal was going to come from? Have you ever had to wonder how you were going to put food on the table for your child? Many of us may answer those questions by considering some times where we thought we were living paycheck to paycheck. There may have been some times where things seemed difficult, but we can be proud

of ourselves because, like good Americans do, we raised ourselves up by our hard-working bootstraps and made it through. Yet, we'll never know what it's like to watch our baby starve to death because there wasn't so much as a bowl of larvae and rice for days at a time.

I have a thing for guitars. I find myself going to guitar shops and spending hours at a time just walking around dreaming of how great it would be to have those fine new instruments in my collection. I imagine just plopping down the credit-card and taking at least one of them home to play with for hours until it's time to take my family out to a nice restaurant for an overpriced meal (because there was no time to cook). But, you see I already have guitars at home and food in the pantry. I couldn't possibly play them all at once or eat all that has been provided before it spoils. How could my time and provisions be better spent if I wasn't dreaming about consuming more of what I don't need?

Jesus used the parable of the rich man and Lazarus to warn against living only for ourselves and all for this life. If I spend all my time and money on leisure and fancy toys, then what time and money do I have left to serve my neighbor? But, why does it matter if I serve my neighbor or not? This parable depicts the rich man burning in hell for feasting sumptuously every day with no regard for the poor beggar at his gate. The poor beggar, Lazarus, however is carried by angels to heaven. As the rich man cries out for help he is told that he received all his good things during his life on earth and now it is too late.

By virtue of being American we know that we have more money than most of the world. How do we choose to use it? If our conscience tells us what we're doing is wrong then where do we go for the answers? Nearly everyone I know considers themselves a Christian. Yet, few have actually read the bible. How can we be Christians if we don't really know what that means? God's Word tells us of His plan for our lives and reveals to us His grace that saves us from the fiery fate of the rich man by the blood of our Lord Jesus Christ. Maybe it's time to turn to our bibles, open up, and start listening.

Devotion 1

Student 9

REL 383 "The Gospel of Luke"
Pastor Matthew Hoehner
July 22, 210

This devotion is about the rich man and the poor man. The gist of this story is that because the rich man has received his reward on earth and has become desensitized to the needs of and the plight of the poor, he will suffer in eternal anguish only to wish forever that he would have shown more compassion on those less fortunate while he was alive.

The audience that this devotion is aimed at is a sports conference that is being conducted to welcome the new players that have received multi-million dollar contracts. These inductees are all young athletes under twenty five. This devotion is meant to ground these young players in reality, and to illustrate how fortunate they are and the spiritual burden and/or opportunity that is associated with their newly found wealth.

“As You Give, So Shall You Receive”

In today's society there are many who have found earthly favor and what some may call blessings, only to hoard and save or store up so that they will feel secure in their old age. Most of these people throughout their lives are presented with countless opportunities to find favor in God's eyes by helping those less fortunate than themselves. As it is written “That which you do to the least of my people, you do to me also” (*paraphrase*). They, like the man who found earthly favor and wealth in the story of “The Rich Man and Lazarus” (*Luke 16: 19-31 ESV*), turn a blind eye and deaf ear to those in need. Though they may adequately appease and greatly help those less fortunate by giving their scraps or wasted leftovers, they choose to ignore the poor and in some most egregious cases make fun or sport of the plight of the poor. This is directly in contradiction of one of the most precious gems of wisdom, “Do unto others as you would have them do unto you.” (*paraphrase*).

Therefore, they have set the stage of their eternal setting, which will ultimately be one of want, misery and a greater degree of grief than they willfully or even inadvertently doled out to those they ignored or refused to help. As is more often the case than not, the poor are received by God in paradise to receive their eternal blessing while it is easier for a rich man to thread a camel through the eye of a needle than to enter the Kingdom of Heaven. (*paraphrase*)

So while you are here on earth, look for and take advantage of opportunities to help those in need, because when your physical body expires, so will your opportunity to be merciful as your father is merciful (*Luke 6:36*), as there is a chasm between the merciless dead and the poor, that cannot be traversed. Take heed to the words of the prophets and be not one who Jesus speaks about as He said to them, “But Abraham said, ‘Child, remember that you received your good things, and Lazarus in like manner bad things; but now he is comforted here and you are in anguish.’” (*Luke 16:25 ESV*)

Devotion Luke 16:19-31

Student 10

Gospel of Luke

Matt Hoehner

July 22, 2010

The Rich Man and Lazarus is a story Jesus tells, about a rich man who was very wealthy during his life on earth. The rich man ate a multiple of good feasts every day and never wanted for anything. Outside his home, at his gate, laid a poor beggar named Lazarus. Lazarus was covered in sores and longed to eat the food that fell from the table of the rich man. There came a time when both the rich man and Lazarus died. Lazarus was carried to heaven where he was comforted by Abraham and no longer had to suffer as he did in his life on earth. The rich man was sent to Hades to live in anguish and torment. While in Hades, the rich man lifted his eyes up and saw Abraham far off with Lazarus at his side. He called out to Father Abraham to have mercy on him. Abraham reminded him that he received his good things on earth and that there where a fixed chasm between them and it could not be crossed. The rich man begged Father Abraham to send Lazarus back from the dead to warn his five brothers so they would not have the same fate as him. Abraham said they have Moses and The Prophets. If they will not listen to them, they surely will not listen to someone that should rise from the dead.

This story is shared with people who decide to live selfish lives. It is shared with anyone who receives their riches on earth and does not choose to help others in need. We are not judged by what we have on earth, but what we do with the things we have.

I would share this story with anyone. Anyone who I feel is easily distracted by material things in the world. I would also share it with anyone that is easily overwhelmed by money and cannot see the power of greed.

I know a little girl that I would share this story with. She is six years old and an only child. She has always been spoiled from toys, to food, to anything she asks for. She always has the prettiest clothes and the most expensive shoes. While a lot of these things may not be her

fault, they have caused her to have an ugly attitude towards other kids. The little girl does not like to share her things and often won't play with other kids who do not possess similar things that she has. There have been many occasions where I have tried to tell her to share her toys because some children are not as fortunate as her. I have used common phrases such as "sharing is caring" and "love your neighbor" in hopes she would remember to play well with others. It's really a hit and miss. Some days she will play nice then after a while she just forgets and is back to her old self. One thing children never seem to forget, however, is a good story. I think telling her the story of the rich man and Lazarus will give her something to hold on to. It might even scare her a little bit, which probably isn't a bad idea. I would first tell her the story while explaining to her the difference between Heaven and Hades. The purpose of doing good things and the misfortune of not helping others and being selfish. Then the actions that you do while on earth can make a difference in where you go after your lifetime is over. After she understands the story I would compare it to what are actions are with her things and sharing with other people.

Devotion 2: Luke 24:13-35
Student 1

Summary:

Two men are traveling from Jerusalem to Emmaus, talking about the events of the last few days. The risen Jesus appears to them, but they are kept from recognizing Him. He asks them what they're talking about, and they tell Him about how Jesus died three days ago, and now his body is nowhere to be found, and how angels appeared to the women saying He had risen from the dead. But they still did not understand. Jesus then begins to teach them, taking them through the Scriptures and helping them understand. They ask Jesus to stay with them, and he does. Jesus reveals himself to them when He breaks the bread. Once they recognize Him, He disappears. The two go and proclaim the resurrection.

Contemporary setting: This devotion is for a group of people who are trying to learn how to read their Bible better. Especially when it comes to the Old Testament, many get lost, or don't study it because they can't see the relevance.

Devotion: Jesus is the key to understanding Scripture, and opens our eyes to the truth.

When my son was born, I looked long and hard for a children's Bible that properly told the story of salvation. The Bibles I remember from my childhood were a collection of disjointed stories, told in a factual historical manner. But the Bible is not simply a collection of stories. It is one great story of God's love for His people. After much searching, I found the Jesus Storybook Bible, with the tagline "every story whispers His name." I knew I had hit the jackpot. From start to finish, from creation to Revelation, everything is told through the lens of Jesus our Savior, with God as the main player. It presents the Bible as a single love story.

There are many Bible critics out there who try to make God seem angry and full of vengeance. They pull random passages out of the Old Testament and call God a heartless murderer or ruthless judge. "If God were good and almighty, why would He do this?" they ask. But the Bible is not a book that allows you to simply take passages out of context. There is always a bigger picture to be seen. On the road to Emmaus, Jesus helps two of his disciples to see this bigger picture. In verse 27 Luke says, "And beginning with Moses and all the prophets, he interpreted to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself." Jesus uses Moses and the prophets to show them God's plan of salvation. With Jesus as their teacher, they gain understanding.

Jesus truly is the lens through which we read and understand God's Word. Instead of reading individual verses or passages, it is important to try and get a larger sense of what is going on. While commentaries or the possession of a study Bible is helpful, sometimes we need to simply let the Holy Spirit work through the Word to give us insight.

Student 2**Devotion: Luke 24:13-35**

Summary: In the Resurrection of Jesus, apprehension is clearly shown amongst the women and apostles in Luke's Gospel. The morning of His Resurrection the women go to the tomb, only to find the stones rolled away and shreds of Jesus' clothing. The same day, two people were walking on the Road to Emmaus discussing what had happened and who appears, but Jesus. He asks them, "What is this conversation that you are holding with each other as you walk?" The two still do not gather that this is Jesus standing before them and go forth telling Him what He already knows.

There is much irony and even humor in this passage because of what Jesus knows and how subtle He tells them of the scripture and that He will come again. He doesn't show His true identity until later when He breaks the bread and blesses it before giving it to them. This is when it dawns on Cleopas and the other witness that He has indeed risen from the dead. Jesus even states, "O foolish ones... Was it not necessary that the Christ should suffer these things and enter into his glory?" When they finally grasp that Jesus really rose, they go and tell the other apostles what they witnessed on The Road to Emmaus.

Audience: Un-believers

Devotion: Jesus walks beside you and me on good days and even bad days. Just as Jesus is not recognized by the travelers to Emmaus, he can be with us and even encourage us in our struggles, even though we aren't aware that he is present.

How often have you ever heard a joke and the one telling the joke gets to the punch line and you pretend to “get it” and actually you don’t “get it” until you are on your way home and it just “clicks”. This is how I would describe the travelers on The Road to Emmaus. These individuals are so upset that Jesus has not risen that they have completely overlooked that He is right in front of their own eyes. Often times we look in all the wrong places for the answer. We keep telling ourselves things will get better, but at times we feel like it just keeps getting worse. We miss the true point in life all the time. Have we ever thought that maybe this is Jesus’ subtle hint to us? We must understand that He is our friend and through our trials and tribulations He guides us by the hand if we accept what He has to offer. Just like when He breaks the bread and offers the host to Cleopas and the other apostle. He reminds us that He died for our sins and has offered a part of Him to us so we can live an eternal life. Sometimes it may take a long time to grasp what Jesus has explained so clearly in His teachings, but in time I hope you will come to understand Jesus and the gifts He gives to you freely—patience, love, and forgiveness.

Student 3
Rev. Matthew Hoehner
The Gospel of Luke
5 August 2010

Luke 24: 13-35

Summary: Two men, disciples of Jesus, were discussing the crucifixion of Jesus and His empty tomb as they were walking to a town called Emmaus. Jesus joins them on the road, but they are kept from recognizing Him. To enter the conversation, Jesus inquires about the subject of their discussion. They proceed to summarize Jesus' powerful ministry, death at the hands of the chief priests and rulers, and Jesus' empty tomb. Despite the testimony of several reliable witnesses, the two men cannot understand the empty tomb. Jesus takes the time to explain how His life has fulfilled all that was foretold through the prophets. As they approach Emmaus, they urge Jesus to stay with them; He agrees. Jesus thanks God for the food set before them, and the two men's eyes are opened, recognizing that their fellow traveler was Jesus. Jesus suddenly disappears. The bread hasn't even found its place in their stomach before they return immediately to Jerusalem to report what happened to them.

The theme of this passage is stated by one of the men, "It is true! The Lord is risen ..."
Luke gives us a narrative with a name (Cleopas) and a place (Emmaus) as a means of documenting that Jesus has truly risen.

Contemporary Setting: The majority of those who surround me are familiar with Jesus and His resurrection. I hope to communicate that there are several things occurring in this passage. Primarily, Luke wants to convey that Jesus is no longer in the grave. He also indirectly tells us about Jesus' compassion ("... their faces downcast."), His desire to teach (... he explained to them..."), and what a hope we have to share with others. I believe that my audience can experience this reading with new insights and personal, relevant understanding.

The Main Point: We have hope in a compassionate, truly risen Savior.

Their mood was grim; their hopes were dashed. Yet mysteries remained. The information did not make sense. "Who would/could have moved the grave stone and for what purpose? What really happened anyway?" they asked. Perhaps discussion continued, because one believed and the other didn't. Roman rule was oppressive. "Wasn't He the One (who would rescue us)?"
Many people groups of today see no hope of change from joblessness, hunger, AIDS, and death.

Even in America, life after death seems like a Hollywood movie ending.

The two men's animations did not go unnoticed; Jesus joined them with an unfamiliar appearance, as a friendly stranger, yet entered the discussion smoothly and with purpose. Jesus' compassion can resist neither the downcast faces nor colorful communication. Jesus loved the opportunity to teach others. In only a few moments, He knew that these men like the rest of the disciples, needed direction. Their future was unknown. As Christians, our conversations need to be salted with speech about Jesus; it builds us up and clarifies our thoughts. Jesus taught us to be watchful for those saddened by life and to not be shy; enter conversations with humility, openness, and purpose. Be good listeners; be prepared to share God's plan for mankind, the unseen hope (Rom 8:24,25; 1Cor 15:19) and grace of the Christ.

The Archaeological Study Bible (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2005. Print.) contains a discussion about crucifixion (p. 1757). It was a brutal practice that had widespread use starting with Alexander the Great and reserved for the worst of criminals and slaves. Jewish custom dictated that "anyone who is hung on a tree is under God's curse" (Deut 21:23). Jesus' death was certain; Roman practice could allow no less. God's curse upon the accumulation of man's choice to avoid godliness and holy relationship hung on a beam highly visible to all. Jesus died, publicly and with certainty. Cleopas and his friend saw and knew their leader was dead; yet, news spread that the tomb was empty. Even walking side by side with the one who knew them, their brains could not connect the dots. In one familiar act of thanksgiving, their eyes were opened. Their joy could not be kept to themselves and out they ran, to their friends in Jerusalem.

Now, go. Now. Share the Good News: It is true! Jesus is risen!

Devotion – Luke 24:13-35

By:

Student 5

Gospel of Luke

August 5, 2010

Instructor: Rev. Matthew Hoehner

Summary

Two of Jesus' disciples are walking down the road to a town called Emmaus when they happen upon a man who asks them what they are discussing so furtively. They explain to him the events of the past three days in which Jesus is killed and is supposed to rise in three days. The man rebukes them and then begins to explain to them the fulfillment of the Old Testament through Jesus, yet they still do not recognize that the man they are travelling with is indeed Jesus.

As it appears that Jesus is about to leave them they ask him to stay with them so that he can continue to teach them, yet they still do not recognize him. He agrees anyway and it is at this point during dinner that Jesus breaks bread and shares it with the two men. At this point their eyes are opened and they realize the man is Jesus. At that point Jesus fades from their presence and they return to the apostles and tell them their story as the apostles explain that Jesus is risen.

Audience

The audience I am speaking to is my peers, my friends, the ones that often have political or religious discussions. We often become deeper in these conversations than expected. Since I have never really taken a deeper look at this portion of Luke's Gospel I know that they probably have not either. They may receive the message as did the two men on the road, with a bit of blindness to what is going on in the bible. Since my friends may sometimes find it hard to believe all that is written in the Gospels this may be a good story to remind them why they must open their minds and their eyes.

Devotion

The main point of the Road to Emmaus is that while we often know the story of Jesus we do not fully comprehend it, we are blind to the deeper meaning, just as the two men were blind to

the presence of Jesus.

The two men travelling to Emmaus were concerned that Jesus had promised that he would be killed and rise on the third day to save everyone. They were somewhat disappointed because they were blind to the fulfillment of the prophecies. In their own mind they expected Jesus to rise up in glory and tear down the Roman Empire and replace it with a Kingdom of Jews. In their own mind, or their preconceived notion they expected Jesus to resurrect and end control over the Jews.

Ultimately their preconceived notions got in the way of their ability to see Jesus for what he was. The humble man walking in their presence teaching them about the fulfillment of the prophecies. We too often do this ourselves as we expect Jesus to save us as we pray for him to help us do well in life, get the next promotion or get us out of a jam. Even when we go to church and the priest preaches on the rising of Jesus, we are probably disappointed that nothing has happened yet, particularly on Easter when the entire message is the resurrection of Jesus.

We are also blind to how Jesus wants us to live. He wants us to live through the new laws established by him, a law of compassion and forgiveness. But we are often like the two men on the road to Emmaus, we forget to open our eyes, to give our lives over to Jesus and God and live as Jesus lived. We become ignorant of the fact that Jesus didn't just resurrect himself 2000 years ago, he is resurrected every day of our lives, that he is always with us, but we fail to see him. We fail to see him when people are compassionate to us, we fail to see him when we are loved by family and friends and we fail to see him when people can see past our faults and love us for who we are.

So instead of waiting for Jesus to reveal himself to us and then fade away, as he did with the two men, we should break bread with Jesus and let him into our lives. We should open our

eyes and see the goodness that is Jesus, that he fulfilled God's promise and freed us not from our human bondage and suffering, but freed us from our sins so that we could live in paradise with him after our own earthly death.

Student 6

Devotion 2: Luke 24 13:35

Summary: In Luke's Gospel on the Road to Emmaus, he tells us of two followers of Jesus on their way out of Jerusalem, heading towards Emmaus. It is the third day after Jesus' death on the cross and they are sad and confused. They had believe Jesus to be their messiah, but he was now gone and they were hearing rumors that his body was gone. While traveling, they are met by a stranger asking what was bothering them. They could not believe that this man had not heard about Jesus of Nazareth or the events that had taken place over the last few days. They did not recognize that the stranger was the risen Jesus. As they traveled, Jesus explained the scriptures to them. When they reached town, the men invited Jesus to remain with them since His lessons touched their hearts and it was getting late. As they sat to eat, Jesus blessed the bread, broke it, and gave it to them to eat. In that very instant, their eyes were opened and they recognized the stranger as the risen Christ. They then hurried back to Jerusalem to share the news with the apostles.

Contemporary Setting: This reflection is intended to be shared with adult Catholics. While a large number of Catholics have converted to the faith, the majority are what is called "cradle Catholics." They were baptized as infants and raised in the faith. As Catholics growing up, they are taught that Jesus is fully present in the Holy Eucharist, but due to the routine of mass, it is often taken for granted and not appreciated as it should be. As they become adult Catholics, many of the teaching from grade school are forgotten and not much adult education was available until recently. Like everyone in society, things like jobs, sports, family obligations, and many other things take priority and faith and spiritual growth get pushed to the side.

They recognized Him in the breaking of the bread. Do we recognize Him?

In the Gospel of Luke we hear how, after the resurrection, Jesus meets two of his followers as they head to Emmaus. They didn't recognize Jesus even though he revealed the scriptures to them. It wasn't until they shared a meal and, as Luke tells us, when He broke the bread to share with them that they knew it was the risen Christ. They recognized Him in the breaking of the bread. Would we recognize Jesus if he were to join us on our journey?

I remember January, 1999 when Pope John Paul II came to St. Louis. I don't recall any other event that caused so much excitement and was given so much attention. Businesses in the downtown area closed. Thousands of people, me included, met at commuter lots before dawn to board busses and head to the Edward Jones Dome to attend an afternoon mass celebrated by the pope. So many people were in attendance, the overflow filled large rooms in the adjoining convention center to watch the events on large screens. People lined the streets shouting "John Paul two, we love you." Local television stations canceled regular programming in order to stream live coverage of the events. Catholics and non-Catholics alike recognized what a special person he was. Not just a religious leader or head of state but truly a holy man of God. If all this attention was given to Pope John Paul II, imagine what would happen if the announcement came, and we believed, that Jesus would appear. Would the city be able to maintain the crowds? Surely the streets, churches, venues would be packed in anticipation.

As Catholics, we follow the commandment to keep holy the Sabbath day by attending mass every Sunday. Most of us do this faithfully unless, of course, we are on vacation and it's inconvenient, or maybe we stayed out late on Saturday night, or made a golf date for early in the morning. As long as we go most of the time we're OK. We get upset when Father Jones has the mass and it lasts over an hour. We prefer to see Father Smith who can get us out in forty-five

minutes. Is this the way Jesus intended us to celebrate the Holy Eucharist? Jesus instituted this special sacrament for us at the last supper so that we may be intimately united with Christ. As Catholics, we believe that the consecrated host is truly the body and blood, soul and divinity of Christ. When we receive Holy Communion, we are truly receiving Christ.

Wait, Jesus IS joining us on our journey. He is present, fully, in body and blood, soul and divinity every day as mass. Why are our churches not packed, not only on Sunday but every day of the week? Our Adoration Chapels should be standing room only with long lines waiting to get in. It is obvious that Catholics do not always recognize Jesus in the breaking of the bread.

The good news is, Jesus will continue to be present in the Holy Eucharist and present for us to visit in our churches every day. The doors to His Father's house are always open and we are welcome inside at any time. Many of our churches offer 24 hour adoration chapels so we can visit with, and talk to, Christ any time of the day or night. We don't need to wait in long lines or wake before dawn to catch a bus. All we need to do is to recognize Jesus in the breaking of the bread.

DEVOTION 2: LUKE 24:13-35

(Week #5)

by

Student 7

Rev. Matthew Hoehner

The Gospel of Luke/REL383

August 5, 2010

DEVOTION 2: LUKE 24:13-35

Summary

Midday Sunday, the day of Jesus' resurrection, two of the apostles were walking on a road from Jerusalem to Emmaus. They discussed Jesus' crucifixion, the women's encounter with two angels that told them Jesus had risen from the dead, and Peter's witness of the empty tomb. They were joined by Jesus who, by divine intervention, prevented them from being able to identify Him. Since they failed to comprehend what had happened, Jesus reiterated everything that had been said in the Scriptures about Himself. After Jesus opened their eyes to the Scriptures, He went to their house and broke bread with them. Jesus disappeared as soon as the apostles were able to recognize Him. The apostles returned to Jerusalem to tell the other apostles what had happened.

Contemporary Setting

I am speaking to students who have experienced high school and are better themselves academically in college.

Main Point

The apostles failed to realize what had happened so Jesus opened their eyes to what had been predicted about Him in the Scriptures.

Open Your Eyes

I remember a time when my mother opened my eyes when I was a teenager. I was sitting in the car waiting for her in a busy parking lot with lots of people walking by. I thought I was acting calm, collected, and like someone others would want to hang around with. I was a teenager so, of course, if an attractive guy walked by, I wanted to be on my best behavior. When my mom got in the car she asked if I was mad at someone. She had thought that by my expression I looked as if I wanted to fight. That was not my intention at all. I had not realized how bad my expression made me look. From that point forward I have tried to portray a positive attitude and expression at all times (in case someone is watching). I have realized that I do not like being around people who are not nice or who have a negative attitude. I want to be the best person I can be and hope some of my positive energy rubs off onto others. It is written in Luke 24: 32, "Were not our hearts burning within us while he talked with us on the road and opened the Scriptures to us?" Just as the Scriptures were opened to the apostles, my mother opened my eyes to a more positive experience in life.

I am sure you can think of a similar situation and have attempted to make a change for the better. College is a step in the right direction. You are opening your mind in many different things. You will gain knowledge in a vast array of subjects and acquire new ways of thinking that will better your future. Practicing the words of the Lord is another positive improvement. It can open your eyes to many interesting and possibly new things that you have not had the chance to explore. Jesus died on the cross and made it possible for you to have a good life. Open your eyes and be the person you want to be.

“Devotion 2- *Luke 24:13-35*”

by

Student 8

Rev. Matthew Hoehner

REL 338 – The Gospel of Luke

4 August 2010

Summary: On the day of the resurrection two of the disciples were walking together from Jerusalem to Emmaus. As they walked they talked about Jesus and all the events that had unfolded before them in recent days. As they discussed these things Jesus Himself came to them and asked what they are talking about, though the disciples did not recognize Him. As they confessed to Him the things they had seen or heard of, they also confessed their doubts. So that they might believe, Jesus interpreted all the Scriptures that revealed who He is and why he came, beginning with Moses and all the Prophets.

When they reached their destination the disciples urged Jesus to stay with them even though they had yet to recognize Him. As Jesus was at the table with them He took bread and blessed it and broke it and gave it to them. It was then that the disciples' eyes were opened and they recognized Him. Then Jesus vanished from their sight. Yet they were so impassioned by what they had felt and by what they had seen that they immediately got up and went out and shared their experience with others.

Contemporary Setting: We who believe will all have questions until the day we meet Jesus face to face. Until that day we are all on the road together and it's important that we continue to share our faith with each other by gathering together in Jesus' name. As we do so He will draw near to us and reveal Himself to us by His Spirit in His Word and Sacraments. I believe this passage emphasizes the importance of one on one or small group discussions or bible-studies, as well as corporate worship. I also believe that this passage illustrates taking that which is revealed to us and sharing it with those who have yet to see and believe.

The Main Point: The purpose of this devotion is to emphasize the importance of gathering together in Jesus' name and discussing our faith with others, not only that we may grow in our relationship with Him as maturing disciples, but also so that others may hear and believe.

Most every Friday night for the better part of two years my family and I would get together with some friends of ours at either of our houses and have dinner. It was always a blessing to share a meal together and we always gave thanks for the opportunity to do so. We all shared in the laughter that inevitably came from having seven people gathered around a table and over time we began to feel more like family than friends.

After dinner the kids would head off to play, the wives would move to a place where they could talk or bake or do whatever they do when the men-folk aren't around, and my friend and I would head to the deck or the garage or the pool table or the fire-pit so that we might feel like we were in a manly enough place for the evenings discussion. In our discussions we would cover the usual manly basics of sports, jobs and family life, but before long conversation would turn to that of how we saw God working in our lives.

My friend and I were both truly blessed in the fact that God had adopted us into His loving family in our baptisms as children. We both grew up in families that attended Sunday school and church and had heard the Word of God throughout our lives. That however didn't mean that we didn't have a ridiculous amount of questions regarding the subject.

As we discussed all the questions we had regarding our faith and how it affected our lives, it always amazed me that we seemed to answer each other's questions from the lessons we had learned in our own individual studies and prayers throughout the week. Even our take on the Preacher's message Sunday morning sometimes differed but as we discussed it and compared it to scripture we always came to a consensus. This was a time of great development in both of our lives as God in his faithfulness continued to draw near to us and reveal Himself to us. We shared our lives and our hearts, we laughed and we cried, we lived and we learned, and we asked and were answered. God was with us.

My friend has since taken a call to northern California and it has been months since I have seen him and his family. He is sharing the Gospel in a place that is new to him and with people that he had never before met. I continue in my studies and it seems I meet more people all the time that desire to share in the love of Jesus. His Word shows us the Way. Let us draw near to him together and he will draw near to us.

Devotion II

Student 9

REL 383 "The Gospel of Luke"
Pastor Matthew Hoehner
July 22, 210

This devotion is about the Risen Jesus and the two men walking down the road to Emmaus. Although He knew what they were thinking He asked anyway. Their response was just as He knew it would be. He admonishes them and pretends to continue on when they reached the city, but they asked him to stay for some reason. After breaking bread at the dinner table, he blesses it and they instantly recognized him as the Risen Lord. He then disappears from their sight and they understand why their hearts were burning inside their chests while in his presence.

The audience of this devotion are business students that out of the need to take a theology elective are required to take The Gospel of Luke. They are now in the class and are confronted with the reality of the gospel. Perplexed by the uncanny similarities of the things that they have heard over the years they become perplexed to a further degree of inquiry concerning the description of the events during the journey to Emmaus.

“He was there and is here for eternity”

I just can't believe how she made it through that accident said Sabrina, She was totally mangled from head to toe and thank goodness that her newborn twins will get to know their mother. Well, Julia replies, how do you think you made it through Sabrina? I just new, said Sabrina, that Jesus was with me and though I did not see him physically my faith put him right there at the scene. You mean to tell me that you believe in that omnipresent babble that you hear from those Christians? Yes I do Julia and during this class maybe you will come to realize the truth of the matter. When Jesus rose and was in the presence of the two men walking down the road to Emmaus he questioned what they were discussing. Understanding that they too did not believe, His reply was, “Oh, foolish ones, slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken! Was it not necessary that the Christ should suffer these things and enter into His glory.” (*Luke 24: 25-26 NASB*) So you see Julia you certainly do not have a monopoly on your disbelief. It seems that those hundreds of years before us, even with the Risen Jesus physically in their presence, still did not believe. The fact and truth of the matter is that whether you choose to believe the truth or not, it will remain the truth throughout eternity. Jesus was there then, He is here now and will live in eternity with God our heavenly father. Will you?

On The Road to Emmaus

Student 10

Gospel of Luke

Matt Hoehner

August 5, 2010

This is a story about the journey of two men talking and discussing upon one another. During their conversation, Jesus came along side of them and asked what it was they were conversing about while they walked. The men, down and unaware, did not realize this fellow man was Jesus. The men were in awe that this man did not know of all the things that had happened in Jerusalem in these days. Jesus then asked them what were the things that had happened. Then men went on to tell how their prophet, mighty in deed and word, was delivered up by priests and rulers to be condemned to death and crucified. They only hoped that he was the one to redeem Israel from Rome, not realizing that dying on the cross was the means of redemption. Now that it was the third day since all those things had happened, Jesus' body was missing from the tomb he was buried in. In the tomb, only laid his linens and a vision of angels that said he was alive. After listening to them, Jesus answered them in Scriptures calling them foolish and slow of the heart to believe. As the day was ending the men urged Jesus to stay with them. While at the table with them, Jesus took the bread and blessed and broke it and gave it to them. This was a gesture of the host of the meal and not the guest. At that moment the eyes of the men were opened and they recognized him. Then Jesus vanished from their sight. The men returned to Jerusalem that same hour and told the eleven and those who gathered with them their story of Jesus and that The Lord has risen indeed.

This story is shared with people that are too caught up in their own thoughts. People who do not open their eyes to see what it is in front of them because they are so

distracted from other things going on in life. Distractions can sometimes be so strong that we are kept from understanding the true meaning of things.

I would share this story with my family members.

There are several members of my family I would share this story with. I do not think I could pick just one person in particular. Everyone seems to have their own unique problems that this parable would help them with. I do not know all the facts of their issues, sometimes it is better not to get involved. This is something I would definitely share with them. It tells the story of how they need to open their eyes and pay attention to the more important things in life. I feel that they are sometimes too caught up on little things that hinder them from realizing what is important at the time. I would explain to them how the two men on the road were so busy worrying about what they thought Jesus was going to do, they did not realize the importance of what he actually did. The men's own selfish beliefs of how they thought Jesus should redeem Israel, kept them from seeing the true redemption, which was on dying on the cross. I would tell them to not worry about their problems, Jesus had already heard them. He will make a way for them to be comforted and how they should not be slow in the heart to believe. Once they realize this, their eyes will be opened and they will see things for as they truly are.

APPENDIX TWO

SURVEYS

Study Bible Survey

Student # 1

Study Bible Used: ___ Concordia Self-Study Bible (NIV) or The Lutheran Study Bible (ESV) ___ Other

	Often	Regularly	Sometimes	Almost never	Never
I used the study Bible notes.		X			
I used the study Bible maps.				X	
I used the study Bible cross references.			X		
I used the study Bible essays.			X		
I used the study Bible timelines.				X	
I used the introduction section before each book.		X			

What resources of the study Bible did you use in your study?

footnotes (notes for anything I had questions about or thought was unclear)

What was the primary purpose you consulted the study Bible aids?

see previous

How would you describe the impact the study Bible had on your study of the Bible?

it made studying the Bible more accessible + understandable, especially by providing the needed context.

Did the study Bible answer your questions or meet your needs?

for the most part. occasionally I would consult a commentary if it didn't, but usually the notes were very helpful.

Were there any issues that were not addressed by the study Bible to your satisfaction?

no

Did the study Bible clarify the biblical text?

yes

Does the study Bible enable you to study the Bible without a teacher or pastor?

yes, although again I find commentaries helpful as well

Student # 2

Study Bible Used: ___ Concordia Self-Study Bible (NIV) or The Lutheran Study Bible (ESV) ___ Other

	Often	Regularly	Sometimes	Almost never	Never
I used the study Bible notes.	X				
I used the study Bible maps.				X	
I used the study Bible cross references.			X		
I used the study Bible essays.			X		
I used the study Bible timelines.			X		
I used the introduction section before each book.			X		

What resources of the study Bible did you use in your study?

The footnotes (notes)

What was the primary purpose you consulted the study Bible aids?

to make sure it was on their *right* thought process

to make sure yes. If not I gathered what I needed, plus work in class.

Were there any issues that were not addressed by the study Bible to your satisfaction?

Not that I can think of. I think the bases are covered very well and very *well* thought out.

Did the study Bible clarify the biblical text?

Yes, it was with a lot of detail and the cross references were helpful in clarifying. I find it much easier to follow too, even what *Jesus says* is in red print.

Does the study Bible enable you to study the Bible without a teacher or pastor?

Yes, I believe so. However, I do like hearing about the Bible from a higher authority who *has* a greater knowledge.

How would you describe the impact the study Bible had on your study of the Bible?

Since the study Bible *enabled* me to see other perspectives that I may never thought of before.

Study Bible Survey

Student # 3

Study Bible Used: ___ Concordia Self-Study Bible (NIV) or ___ The Lutheran Study Bible (ESV) Other

	Often	Regularly	Sometimes	Almost never	Never
I used the study Bible notes.	✓				
I used the study Bible maps.			✓		
I used the study Bible cross references.		✓			
I used the study Bible essays.	✓				
I used the study Bible timelines.			✓		
I used the introduction section before each book.	✓				

What resources of the study Bible did you use in your study? ^(the class)
 Concordance, archaeological articles, and historical notes. Archaeological Study Bible by Zondervan, NIV

What was the primary purpose you consulted the study Bible aids?
 For background information; to obtain contextual understanding.

Did the study Bible answer your questions or meet your needs?
 Yes.

Were there any issues that were not addressed by the study Bible to your satisfaction?
 No.

Did the study Bible clarify the biblical text?
 Yes.

Does the study Bible enable you to study the Bible without a teacher or pastor?
 Yes, but it is profitable to discuss Scriptures with others to gain different perspectives.

How would you describe the impact the study Bible had on your study of the Bible?
 It amplified my study, expanded themes, and introduced ideas not previously noticed.

Study Bible Survey

Student # 4

Study Bible Used: Concordia Self-Study Bible (NIV) or The Lutheran Study Bible (ESV) Other

	Often	Regularly	Sometimes	Almost never	Never
I used the study Bible notes.			✓		✓
I used the study Bible maps.					✓
I used the study Bible cross references.			✓		
I used the study Bible essays.					✓
I used the study Bible timelines.		✓			✓
I used the introduction section before each book.		✓			

What resources of the study Bible did you use in your study?

CROSS REFERENCE

What was the primary purpose you consulted the study Bible aids?

for reference

Did the study Bible answer your questions or meet your needs?

NO/yes

Were there any issues that were not addressed by the study Bible to your satisfaction?

NO

Did the study Bible clarify the biblical text?

Yes

Does the study Bible enable you to study the Bible without a teacher or pastor?

Yes

How would you describe the impact the study Bible had on your study of the Bible?

enlightening

Study Bible Survey

Student # 5

Study Bible Used: Concordia Self-Study Bible (NIV) or ___ The Lutheran Study Bible (ESV) ___ Other

	Often	Regularly	Sometimes	Almost never	Never
I used the study Bible notes.		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			
I used the study Bible maps.			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
I used the study Bible cross references.			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
I used the study Bible essays.				<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
I used the study Bible timelines.			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
I used the introduction section before each book.		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			

What resources of the study Bible did you use in your study?

I used mainly the notes + maps or I referenced the intro to Luke.

What was the primary purpose you consulted the study Bible aids?

Typically to get a better understanding of what was written or maybe what ~~is~~ may be a difficult idea.

Did the study Bible answer your questions or meet your needs?

Most of the time it helped make sense out of hard subjects. Sometimes it also helped me find how certain aspects of the Gospel related to OT writings.

Were there any issues that were not addressed by the study Bible to your satisfaction?

Occasionally the notes would reference other books of the Gospels or instead of making something clearer only restated what may have been difficult to understand.

Did the study Bible clarify the biblical text?

Yes - often it clarified meanings of words or helped me understand why certain words were used over other words.

Does the study Bible enable you to study the Bible without a teacher or pastor?

It can for some self study; however, to really get a full or better understanding a teacher or pastor would be able to better give deeper meaning to the Gospel.

How would you describe the impact the study Bible had on your study of the Bible?

It definitely helped in the final paper in finding passages. It was also useful in seeing the differences in translations from my Catholic Bible + a Lutheran translation.

Study Bible Survey

Student # 6

Study Bible Used: Concordia Self-Study Bible (NIV) or The Lutheran Study Bible (ESV) Other

	Often	Regularly	Sometimes	Almost never	Never
I used the study Bible notes.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>				
I used the study Bible maps.				<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
I used the study Bible cross references.		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			
I used the study Bible essays.					<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
I used the study Bible timelines.					<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
I used the introduction section before each book.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>				

What resources of the study Bible did you use in your study? *I used the Bible notes and cross references as well as the concordance in the back of the book*

What was the primary purpose you consulted the study Bible aids?
I used the aids to gain a better understanding of the meaning in the text.

Did the study Bible answer your questions or meet your needs?
For the most part. I'm sure there would not be room to explain how every thing is referenced in the time for example an explanation of the Hebrew word & how it would be translated

Were there any issues that were not addressed by the study Bible to your satisfaction?
No

Did the study Bible clarify the biblical text?
For the most part - see above

Does the study Bible enable you to study the Bible without a teacher or pastor?
Yes but a teacher or pastor would be able to help you understand the text more fully

Does the study Bible enable you to study the Bible without a teacher or pastor?
Yes but a teacher or pastor would be able to help you understand the text more fully

How would you describe the impact the study Bible had on your study of the Bible?
Without the study bible it would be hard to understand many of the meanings behind the text, especially the parables

Study Bible Survey

Student # 7

Study Bible Used: Concordia Self-Study Bible (NIV) or The Lutheran Study Bible (ESV) Other

	Often	Regularly	Sometimes	Almost never	Never
I used the study Bible notes.			✓		
I used the study Bible maps.					✓
I used the study Bible cross references.					✓
I used the study Bible essays.				✓	;
I used the study Bible timelines.					✓
I used the introduction section before each book.		✓			

What resources of the study Bible did you use in your study?

FOOTNOTES OF NIV STUDY BIBLE.
INDEX TO SUBJECTS + CONCORDANCE

What was the primary purpose you consulted the study Bible aids?

To find quickly ^{WHERE} ~~where~~ things were or to help/assist with a reference.

Did the study Bible answer your questions or meet your needs?

Most of the time.

Were there any issues that were not addressed by the study Bible to your satisfaction?

There was but I do not remember what I was looking up & could not find. It was

Did the study Bible clarify the biblical text? in the Concordance.

Yes. It was very helpful.

Does the study Bible enable you to study the Bible without a teacher or pastor?

Yes, but the teacher gives more info. ^{I did not read} & puts it all together & gives a different

How would you describe the impact the study Bible had on your study of the Bible?

It clarified many items I was unsure of. ^{point of view.}

Study Bible Survey

Student # 8

Study Bible Used: ___ Concordia Self-Study Bible (NIV) or X The Lutheran Study Bible (ESV) ___ Other

	Often	Regularly	Sometimes	Almost never	Never
I used the study Bible notes.	✓				
I used the study Bible maps.			✓		
I used the study Bible cross references.			✓		
I used the study Bible essays.			✓		
I used the study Bible timelines.				✓	
I used the introduction section before each book.	✓				

What resources of the study Bible did you use in your study?

Mostly the introductions and notes (including prayers)

What was the primary purpose you consulted the study Bible aids?

To gain a broader understanding or more context.

Did the study Bible answer your questions or meet your needs?

At times I felt the context was helpful, but at other times it was a distraction. When I felt distracted by the notes I would pick up a text only version and just pray, read & reread.

Were there any issues that were not addressed by the study Bible to your satisfaction?

Did the study Bible clarify the biblical text?

More in context ~~was~~ message than

Does the study Bible enable you to study the Bible without a teacher or pastor?

I study on my own with or without the notes. I would say it enhances

Did the study Bible clarify the biblical text?

More in context ~~was~~ message than

Does the study Bible enable you to study the Bible without a teacher or pastor?

I study on my own with or without the notes. I would say it enhances

How would you describe the impact the study Bible had on your study of the Bible?

I'm torn because I ~~feel~~ at times I find myself looking more to the notes to explain rather than praying that God would open my heart to understand.

Study Bible Survey

Student # 9

Study Bible Used: ___ Concordia Self-Study Bible (NIV) or The Lutheran Study Bible (ESV) ___ Other

	Often	Regularly	Sometimes	Almost never	Never
I used the study Bible notes.		✓			
I used the study Bible maps.			✓		
I used the study Bible cross references.		✓			
I used the study Bible essays.				✓	
I used the study Bible timelines.				✓	
I used the introduction section before each book.		✓			

What resources of the study Bible did you use in your study?

I liked the Chapter verse specific references at the bottom

What was the primary purpose you consulted the study Bible aids?

To get Clarification of certain scripture

Did the study Bible answer your questions or meet your needs?

It presented a different perspective of the subject, which broadened my understanding

Were there any issues that were not addressed by the study Bible to your satisfaction?

None that I can think of.

Did the study Bible clarify the biblical text?

mostly

Does the study Bible enable you to study the Bible without a teacher or pastor?

To a degree

How would you describe the impact the study Bible had on your study of the Bible?

It gave a wider perspective and was generally helpful.

Study Bible Survey

Student # 10

Study Bible Used: ___ Concordia Self-Study Bible (NIV) or The Lutheran Study Bible (ESV) ___ Other

	Often	Regularly	Sometimes	Almost never	Never
I used the study Bible notes.	X				
I used the study Bible maps.				X	
I used the study Bible cross references.			X		
I used the study Bible essays.			X		
I used the study Bible timelines.		X			
I used the introduction section before each book.		X			

What resources of the study Bible did you use in your study?

I used the notes.

What was the primary purpose you consulted the study Bible aids?

To receive a better understanding of the text.

Did the study Bible answer your questions or meet your needs?

Most of my questions were answered.

Were there any issues that were not addressed by the study Bible to your satisfaction?

Not really. There were some parts that were hard to understand but most of it worked out well.

Did the study Bible clarify the biblical text?

yes.

Does the study Bible enable you to study the Bible without a teacher or pastor?

I think it would give a pretty good general understanding, but some things you would just need explained by someone.

How would you describe the impact the study Bible had on your study of the Bible?

It helped out a lot. I found a lot of information that helped me with gaining a better explanation.

APPENDIX THREE

CONSENT FORM

A Study of Study-Bibles

The research in which you are about to participate is designed to investigate the use of study-Bibles and is being conducted by Rev. Matt Hoehner. In this research you will write two devotions utilizing the study-Bible and fill out a survey assessing your use of the study-Bible throughout this class. Please be assured that any information that you provide will be held in strict confidence. At no time will your name be reported along with your responses. Please understand that your participation in this research is totally voluntary and you are free to withdraw at any time during the study.

I acknowledge that I have been informed of and understand, the nature and purpose of this study, and I freely consent to participate.

Name _____

Signed _____ Date _____

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