Study-Bible footnotes and Bible commentaries are useful. But if used too soon in the study process, they can limit our thinking. Once we have read what J.I. Packer or John Stott (or even John Doe) has said about a passage, it may be difficult to think beyond their opinions. Those limitations can obscure what else the Holy Spirit might want to show us from the passage. Those resources offer helpful insights after our own diligent study.

On the other hand, some resources are helpful early in the study process. These are especially useful when we are trying to understand a culture very different from our own, or geographical details, or historical facts that were common knowledge to the original audience.


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