SCRIPTURE TOOLS FOR EVERY PERSON

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Category: Computing/Internet

I don't often post other peoples' press releases, but this is important and I want to make sure it gets lots of exposure.

Tyndale House Cambridge Launches Beta-version of Scripture Tools for Every Person (STEP), a new free Bible study resource.

24 July 2013, CAMBRIDGE, UK Today the STEP development team of Tyndale House Cambridge launched the Beta-test version of a new free Bible study resource at www.StepBible.org.

STEP software is designed especially for teachers and preachers who donâ€™t have access to resources such as Tyndale House Library, which specialises in the biblical text, interpretation, languages and biblical historical background and is a leading research institution for Biblical Studies.

The web-based program, which will soon also be downloadable for PCs and Macs, will aid users who lack resources, or who have to rely only on smartphones or outmoded computers.

About STEP

The project began when STEP director Dr David Instone-Brewer created the Tyndale Toolbar for his own use. It became popular among researchers at Tyndale House and is now used by thousands of people across the globe. The Beta launch of STEP invites users to try out the new tools and give suggestions for improvement.

"STEP represents the most comprehensive yet user friendly tool for Bible Study I have seen in over 35 years of research," said Dr Wesley B. Rose. Tim Bulkeley, a contributor to the project, said "I wish I was just starting to teach in Kinshasa now, with STEP and a smart phone. Students would find learning Hebrew and Greek, to read the Bible directly, so much easier."

Almost a hundred volunteers worldwide have contributed to this work, including 75 who helped to align the ESV, used with the kind permission of Crossway, with the underlying Greek and Hebrew. All their work will now be freely available for other software projects. There are many exciting features in the pipeline for others to get involved with.
Try it out at www.StepBible.org.

Further information

The special problems of the Majority World have inspired some unique technical solutions. The whole database-driven program is designed to be downloaded onto computers as diverse as decade-old desktops and Android phones. This download, which is still being tested, enables it to continue working when internet access goes down.

Ten language interfaces are available and another 83 are ready for volunteers to work on. Bibles in many languages are already present and agreements are in place with the United Bible Societies and other organisations to add hundreds more. Someone using a Swahili browser can see buttons, menus and Bibles in their own mother-tongue.

Some of the features are unavailable on any other software, and the ease of use belies its extraordinary complexity. Even in Basic View you can get answers to questions like: Which other verses use the same original word found here? This works for every Bible in all the available languages without requiring knowledge of any Hebrew or Greek. In Advanced View one can see multiple interlinear texts with word-by-word alignment in English, Chinese, Hebrew and other languages. Information about grammar and dictionaries is also given at three levels so that someone wanting quick information isn't overloaded with the complex details, which are also available.

Edit:

Simon just posted this comment on FaceBook

> *I'm glad that people are excited about the Tyndale STEP project and all, but one of the things that STEP promised, hasn't (yet) delivered, and the world badly needs, is freely available, permissively licensed, machine-readable Biblical studies data, so people can build their own tools for Bible study.*
>
> *Support and promote STEP by all means, but to avoid duplication of effort, it's a great idea to also support people who are already working on this.*