New Christian Bible Study: **Search Tips**

There's a lot of power in the NCBS Advanced Search function. And, with the advanced options, there's a certain level of complexity, too. These search tips are designed to help you overcome the complexity, and find the things you're looking for. (And, we're happy to help with tough questions!)

Search In: Choose a Search "Space":

We have a huge set of content. Our "Search in" choice offers three main spaces, or chunks of content, that you can search:

- The Bible text – in many languages and translations.
- Swedenborg's Writings – in many languages, works, and translations.
- Explanations (commentary, topics, sermons, articles, etc.)

Choose the one you want! When you select one of these, your other search options will be updated to reflect your choice.

Search in a selected Language: When you choose a language to search in, it narrows the search results for you, and also lets you choose your search space (translations, etc.) more easily.

Then, depending on your "search space" and "language" choices, you can focus in on specific translations and/or books if you already have an idea of where you want to be looking.

Match: Choose how you want to match your search term(s)

- *This exact phrase* – will find exact matches for your search terms in the searched text.
- *All of these words* – (This is a Boolean "AND" search.) It will return search results that contain all of the words in your search terms.
    - (*within n words*): This gives you a way to refine your search a little, so it's not too loose. Your search terms need to span no more than n words.
- *Any of these words* – (This is a Boolean "OR" search.) It will return search results than contain at least one of your search terms.

Ranking Search Results:

By default, the checkbox will be CHECKED for this option: *Use relevance/proximity ranking*.

In this case, your search results will be ranked by the density of the search terms in the passage, and by their proximity (if you have that box checked).

When you clear that checkbox, your search results will be listed in the order that they appear in the work(s) that you are searching.

Notes about special search options... here's how to do:

- **AND/OR searches**: "AND" / "OR" searches are built into our "match" options.
    - Use the "All of these words" option to run an AND search.
    - Use the "Any of these words" option to do an OR search.
- **Wildcard searches**: Use an asterisk.
    - Vine* runs a wildcard search, for any word starting with Vine.
        - (NB: Exact Match and wildcards don't work together.)
- **NOT searches**: Want to find Eve but not Adam? Use this syntax:
    - Eve !Adam finds the word "Eve", except if it appears in the same verse or subsection as "Adam".
        - (NB: This works for "All the Words" or "Any Words" searches).
- **Searching for Phrases**:
    - You can search for 2 phrases, like this: "Virgin Mary" "Angel Gabriel", by putting the searched-for phrases in quotation marks.
- **Proximity search:** For "All of these words" searches, you have an option to enter a maximum number of words that separate searched-for words. Enter a number in the "within n words" field.
- **Stemming searches** – You don't need to do anything; they are built-in!
    - E.g. a search for 'Conjug' will include results for which Conjug is a stem.

Quick Searches using Abbreviations:

You can use abbreviations for quick searches, in some cases:

Bible Searches can recognize some abbreviations of book names:

- Genesis 22, as a search term, works. It will take you to that chapter.
- Gen 22 works, too.
- Gen 22:10 works, too, taking you to the verse.
- The abbreviations vary from language to language, so... you can use the ones in the language you want to work in.

Searches in Swedenborg's works handle some abbreviations of work names:

- Arcana Coelestia 123 works. Heavenly Secrets 123 does, too. So does AC 123.
- But, you need the space: AC123 doesn't work.

Search Types: Normal text and "Regular Expressions".

We provide the ability to choose between "normal text" and "regular expression" searches. Regular expressions use a special syntax to allow for powerful searching and pattern matching. Our support for them gives you an amazingly flexible search ability, but there's a learning curve. That said, you can learn to do most of what you're likely to want with just a few brief examples:

1. Alternate Spellings:
   a. You can find results with alternate spellings. For example, gr[ae]y will find text using either spelling, gray or grey.
   b. To find text containing the words color, or colour, use this: colou?r
      i. Here, the u might or might not occur in the searched-for word, so that's what the question mark indicates.
2. To find text ending with "gal": .gal
   a. Here, the leading period indicates a wildcard.
3. If you want to find A and (B or C), here's the syntax:
   a. (A)([^#]+)(B|C)
4. What if you want to find "spiritual angel", followed within 1 to 20 words by a word beginning with "celestial angel". Use this expression:

   (spiritual angel)\W+(?:\w+\W+){1,20}?(celestial angel)

5. To find a word beginning with "reform", followed within 1 to 10 words by a word beginning with "affection", use this expression:

   (reform|reform[a-z]+)\W+(?:\w+\W+){1,10}?(affection|affection[a-z]+).

6. To find text that contains the words "divine" and "natural", but <u>not</u> "divine natural", this search finds them within 2 to 6 words:

   (divine)\W+(?:\w+\W+){2,6}?(natural)

Note! Order matters. The searches in #3, 4, 5, 6 <u>won't</u> find results in which the second term is found first, e.g. for #4, if "celestial angel" appears before "spiritual angel".

Other Search Functions in the New Christian Bible Study Project:

- Search Collateral Literature Archive (These are mostly older works, not that closely related to Bible exegesis):
  https://newchristianbiblestudy.org/explanatory-works
- Searchable Archive of "New Church Life" issues:
  https://newchristianbiblestudy.org/new-church-life
- Search the Writings using Advanced Neo-Latin Search:
  https://newchristianbiblestudy.org/advanced-latin-search

Contact Us:

Remember, we're happy to help with tough search questions.

Also, if you're really keen, to see more documentation on the search syntax that's supported by our PostgreSQL database, go here:
www.postgresql.org/docs/9.3/functions-matching.html