

RECOMMENDED RESOURCES for GROWING IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION in LIFE and MINISTRY

All of these resources are excellent. I hesitated to ‘asterisk’ those books I thought absolutely essential, lest you think the others are unnecessary. The asterisks are provided as a guide to the absolute minimum number of books on this list that should be in the library of any serious student of God’s Word. In reality, the entire list constitutes the skeleton of what you really need. But, this will give you a firm foundation of excellent resources to correctly read, understand, apply, teach, and preach the Bible. (NOTE: Inclusion on this list does **not** mean that everything in a work is the best approach or best understanding of a subject, but merely that the work is an excellent presentation that represents a view held by many orthodox Christians and should be understood by a well-read pastor / teacher. Pastor-Teachers should be thoroughly versed in the Faith, well-prepared to preach and teach truth.)

ETHICS

Biblical Ethics for Relationships and Ministry ...

** **Religious Affections: A Christian’s Character Before God**, Jonathan Edwards, edited by James Houston, Vancouver: Regent College Publishing. (*If you purchase Religious Affections, be sure to purchase this version edited by James Houston.*) (*This book is a great Christian classic.*)

** **O Shepherd, Where Art Thou?**, Calvin Miller, Nashville: B & H Publishing.
(*A brief, very humorous story illustrating the radically different philosophies and practices of three friends who pastor in one city as they lead their churches, and how these ministries relate well or poorly to the Bible.*)

* **Stealing Sheep: The Church’s Hidden Problems with Transfer Growth**, William Chadwick, Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press.

* **Ministerial Ethics: A Guide for Spirit-Filled Leaders**, T. Burton Pierce, Springfield: Logion Press.

Ministerial Ethics: Being a Good Minister In A Not-So-Good World, Joe Trull & James Carter, Nashville: B & H Publishing.

Life Together, Dietrich Bonhoeffer, HarperOne.

STUDY BIBLES

The four best study Bibles as of 02/2020. Buy at least one of the following, in this order ...

NIV Cultural Backgrounds Study Bible

NIV Study Bible

ESV Study Bible

Archaeological Study Bible (comes as either NIV or KJV)

How to Choose a Translation for All It's Worth, Fee and Strauss, Grand Rapids: Zondervan.

SCRIPTURE and INSPIRATION

* **Five Views on Biblical Inerrancy**, in the Counterpoint Series, Grand Rapids: Zondervan.

Scripture and the Authority of God, N. T. Wright, HarperCollins.

The Bible Made Impossible: Why Biblicism Is Not a Truly Evangelical Reading of Scripture, Christian Smith, Grand Rapids: Brazos Press.

HERMENEUTICS

The best books on how to correctly read and interpret the various kinds of books or literature (law, prophets, poetry, wisdom, gospels, narrative, epistles, apocalyptic) in the Bible should be in every minister's library, and are as follows ...

* **How to Read the Bible for All It's Worth**, Fee and Stuart, Grand Rapids: Zondervan.

* **How to Read the Bible Book by Book**, Fee and Stuart, Grand Rapids: Zondervan.

How to Read the Bible as Literature ... and Get More Out Of It, Leland Ryken, Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1984.

How to Read the Bible Through the Jesus Lens: A Guide to Christ-Focused Reading of Scripture, Michael Williams, Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2012.

Reading the Good Book Well: A Guide to Biblical Interpretation, Jerry Camery-Hoggatt, Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2007.

* **Ancient Near Eastern Thought and the Old Testament: Introducing the Conceptual World of the Hebrew Bible**, John Walton, Baker Academic.

Grasping God's Word: A Hands-On Approach to Reading, Interpreting, and Applying the Bible, J. Scott Duvall and J. Daniel Hays, Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2005.

Introduction to Biblical Interpretation, Klein, Blomberg, and Hubbard, Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2004.

The Hermeneutical Spiral: A Comprehensive Introduction to Biblical Interpretation, Grant Osborne, Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press. *(A deeper, more advanced work)*

Is There A Meaning In This Text?, Kevin Vanhoozer, Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2009.

A Basic Guide to Interpreting the Bible, Robert Stein, Grand Rapids: Baker, 2011.

PREACHING / TEACHING

The best books for seeing how the Old Testament speaks of Christ, and how to correctly preach what the OT says about Christ, will properly explain how to spot and interpret types, figures, symbols, themes, and so forth. *Some of these and other excellent books on preaching are as follows ...*

* **Preaching the Whole Bible as Christian Scripture: The Application of Biblical Theology to Expository Preaching**, Graeme Goldsworthy, Grand Rapids: Eerdmans.

* **Preaching Christ from the Old Testament: A Contemporary Hermeneutical Method**, Sidney Greidanus, Grand Rapids: Eerdmans.

Preaching Christ in All of Scripture, Edmund P. Clowney, Wheaton: Crossway Books, 2003.

Speaking of God: Reading and Preaching the Word of God. Jeremy Camery-Hoggatt, Eugene: Wipf & Stock, 2006.

Preaching: The Art of Narrative Exposition, Calvin Miller, Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2006.

THEOLOGY

NT / OT THEOLOGY

The best OT theology, NT theology, and Biblical Theology books properly explain the theology of each book of the Bible, and trace biblical theological themes as they flow through the Bible book by book. They explain the unity of God's Word, how it all fits and flows together. *The best of these are as follows ...*

An Old Testament Theology: An Exegetical, Canonical, and Thematic Approach, Bruce K. Waltke, Grand Rapids: Zondervan.

Theology of the New Testament: A Canonical and Synthetic Approach, Frank Thielman, Grand Rapids: Zondervan.

BIBLICAL THEOLOGY

What Is Biblical Theology? A Guide to the Bible's Story, Symbolism, and Patterns, James M. Hamilton, Jr., Crossway Books.

* **According to Plan: The Unfolding Revelation of God in the Bible: An Introductory Biblical Theology**, Graeme Goldsworthy, Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic.

The Mission of God: Unlocking the Bible's Grand Narrative, Christopher Wright, Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 2006

The Temple and the Church's Mission: A Biblical Theology of the Dwelling Place of God, G. K. Beale, IVP Academic.

Biblical Theology: Old and New Testaments, Geerhardus Vos, Banner of Truth.

SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY

Renewal Theology: Systematic Theology from a Charismatic Perspective, J. Rodman Williams, Grand Rapids: Zondervan.
(Williams was a wonderful Spirit-filled Presbyterian scholar; he was Reformed, but genuinely Spirit-filled)

Systematic Theology: An Introduction to Biblical Doctrine, Wayne Grudem, Grand Rapids: Zondervan.

PAULINE THEOLOGY

The Climax of the Covenant: Christ and the Law in Pauline Theology, N. T. Wright, Minneapolis: Fortress Press.
(The best work on this subject, which addresses in detail the relationship between Israel and the Church.)

Paul, the Spirit, and the People of God, Gordon Fee, Hendrickson Publishers.
(the doctrine of the Holy Spirit in Paul, especially His supernatural ministry)

God's Empowering Presence: The Holy Spirit in the Letters of Paul, Gordon Fee, Baker Academic

ARMINIANISM / CALVINISM

Theology of The Reformers, Timothy George, B & H Publishing.

For Calvinism, Michael Horton, Grand Rapids: Zondervan

Against Calvinism, Roger E. Olson, Grand Rapids: Zondervan

* **Elect in the Son: A Study of the Doctrine of Election**, Robert Shank, Bloomington: Bethany House

Life in the Son: A Study of the Doctrine of Perseverance, Robert Shank, Bloomington: Bethany House

- **Arminian Theology: Myths and Realities**, Roger E. Olson, Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press

HERETICAL STREAMS of the PENTECOSTAL / CHARISMATIC MOVEMENT ... *(serious heresies often found among us)*

A New Apostolic Reformation?: A Biblical Response to a Worldwide Movement, R. Douglas Geivett & Holly Pivec, Wooster, OH: Weaver Book Company, 2014.

God's Super-Apostles: Encountering the Worldwide Prophets and Apostles Movement, R. Douglas Geivett & Holly Pivec, Wooster, OH: Weaver Book Company, 2014.

A Different Gospel: A Biblical Look at the Word of Faith Movement, Dan McConnell, Peabody, MA: 1995.

Oneness Pentecostals & The Trinity: A Worldwide Movement Assessed by a Former Oneness Pentecostal, Gregory A. Boyd, Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1992, 234 pages.

Christianity Without the Cross: A History of Salvation in Oneness Pentecostalism, Thomas A. Fudge, Parkland, FL: Universal Publishers, 2003, 394 pages.

ESCHATOLOGY

* **The Bible and the Future**, Anthony Hoekema, Grand Rapids: Eerdmans.

Three Views on the Rapture, Countpoints Series, Zondervan.

The Meaning of the Millennium: Four Views, ed. By Robert Clouse, IVP Academic.

* **Three Views on the Millennium and Beyond**, ed. By Darrell Bock, Counterpoints Series, Zondervan.

* **Kingdom Come: The Amillennial Alternative**, Sam Storms, Christian Focus Publications.

Jesus and the Holy City: New Testament Perspectives on Jerusalem, Peter Walker, Eerdmans.

Jesus and the Land, Gary Burge, Baker Academic.

* **The Israel of God: Yesterday, Today, and Tomorrow**, O. Palmer Robertson, P&R Publishing.

Jesus and Israel: One Covenant or Two?, David Holwerda, Eerdmans.

COMMENTARIES & MONOGRAPHS RELEVANT TO ESCHATOLOGY ...

* **The Gospel of Matthew** – NICNT Series, R. T. France, Eerdmans.

* **The Gospel of Mark** – NIGCT Series, R. T. France, Eerdmans

Mark – The NIV Application Commentary, David Garland, Zondervan.

The First and Second Letters to the Thessalonians, Gordon Fee, Eerdmans.

*** **The Theology of the Book of Revelation**, Richard Bauckham, Cambridge University Press.

* **The Climax of Prophecy**, Richard Bauckham, T & T Clark.

Reversed Thunder, Eugene Peterson, HarperOne.

The Returning King: A Guide to the Book of Revelation, Vern Poythress, P & R Publishing

*** **The Book of Revelation – NIGCT Series**, G. K. Beale, Eerdmans.

* **The Book of Ezekiel – NICOT Series**, Daniel Block, Eerdmans.

Ezekiel – The NIV Application Commentary, Iain Duguid, Zondervan.

* **Daniel – The NIV Application Commentary**, Tremper Longman III, Zondervan.

Daniel – Geneva Commentary Series, E. J. Young, Banner of Truth.

THE MODERN HISTORY OF ESCHATOLOGY ...

On the Road to Armageddon: How Evangelicals Became Israel's Best Friend, Timothy Weber, Baker Academic.

When Time Shall Be No More: Prophecy Belief in Modern American Culture, Paul Boyer, Belknap Press.

The Last Days Are Here Again: A History of the End Times, Richard Kyle, Baker Publishing Group.

The Praise of Folly: The Enigmatic Life & Theology of C.I. Scofield, David Lutzweiler, The Apologetics Group.

The Incredible Scofield and His Book, Joseph Canfield, Ross House Books.

HISTORICAL THEOLOGY (CHURCH HISTORY)

*** **The Rise of Christianity**, Rodney Stark, HarperCollins, 1996.

* **Destroyer of the Gods: Early Christian Distinctiveness in the Roman World**, Larry Hurtado, Baylor Univ Press, 2016.

A History of the Christian Church, Williston Walker, Scribner, 1985.

Fundamentalism and American Culture, George Marsden, Oxford University Press.

** **The Scandal of the Evangelical Mind**, Mark Noll, Grand Rapids: Eerdmans.

** **Full Gospel, Fractured Minds?: A Call to Use God's Gift of the Intellect**, Rick Nanez, Grand Rapids: Zondervan.

** **The Creationists: From Scientific Creationism to Intelligent Design**, Ronald Numbers, Boston: Harvard University Press.

Understanding Dispensationalists, Vern Poythress, P & R Publishing.

* **Dispensationalism: Rightly Dividing the People of God**, Keith Mathison, P & R Publishing.

Pentecostal Currents in American Protestantism, Blumhofer, Spittler, Wacker, University of Illinois Press.

An Introduction to Pentecostalism, Allan Anderson, Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2004.

The Assemblies of God: A Chapter in the Story of American Pentecostalism, Edith L. Blumhofer, Springfield, MO: Gospel Publishing House, 1989, 2 volumes, 706 pages.

Restoring the Faith: The Assemblies of God, Pentecostalism, and American Culture, Edith Blumhofer, University of Illinois Press.

Vision of the Disinherited: The Making of American Pentecostalism, Robert M. Anderson, Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1979, 334 pages.

Fire From Heaven: The Rise of Pentecostal Spirituality and the Reshaping of Religion in the Twenty-first Century, Harvey Cox, Cambridge, MA: Da Capo Press, 1995, 346 pages.

EVANGELICAL / PENTECOSTAL RENEWAL

*** **THE ANCIENT-FUTURE FAITH SERIES ...**

Ancient-Future Faith: Rethinking Evangelicalism for a Postmodern World, Robert E. Webber, Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1999

Ancient-Future Evangelism: Making Your Church a Faith-Forming Community, 2003

Ancient-Future Time: Forming Spirituality through the Christian Year, 2004

The Divine Embrace: Recovering the Passionate Spiritual Life, 2006

Ancient-Future Worship: Proclaiming and Enacting God's Narrative, 2008

The Problem with Evangelical Theology: Testing the Exegetical Foundations of Calvinism, Dispensationalism, and Wesleyanism, Ben Witherington III, Baylor University Press

The Celtic Way of Evangelism: How Christianity Can Reach the West . . . Again, George Hunter III, Abingdon Press.

Retrieving the Tradition and Renewing Evangelicalism: A Primer for Suspicious Protestants, D. H. Williams, Eerdmans.

The Spirit Poured Out on All Flesh: Pentecostalism and the Possibility of Global Theology, Amos Yong, Baker Academic

The Spirit in the World: Emerging Pentecostal Theologies in Global Contexts, Veli-Matti Karkkainen, Eerdmans.

Baptized in the Spirit: A Global Pentecostal Theology, Frank Macchia, Zondervan.

CHRISTIAN SPIRITUALITY / DEVOTION / FORMATION

Four Views on Christian Spirituality, Counterpoints Series, Zondervan.

A Long Obedience in the Same Direction: Discipleship in an Instant Society, Eugene Peterson, IVP Books.

Run with the Horses: The Quest for Life at Its Best, Eugene Peterson, IVP Books.

***** Religious Affections: A Christian's Character Before God**, Jonathan Edwards, edited by James Houston, Regent College Publishing.

Celebration of Discipline, Richard Foster, HarperSanFrancisco.

The Divine Conspiracy: Rediscovering Our Hidden Life In God, Dallas Willard, Harper.

The Contemplative Pastor: Returning to the Art of Spiritual Direction, Eugene Peterson, Eerdmans.

***** The Book of Pastoral Rule: St. Gregory the Great**, St. Vladimir's Seminary. (The duties and obligations of the pastors in the care and formation of their flock.)

Bread for the Journey: A Daybook of Wisdom and Faith, Henri Nouwen, HarperOne.

Prayer, Hans Urs von Balthasar, Ignatius Press.

CRITICAL ISSUES

FAITH AND SCIENCE

SCRIPTURE ...

* * **Genesis 1 As Ancient Cosmology**, John Walton, Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press.
(A condensed version is **The Lost World of Genesis One: Ancient Cosmology and the Origins Debate**, same author & publisher)

* * **The Lost World of Adam and Eve: Genesis 2-3 and the Human Origins Debate**, John Walton, InterVarsity Press.

* * **The Lost World of the Flood: Mythology, Theology, and the Deluge Debate**, InterVarsity Press, Tremper Longman III and John Walton.

Genesis in the **NIV Application Commentary series**, by John Walton, Grand Rapids: Zondervan.

Genesis: A Commentary, Bruce Waltke, Grand Rapids: Zondervan.

Four Views on the Historical Adam, in the Counterpoint series, Grand Rapids: Zondervan.

* **Three Views on Creation and Evolution**, Counterpoint Series, Zondervan.

The Spirit of Creation: Modern Science and Divine Action in the Pentecostal-Charismatic Imagination, Amos Yong, Eerdmans.

SCIENCE ...

* **Belief in God in an Age of Science**, John Polkinghorne, Yale University Press.

* **The Creationists: From Scientific Creationism to Intelligent Design**, Ronald Numbers, Boston: Harvard University Press.

Why the Universe Is the Way It Is, Hugh Ross, Grand Rapids: Baker Books.

* **The Bible, Rocks, and Time: Geological Evidence for the Age of the Earth**, Davis Young, Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press.

Beyond the Firmament: Understanding Science and the Theology of Creation, Gordon Glover, Chesapeake: Watertree Press.

* **Evolutionary Creation: A Christian Approach to Evolution**” Denis O. Lamoureux, Eugene: Wipf & Stock.

Adam and the Genome: Reading Scripture after Genetic Science, Scot McKnight and Dennis Venema, Brazos Press.

Scripture and Cosmology: Reading the Bible Between the Ancient World and Modern Science, Kyle Greenwood, IVP.

Coming to Peace With Science: Bridging the Worlds Between Faith and Biology, Darrel R. Falk, Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press.

The Language of God: A Scientist Presents Evidence for Belief, Francis Collins, New York: Free Press.

WAR and PEACE...

Between Pacifism and Jihad: Just War and Christian Tradition, j. Daryl Charles, IVP Academic.

RELIGIOUS PLURALISM / UNIVERSALISM / WORLD RELIGIONS...

God Has Not Left Himself Without Witness, Ivan Satyavrata, Wipf & Stock.

Four Views on Salvation in a Pluralistic World, Counterpoints Series, Zondervan.

SEXUALITY

The Bible and Homosexual Practice: Texts and Hermeneutics, Robert Gagnon, Abingdon.

Slaves, Women, & Homosexuals: Exploring the Hermeneutics of Cultural Analysis, William Webb, InterVarsity Press.

What Does the Bible Really Teach About Homosexuality?, Kevin DeYoung, Crossway.

The Biology of Sin: Grace, Hope, and Healing For Those Who Feel Trapped, Matthew S. Stanford, Biblica.

OLD TESTAMENT “BARBARISM” ...

The Lost World of the Israelite Conquest: Covenant, Retribution, and the Fate of the Canaanites, John H. Walton

Is God a Moral Monster?: Making Sense of the Old Testament God, Paul Copan, Baker Books.

Show Them No Mercy: 4 Views on God and Canaanite Genocide, Counterpoints Series, Zondervan.

HELL...

* **Four Views on Hell**, Counterpoint Series, Grand Rapids: Zondervan.

* **Two Views on Hell: A Biblical and Theological Dialogue**, Fudge & Peterson, IVP Academic.

* **The Fire that Consumes: A Biblical and Historical Study of the Doctrine of Final Punishment**, Edward Fudge, Wipf & Stock, Third Edition, 2016.

* **Hell Under Fire**, Christopher Morgan, Zondervan, 2004.

DISCIPLESHIP / THE CHURCH / GROUPS ...

* **The Master Plan of Evangelism**, Robert Coleman, Revell.

The Lost Art of Disciple Making, LeRoy Elms, Zondervan.

The Complete Book of Discipleship: On Being and Making Followers of Christ (The Navigators Reference Library), Bill Hull, NavPress.

Transforming Discipleship: Making Disciples a Few at a Time, Greg Odgen, IVP Books.

* **Life Together: The Classic Exploration of Faith in Community**, Dietrich Bonhoeffer, HarperOne.

* **The Cost of Discipleship**, Dietrich Bonhoeffer, Touchstone.

Discipleship by Design, Harvey Herman

Dedication and Leadership, Douglas Hyde, Univ of Notre Dame Press, 1992.

John Wesley's Class Meeting: A Model for Making Disciples, D. Michael Henderson, Evangel Publishing House.

Slow Church: Cultivating Community in the Patient Way of Jesus, Smith & Pattison, IVP Books.

The Grasshopper Myth: Big Churches, Small Churches and the Small Thinking that Divides Us, Karl Vaters, New Small Church.

COMMENTARIES

SINGLE VOLUME COMMENTARIES

The IVP Bible Background Commentary: Old Testament, Walton, Matthews, and Chavalas, Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press.

The IVP Bible Background Commentary: New Testament, Craig Keener, Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press.

SINGLE-BOOK COMMENTARIES

The following two books are surveys of the best commentaries on each book of the Bible. They briefly classify, describe, and rate each commentary. By using these two books you can find the best commentaries for your level of expertise and interest.

Old Testament Commentary Survey, Tremper Longman III, Baker Academic.

New Testament Commentary Survey, D. A. Carson, Baker Academic.

COMMENTARY SERIES...

BEST SIMPLE / INEXPENSIVE COMMENTARY SERIES

The best simple series for the money are ...

Tyndale Old Testament Commentary Series, IVP Academic.

* * **The New Testament for Everyone**, by Tom Wright, Westminster John Knox Press, 16 Volumes, paperback.

BEST COMMENTARY SERIES

New International Commentary on the Old Testament (NICOT)

New International Commentary on the New Testament (NICNT)

New International Greek Testament Commentary (NIGTC)

The NIV Application Commentary (NT and OT)

Reformed Expository Commentary Series

MISCELLANEOUS IMPORTANT WORKS

* **The New Testament and the People of God (Christian Origins and the Question of God, Volume 1)** N. T. Wright, Fortress Press.

* **Jesus and the Victory of God (Christian Origins and the Question of God, Volume 2)**, N. T. Wright, Fortress Press.

* **The Resurrection of the Son of God (Christian Origins and the Question of God, Volume 3)**, N. T. Wright, Fortress Press.

* **Paul and the Faithfulness of God (Christian Origins and the Question of God, Volume 4)**, N. T. Wright, Fortress Press.

The Literary Structure of the Old Testament: A Commentary on Genesis-Malachi, David Dorsey, Baker Academic.

Orthodoxy, G. K. Chesterton.

The Creed: What Christians Believe and Why it Matters, Luke Timothy Johnson, Image.

Affirming the Apostles' Creed, J. I. Packer, Crossway.

New City Catechism, Tim Keller, CreateSpace Publishing,

* **Miracles: The Credibility of the New Testament Accounts**, Craig Keener, Baker Academic, 2011, 2 Vols.