

General Topics :: What are you reading?

What are you reading? - posted by theopenlife, on: 2008/11/27 1:54

It's always interesting to find out what people are reading these days. I'll begin by sharing this month's list, with some comments. Since I'm copy/pasting this from my blog www.theopenlife.com, the links will not appear.

In keeping with the holiday, I would like to express my gratitude to God and the men He uses for the many books I have been blessed by. In terms of reading accomplished, this month has been more productive than usual (hopefully a new trend). Altogether, I digested over 1,261 pages of printed content and I trust have retained some of it. I would like to share some of those books with you and provide a short comment on Martin Luther's *Bondage of the Will*.

I began the month with Calvin's 'On Prayer and the Christian Life', which is available as a free audio book until the end of November at [Christianaudio.com](http://christianaudio.com). If time permits I would like to go through it again, seeing the book to be very warm and full of practical exhortation.

Next, I read one of the Pocket Puritan series entitled 'Anger Management', which is an excerpt from Richard Baxter's copious *Christian Directory*, which I suppose was more or less his attempt to answer every conceivable question of conscience in the daily lives of Christians. Pill-sized and potent, *Anger Management* is useful medication for temperamental tendencies. Allowing that anger is sometimes beneficial, Baxter first explains when anger is sinful and then gives and expounds on twelve "considerations to hinder sinful anger." For instance, Anger is a sin which does not leave you to sin alone. Ponder that. He next refutes six objections and closes with sixteen practical directions for abstaining from sinful anger. I most appreciated his observation that, "Humility is patient and does not exaggerate injuries... He that thinks lowly of himself considers things said or done against him as of little significance." Thanks to the brother who gave me the book, who admitted that he ought to keep it in his chest pocket at all times.

Now to my favorite of the month, Volume 1 of C. H. Spurgeon's 'Autobiography'. I actually listened to the audio version, narrated by the excellent Simon Vance (aka Robert Whitefield), which I consider some of the best \$12.50 (with membership) that I have ever spent. A complete review of it is available here, so it will suffice only to say that my respect for Spurgeon has gone to heights before unknown. His genius, wit, warmth, and theological devotion is astounding. And, at 20+ hours for just the half of it, this is money well invested.

My interest in biography not being yet sated, I also devoured that of David Livingstone, the British pioneer missionary/cartographer/emissary to Africa during the 1800's. The audio version of Thomas Hughes' 1889 edition is well read by Frederick Davidson. Be forewarned, however, the story may become tedious at times for those not interested in anthropology, biology, or 19th century interracial relations. However, if you are wont to enjoy *National Geographic*, you will be both fascinated and sanctified by this account of one of God's great soldiers.

Lastly, I read in two sittings (or should I say, heard in two listenings) Martin Luther's 'Bondage of the Will'. A full review is available at www.puritanical.org, Ryan Thompson's book-review blog. As mentioned before, I listened to the free audio version of the book, available on SermonAudio.com. I found it not only thought provoking, but a fun use of two-and-a-half hours. In the spirit of the author, the narrator becomes pretty impassioned at times and I could only wish he had a German accent. For those unfamiliar, the book is Luther's refutation of Erasmus of Rotterdam's *Diatribes on the Freedom of the Will*. About three-quarters were a polemic destruction of Erasmus' reputation as an authority on the subject. I almost wondered if Luther would ever start expounding his subject rather than exposing the illogical and false pretenses of the scholarly Dane. But, with fervid genius, the monk prevails in the remaining thirty minutes to expose free will for what it is - a void term.

There were elements of *Bondage* that were, to me, raw rhetorical genius. Such as when Luther refers to himself in the third person, like a brute gorilla of intellect beating his breast and ready to smash Erasmus' arguments, saying,

Quote:
-----You called those men, 'men of the greatest understanding in the Scripture, and martyrs of Christ;' merely in order that you might blind the eyes of the inexperienced commonalty, and make work for Luther by loading his cause with empty words, odium, and contempt. But, however, I

aver that neither of your assertions are true, and that both are false. For, first of all, I aver, that the Scriptures are quite clear: and next, that those men, as far as they asserted "Free-will," were most ignorant of the Sacred Writings: and moreover, that they neither asserted it by their life, nor by their death, but by their pen only; and that, while their heart was traveling another road.

Luther called Erasmus' flattery for what it was: a false flag.

As well, I appreciated the simplicity of Luther's explanation about 'Imperatives versus Indicatives.' In short, to infer an indicative sense upon what may be an imperative passage is to upset all of one's biblical understanding. For instance, one may read 'Choose you this day whom you will serve,' and thereby infer the word 'choose' indicates one's native ability to fulfill the command. However, if one uses such exegetical methods consistently then he must also infer an indicative sense upon all similar 'command' passages. 'Thou shalt love the Lord your God with all your heart', if taken to be indicative rather than imperative, becomes a (ridiculous) statement that all people only love God perfectly, thus making a promise out of the command; or it means we are capable, by ourselves, of loving God perfectly. What need then is there for grace? If one says, No, but grace enables us enough to will these things by our free will, then we deny the very freedom of the human will, seeing that it needs enabling grace in order to do right, which proves it is in bondage to sin!

Well, friends, the time is coming to a close for you to enter this month's free book give away at www.theopenlife.com. Don't miss out on the opportunity to grow in knowledge for the heartfelt service of Christ.

Re: What are you reading? - posted by Koheleth, on: 2008/11/27 8:07

Revival Praying by Leonard Ravenhill

Re: - posted by PaulWest (), on: 2008/11/27 8:50

[Image: <http://www.wtsbooks.com/images/0851519148m.jpg>]

"The Jerusalem Sinner Saved" by John Bunyan

Re: What are you reading? - posted by InTheLight (), on: 2008/11/27 9:13

[Image: http://g-ecx.images-amazon.com/images/G/01/ciu/7b/84/a6d1d250fca01f429b67a010._AA240_.L.jpg]

Behold His Love by Basilea Schlink

"How Jesus' Sufferings relate to the modern Christian in practical life"

Re: - posted by TaylorOtwell (), on: 2008/11/27 10:14

Great thread idea!

Lately, I have been reading through Daniel Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe*. Mr. Defoe has placed a lot of spiritual wisdom, as well as warnings, in this adventure story.

Other than that, I have been reading through the (http://www.prca.org/bc_index.html) Belgic Confession of Faith, as well as the (<http://www.sacred-texts.com/chr/westcat1.htm>) Westminster Shorter Catechism.

Grace to you,
Taylor

Re: What are you reading? - posted by divdasunder (), on: 2008/11/27 10:38

Lately I have read or am reading-

No Compromise- life story of Keith Green

The Cross by Martyn Lloyd Jones

Run Baby Run by Nicky Cruz

General Topics :: What are you reading?

A biography on Watchman Nee and a biography on John Bunyan

Re: - posted by MJones (), on: 2008/11/27 11:09

I thoroughly enjoyed:

'Hudson Taylor's Spiritual Secret' an account of his calling into the China missions and how God led him.

John Eldrege's 'Walking with God', which is a look into a year of his life through selected journal entries of the ordinary and sometimes extraordinary experiences he had with God.

Re: What are you reading? - posted by Fuegodedios (), on: 2008/11/27 11:33

Thomas watsons: A Body Of Divinity

William Perkins: The Art of Prophesying

A.W. Tozers 2 volume set of the Attributes of God

A.W. Pinks: The sovereignty of God (always reading this one).

Charles Spurgeon Sermons 10 Volume set(always reading this one as well)

Stephen Charnocks: The existence and attributes of God (slowly chopping away at this one this is a massive work).

Yes, I love to read and first and foremost I love to Read my BIBLE and keep that as my standard and anchor over any other book. :-)

Re: - posted by TaylorOtwell (), on: 2008/11/27 11:40

Quote:

-----Thomas watsons: A Body Of Divinity

Enjoy! :)

Watson's writings are full of gems.

Re: - posted by Fuegodedios (), on: 2008/11/27 11:42

Oh yes dear brother. Watson is really blessing me his way of putting things is just amazing.

Re: - posted by TrueWitness, on: 2008/11/27 13:30

I am currently reading the autobiography of George Müller, a 19th century saint who founded orphanages in Britain. The title of his autobiography is "The Life of Trust" and is in the public domain (is free) and can be found easily with an internet search. I suggest getting a PDF document. Reading about his life causes me to be humbled (because his life was truly humble) and fills me with hope and faith (because God demonstrated His faithfulness and goodness powerfully to George and the orphans). Time after time when George did not know where funds would come from to supply their needs, God supplied the need, and not one moment too soon I might add. It is a refreshing read during this time of economic uncertainty and is at odds with the current trend of prosperity teaching and believer-centric teaching. I highly recommend this to all believers. Here is a crucial paragraph that explains why George wanted to open an orphanage:

It may be well to enter somewhat minutely upon the reasons which led me to establish an orphan house. Through my pastoral labors, through my correspondence, and through brethren who visited Bristol, I had constantly cases brought before me, which proved that one of the especial things which the children of God needed in our day, was, to have their faith strengthened. I might visit a brother who worked fourteen or even sixteen hours a day at his trade, the necessary result of which was, that not only his body suffered, but his soul was lean, and he had no enjoyment in God. I might point out to him that he ought to work less, in order that his bodily health might not suffer, and that he might gather strength for his

inner man, by reading the word of God, by meditation over it, and by prayer. The reply, however, I generally found to be something like this: "But if I work less, I do not earn enough for the support of my family. Even now, whilst I work so much, I have scarcely enough." There was no trust in God, no real belief in the truth of that word, "Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you." I might reply something like this: "My dear brother, it is not your work which supports your family, but the Lord; and he who has fed you and your family when you could not work at all, on account of illness, would surely provide for you and yours; if, for the sake of obtaining food for your inner man, you were to work only for so many hours a day as would allow you proper time for retirement. And is it not the case now that you begin the work of the day after having had only a few hurried moments for prayer; and when you leave off your work in the evening, and mean then to read a little of the word of God, are you not too much worn out in body and mind to enjoy it, and do you not often fall asleep whilst reading the Scriptures, or whilst on your knees in prayer?" The brother would allow it was so; he would allow that my advice was good; but still I read in his countenance, even if he should not have actually said so, "How should I get on, if I were to carry out your advice?" I longed, therefore, to have something to point the brother to, as a visible proof that our God and Father is the same faithful God that he ever was,--as willing as ever to PROVE himself the LIVING GOD, in our day as formerly, to all who put their trust in him.

If you are interested in downloading this gem, here is the link:

<http://manybooks.net/titles/mullerg2728827288-8.html>

Re: - posted by roaringlamb (), on: 2008/11/27 14:09

I am working through the following(I have a bad habit of starting books and not finishing them).

- The Returning King by Vern Poythress
- Practical Religion by J.C. Ryle
- The Cross and Christian Ministry by D.A. Carson
- Christless Christianity by Michael Horton
- Total Church by Tim Chester and Steve Timmis
- Preaching to a Post-Everything World by Zack Eswine
- Jesus-Made in America by Stephen Nichols
- The Cross Centered Life by C.J. Mahaney
- The Apostolic Preaching of The Cross by Leon Morris
- The Institutes by John Calvin

Re: - posted by PreachParsly (), on: 2008/11/27 15:50

La Santa Biblia (I'm studying Spanish)

Conformed to His Image By Oswald Chambers

Re: - posted by HomeFree89 (), on: 2008/11/27 19:46

I'm currently reading Finney's Autobiography.

Since Oc. 27, I have read 18 books. Some would include:

- "A Christmas Carol" by Charles Dickens
- "Wesley Gold" and "Spurgeon Gold" compiled by Ray Comfort
- "The Myth of a Christian Nation" by Gregory A. Boyd
- "The Bravehearted Gospel" by Eric Ludy
- "Prolife Answers to Prochoice Arguments" by Randy Alcorn
- "Pandita Ramabai" by Basil Miller
- "Why We're Not Emergent By Two Guys Who Should Be" by Ted Kluck and Kevin Deyoung

Re: - posted by alan4jc (), on: 2008/11/27 21:04

I just finished Greg Laurie's autobiography, "Lost Boy."

Also I am reading "The Saving Life Of Christ" Major Ian Thomas

Re: - posted by loveyouall (), on: 2008/11/27 23:13

The Holy Bible.

Re: - posted by fuehrerbe21 (), on: 2008/11/28 20:37

As suggested to me by SI's very own Paul West, I am almost finished with The Normal Christian Life. It has been very encouraging and exciting to read!

I am also reading a short book regarding the training of children. My wife and I are trying to train our daughter in obedience, so it has been helpful and practical.

I am also almost finished with Pour Your Heart into It by Howard Schultz, the CEO of Starbucks. Since I work for Starbucks, it only seemed fitting that I read about where our company started.

I'm thinking about reading some A W Pink once I'm finished with TNCL. We'll see what happens. I graduate from school in about a month and I anticipate having more time to read!

My next date night with my wife is to go to Barnes and Noble and read! We are very excited since it is something neither of us get to do as much as we'd like!

Re: - posted by Abe_Juliot (), on: 2008/11/28 21:07

Hey, how have you been friend and brother?

Blessings to you in Christ. -Abraham

Such a friend

(Thomas Brooks, "Apples of Gold" 1660)

"There is a friend who sticks closer than a brother." Proverbs 18:24

Such a friend is Jesus. He is so a friend to every one of His people, as if He were a friend to none besides. Jesus is . . .

an omnipotent friend;

an omniscient friend;

an omnipresent friend;

an indeficient friend;

a sovereign friend;

an immutable friend;

a watchful friend;

a loving friend;

a faithful friend;

a compassionate friend;

a close friend,

a universal friend— a friend in

all cases and in all places,

our first friend,

a constant friend— "Whom He loves,

He loves to the end." John 13:1

Re: What are you reading? - posted by boG (), on: 2008/11/28 23:08

The Reformed Pastor by Richard Baxter. Even though this book isn't particularly thick it was dense. I would recommend this book to every pastor and minister. It actually took me the majority of this last month to finish it.

Here is an excerpt from the "introduction to The Reformed Pastor" written by J.I. Packer:

"From those days to ours *The Reformed Pastor* has held its place as a classic. On 19 August 1810, Francis Asbury, the Methodist apostle of America, wrote in his diary: 'O what a prize: Baxter's *Reformed Pastor* fell into my hands this morning.' John Angell James, minister of Carr's Lane, Birmingham, and author of *An Earnest Ministry the Want of the Times* (what a Baxterish sentiment!), wrote in 1859, a few hours before he died: 'I have made, next to the Bible, Baxter's *Reformed Pastor* my rule as regards the object of my ministry. It were well if that volume were often read by all our pastors.' James himself often read it on Saturday evenings, to prepare himself for Sunday, and Spurgeon used frequently to have his wife read it to him on Sunday evenings, when the day's preaching was done."

"Has Baxter's book a ministry to ministers today? Three qualities which mark it justify the answer 'yes'.

1. The first is its energy. What has been said of Luther's *Bondage of the Will* can also be said of *The Reformed Pastor*: its words have hands and feet. Sylvester says that Baxter had a piercing eye; certainly he had piercing words. He wrote as he spoke, and his words were not emotional, since they came from the head, but passionate, for they came from the heart as well as the head. His book blazes with white-hot zeal, evangelistic fervour, and eagerness to convince. 'Richard Baxter is the most forceful of writers,' said Spurgeon; 'if you want to know the art of pleading, read . . . his *Reformed Pastor*.' As *The Saints' Everlasting Rest* is the supreme transcript of Baxter's heart as a Christian, so *The Reformed Pastor* is the supreme transcript of his heart as a minister. And what comes from Baxter's passionate heart has energy and evocative power, and can still go to the heart across a three-centuries gap."

During this past month I have also begun the following series of books:

- 1) (Studies in the Sermon on the Mount by Oswald Chambers) Studies in the Sermon on the Mount by Oswald Chambers
- 2) (http://www.banneroftruth.org/pages/item_detail_index.php) Sermons on the Beatitudes by John Calvin
- 3) (http://www.christianbook.com/Christian/Books/product?item_no0036&kw0036&eventPPCSRC&p1010575&cm_mmcldearc_-_osmx_-_Academic_-_0036) Studies in the Sermon on the Mount by D. Martyn Lloyd-Jones
- 4) (http://www.banneroftruth.org/pages/bookreview/old_evangelicalism.php) The Old Evangelicalism: Old Truths For A New Awakening by Iain H. Murray

Re: What are you reading? - posted by MSeaman (), on: 2008/12/1 12:25

For God's Sake, Grow Up by David Ravenhill.

Re: What are you reading? - posted by Limey153 (), on: 2008/12/1 12:48

'The Surprising Work of God' by Jonathan Edwards

and as soon as I finish this book I am going to read a book that was loaned to me called:

'The Seduction of Christianity, Spiritual Discernment in the last days' by Dave Hunt & T.A McMahon.

Re: - posted by KingJimmy (), on: 2008/12/1 19:42

"Towards an Old Testament Theology" by Walter Kaiser, Jr. Quite an amazing study of the Old Testament and how God's "promise" towards "the seed" has unfolded. Though somewhat technical in nature (much of the technical chatter is reserved for footnotes), it is a great study. Especially if you embrace an Art Katz theology.

General Topics :: What are you reading?

Re:, on: 2008/12/1 19:49

Ray Comforts blog.....Faith by wigglesworth....General next to God, William Booth

Re: - posted by Compton (), on: 2008/12/1 21:39

Quote:

-----My next date night with my wife is to go to Barnes and Noble and read!

This really is enjoyable. Browsing through a pile of books with a nice cup of coffee is especially appealing during the winter.

MC

Re: - posted by Swordbearer (), on: 2008/12/1 21:46

"Hudson Taylor, In early years" - By Mr and Mrs Howard
"By Searching" and "Whom God has Joined" - Isobel Kuhn
"Things I have Learned" - Bob Jones Sr
"The Journals of Jim Elliot" - By Elisabeth Elliot
"The Pilgrims Progress" - John Bunyan
"Road To Revival" - Vance Havner

Re: - posted by BenK (), on: 2008/12/1 21:59

The Gospel and Personal Evangelism - Mark Dever

Re: - posted by Compton (), on: 2008/12/1 22:15

A couple of intriguing recent titles...

Graven Images New England Stone carving and it's Symbols' 1650-1815. The oft misunderstood and misrepresented Puritans continue to surprise...this photo survey of their grave carvings is no exception.

Life and Leisure in Ancient Rome It's too bad 95% of history books are really just about wars and kings. This little book is a happy exception. It's the boring stuff that ancient people did all day with their lives that connects us with them.

The Art of Prophesying Many here at SI are well aware that the Puritans took the pastoral role of public preaching and praying God's word seriously. (Special thanks to Paul West for bringing this one up a few weeks ago.)

Blessings,

MC

Re: - posted by ginnyrose (), on: 2008/12/2 5:03

Quote:

-----It's too bad 95% of history books are really just about wars and kings.

Amen and AMEN! And historians wonder why children and adults are so turned off by history??!! Reading most history books you would think the only people that lived in ages past were the armies and the politicians. And you see the same mindset in recorded church history. You get the idea that all churches consisted of is preachers, their sermons and squabbles. What about the people in the pew? What happened to life where it meets the road? This is the story I want to hear and read about, be it secular or religious.

General Topics :: What are you reading?

History should be about people: not just a few who are in some leadership positions, like some 'king' or 'pope', be it church or state.

ginnyrose

Re:, on: 2008/12/2 8:15

Comic books.

Krispy

Re: - posted by EvangelistC, on: 2008/12/3 11:55

All of Grace by Spurgeon
True Israel of God by Shelton Jr.
The Bible

Re: - posted by Compton (), on: 2008/12/3 16:20

Quote:

-----Comic books.

Well, I hope they're Jack Chicks. ;-)

Re:, on: 2008/12/3 16:24

lol... good one!

Krispy