

Crossroads Classics

As Crossroads is committed to helping people become mature followers of Jesus Christ, we thought it appropriate to ask our ministerial staff which Christian Books have served them most in their walks with Christ. The following is a dozen of what we are calling "Crossroads Classics"— books that we felt would serve our community of believers in Crossroads so well, that whether these authors are contemporary or from a day gone by, they would assist our brothers and sisters in their own faith travels. In them, you will find an absolute treasure trove of spiritual wisdom and insight, as Christianity is often "caught" more than "taught." Most of these books are also reasonably short, as we felt that brevity and simplicity often are better teachers. Contemporary and vintage authors alike, these books cover a wide base of spiritual development for the believer, and it is for that reason, that we felt compelled to present this to you, that you may benefit from the wisdom of these fellow journeymen through their own printed page. Our prayer is that Jesus would bless you and change you through these works of art as much or even more than he has blessed us through them. Most of these books are available at your local Christian Bookstore or book superstore, and all can be purchased through Amazon.com.

Carpe diem.

- α **The Cost of Discipleship, Dietrich Bonhoeffer.** The most quoted man and book throughout our entire list of Crossroads Classics. A brief description of this book could hardly do it justice in its value for the believer in learning what it means to be a fully devoted follower of Jesus Christ. Although not centered around this event, Bonhoeffer was imprisoned in a concentration camp and executed for his faith in Nazi Germany during World War II. Bonhoeffer's legacy and insights in faith will bless you infinitely. Perhaps one of the very finest Christian books ever to go to print.
- α **The Pursuit of Holiness, Jerry Bridges.**-- A deeply practical book on engaging God and living for him. Very readable. Tackles why holiness is important and how it is achieved in day to day life. This book also gives practical evidences of holiness, without just painting a "be moral" kind of dialog. It is of benefit as well to Crossroads' heritage in the Wesleyan Church, where living a holy and devout life from a centered heart is of great importance in our personal faith development.
- α **No Easy Road, Dick Eastman**— If prayer baffles you, or you are new to it, this book will truly bless you. Not mechanical in any kind of way, this book centers itself on teaching you to be the kind of person God desires that prayer might be intimate, enjoyable, and effective. Eastman uses great analogies as well to help connect the dots for readers which makes this prayer more tangible and understandable.
- α **The Sacred Romance, John Eldredge**-- An all around staff favorite. Destined to be a classic in Christian literature. Eldredge paints a masterful picture of the gospel, provides a marvelous framework for Christianity, and addresses the issue of why Christianity doesn't seem to "work" for so many the way they hope. Excellent for new believers to see how God draws them in to himself in loving friendship, and helps folks understand what it means to fight for our faith. Excellent foundational book on the faith.

- α **Celebration of Discipline, Richard Foster**-- is a fantastic book to on developing the basic spiritual disciplines of the faith that every believer must have in order to encounter God. In a world where many of our disciplines have been lost, Foster returns us, in a contemporary way, to God as found through prayer, fasting, and many of the other spiritual disciplines. A great book to help you understand and practice them, that you might connect with God more deeply.

- α **The Practice of the Presence of God, Brother Lawrence**-- Who can't learn from a monk? And this guy-- wow! So much wisdom in such a little book from a very simple man who lived in the 17th Century and simply strived to be in the presence of God continually during the mundane and ordinary workings of his life. This is a book you will return to again and again, as it is packed with insight on connecting with God in everyday life.

- α **Mere Christianity, CS Lewis**— Do you find yourself reasonably philosophical or intellectual? If so, than Mere Christianity, or any of C.S. Lewis' writings are for you. You'll find it small, formidable, and thought provoking. Those who often find themselves asking the question "Why?" will be in heaven. None of Lewis' stuff is for the faint of heart, but of all of his writings on faith, this one is delightfully enlightening. You'll find wonders from a deeply intellectual thinker who is also an excellent study of human nature.

- α **The Ragamuffin Gospel, Brennan Manning**— Delightful. If ever you've thought that you could not come to Christ because of your unworthiness— the "I'm too messed up" sort of thing— then this book is the perfect read. It articulates the deep love of God for you in a very real, personal, way. Spends most of it's time taking the reader through the work of Christ in our lives, in very readable language. Manning has a beautiful way of communicating the simple truths of God.

- α **Sit, Walk, Stand, Watchman Nee**— A blessed tour through the book of Ephesians which helps us understand our true identity, which is found only in Jesus. Identity is the cry of this generation-- needing to know who they are in Christ already and what he has already accomplished in them, that they might live in his completed work. Simple and short-- 90 pages packed with insight.

- α **The Return of the Prodigal Son, Henri Nouwen**-- If Mere Christianity was a book for intellectuals, then this is a book for "artistes", those who have an artistic bent, or simply find God speaking to them through visualness. As God is the Author of Life, he is also understood through artistic endeavor. Nouwen was so captured by a poster of Rembrandt's "The Prodigal Son", that it started a personal spiritual pilgrimage with the Father for Nouwen through the Prodigal Son story in the scriptures. His insights are contextualized within Nouwen's descriptions of the painting, and how God speaks to him through the story of the Prodigal Son, as he visits Russia to see the original work of art. A delightful read— an awe inspiring masterpiece that reminds you that you're God's child.

- α **Desiring God, John Piper**— For our Calvinist friends out there. Actually, this book rounds out our list of Crossroads Classics quite nicely. An interesting premise in this book, Piper's approach is what he calls "Christian Hedonism"-- finding pleasure in Christ, and the book centers on that one principle. In a society so pleasure and thrill focused, it is an awesome experience to see someone addressing what it means to find pleasure in relationship with Christ. This book is our most lengthy entry in our list with about 350 pages. Could be daunting to some, but is written conversationally and is very readable. Insights abound.

- α **The Pursuit of God, A.W. Tozer**— This really is a book on engaging God, which could perhaps be best described by the title of Chapter 1— "Following Hard After God." Tozer takes you through what it means to understand God and pursue him, and how we were wired for relationship with him. Not at all a "how-to" book, but a fresh look at what it means to sit in intimate relationship with the Father.