John W. Graham Library
Guides to Biblical and Theological Research

Recommendations for Assembling a Contemporary Theological Library

Format
- Items with an asterisk (*), or a close alternative, should be regarded as a mandatory starting point for the library of an M.Div. student.
- Unless otherwise indicated, earlier editions of a volume are also recommended.
- This is a draft containing choices by some of the faculty of Wycliffe College who are generally named in parentheses.
- The bibliography is limited to mostly contemporary sources.

General Advice
- It is best to begin building your library during your course of studies, especially when sales are on.
- It is preferable to purchase timeless reference material, even if costly.
- Avoid buying trendy books or those on an obscure subject.
- Choose books based on recommendations (such as those in this guide), and based on date and publisher. For example, unless a classic, a book should be published within the past thirty years by one of the following: Augsburg, Baker, Blackwell, Brazos, Broadman, Carta, Holman, Chalice, Clements (Regent College), Continuum, Eerdmans, Fortress, Harper-Collins, Hendrickson, InterVarsity, John Knox, KTAV, Orbis, Paternoster, T & T Clark, Westminster, Word, and Zondervan. University presses generally produce good (though often technical) books.
- Support a local bookstore such as Crux Books (www.cruxbooks.com), whose prices are good. Others are faithfamilybooks.ca and www.christianbooks.com
- Commit now to theological reading and learning as part of your ministry.

Reference Works

*The New International Biblical Commentary.* Hendrickson and/or Baker.
Check availability at Crux Books (www.cruxbooks.com), and www.Christianbook.com

Now hard to find. There are more recent works, but they cost more. No set contains fewer gaps. This remains a comprehensive, solid, informative encyclopedia of the Bible. There are topics here on most anything relating to the Bible except for the most recent methods. Though now out of print, this set can be purchased through www.christianbooks.com
Alternative multi-volume bible dictionaries/encyclopedias include the *Anchor Bible Dictionary* (1991), and the more dated (1976) *New Interpreter’s Dictionary* (Abingdon). An ideal up-to-date (thus expensive) alternative is the *New Interpreter’s Bible Dictionary*, ed. Katherine Sakenfeld.

Alternatives: The InterVarsity dictionary series below or any recent multi-volume Bible dictionary or encyclopedia. (G. Taylor.)


Appears to be a much cheaper alternative to the Oxford edition by the same editors.


(G. Taylor: I pull this off the shelf more than almost any other book. It is a goldmine of information on all kinds of theological and Bible- or history-related topics, e.g. God, Paul, Charles Simeon, baptism, salvation, deity of Christ, Cranmer, etc.)


A Bible atlas published by one of the publishers listed above under General Advice. Good choices are, for example:


*A Bible Concordance such as the Zondervan NIV Exhaustive Bible Concordance* (now called *The Strongest NIV Exhaustive Concordance*. 1999) that lists the Hebrew- and Greek-word numbering system of Strong’s Concordance and its relation to the more recent numbering system of Goodrick-Kohlenberger (G/K). Alternatives include the Zondervan NASB Exhaustive Bible Concordance.


*The IVP Bible Dictionary Series*. 8 vols. IVP Academic, 1992-present, as follows:

*Jesus and the Gospels*, ed. J. B. Green et al., 1992 (Donaldson)

“A must have. It covers a vitally important area that many other resources neglect.” (G. Taylor).


(G. Taylor: “A bit dry, but very informative on other religions, including Christianity.”)


**Bibles**

Four or more of the following:


**Bible Related**


A recommendation from the website of Booth College reads: “Unlike other New Testament introductions that are primarily concerned with historical-critical issues or with what scholars have said, this book gets directly to the business of explaining the New Testament's background, content, and theology. The authors do not presume that readers need to be familiar with scholarly debates about the New Testament, nor do they assume those debates have necessarily raised the most important issues. Instead, this book is aimed at putting the message of the
Christian Scriptures back within the reach of general readers. Although informed by the current scholarship in the history, traditions, and literature of the New Testament, this book is primarily designed to induct readers of the New Testament into sensitive appreciation and serious awareness of its major figures and concerns.”


Covers much academic, technical material.


An update of the classic Wigram’s, *The Englishman’s Greek Concordance of the New Testament.* (Strong’s numbers.)

*Kreoger, Catherine Clark and Mary J. Evans. *The IVP Women’s Bible Commentary.* InterVarsity, 2002. (M. Taylor.)


Coded to Strong’s numbers. (G. Taylor.)


The high-quality production makes this a goldmine of information, hard to get elsewhere, expensive.


Words have meaning mostly in relation to their context and not alone. Nevertheless, this book provides accurate, brief, accessible information on the meaning of key words, whether in Greek or Hebrew, in the Bible. Best of all, no
knowledge of Greek or Hebrew is required to use this very helpful resource. Mounce contains these sections:
1) English word dictionary that gives the meaning of the Hebrew and Greek equivalents to that word (along with the Strong's and K/B number);
2) Scripture index that directs the reader to pages where a word found in a particular verse is discussed;
3) Hebrew English dictionary that lists words according to the G-K number (which obviates the need to recognize and know Hebrew);
4) Greek-English dictionary that also lists words according to the G-K number (which obviates the need to recognize and know Greek).
The discussion of the meaning of Hebrew and Greek words is more up to date than the old Vine’s.


Quite expensive (ca. $250 but good value due to its layout and many photos) until it appears in paperback. Peter Enns, says, “I recommend this set without the slightest hesitation and with great enthusiasm. I cannot think of a better place for interested readers to begin familiarizing themselves with the tremendous and pervasive impact that extra-biblical data has had on our understanding of the Old Testament.” Important source on historical and archaeological background, all the more necessary because there is no IVP Dictionary on OT Background.


**Counselling**


Though not a Christian book, this work is vital to identifying what is going on in hurting marriages. A pioneer in what is a revolutionary breakthrough makes accessible for the first time an approach called emotion focused therapy that has very dramatically increased the success of marriage counseling.
Development and Mission

Evangelism and Mission
"[For this field] I refer to this more than any other book" (Bowen).

"Contains useful material for preaching and teaching on this subject” (Bowen).

The DARE series of booklets available through John P. Bowen and the Wycliffe College Institute of Evangelism: [http://institute.wycliffecollege.ca](http://institute.wycliffecollege.ca)

A close second to Bosch (Bowen).

Christian Education and Discipleship
See [www.christianedwarehouse.com](http://www.christianedwarehouse.com) for a wealth of resources on Sunday School, Vacation Bible School, etc.
An Anglican resource is [www.anglicansonline.org/resources/ce.html](http://www.anglicansonline.org/resources/ce.html)
Information on Sunday School resources and choosing the right curriculum is available in the your church section of the website [www.christianitytoday.com](http://www.christianitytoday.com)

Promotional description reads: “designed for students taking a first short course in Christian theology or for lay Christians who wish to find out more about their faith. Accessible and lively . . . introduces readers to key theological issues, such as God, Jesus Christ, the Holy Spirit, faith, creation, salvation, atonement, [etc.].”

Video series of faculty presentations available through Wycliffe College (e.g. Marion Taylor on Old Testament, Glen Taylor on Lay Preaching, John Bowen on C. S. Lewis, etc.)
[Request from Paul Patterson: paul.patterson@wycliffe.utoronto.ca]

Church History

In addition to the reference works above,

Culture and Apologetics

See Campbell under Reference above.
Bowen comments: “C.S. Lewis always understands how the non-theologically trained think, and offers useful ‘translations’ of technical ideas as well as marvelous illustrations.”

Theology and Ethics

- Downloadable pdf or available free online at www.ccel.org/ccel/athanasius/incarnation or www.worldinvisible.com/library/athanasius/incarnation

- Other editions include the Augustinian Heritage Institute, 1997, the Penguin Classics.

- This set can be found at a very reasonable price of under $175.


- Mangina comments: brief, readable guide to sacraments from an Eastern Orthodox perspective.
Worship (Anglican)


**Sermon Illustrations**

Many experts discourage the use of such books. True, the quality differs and some are tacky or even downright inappropriate, but having a collection of mixed quality beats having none!


**Online Resources**

See the listing under the Pastor’s Electronic Library.

http://www.trinity.utoronto.ca/library_archives/theological_resources/epastors_library.html

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