

## A Good Read

**“Till I come, give attendance to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine.”** – 1 Timothy 4:13

Books that promote godly living are a powerful aid to Christian living. Read the spiritual classics, inviting great writers, preachers, godly men and women, to be your spiritual mentors and friends. The Puritans excel in such writing. “There must scarcely be a sermon, a treatise, a pamphlet, a diary, a history, or a biography from a Puritan pen, which was not in one way or another aimed at fostering the spiritual life”, as one noted preacher once stated.

Read sound experiential books on various topics to meet a variety of needs. To foster experiential living by remaining sensitized to sin, read Ralph Venning’s *The Plague of Plagues*. To be drawn closer to Christ, read Isaac Ambrose’s *Looking Unto Jesus*. To find peace in affliction, read Samuel Rutherford’s *Letters*. To gain relief from temptation, read John Owen’s *Temptation and Sin*. To grow in holiness, read John Flavel’s *Keeping the Heart*, or J.C. Ryle’s excellent book called *Holiness*.

Read as an act of worship. Read to be elevated into the great truths of God so that you may worship the Trinity in Spirit and in truth. Be selective about what you read, however. Measure all your reading against the touchstone of Scripture. So much of today’s Christian ‘literature’ is worthless, insubstantial talk, riddled with bad theology or secular thinking. Time is too precious to waste on nonsense. Read more for eternity than time, more for spiritual growth than professional advancement. Remember John Trapp’s warning: “As water tastes of the soil it runs through, so does the soul taste of the authors that a man reads”.

Before picking up a book, ask yourself: Would Christ approve of this book? Will it increase my love for the Word of God, help me to conquer sin, offer lasting abiding wisdom, and prepare me for the life to come? Or could I better spend time reading another book?

Speak to others about the good books you read. Conversation about experiential reading promotes experiential living.

– Article submitted by Chuck Wetzel  
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