

A Book List for Serious Students...

Some of you have children now entering university and experiencing sticker shock in the bookstore. Been there. Bought that. Sold it back for \$5. But why should our kids have all the fun? We are starting a new class in the auditorium this week and I am often asked for additional reading material so it's time for a booklist.

For all Bible students: two books I consider essential for any family that wants quick and accurate, up to date information on the Bible and its books are "The Oxford Companion to the Bible" by Metzger and Coonan and "The Oxford Bible Commentary" by Barton and Muddiman. These are massive paperbacks (available in hardback) and are not cheap but used copies or sale versions can be found on Amazon and other retail websites. If you ever look in my office, these are right behind where I stand all day for easy access.

There is no one version of how the Bible came to be and how it came to us. That said, I really recommend these books:

"Who Wrote the Bible" by Richard Elliott Friedman and his companion volume "The Bible With Sources Revealed" both use the Documentary Hypothesis that says several authors worked on and edited the books of Moses and the books of history in our Old Testament. Most scholars follow this line of thought.

A more traditional take is Neil Lightfoot's "How We Got the Bible." Note that this is 40 years old so get the newest edition. It is updated and has a lot more material. It is fairly conservative but mentions other views fairly.

If you can afford a hefty \$40 (more or less) paperback, a text used in some of our universities is Paul Wegner's "The Journey from Texts to Translations" and it goes from how the Bible came to be written to how it got to us, paralleling our class for the next four months.

If you are really getting into this, read John Walton's "The Lost World of Scripture" and Achtemeier's "Inspiration and Authority."

I will refer to these and about 20 (so far) other books and scholars as we go through the class. We live in amazing times where books and research is available less expensively than ever before, widely disseminated online or in print. But remember this: becoming an expert in any theological subject does not excuse us from living like Jesus every single day right where we are.

Patrick