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Harding School of Theology

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Footnotes: Spring Reading

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Footnotes¹

¹Curated Resources for Ministers



Hey Friends,

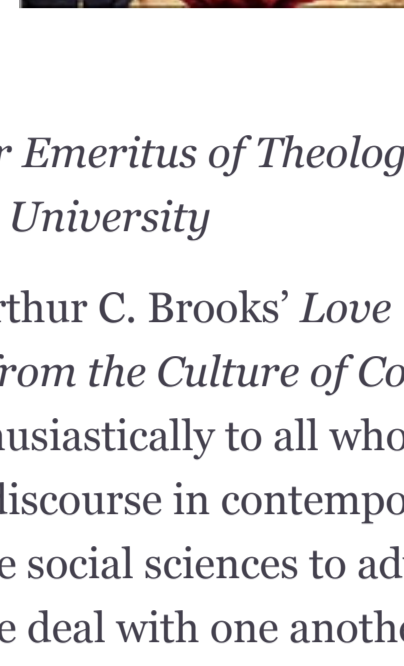
You get a lot of my reviews in *Footnotes*. Today you'll get some reviews from my trusted friends who work in religious and theological libraries. I love these people. They are the ones who believe in the Good Book, but also have a thing for 100,000 other good books they've been meaning to read. I think you'll love their recommendations.

Thanks as always for reading *Footnotes* and for the generous feedback you provide. Be sure to forward it to anyone in your circle who might appreciate the interviews, reviews, and links.

I hope you have a blessed Holy Week.



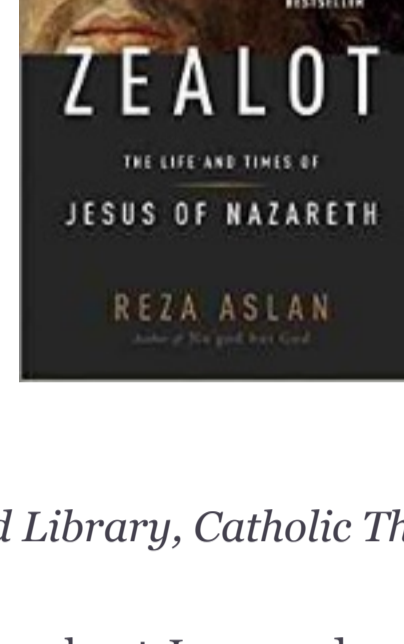
Spring Reading



M. Patrick Graham

Margaret A. Pitts Professor Emeritus of Theological Bibliography, Candler School of Theology, Emory University

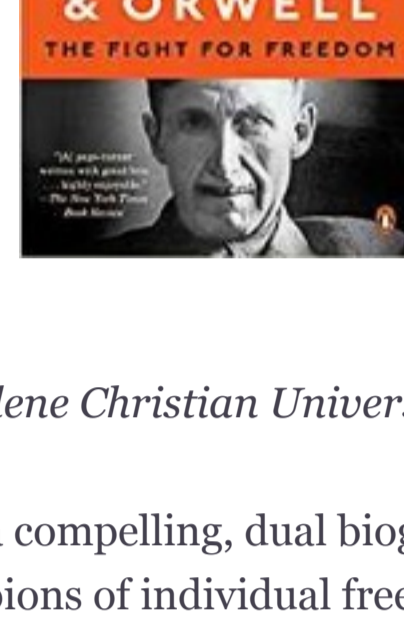
I've just finished reading Arthur C. Brooks' *Love Your Enemies: How Decent People Can Save America from the Culture of Contempt* (Harper Collins, 2019) and commend it enthusiastically to all who are concerned about the sad state of public and private discourse in contemporary life. The author draws on history and several of the social sciences to advance his thesis that the contempt with which people deal with one another in political, religious, and policy debates is poisonous and counterproductive for society. Far better for us to "love our enemies," treat all with respect and good will, and strive to broaden our circle of "friends" with whom we can argue vigorously and honestly, because we share the virtue of intending good for all (Aristotle's highest level of friendship).



Kris Veldheer

Director, The Paul Bechtold Library, Catholic Theological Union, Chicago

In trying to understand more about Jesus and early New Testament times, Aslan's book *Zealot* offers a very different perspective than previous accounts I had read. Aslan sifts through the myths and stories to offer a perspective on Jesus set against the turbulent times in which he lived. I found this book refreshing because I learned so much about the time period in which Jesus lived as well as more about the deeper meaning of Jesus' ministry. I highly recommend this book.



Craig Churchill

Theological Librarian, Abilene Christian University

Thomas Ricks has written a compelling, dual biography highlighting the contributions of two champions of individual freedom: Winston Churchill and George Orwell. At first glance, this might seem to be an odd coupling. For example, one would be hard-pressed to find two people whose views on imperialism differed more sharply than did Churchill and Orwell. Nonetheless, despite their considerable differences, Ricks views these two giants as "kindred spirits" united by their fierce opposition to tyranny. He concludes, "Together in the mid-twentieth century these two men led the way, politically and intellectually, in responding to the twin totalitarian threats of fascism and communism."

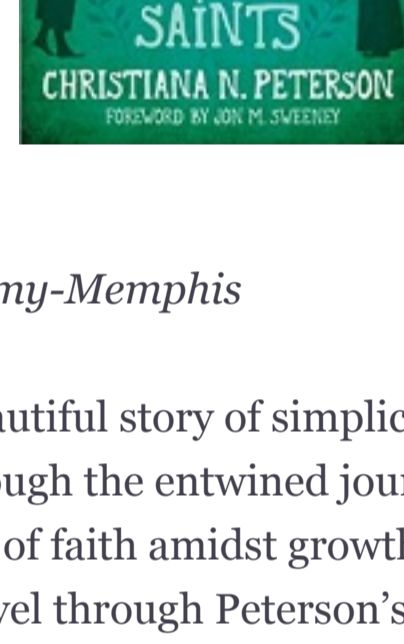
Are the impulses of authoritarianism and totalitarianism still alive today? Is the political right or the political left more vulnerable? What blinders, if any, might we have with respect to the dangers associated with extremes within our own ideological camps? These are the types of questions that came to my mind while reading Ricks's book.



Lisa Fuller

Student Success Librarian, Brackett Library, Harding University

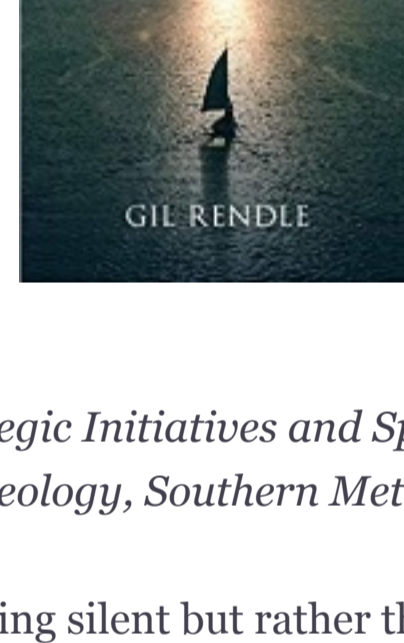
In this era of ever-increasing scrutiny of higher education, those of us in academic environments may question the value of our work. The youngest child of survivalist, isolationist parents, Tara Westover craved education in ways many of us cannot comprehend. Largely unschooled until her teens, Westover's home life was chaotic and she eventually saw that formal education was her only path to a different reality. Her memoir reminds us all of the role of education, not only for personal learning or growth, but also for the building of healthy communities and emotional growth.



Jessica Holland

Librarian, Harding Academy-Memphis

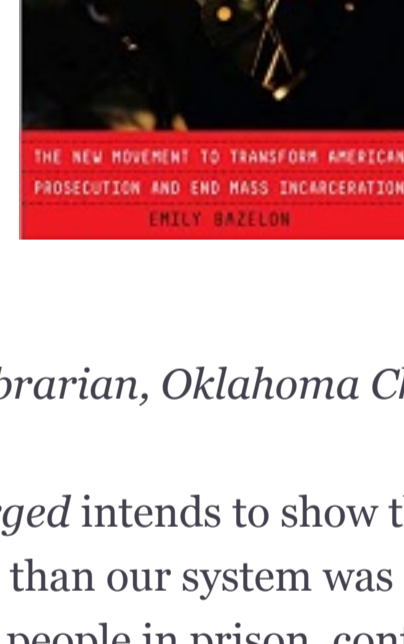
Mystics and Misfits is a beautiful story of simplicity, intentionality, and community that is told through the entwined journeys of the author and her saints. A wonderful picture of faith amidst growth, death, uncertainty, and anxiety is created as we travel through Peterson's narrative to a deeper understanding of the community that is ours through faith and the connections we have with those who have gone long before.



Andy Keck

Executive Director of Strategic Initiatives and Special Assistant to the Dean, Perkins School of Theology, Southern Methodist University

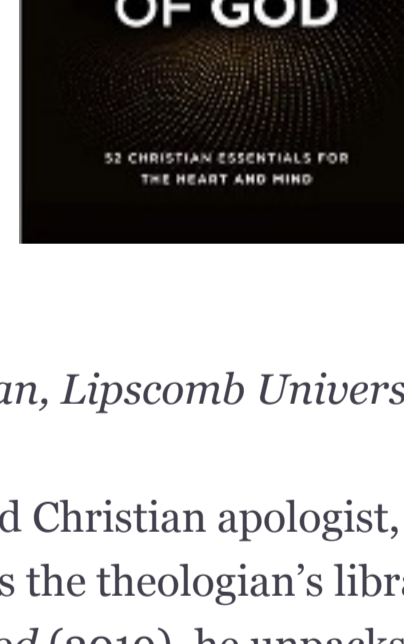
"Quiet" does not refer to being silent but rather the posture of careful listening – both vertically (via contemplative prayer) and horizontally (via listening to learn from others). "Courageous" does not mean operating out of fear but rather thinking deeply about intentional outcomes and missiological experiments. Throughout the book, Rendle helps the reader work through a changing set of assumptions about ministry, easy temptations for church leaders, and how to chart a new path in the wilderness.



Chris Rosser

Theological/Instruction Librarian, Oklahoma Christian University

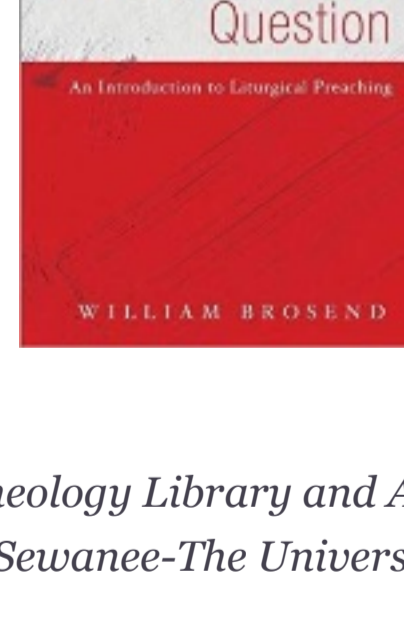
According to Bazelon, *Charged* intends to show that American prosecutors have "amassed more power than our system was designed for," and have "mostlly used it to put more people in prison, contributing to the scourge of mass incarceration, which continues to rip apart poor communities, especially if they are mostly black or brown, and long ago passed the level required for public safety" (xxix). Recently, Oklahoma Christian University hosted Bryan Stevenson (*Just Mercy*), and Bazelon's new book will be an important voice informing our campus conversations about power, politics, and mass incarceration in Oklahoma and in America. The author powerfully and provocatively explicates the problem of prosecutorial power; she also responds to the problem with practical recommendations for meaningful change ("Twenty-One Principles for Twenty-First-Century Prosecutors"). Those hopeful for reform and for a more mercy-infused justice system will discover in Bazelon's *Charged* generative ideas and good reason to maintain hope.



Elizabeth Rivera

Special Collections Librarian, Lipscomb University

Prolific author and seasoned Christian apologist, Ravi Zacharias continues to produce work that enhances the theologian's library. In Zacharias' most recent book *The Logic of God* (2019), he unpacks how and why God is still relevant in the 21st century. For the first time, Zacharias writes a 52 reading devotional that is digestible but still answers the core questions of the human heart.



Romulus Stefanut

Director of the School of Theology Library and Assistant Professor of Theological Bibliography, Sewanee-The University of the South

Rev. Dr. William Brosend of Sewanee, School of Theology, distilled in his latest book on preaching decades of experience in the art and science of homiletics. His main thesis is that an edifying sermon is driven by the symbiosis of two questions: the exegetical question and the homiletical question. The exegetical question unpacks the biblical text within its larger context, while the homiletical question contextualizes the message to address "[w]hat does the Holy Spirit want the people of God to hear from these texts on this occasion?". If you are looking at fresh ways to improve your preaching, I would highly recommend this book for your personal and congregational enrichment.



A Few More Footnotes

1. Wednesday I heard Michele Norris (formerly of NPR) speak at the Association of College and Research Librarians in Cleveland. I'm a huge fan of her work. She discussed her journey with [The Race Card Project](#). I'd love to see how you all could adapt this for your work in congregations. There is a lot of potential here, and it only requires six words.
2. [Bread for the World](#) reports that faith communities in the U.S. will cut back to pony up \$400,000 each over the next 10 years to offset the cuts to programs that feed the hungry. I need to talk to an economist about this. [Look for more](#) in a future issue.
3. [In Praise of Public Libraries](#). I love that she includes the note about Andrew Carnegie's commitment of what would amount to \$1.6 billion today. *Are you reading this, Jeff Bezos?*
4. Readers today are unlikely to confuse an adolescent with an armload of brushwood used for fences and hedges. [Mary Norris reports](#) on her trip to a conference for copy editors. The fee was probably a little steep for churches to send the editors of their Sunday bulletin, but I've seen a few that could use the help.



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UPCOMING
April 29
From Hymn Songs to Hillsong

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