

Suggested books for General Christianity

<u>Title/Author</u>	<u>Central themes/issues</u>
Theology: A Very Short Introduction by David Ford	An accessible introduction to the questions raised by and about religion, with a focus on Christianity Looks at the concept of God in ancient, modern, and postmodern contexts
Christian Theology: An Introduction by Alister McGrath	Alister McGrath's internationally-acclaimed <i>Christian Theology: An Introduction</i> is one of the most widely used textbooks in Christian theology. This is a more challenging read but McGrath does a great job of making difficult concepts seem more straight forward.
The New Lion Handbook of Christian Belief by Alister McGrath	An excellent 350 page introduction to classic Christian thinking/doctrine. This is detailed without being difficult to understand. It begins with a seven-page overview of Christian Church History Then we explore faith, including an introduction to the creeds, faith and philosophy, religious language, can God's existence be proved?, the place of tradition, interpreting the Bible, introduction to theology, modernity, postmodernity, and Islam. Next we have chapters on God, Jesus, Salvation, the Church, and the Christian Hope. At the end is a Concise Anthology of Christian Thought (actually 'church history' via some great Christian apologists and theologians, from Justin Martyr to Tillich, Moltmann and Pannenberg).
Christianity an introduction by Alister McGrath	Written for beginners to this subject, and assumes no knowledge of Christian beliefs or practices. Includes an introduction to biblical sources and discussion of the central figure of Jesus. Features comprehensive discussions of Christian theology, the history of Christianity from its origins to the present day, and Christianity in the modern world. Easy to understand
The Thiselton Companion to Christian Theology by Anthony Thiselton,	Covering everything from -Abba- to -Zwingli, - <i>The Thiselton Companion to Christian Theology</i> offers a comprehensive account of a wide sweep of topics and thinkers in Christian theology The entries comprise both short descriptive surveys and longer essays of original assessment on central theological topics -- such as atonement, Christology, God, and Holy Spirit -- and on such theologians as Aquinas, Augustine, Barth, Calvin, Kung, Luther, Moltmann, and Pannenberg. The book also includes a helpful time chart dating all of the theologians discussed and highlighting key events in Christian history; select reading suggestions conclude each of the longer entries.
Christianity: A Very Short Introduction By Linda Woodhead	Christianity addresses topics that other books neglect, for example the competition for power between different forms of Christianity, the churches' uses of power, and their struggles with modernity. Woodhead also considers the recent charismatic explosion of Christianity in Latin America, Africa, and the Far East. She concludes by showing the ways in which those who previously had the least power in Christianity--women and non-Europeans--have become increasingly central to its unfolding story.

The Puzzle of the Gospels by Peter Vardy	This work examines the four gospels: the dating, authorship and sources used; the contradictions between them; the links with the Old Testament; and how the biblical language should be interpreted. It also considers the parables, the sayings of Jesus and the major themes of the Gospels.
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General Christianity Suggested Websites

<u>Link</u>	<u>Description</u>
http://www.bibleodyssey.org/	Website of the Society of Biblical Literature
http://liberationtheology.org/books-videos/free-booksvideos/	A list of free electronic books and videos relating to liberation theology, with material potentially relevant to Themes 3 and 4.
https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC-ksG_f__1I4V2BGqWuamSw	YouTube channel for A Level Christianity

Christianity Theme 1 Suggested Books

<u>Title/Author</u>	<u>Central themes/issues</u>
The Birth of the Messiah: A Commentary on the Infancy Narratives in the Gospels of Matthew and Luke By R E Brown	A detailed commentary on the birth stories by this Roman Catholic scholar. Raymond Brown is interested in the role the infancy narratives played in the early Christian understanding of Jesus. By treating the two narratives together in the same volume, Brown points out their common tendencies and emphases. By giving them two distinct treatments, however, he also shows how each fits within the theological framework of its respective Gospel, and thus offers us reasons for the differences between the infancy narratives.
Kerygma and Myth: A Theological Debate by R Bultmann et al	A challenging read, Bultmann sets out his case for demythologisation and addresses his critics.
The Historical Jesus: The Life of a	<i>The Historical Jesus</i> reveals the true Jesus—who he was, what he did, what he said. It opens with "The Gospel of Jesus," Crossan's studied determination of Jesus' actual words and actions stripped of any subsequent additions and placed in a capsule account of his life

<p>Mediterranean Jewish Peasant by J D Crossan</p>	<p>story. The Jesus who emerges is a savvy and courageous Jewish Mediterranean peasant, a radical social revolutionary, with a rhapsodic vision of economic, political, and religious egalitarianism and a social program for creating it.</p>
<p>Jesus: A Revolutionary Biography by J D Crossan</p>	<p>John Dominic Crossan is widely regarded as the leading authority on the words and life of Jesus Christ. His classic national bestseller, Jesus, is a powerful and controversial portrait of a courageous revolutionary, philosopher, and political agitator who challenged the prevailing rules of the social order. Bold, moving, and provocative, a book that will affect every Christian reader deeply and profoundly, Jesus is a remarkable work that presents a very different view of a saviour and king of peace who proclaimed - in thought and action - that all may participate in the rule of God.</p>
<p>The Acts of the Apostles by L T Johnson</p>	<p>The Acts of the Apostles is the second volume in the two-part writing scholars call Luke-Acts. It continues the story begun in the Gospel of Luke, showing how the Good News offered by Jesus was eventually extended to the end of the earth, so that Gentiles as well as Jews came to share in the blessings of God.</p> <p>This commentary treats Luke-Acts as an apologetic history. It takes with equal seriousness Luke's literary artistry and his historical interests, fitting his methods comfortably within the ancient standards of historiography. This perspective illustrates in particular that Luke's historical narrative serves a definite religious intent. Tracing that intent through the specific contours of Luke's story is the special contribution of this commentary.</p>
<p>The Acts of the Apostles, by I H Marshall</p>	<p>Marshall's commentary on the Book of Acts is a contribution to the Tyndale New Testament Commentaries, a popular study aid designed to help the general Bible reader understand clearly what the text actually says and what it means without going into scholarly technicalities.</p>
<p>Revelation, Inspiration and Sacred Writings by P Manning</p>	<p>A small pamphlet rather than a book that is very easy to read, investigating the philosophical issues of revelation, inspiration, and sacred writings.</p>
<p>The Jesus Debate: Modern Historians Investigate the Life of Christ by M A Powell</p>	<p>Who was Jesus? What can we know about his life, his teachings and his personality? These are some of the questions considered in this book, along with a review of the early research into the historical Jesus, and the conclusions of major contributors to Jesus scholarship such as Robert Funk</p>
<p>The New Testament and the People of God by N T Wright</p>	<p>Part of a five-volume project on the theological questions surrounding the origins of Christianity, this book offers a reappraisal of literary, historical and theological readings of the New Testament, arguing for a form of "critical realism" that facilitates different readings of the text.</p>
<p>The Resurrection of the Son of God by N T Wright</p>	<p>Why did Christianity begin, and why did it take the shape it did? To answer this question which any historian must face, renowned New Testament scholar N.T. Wright focuses on the key points: what precisely happened at Easter? What did the early Christians mean when they said that Jesus of Nazareth had been raised from the dead? What can be said today about his belief?</p>

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http://catholic-resources.org/Bible/Jesus-Birth.htm	The Birth of Jesus: comparing the Gospel infancy narratives.
http://www.tektonics.org/af/birtnarr.php	"The Nativity Stories Harmonized" (note apologetic perspective).
http://www.religioustolerance.org/resurrec.htm	The Resurrection of Jesus Christ: Is it a fact or a religious myth?
http://ntwrightpage.com/Wright Bible Authoritative.htm	N. T. Wright post: "How can the Bible be authoritative?"
http://www.theopedia.com/authority-of-the-bible	Authority of the Bible (and links to further materials).
http://www.reonline.org.uk/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2013/07/The-Bible-and-the-Word-ofGod.pdf	RE Online article about the Bible as the "word of God"
http://www.gotquestions.org/canon-Bible.html	History of the Christian biblical canon (though note explicit Christian bias)
http://www.pbministries.org/Theology/Simmons/chapter03.htm	Information on different forms on inspiration including objective and subjective inspiration.
https://bible.org/seriespage/5-bible-inspired-revelation-god	Further information on 'inspiration' of the Bible
https://postbarthian.com/2012/10/15/the-apostolic-preaching-and-its-developments-by-c-h-dodd/	<u>Dodd and the Kerygmata.</u>

Christianity Theme 2 Suggested Books

<u>Title/Author</u>	<u>Central themes/issues</u>
<p style="text-align: center;">The Nature of the Atonement: Four Views By J Beilby & P.R Eddy</p>	<p>This book offers a "panel" discussion of four views of atonement maintained by four evangelical scholars. The proponents and their views are: Gregory A. Boyd: <i>Christus Victor</i> view Joel B. Green: Kaleidoscopic view Bruce R. Reichenbach: Healing view Thomas R. Schreiner: Penal Substitutionary view Following an introduction written by the editors, each participant first puts forth the case for their view. Each view is followed by responses from the other three participants, noting points of agreement as well as disagreement. This is a book that will help Christians understand the issues, grasp the differences and proceed toward a clearer articulation of their understanding of the atonement.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">The Trinity: How Not to Be a Heretic by S Bullivant</p>	<p>The central idea of this book is that, contrary to popular assumption, the Trinity is a very simple doctrine. It consists of just three short, deeply scriptural convictions: i) There is only one God; ii) Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are all God; and iii) Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are not the same. The Trinity: How Not to be a Heretic explains how the earliest Christians came to be convinced by each statement, why they matter, and how—slowly, over a period of several centuries—it found a way of saying all three at once. Its sole purpose is to help Christians of all kinds better understand the Trinity, so that they can then help others—Christians, non-Christians, and maybe even some not-yet-Christians—better understand it too</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Models of God: Theology for an Ecological, Nuclear Age by S McFague</p>	<p>In this award-winning text, theologian Sallie McFague challenges Christians' usual speech about God as a kind of monarch. She probes instead three other possible metaphors for God—as mother, lover, and friend.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">The Crucified God: The Cross of Christ as the Foundation and Criticism of Christian Theology By J Moltmann</p>	<p>Why, asks the author, turn to the theology of the cross after a theology of hope? Might this not seem to be a retreat into pietism? On the contrary, he argues, the theology of the cross is the other side of the theology of hope. His starting points shows how far he is from pietism. The book begins from a Christ crucified on political charges. Here Christians claim to see God. But what they see must have significance not just for theology, but for politics and social reform. This book takes the author into a re-examination of eschatology, a new approach to the doctrine of the Trinity, and above all into a new consideration of the practical concerns and possibilities for Christians today. The climax of his argument is formed by two chapters offering suggestions for the psychological and political liberation of man</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Paul and Palestinian Judaism: A Comparison of Patterns of Religion By E P Sanders</p>	<p><i>Paul and Palestinian Judaism</i> compares Judaism, understood on its own terms, with Paul, understood on his own terms. Sanders aims to: Consider methodologically how to compare two (or more) related but different religions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Destroy the view of Rabbinic Judaism which is still prevalent in much, perhaps most, New Testament scholarship • Establish a different view of Rabbinic Judaism • Argue a case concerning Palestinian Judaism as a whole • Argue for a certain understanding of Paul • Carry out a comparison of Paul and Palestinian Judaism

Theme 2 Christianity Suggested Websites

<u>Link</u>	<u>Description</u>
https://carm.org/what-is-the-trinity http://www.bbc.co.uk/religion/religions/christianity/beliefs/trinity_1.shtml	What is the trinity?
http://christiancadre.org/topics/trinity.html	Collection of (apologetic) articles on the Trinity, including its biblical basis.
http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/02055a.htm	Detailed New Advent encyclopaedia article on the atonement and its history.
https://carm.org/are-we-justified-faith-romans-or-works-james	Faith and Works: comparing arguments for justification through faith with arguments for justification through works
https://www.catholic.com/magazine/print-edition/we-can-work-it-out	Article on justification by faith and works
https://www.christianhistoryinstitute.org/magazine/article/dr-luthers-theology/	Martin Luther's theology (with a focus on justification).
https://ageofex.wordpress.com/2011/11/18/the-council-of-trent-and-their-relation-to-martin-luther/	Article on the Council of Trent (including responses to Luther).
http://www.christianity.com/church/church-history/timeline/1501-1600/the-roman-catholic-council-of-trent-on-justification-11629976.html	Another article on the Council of Trent (including responses to Luther).
https://www.huffingtonpost.com/pastor-gilford-t-monrose/role-of-the-church_b_1896969.html	"The Role and Importance of the Church in Community"
https://www.gci.org/disc/23-functions	"Six Functions of the Church" (note explicit Christian perspective).

Christianity Theme 3 Suggested Books

<u>Title/Author</u>	<u>Central themes/issues</u>
<p>Christians in an Age of Wealth: A Biblical Theology of Stewardship by C Blomberg</p>	<p>In this book, Craig Blomberg addresses the tough questions about the place and purpose of wealth and material possessions in a Christian's life. He points to the goodness of wealth, as God originally designed it, but also surveys the Bible's many warnings against making an idol out of money.</p> <p>So are material possessions a blessing for which we should long? And what are the dangers that the use or abuse of material possessions can produce?</p>
<p>Beyond God the Father: Toward a Philosophy of Women's Liberation, By M Daly</p>	<p>The foundation of <i>Beyond God the Father</i> is the argument that Christianity is an entirely patriarchal institution. Among the more prominent arguments in the book, Daly focuses a great deal of attention on the language of Christianity, particularly the ways in which it celebrates men. For example, Daly offers a compelling argument that God is constructed using almost entirely masculine language. This, according to Daly, is problematic because, "...if God is male, then the male is God."</p>
<p>The God Delusion By R Dawkins</p>	<p><i>The God Delusion</i> caused a sensation when it was published in 2006. Within weeks it became the most hotly debated topic, with Dawkins himself branded as either saint or sinner for presenting his hard-hitting, impassioned rebuttal of religion of all types.</p> <p>Dawkins attacks God in all his forms. He eviscerates the major arguments for religion and demonstrates the supreme improbability of a supreme being. He shows how religion fuels war, foments bigotry and abuses children.</p>
<p>The Blind Watchmaker By R Dawkins</p>	<p>The watchmaker belongs to the eighteenth-century theologian William Paley, who made one of the most famous creationist arguments. It was Charles Darwin's brilliant discovery that put the lie to these arguments. But only Richard Dawkins could have written this eloquent riposte to the creationists. Natural selection - the unconscious, automatic, blind, yet essentially non-random process that Darwin discovered - has no purpose in mind. If it can be said to play the role of watchmaker in nature, it is the blind watchmaker. Acclaimed as perhaps the most influential work on evolution written in this century, <i>The Blind Watchmaker</i> offers an engaging and accessible introduction to one of the most important scientific discoveries of all time.</p>
<p>God Has Many Names By J Hick</p>	<p>A major revolution in thinking about religion is called for in this challenging work by theologian and religious philosopher John Hick. The author persuasively argues for a true religious pluralism, respectful of the non-Christian traditions that have persisted over time--Hinduism, Buddhism, Judaism, and Islam.</p>
<p>The Rainbow of Faiths: Critical Dialogues on Religious Pluralism, By J Hick</p>	<p>John Hick has long argued that the widespread realization that Christianity is only one among several great world religions calls for a need to rethink Christian doctrine. He himself see the great world faiths as very different and (so far as we can tell) equally valid ways of conceiving, experiencing and responding in life to ultimate reality that we call God, The rainbow, as the sun's light refracted by the earth's atmosphere into a glorious spectrum of colours, is a metaphor for the refraction of the divine Light by human religious cultures.</p>

<p>The Dawkins Delusion? Atheist Fundamentalism and the Denial of the Divine By A McGrath</p>	<p>World-renowned scientist Richard Dawkins writes in The God Delusion: 'If this book works as I intend, religious readers who open it will be atheists when they put it down'. Alister McGrath is ideally placed to evaluate Dawkins' ideas. Once an atheist himself, he gained a doctorate in molecular biophysics before going on to become a leading Christian theologian. He wonders how two people, who have reflected at length on substantially the same world, could possibly have come to such different conclusions about God. McGrath subjects Dawkins' critique of faith to rigorous scrutiny. His exhilarating, meticulously argued response deals with questions such as: Is faith intellectual nonsense? Are science and religion locked in a battle to the death? Can the roots of Christianity be explained away scientifically? Is Christianity simply a force for evil? This book will be warmly received by those looking for a reliable assessment of The God Delusion and the many questions it raises - including, above all, the relevance of faith and the quest for meaning.</p>
<p>Sexism and God-talk: Toward a Feminist Theology: with a New Introduction By R R Reuther</p>	<p>How did a religion whose founding proponents advocated a shocking disregard of earthly ties come to extol the virtues of the "traditional" family? In this richly textured history of the relationship between Christianity and the family Rosemary Radford Reuther traces the development of these centrepieces of modern life to reveal the misconceptions at the heart of the "family values" debate.</p>

Theme 3 Christianity – Suggested Websites

<u>Link</u>	<u>Description</u>
<p>http://www.rapidnet.com/~jbeard/bdm/Psychology/char/more/w-f.htm</p>	<p>An article explaining and denouncing the World Faith movement.</p>
<p>http://liberationtheology.org/people-organizations/rosemary-radford-ruether/</p>	<p>Information on Rosemary Radford</p>
<p>http://liberationtheology.org/people-organizations/mary-daly</p>	<p>Information on Mary Daly</p>
<p>http://www.reonline.org.uk/westminster-faith-debates-is-it-right-for-religions-to-treat-menand-women-differently/</p>	<p>Westminster Faith Debates: Is it right for religions to treat men and women differently?</p>
<p>https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/religion/11724826/Immigration-reviving-Christianity-in-Britain-Cardinal.html</p>	<p>Immigration reviving Christianity in Britain</p>

http://www.independent.co.uk/voices/comment/christianity-isn-t-dead-it-has-just-become-more-diverse-a6940081.html	Christianity isn't dead – it has just become more diverse” (article on migration and secularisation)
http://www.reonline.org.uk/westminster-faith-debates-religion-in-public-life/	Westminster Faith Debates: Religion in Public Life?”
http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/magazine-27111146	Eight arguments about whether the UK is a Christian country”.
http://www.wesley.cam.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/10/06-da-silva.pdf	Reverse mission in the Western context
http://www.christiantoday.com/article/	How reverse missionaries built the UK's fastest-growing church.
http://www.rejesus.co.uk/site/module/faith_v_science/P6/	Professor Alister McGrath – Faith v Science.
http://www.philosopherkings.co.uk/Rahner.html	Information on Karl Rahner
http://www.issuesetcarchive.org/issues_site/resource/archives/anonchrs.htm	What is the Catholic teaching of "Anonymous Christianity"?

Christianity Theme 4 Suggested Books

<u>Title/Author</u>	<u>Central themes/issues</u>
Eucharist: Symbol of Transformation by W Crockett	Doctor Crockett traces the evolution of Eucharistic traditions - traditions which reflect the cultural diversity characteristic of the regions in which they were produced - and compares them to our Eucharistic celebrations today, exploring as well the relationship between Eucharist and justice.
Reformation and Modern Rituals and Theologies of Baptism: From Luther to	Spinks traces developments through the Reformation, liturgies in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, and explores important new ecumenical perspectives on developments of twentieth-century sacramental discussion. Present practices of Baptist, Amish, as well as Methodist, Roman Catholic, Lutheran, Reformed and Anglican denominations are also examined

Contemporary Practices, By B Spinks	
Baptism: Three Views By D F Wright	The Christian church confesses "one baptism." But the church's answers to how, whom and when to baptize, and even what it means or does, are famously varied. This book provides a forum for thoughtful proponents of three principal evangelical views to state their case, respond to the others, and then provide a summary response and statement. Sinclair Ferguson sets out the case for infant baptism, Bruce Ware presents the case for believers' baptism, and Anthony Lane argues for a mixed practice. As with any good conversation on a controversial topic, this book raises critical issues, challenges preconceptions and discloses the soft points in each view.
Introducing Liberation Theology By L Boff	This work deals with the basic questions that are tackled by liberation theology - oppression, violence, domination and marginalization. It then goes on to show how the Christian faith can be used as an agent in promoting social and individual liberation, and how faith and politics relate
A Theology of Liberation By G Gutiérrez	The seminal text of the movement which was later characterized as liberation theology. This powerful, compassionate and radical book attracted criticism for mixing politics with religion, but was also welcomed as the option for the poor, placing the exploited and the economically downtrodden at the centre of a programme to redeem God's people from bondage.
2000 Years Of Charismatic Christianity: A 21st Century Look at Church History from a Pentecostal/Charismatic Perspective By E L Hyatt	2000 Years of Charismatic Christianity offers convincing evidence that the modern Pentecostal and Charismatic movements are rooted in the two-thousand-year history of the church. Those who identify with these movements will be affirmed in the experience of the Holy Spirit and will gain a new respect and appreciation for the movement of which they are a part. Those outside the Pentecostal and Charismatic movements will also benefit by reading this volume in that they will gain an understanding of this movement that Harvard professor Dr. Harvey Cox says is "reshaping religion in the 21st century.
Gustavo Gutiérrez: Essential Writings Ed by J B Nickoloff,	James Nickoloff draws from Gutierrez's many published books and translates some pieces for the first time. Arranged both thematically and chronologically, the Selected Texts highlight not only the revolutionary import of Gutierrez's theology but also his deep and searching spirituality, his bold view of the church, and his personal challenge to the reader to engage the world's injustices directly. Nickoloff's expert Introduction explains the development of Gutierrez's ideas and sheds new light on the Latin American, especially Peruvian, context of his thought.

Theme 4 Christianity Suggested Websites

<u>Link</u>	<u>Description</u>
http://www.religioustolerance.org/chr_bapt1.htm	An overview of Christian Baptism.

http://www.cleo.net.uk/resources/displayframe.php?src=425/consultants_resources/religiouseduc/stSbapt/stStephen.html	Video of infant baptism service.
http://www.cleo.net.uk/resources/displayframe.php?src=238/consultants_resources/re/allB/OpenHere.html	Video of Church of England adult immersion baptism (believer's baptism).
http://www.religioustolerance.org/chrcomm.htm	Information on the Eucharist.
http://www.goarch.org/ourfaith/ourfaith7070	The Calendar of the Orthodox Church.
http://usa.greekreporter.com/2015/04/05/why-orthodox-christian-easter-is-later-than-the-catholic-one/	News reports on Eastern Orthodox Christmas and Greek Orthodox Easter.
http://liberationtheology.org/people-organizations/leonardo-boff/	Information on Leonardo Boff
http://liberationtheology.org/people-organizations/gustavo-gutierrez/	Information on Gustavo Gutiérrez.
https://www.oikoumene.org/en/	World Council of Churches website.
http://www.gotquestions.org/Charismatic-movement.html	What is the Charismatic movement?" (though note anti-Charismatic bias of the article