

BRING THE BOOKS



Christian Chen

Bring the books

A guide to Christian Classics by Christian Chen

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Detta häfte är en sammanslagning av två verk, först en predikoserie av Christian Chen vid en konferens år 1987 i Iberité, Brasilien, samt en lista med kristna klassiker utgiven av Living Word Publication. Tanken med häftet är att det ska vara till hjälp att hitta bra litteratur för att fördjupa sig i Ordet. Många av författarna finns översatta till svenska. De titlar som finns översatta till svenska har vi angett i en separat kolumn. Det finns en mer utförlig boklista med Christian Chens kommentarer på engelska som vi har glädjen att publicera som e-bok. Denna finns att hämta på www.Boasaker.nu. Boklistan är publicerad med förlagets godkännande och får gärna distribueras men inte säljas.

Christian Glamheden, februari 2023.

INTRODUCTION

2 Tim 4:13 When you come bring the cloak which I left at Troas with Carpus, and the books, especially the parchments.

Having mentioned many important things in his letter, Paul asked Timothy to bring the books, especially the parchments. We understand from this portion of the scriptures that Paul not only loved the people that studied the word of the Lord, but also read many books about the Word of God. Probably he had many books on philosophy and many other subjects.

BEYOND THE OLD TESTAMENT

As Christians, we should not only learn how to study the Bible, but also enrich ourselves through other books. Usually, we study the Bible very fast and don't notice certain aspects. For example, did you know that the first record about literature in the Bible is found in the following verse: "Then the Lord said to Moses, 'Write this in a book as a memorial and recite it to Joshua, that I will utterly blot out the memory of Amalek from under heaven'" (Exodus 17:14)?

In this portion we see that God commanded Moses to write something as a memorial in a book and to recite it to Joshua, who represents the second generation, a young generation. It dealt with something important not only for Moses, but also for a younger generation. The reason was "that I will utterly blot out the memory of Amalek from under the heaven." Since Amalek represents the flesh, that book was not only for Joshua, but also for us.

Amalek was the first enemy that the people of Israel faced in the desert. The Amalekites didn't attack Israel from the front, but from behind (see Deuteronomy 25:18). The Israelites had placed the children and the women at their rear, the very weakest of them, and from there came the Amalekites. It is in this way the flesh attacks us. Many times, we are prepared to confront the flesh, but it always attacks us from behind. He never calls us and does not even warn us that he is ready to attack us.

We know that David fell terribly when he was at the prime of his life. Because of such lessons, God desires that the Book is passed from the first generation to the second and in the same

manner to the third generation, and so on, so that all the children of God may learn that lesson. God also desires that His children study other books. In the first generation, some of the brothers studied the Bible, found some methods, and discovered some laws of interpretation. From that moment they wrote books in the second century, in the third century, until the present century; hence, we find many and many books.

We should say as Paul, “Bring the books,” because these books are important for us. The Bible itself mentions that there are many other books besides “the books of books.” Look, here are some examples: “Therefore it is said in the Book of the Wars of the LORD” (Numbers 21:14). Here is mentioned the “book of wars,” which does not pertain to the Bible and is neither found there, but it is an important book. “So the sun stood still and the moon stopped, until the nation avenged themselves of their enemies. Is it not written in the book of Jashar? And the sun stopped in the middle of the sky and did not hasten to go down for about a whole day. (Joshua 10:13) The book of Jashar (righteous) is not a book of the Bible. In 2 Samuel, this book is also mentioned.

Thus, we discover that there are books about war, about science, about poems, but we know they are not books of the Bible. “Now the rest of the acts of Salomon and whatever he did, and his wisdom, are they not written in the book of the acts of Solomon?” (I Kings 11:41). Here is mentioned a book about the history of Solomon that also is not part of the bible. Three other examples are 2 Chronicles 9:29, 12:15, and 20:34. In these Bible verses, books are referred to with equivalence to books about spiritual themes of our present time. They are very useful, but they are not inspired and can never replace the “Book of books,” nor take the unique position of the Bible.

BOOKS AND MORE BOOKS

In this work, there’s a list of Christian books that is very useful for the study of the Word of God. This list should be understood correctly and used carefully. For example, in the book *The Cost of Discipleship* written by Dietrich Bonhoeffer the author offers much help, despite maintaining many opinions that I, personally, do not agree with. Thus, we see that these books can never occupy the position that the Word of God occupy. They do not have and can neither have the authority of the Bible. In fact, they help greatly but should be read carefully. For this reason, we need some warnings, not concerning the author but the content.

A TREASURY OF BOOKS

“Then King Darius issued a decree, and search was made in the archives, where the treasures were stored in Babylon” (Ezra 6:1). In Hebrew, it’s written, “where the treasures and the documents were stored” – in other words, the place where the king usually stored his treasures. The Bible says it was a treasury of books. We can also use this word to describe how rich the books are that God has granted His church since the first century. There are books and books centered on just two things: a Man and a Book. These are the books we should read, because we know we are interested in a Man, our Lord Jesus Christ, and a Book, the Bible. We should never forget that our Lord is the “Word incarnated” and the Bible is the “written word of God.” Throughout 20 centuries, many books have been treasured, that aid us to know better the “incarnated Word of God” and the “written word of God.”

There is a book published with statistics from the 18th century, with a list of all the books written from the first century until 1732 that deals with the Bible. It is 12.000 volumes written by 3.600 authors about the “book of books”! We know that Shakespeare wrote many books, and Confucius also wrote books, but I am referring to books about “the Book.” Remember, however, we

didn't have the printing press until recently, and because of limited circulation, part of the writings about the Bible have disappeared.

Let me give you one example. There was a great man of God in church history called Origen Adamantius (c. 185-254). He was a great scholar. He loved the Lord and studied the Bible every evening. At night he dared not to sleep in his bed because the Lord said, "the foxes have holes, and the bird of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay His head" (Matthew 8:19). Since he wanted to follow the Lord strictly, even if he had a bed, he slept on the floor. This man may not be a good example for us to follow, but he loved the Lord.

Origen refused all the gifts from brothers and sisters, since he didn't want money from the brothers. He was so rich in the Lord! One day, a converted millionaire that loved this brother and knew that he didn't want money sent him a great number of secretaries (I don't remember the number but there were many). He was rich in the Word and needed some secretaries to do the copying. Now that gift the brother accepted! From that time on he wrote many books, more than 6000 books according to history, with the help of the secretaries. This is not an easy thing, but sadly, most of his writings disappeared. The Lord not only gave us brother Origenes but also gave us others who wrote many and many books, which, unfortunately, also disappeared.

Therefore, there is, in fact, a treasury of books, and we can even have a list with 12.000 books. But could we possibly read all of them? I know brothers that love to buy books, but if we ask them how many they have read, what would be the answer? I don't even mean the whole book, but how many of the books they have read at least one page? Soon you will discover that there is not much time to read the books in your library.

In addition to the books written about the "Book of books," there are approximately 80.000 books listed, in 1963, about the Lord Jesus, only in English. This number, per se, is a testimony of the uniqueness of our Lord, because it is incomparable with the number of books written about Confucius, Socrates, Shakespeare, or Einstein.

It is impossible to know how many books have been written about the Bible and about the Lord, in all languages, including the ones that have not been listed. Do you know what this tells us? It tells us how rich the Body of Christ is. All the richness and treasures are in the Head and Christ is the Head of the Body. He is the Head of the Church, and in Him dwell the unsearchable riches of Christ. That's why the apostle John said that if everything that the Lord did on earth were to be described, even the world itself would not contain the books that would be written. How much the Lord has been working! If we want to know the riches of the Head of this Body, then we have to discover how that richness was communicated to the Body, throughout twenty centuries.

The Lord, the universal man, deposited His riches in His Body, which is the Church. Some say: I only want my Lord, I only study the Bible, I want the Holy Spirit to interpret everything for me, I learn alone before my Lord. That's wonderful brothers, but such persons are only individual members of the Body of Christ. However, the Lord deposited all His riches in His Body, from the first century to the present. He who is wise enough will study not only the Bible but also other books. In this way, it's possible to benefit from riches the Lord has deposited in the Body throughout history.

Let me give you one example. Do you know how many chapters there are in Paul's letter to the Romans? Sixteen chapters, contained in around seventeen pages. We can read this book in one hour. There is an excellent commentary on this book in which we can learn much about Romans. This book has 4.000 pages full of riches. But how is it possible to read these 4.000 pages?

The Bible has about 1.280 pages, that is, one third of that commentary on Romans. A person with normal reading speed can read the whole Bible, from Genesis to Revelation, without eating or drinking, in 60 hours. It was Campbell Morgan who gave us this information (I believe he did it himself). Thus, a person who can read the Bible in 60 hours would also be able to read that book with 4.000 pages in two or three times the time. But how many hours did it take for the author to write that book? Some of the authors wrote only one book during all their lifetimes because they had not time for more. They used all their effort to write only one book. I tell you, that book must be a wonderful one!

GOOD BOOKS AND OTHERS THAT ARE NOT AS GOOD

A commentary on the whole Bible, written by one author, is probably not a good book, for one author alone does not have the capacity to write about everything, from Genesis to Revelation.

The Bible has 66 books. How can one man exhaust the whole Bible if each book costs us a lifetime to study? That's why we must be very careful when choosing commentaries. It's better to buy a book that cover one of the books of the Bible, or only one chapter. There is a thick book on Psalm 119, and another also thick book on our Lords priestly prayer in John 17. These books are very good, and many hours were used to write them, even if they only cover one chapter.

Our purpose here is to talk about good books. Let's remember that many authors spent all their lifetime to write only one book, and they did lot of research, very concentrated and accurate. If you spend time to read one book each week, you will read 52 books in one year. More importantly, the riches deposited in these books will flow through you and become yours.

Brother Watchman Nee (1903-1972) had an interesting habit. When the Lord gave him some money, he spent one third to buy books. One reason for the riches he had of the Word is because of the great number of books he read. In fact, in his library, he had more than 3.000 books, many worn out. His room was like a bookstore. There was no place to sit on his bed; it was always filled with books. His bed was like a runway for airplanes, with one book next to another. At night, brother Nee slept among all these books, making it easy for him to pick one up to read.

He not only studied the Bible but was also "standing on the shoulders of giants." It's similar to children going to a parade. They can't see much if they aren't on the shoulders of their parents. From that position they can see farther. We thank the Lord for the life of brother Nee. He was not only a man of the Word and a man of the Cross, but also a man of books.

If you, for example, want to study the book of Exodus, you will need some help. If you go to a library, you will find many good books, and many that aren't as good. I have the sad experience of not finding any good books about a certain topic, in a Christian library. In a good evangelical library, you might find 10 books about Judges, but probably only two of them would be helpful.

Generally speaking, we don't get much help from "modernists." Many times, I ask myself: If they don't believe that the Bible is the Word of God, why are they wasting their time in writing those books, when they only speculate if a part of the Bible is genuine or not?

Once I read an interesting article written by a rabbi. He wanted to prove that the "Sermon on the Mount" was not the original words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and that everything had already been said. I discovered this article in one of the best Christian libraries that I know. At the University of Princeton, there's a very famous theological school with many scholars. They have

written many books, but if an unmaturing Christian reads them, he soon will have problems. In his mind he gradually will be confused, and he will lose faith. Really, this big risk exists. Moreover, since our time and resources are limited, we can't afford to read but good books.

I want to close this section with an example from the books on Christian life. Keswick is a small village with two lakes, located at the boundary between England and Scotland. Every year, during the second week of July, they had a conference there called the Keswick Conference. Brothers and sisters from all over the world attend this conference, hosted in big tents. Someone told me that approximately ten thousand people every year used to be gathered there. All the families at Keswick opened their households as if they were hotels to receive the brothers from all the world. It started in 1875. One of the characteristics of this conference during the first decades was that the messages given were very strong.

Every year, different people receive the Nobel prize in some scientific fields. There is no such prize which acknowledges spirituality and biblical knowledge. However, for many years, especially in the beginning of the history of the conference, an invitation to speak at Keswick was equal to winning the Nobel prize in the Christian world. Among the brothers and sisters who ministered at this conference we find names as the following: James Hudson Taylor (1832-1905), Jessie Penn-Lewis (1861-1927), Arthur Tappan Pierson (1837-1911), Bishop Handley Carr Glyn Moule (1841-1920), and Theodore Austin-Sparks (1888-1971). Many wonderful people wrote many wonderful books, especially on different aspects of the Christian life. Maybe you don't have time to read all the books, but read at least one of each by these great men of God. In this case, start with the book that represents the author, the cream of his ministry. Additionally, try to not only read but also memorize the riches you find there. In this way we discover how rich the Body of Christ is.

TWO SUGGESTIONS OF STUDY

We know books can be put into different categories: some on Bible study, some about Christian life, some about church history, and some that can help us in gospel preaching. For practical reasons, we will concentrate on only one category of books: books for Bible study. We will introduce some important books on how to study the Bible. Bible study can be done at an advanced level or an elementary level. Let's start with the elementary level.

Suppose that you decide to study the Bible in a systematic way. The Bible has 66 books, but where should you start? I suggest you concentrate on the first five books of the Old Testament and then on the first five books of the New Testament. These ten books are fundamentals. Spend some time to study these ten books, and it will be much easier to study other books.

After 60 years of Bible study, George Campbell Morgan (1863-1945) shared his testimony: for seven years, he read from Genesis to Revelation, each book seriously but not too deep. His way of Bible study was telescopic, not in microscopic. He said that during those seven years, he had the habit to read every book at least 50 times, before taking notes on what he had read.

An interesting fact is that Campbell Morgan never received a formal training in a Bible school. For reasons of health, he could not attend college. However, he was considered by both Christians and scholars as the "the man of the Word" and "the prince of expositors."

The contribution of Campbell Morgan's writings is that we always receive a solid foundation. His books are not too deep, but very fundamental and a very solid. If you find any book by Campbell Morgan, buy it!

Maybe you won't be able to study the Bible as Campbell Morgan. In that case, I suggest you to study, at least, these ten books and in the following order: begin with Matthew. Before doing any research, read this gospel at least ten times. Next, read the book of Matthew side by side with a commentary about Mathew, for example, Campbell Morgan's book on Mathew. If the author dwells on a certain thing considerably, do the same and concentrate on that point.

When reading Mathew, do it in a sitting. Don't read two chapters a day but set aside, for example, an evening to read chapter one all the way to chapter 28. When reading, try to memorize as much as possible. It's enough to memorize the facts; you don't need to memorize the verses. When you have finished the book of Mathew, begin with the book of Genesis, in the same way as you did with Mathew. The following order is John, Exodus, Mark, Numbers, Luke, Leviticus, Acts, and Deuteronomy. After this phase, you will have a reasonable knowledge of these ten books. This means you have a common sense of the Bible.

For those who only want to read the Holy Scriptures, I suggest a study about the feet of our Lord Jesus. The first thing to do is to check a good concordance for all the verses that speak of the word "foot" and then select only the ones with reference to the feet of our Lord Jesus. Then you will discover what person and how many people came to the feet of Jesus, and also what happened to them. From this study, you can learn many precious spiritual lessons. Many brothers and sisters in China did such a study. It is simple but very beautiful.

When you have finished this study in the New Testament, go to the Old Testament. You might ask: Wait a minute, how can I find anything about the feet of Jesus in the Old Testament? Remember, Ruth slept at the feet of Boaz. Study that. Additionally, when people bowed before God, they were at His feet. The Bible says that the Ark was at the feet of God. His throne is in the heavens, but He extends His presence to the earth. When you go to the Holy of Holies, it means you are going at the feet of our Lord. This is one topic, and you will find others in the Bible.

When you study the New and Old Testament in this way, at the feet of our Lord, I tell you, you won't need to consult the writings of Madam Guyon. If you study the Bible well, you will learn how to live before the Lord. Only by studying the Word and being in fellowship with Him will we find the mines of gold. Moreover, you should not only study your Bible but also instruct and help others to learn and live at the feet of Jesus.

101 CHOICE BOOKS

Bible study

1.	Alford, Dean Henry	The Greek Testament	
2.	Anderson, Robert	The Coming Prince	
3.	Archer, G. L.	Encyclopedia of Bible Difficulties	
4.	Arnot, William	Studies in Proverbs	
5.	Baron, David	The Visions and Prophecies of Zechariah	
6.	Bellett, J. G.	The Moral Glory of the Lord Jesus	
7.	Bengel, John Albert	Gnomon of the New Testament	Bönesuckar till nya testamentet
8.	Bruce, A. B.	The Training of the Twelve	
9.	Bullinger, E. W.	Number in Scripture	

10.	Coates, C. A.	An Outline of Deuteronomy	Betragtninger over den Femte Mosebok
11.	Conybeare, W. J. Howson, J.S	The Life and Epistles of St. Paul	
12.	Darby, J.N.	Synopsis of the Bible	
13.	Edersheim, Alfred	The Temple	
14.	Edersheim, Alfred	Old Testament History	Den heliga historien
15.	Edersheim, Alfred	The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah	
16.	Govert, Robert	Lectures on the Apocalypse	
17.	Grant, F.W.	The Numerical Bible	
18.	Hengstenberg, E. W.	The Christology of the Old Testament	
19.	Hislop, A.	The Two Babylons	
20.	Ironside, H. A.	Notes on the books of Ezra, Nehemiah, and Esther	
21.	Kaung, Stephen	The Splendor of His Ways	
22.	Krummacher, F. W.	The Suffering Saviour	Den lidande Kristus
23.	Lang, G.H.	Pictures and Parables	
24.	Lang, G. H.	The Histories & Prophecies of Daniel	
25.	Lightfoot, J. B.	Galatians	
26.	Lightfoot, J. B.	Colossians and Philemon	
27.	Lightfoot, J. B.	A Revised Text on Philipians with Note	
28.	Lloyd - Jones, Martin	Studies in the Sermon on the Mount	
29.	Lloyd-Jones, Martin	Ephesians (5 vols.)	
30.	Mackintosh, C. H.	Notes on the Pentateuch	1-5 Mosebok, Bibelstudier
31.	Mauro, Philip	Ruth: The Satisfied Stranger	
32.	Moldenke, Harold N.	The Plants of the Bible	
33.	Morgan, G. C.	Gospel on Luke	
34.	Morgan, G. C.	Crises of the Christ	
35.	Morgan, G. C.	Studies in II Timothy	
36.	Murray, Andrew	The Holiest of All	
37.	Nee, W.	Interpreting Matthew	
38.	Nee, W.	Ye Search the Scriptures	
39.	Nee, W.	Song of Songs	Sångernas sång
40.	Nicholson, W.R.	Oneness with Christ	
41.	Orr, James	International Standard Bible Encyclopedia	
42.	Payne, J.B.	Encyclopedia of Biblical Prophecy	
43.	Pember, G.H.	Earth's Earliest Ages	
44.	Pember, G.H.	Pember on Prophecies	
45.	Robertson, A. T.	Word Picture in the New Testament	
46.	Scroggie, W.G.	A Guide to Gospels	
47.	Scroggie, W.G.	Know Your Bible	
48.	Scroggie, W.G.	The Unfolding Drama of Redemption	
49.	Seiss, J.A.	The Apocalypse	
50.	Smith, George Adam	Atlas of the Historical Geography of the Holy Land	
51.	Smith, William	Smith's Dictionary of the Bible	
52.	Spurgeon, C.H.	The Treasury of David	David's skattkammare
53.	Stalker, James	The Trial and Death of Jesus	Passionsbetraktelser

54.	Thomas, W. H. G.	Genesis: A Devotional Commentary	
55.	Unger, M.F.	Unger's Bible	
56.	Urquart, John	The Wonders of Prophecy	
57	Westcott, B.F.	The Epistles of John with Notes & Essays	
58.	Westcott, B.F.	The Gospel according to St. John	
59.	Whyte, Alexander	Bible Characters	
60.	Wieand, Albert C.	The Harmony of the Gospels	
61.	Young	Youngs Concordance	

Christian Faith

62.	Ladd, George	The Gospel of the Kingdom	
63.	Morrison, Frank	Who Move the Stone	
64.	Packer, J.I.	Knowing God	Lär känna Gud
65.	Peters, N. H..	The Theocratic Kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ	
66.	Sanders, J. O.	The Incomparable Christ	
67.	Sauer, Erich	The Triumph of the Crucified	Den korsfästes triumf
68.	Smedes, Lewis	Union with Christ	

Christian Life

69.	Austin - Spark, T	Centrality and Universality of Cross	
70.	Bonhoeffer, Dietrich	The Cost of Discipleship	Efterföljelse
71.	Bounds, E.M.	Power through Prayer	Bönetjänsten
72.	Christian, Unknown	How to Live Victorious Life	
73.	Guyon, Madame	Autobiography	
74.	Hopkins, Evan Henry	The Law of Liberty in the Spirit	
75.	Huegel, F.J.	Bone of His Bone	
76.	Kempis, Thomas A.	The imitation of Christ	Om Kristi efterföljelse
77.	Law, William	A Serious Call to Devout and Holy Life	En innerlig maning till ett liv i fromhet
78.	Lawson, James G.	Deeper Experiences of Famous Christian	
79.	Macmillam, Hugh	The True Vine	
80.	Mantle, J. G.	Beyond Humiliation	
81.	Mcintyre, D. M.	The Hidden Life of Prayer	
82.	Meyer, F.B.	The Christ Life for the Self Life	
83.	Murray, Andrew	How to Raise Your Children for Christ	
84.	Murray, Andrew	Humility	
85.	Murray, Andrew	The Spirit of Christ	
86.	Nee, W.	The Ministry of God's word	
87.	Nee, W.	Normal Christian Life	Ett rikt kristet liv
88.	Nee, W.	The Spiritual Man	
89.	Paxon, Ruth	Life on the Highest Plane	
90.	Penn-Lewis, Jessie	The Message of the Cross	
91.	Rutherford, Samuel	The Letters of Samuel Rutherford	
92.	Smith, Hannah W.	The Christian Secret of a Happy Life	
93.	Tauler, Johann	The Sermons	

94.	Tozer, A. W.	Pursuit of God	Gudslängtan
95.	Trotter, I. Lilius	The Parables of the Cross	

Biograph Books

96.	Broadbent, E.H.	The Pilgrim Church	
97.	Bunyan, John	Pilgrim ' s Progress	Kristens resa
98.	Fox, George	The Journal	
99.	Holmes, Frank	Brother Indeed	
100.	Lang, G.H.	Groves, Anthony Norris	
101.	Miller, Andrew	Church History	